



MITCHELL PHOENIX

Berlusconi the leader – Rascal or Rogue?

More allegations about Silvio Berlusconi, Italy's Premier, have emerged in recent days. This time he is alleged to have exchanged business favors for sex from an escort. Call it sloppy management, a devil-may-care attitude or just bad luck, the whole episode reflects back on the vessel under his leadership.

What business is it of ours how leaders behave on their own time? Surely they are entitled to a private life? Of course they are, as long as it remains private.

Berlusconi has proved over many years that he is a flawed leader. He seeks the limelight and has frequently been accused of insensitivity, abusing his position and shady dealing. What, therefore, is his duty to those he leads?

The first principle of leadership is to demand the utmost of oneself. At one level it encapsulates the idea of setting an example. It is a very simple idea that provides a daily personal challenge. A leader's example can inspire or dispirit in the same measure. Setting an example requires consciousness and an acceptance of responsibility.

As children you may have played a game called 'Follow the Leader'. Luckily we get to decide if we want to or not in adulthood. Is Berlusconi a rascal or a rogue? Would you follow him?