



pg16

Ratzinger's rival

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Attacked by a blog Betrayed by the party

Musumeci under pressure to bow out of election after brutal character assassination

Siggiewi's Nationalist mayor Robert Musumeci has been placed under pressure by the Office of the Prime Minister not to contest the forthcoming by-election for John Dalli's seat: an initiative which coincides with a series of highly vitriolic and personal online attacks by blogger Daphne Caruana Galizia.

Musumeci was contacted yesterday by a senior official from the Office of the Prime Minister, and told that it would be inopportune for him to contest the forthcoming by-election.

This comes at a time when both Musumeci and his partner, Magistrate Consuelo Scerri-Herrera, were being exposed to a daily and increasingly hyster-

ical bout of scathing abuse by Caruana Galizia on her blog.

It seems that – rather than expressing concern at the often scurrilous, invasive and obscene nature of the columnist's invective – the Office of the Prime Minister instead echoed many of the 'concerns' expressed on the blog in question.

And yet, it remains uncertain why Musumeci's private life should suddenly prove problematic only now... and not before the last Siggiewi local council elections in June 2009.

Party insiders believe that Robert Musumeci's unpopularity with the present administration stems more from his

outspoken criticism of the Nationalist Party than for anything connected with his private life.

Known for his moderate views and his tendency towards outspokenness, Musumeci made headlines when he found himself cut off in mid-sentence during a critical speech at a recent party General Council. Furthermore, the young Siggiewi architect has raised eyebrows in PN circles on account of his friendship with people indirectly or directly involved with the Labour Party.

At district level, Musumeci is also opposed within the Siggiewi local council by Carol Aquilina, who is deemed to be closer to the Party core.



pg7

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pg28

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OPINIONS 11-12

Saviour Balzan

pg12



FREE INSIDE

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Page 3

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