

## Italy's prime minister retiring

*by UPI*

ROME - Italy's 86-year-old prime minister, Romano Prodi, says he is calling it quits after next month's parliamentary elections. Prodi said he decided not to stand as his coalition's main candidate shortly after the fall of his center-left allied government in January, Euronews.net reported Monday. "I am finished with Italian politics and possibly also with politics in general. The world is full of opportunities; there is always something new to do," he said. Prodi reportedly sees Rome's mayor, Walter Veltroni, taking over the country's leadership. Veltroni is aiming for a smaller coalition and plans on eliminating a number of Prodi's strong-left allies, the report said. A poll revealed that Veltroni's Democratic Party is six-and-a-half points behind former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's center-right party.

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