

Against Rudy Giuliani the Strategy Is to Divide Italian-Americans

Dom Serafini (January 15, 2008)



In Italy, amid political turmoil that is absorbing public opinion, people are hardly aware that America is preparing for a new presidential election. This realization is disquieting especially considering that, for the first time in U.S. history, one of the presidential frontrunners is an Italian-American: Rudy Giuliani.

From what I could hear from NIAF's annual Gala event, which was televised, Rudy has a great relationship with Italy, but is Italy paying attention? And, more importantly, are Italian-Americans fully behind Rudy for president?

When he was mayor of New York, Giuliani got in trouble with his Republican Party because he endorsed Mario Cuomo, a Democrat, for New York Governor. Political ideology or opportunism was not contemplated. Evidently, for Rudy, the Italian element of the candidate was a guarantee that he



was as good as gold.

Not every Italian-American, unfortunately, appreciates this golden rule. Recently, the Long Island, NY daily paper “Newsday,” ran a story: “Will Italians in U.S. give Rudy the boot?” It argued that “Giuliani has turned his back on his Italian roots,” which, judging from his speech at the NIAF event in Washington D.C., is far from the truth.

The “Newsday” story pointed out that Giuliani went to Calabria to inaugurate the first direct flight from Kennedy Airport to the region, but Giuliani’s camp did not publicize the trip, as if the candidate were ashamed of his Italian origins.

Frankly, the Giuliani trip to Calabria didn’t even merit a blip in the media radar in Italy or the Italian press in the U.S.—which is too busy reporting about the crime wave emergency, the political ineptitude or the corruption that is now engulfing Italy.

Looking at the demographic situation, in the U.S. there are an estimated 25 million Americans of Italian descent, mostly scattered around such important states as California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan and Ohio. “Newsday” pointed out that in states such as New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Rhode Island, some 15% of the population is of Italian descent.

On the political front, we have “Billary,” who has planned her presidential campaign very carefully. The Senator from New York is said to be a good Republican masked as a Democrat, and therefore she can appeal to both constituencies. One could argue that Rudy could be considered a good Democrat masked as a Republican, but the difference is that Hillary Clinton has no major rivals in the Democratic camp.

Indeed, according to some accounts, Clinton’s key antagonist, Illinois senator Barack Obama, is a creation of “The New York Times” in order to discourage challenges from more insidious candidates. Sen. Obama is not even considered by Hillary as a potential running mate, since his constituency would vote for Clinton anyway.

The fact that “The New York Times” could be aiding Clinton’s presidential strategy doesn’t mean, however, that the Jewish community is fully behind “Billary.”

Our “elder brothers” (as Pope John Paul II called Jews) would rally behind Rudy: On the religious level (Catholics are Judeo-Christians); on the geopolitical level (for the support of Israel), and on the economical level (Giuliani has a good record in running a Metropolis that is defined as unmanageable).

If the states such as Florida and New York, in particular, get behind Rudy, Hollywood would take notice and, perhaps, would switch its endorsement from ‘Billary’ to Giuliani.

Plus, if one looks at vulnerabilities, Hillary has many more than Giuliani who has basically two: The fact that he is of Italian descent and that he’s Catholic.

Giuliani was wise in getting all his skeletons (his multiple divorces, the discord with his children, the antics of his current wife, his speaking fees and some friends are not properly sound) out of the closet, well in advance of the primaries. Now he has only to make sure that his antagonists don’t succeed in splintering the Italian-American block. The religious element—with a Mormon and a



former Muslim among the candidates—will finally be of secondary importance.

In any case, what the Italian-American community should never do, is follow the “Newsday” advice that, “Italo-Americans should not support Giuliani simply on the basis of ethnic pride.” Beside that fact that Italo-Americans are not an “ethnic” group, but a nationality, all Americans of Italian origins should indeed vote for Rudy exclusively because he’s Italian, which is by itself a good enough reason and a guarantee of everything America stands for.

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