Italy: The Murderous State, Presumed Innocent

written by Stefanie Prezioso | July 23, 2026

Protesting killing of Abderrahim Fakir

The death of Abderrahim Fakir in a working-class neighborhood of Bologna on Sunday, July 20, sparked outrage, leading thousands of people to demonstrate to demand “Truth and Justice”; this death is reminiscent of that of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020…

Shooting Burglars in the Back

On July 15, 2026, Mario Roggero was definitively sentenced to 14 years and 9 months in prison for killing two of the three burglars who had attacked his jewelry store, armed with a toy gun and a knife, as they were fleeing. The footage is crystal clear: the robbers had already left the store, were not threatening anyone, and the jeweler shot them multiple times.

The entire right and far-right of the government are rallying around Roggero, who is seeking a presidential pardon—already supported by Justice Minister Carlo Nordio, outside any legal framework. Matteo Salvini says he is considering running him as a candidate in the next elections in order to grant him parliamentary immunity. The League is taking this opportunity to introduce a bill that has been a priority for the party since at least the 2018 elections, aimed at expanding Article 52 of the Penal Code, which deals with self-defense.

Congressman Claudio Borghi has thus introduced this proposal:

“Any reaction to a criminal act is not punishable, regardless of the proportionality of the means used, the persistence of the danger, and the strictly defensive nature of the conduct.”

Giorgia Meloni, for her part, was quick to declare that the sentence was disproportionate. Mario Roggero has quickly become the “national hero” of Italy’s right-wing and far-right political spectrum, which remains firmly in power in the absence of serious opposition.

As for Elon Musk, he is waging a campaign on X against the Italian judges, who he claims should “be imprisoned” for handing down this verdict—in the same vein as his support for Marine Le Pen (“the only hope for France”), whom he claims is a victim of the French justice system.

Rise in police violence

On July 17, 2026, several hundred people protested in Venice against the U.S. Ambassador to Italy, Tilman Fertitta, whose mega-yacht — 117 meters long and 30 meters high, as imposing as a six-story building — had dropped anchor right in the middle of the Festa del Redentore, one of the city’s most important festivals, partially blocking residents’ access to the fireworks display. The protesters, dressed in children’s swim rings (frogs, unicorns, and turtles), were violently charged by the police.

On July 19, Abderrahim Fakir, a 43-year-old Moroccan national who had arrived in Italy from Casablanca at the age of 7, was killed by two police officers in Bologna, in the working-class neighborhood of Pilastro; there, too, the images are as clear as they are unbearable: wounded in the head and in a state of confusion, he pleads for help while two police officers hold him down, handcuffed and facing the ground, after spraying pepper spray in his face; four paramedics watch this man die without intervening… Remember, “I can’t breathe,” said George Floyd, just before he died in Minneapolis.

On July 20, following the violent death of Abderrahim Fakir, a massive crowd flooded the streets of Bologna, called out by the Democratic Party mayor, Matteo Lepore, to demand truth and justice—while, for the first time since the Security Decree-Law, pushed by the Meloni government, went into effect, police officers and healthcare workers were protected by the “criminal immunity shield” (a more radical law on the presumption of legality for law enforcement shootings had just been passed by the French Parliament by a vote of 313 to 199, supported by the National Rally, The Republicans, and Macron’s supporters). Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi then felt compelled to argue that Italy was not a “police state”…

A license to kill?

As Cecchino Antonini explains https://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article77985: “The security decree also expands the ‘criminal shield’ for law enforcement, that is, the legal protections for officers who commit offenses in the line of duty under circumstances of necessity. Following President Mattarella’s remarks, the government clarified that this protection applies not only to officers but to anyone in similar circumstances. Indeed, it is worded more cautiously: any person who commits an offense when there is an “obvious cause for justification” is not entered into the ordinary registry of persons under investigation, but into a separate registry, with an expedited procedure that should result in the case being dismissed within thirty days, unless the prosecutor decides otherwise. Politically, this measure introduces a principle of preventive legitimization of the use of force, and the “shield” risks having selective effects by further exposing people considered foreign or marginalized, such as young people and migrants.”

French law is more radical, as it involves a reversal of the burden of proof by presuming the legality of the act from the outset—which is legally far more radical, and it is precisely this that has led opponents to label the French law a “license to kill.”

Democracy Gutted

Democracy thwarted, democracy suspended, democracy gutted: a new political era is dawning in Italy, the United States, and also in France. The piece-by-piece construction of an absolutist governmental sovereignty, which is taking hold by methodically disarming each of the powers that

could stand in its way.

