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## **THE EUROPEAN PUPPET MASTERS: WHO REALLY COMMANDS IN BRUSSELS?**

**A wide-ranging tableau of the "Europe that counts". Cerstin Gammelin and Raimund Löw are two journalists, the Brussels correspondents for the "S&uuml;ddeutsche Zeitung" and the Austrian TV broadcaster ORF respectively. They have observed the moves of the members of the European Commission from the centre of political governance and acquired a wealth of anecdotes, curiosities and information on the real moves and strategies adopted in the field by the governors of Europe, allowing them to answer a highly topical question: who really commands in Brussels? The European Commission? The Heads of State working together? Or does just one of the latter act as the absolute leader, while the others, as cited in the book by Gammelin/ Löw, "take notes?".-**

An interesting and courageous foray into the secret documents and minutes of the European Council was presented today by Cerstin Gammelin. She is the co-author of the recent publication "The Puppet Masters of Europe", which offers behind the scenes information and little-known gossip about the "ruling class" in Brussels. She presented a portrait, not just political, of some of the most important politicians in the last five years: from Sarkozy and Berlusconi to Hollande, Merkel, Monti and the British Prime Minister David Cameron. It was a fascinating discourse, also making reference to the methods adopted to save Italy, "a country that could not fail" according to the EC, offering a blow-by-blow account of the Euro and banking union crisis, to arrive at attentive assessment of the recent European election results: "For the first time there will be an extreme right-wing political group in the European Parliament", commented Gammelin "and it is essential that the left-wing and moderate centre defend liberal thinking with greater force, in order to recover favour among the active electorate". As far as the in-depth portrait of Angela Merkel is concerned, an aspect which occupies much of the book, her opinion is unchallengeable: "Merkel is the Queen of Europe, on the strength of the economic power of her country, but it is necessary to arrive rapidly at a greater equilibrium between the members of the EC, who to date "have only taken notes" and too often submitted to decisions that were certainly not bipartisan. Matteo Renzi now has a major opportunity in his hands", she continued "given the clear success of his party, with 41% of the votes: he must have the determination to bring innovative and radical proposals for change to the table in Brussels and to immediately look for consensus and alliances with other government leaders, not just with the German Chancellor". -

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