

Michael Briguglio's Blog

Sociologist from Malta

Monday, March 10, 2014

Labour's year at the helm

The Sunday Times 9th March 2014

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20140309/local/The-more-things-change-Labour-s-year-at-the-helm.509802>

The Sunday Times asked me for a short comment on the first year of Labour Government. This is how I replied:

With regard to social justice and civil rights, Labour is attempting to increase equality through measures such as universal childcare centres and recognition of plural family forms, even in education.

This is a big step forward in Malta. On the other hand, Labour's fiscal policy is regressive. Shortfalls will possibly be aided through the cash-for-citizenship scheme, which, in turn, can generate new antagonisms through the demands it creates. The latter is also in line with the discriminatory concept of Fortress Europe.

On energy, Labour is in line with its electoral pledge, but it may be rushing too much in its risk analysis of gas storage. Besides, overdependence on energy oligarchs has its dangers.

The same can be said with respect to over-reliance on big business land developers.

Where public appointments are concerned, not all can be deemed as meritocratic, as is the case with southern European patronage.

Challenges such as the battle against precarious employment and the need to increase the minimum wage will give a clearer definition of Labour's direction. This is a 'third way' pragmatic government which is attempting to reconcile social justice with neo-liberalism.

This is a government that can implode due to its internal contradictions, or that can be building a hegemonic government, as was the case with Labour in the 1970s and the Nationalists for almost 25 years.

Posted by Michael Briguglio at 9:44 am  

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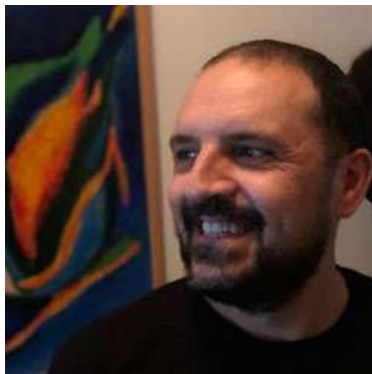
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Michael Briguglio

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