The methods may differ on either side of the Atlantic, but the goals remain hopelessly the same: to strip constitutions of their meaning; to undermine elections (in Italy by proposing a new electoral law that, by combining a disproportionate majority bonus with closed-list systems, guarantees an overwhelming majority for the outgoing right-wing and far-right coalition while giving party leaders the de facto power to decide who sits in Parliament; in the United States, by already doing everything possible to hinder the exercise of the popular vote, and even contesting the results of *the midterm elections*—as Donald Trump did in his latest speech); undermining the "red" judiciary; attacking democratic freedoms and rights; targeting migrants—and with them, all the exploited—by promoting mass deportation, and incarceration; ensuring control over a single narrative by curtailing the right to information and freedom of expression.

Such is the case with the various attempts to silence the press (Trump attacks television networks and newspapers), which becomes merely a conduit for a single narrative (a report by a RAI journalist on the death of Abderrahim Fakir was censored by the network). Taken together, these policies paint a picture of the future: the transfer of all legitimate decision-making to a single center, with no authority left capable of challenging it, and the gradual, almost silent erosion of any institutional or social countervailing power.

This is a gradual shift of the political center of gravity toward a head of government (a monarch and his inner circle) whose actions must be free of any obstacles. A process that began around the turn of the 2000s in Italy and is now accelerating on the Peninsula and elsewhere. On July 20, the rising figure to the right of Giorgia Meloni, General Roberto Vannacci, with his new party "Futuro Nazionale"—which he describes as the "true right" campaigning for "remigration "—illustrated his "project" by posting a AI video on social depicting the killing, against the backdrop of the Roman Empire, of Elly Schlein of the Democratic Party and Giuseppe Conte of the Five Star Movement.

In the Face of Increasingly Authoritarian States: Organize and Fight

On July 16, 2026, under the leadership of Marco Rubio, a "global" summit was held, bringing together more than sixty countries. Its focus: the "resurgence of political terrorism"; Italy sent its Undersecretary of State for the Interior, Nicola Molteni, a member of the Lega. "Political terrorism" is a concept first introduced by the Nixon administration in the context of the Vietnam War, targeting primarily left-wing organizations (ranging from those fighting for civil rights to the Black Panthers).

Today, it has been revived by the security decree "Combating Domestic Terrorism and Organized Political Violence" (NSPM-7), on the basis of which the first harsh prison sentences have already been handed down in Texas. This "Antifa Summit" introduced the new concept of "far-left terrorism," (FLT) which, as stated in a White House press release, must "will be treated with the same seriousness and ferocity the world has long reserved for jihadist terrorism."

Following this summit, the U.S. State Department released a new report on " Cuba's "campaign of subversion against the United States"which reads like a blacklist of left-wing groups and activists: " Many of the most significant upheavals in recent American political history — from the George Floyd riots to the rise of Antifa to the explosion of pro-terrorist activism on American college campuses — can be linked, in some way, shape, or form, to Cuban influence," https://www.kenklippenstein.com/p/after-political-terrorism-event-us?publication_id=7677&post_id=207813534&isFreemail=true&r=1om0z2&triedRedirect=true&utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email. The list includes New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani, Congresswoman Ilhan Omar, *Democracy Now!* journalist Amy Goodman, Ben Cohen, co-founder of Ben & Jerry's ice cream,

as well as the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and Black Lives Matter…

The steamroller of the powerful right-wing coalition has begun rolling right before our eyes, brandishing the specter of its old demons—the “Reds”—in the face of any social resistance. Its real goal, is to undermine our hard-won freedoms and rights by criminalizing those who are fighting today for equality and emancipation.

Marx and Engels wrote as early as 1847:

“A specter is haunting Europe—the specter of Communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this specter; Pope and Czar, Metternich and Guizot, French radicals and German police spies.”

Today, the powerful of this world—whether they call themselves centrists, right-wingers, or far-right—have resumed this fight with redoubled energy against democracy, which hinders their absolute freedom to enrich themselves as they see fit.

It is therefore time to move from the spontaneous organization of resistance to sustainable forms of organization, uniting labor, feminist, anti-racist, and environmental movements on a democratic, class-based foundation, clearly defending an inalienable set of rights and social demands aimed at equality and the collective ownership of our common goods. To achieve this, we must rebuild ties across borders by reviving a militant, enduring internationalism.

The total state is on the march. It is up to us to grasp the full extent of this reality and equip ourselves to counter it by situating our struggles today within the long-standing fight of the working classes for democracy and social justice.