

The pioneers' ambition

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The Party of European Socialists need, at the present time, to update their politics in order to deliver on their universal values, with respect to the great changes in progress. It is essential to avoid nostalgia and conformism, both in relation to the ancient economical orthodoxies of the Left wings in the 20th century and in respect of the new conformism of the fiscal austerity and of the compression of the government spending. Our electorate has been claimed by radical movements and populist forces, and they are allured by abstentionism, according to the voting results in several European countries, as long as they don't receive adequate answers to their requests. This is perfectly understandable.

This is the consideration we started with during our National Congress and which we entrusted to the work of the PSE's congress in Rome last year, during which Martin Schulz was elected as the candidate of all the European Socialists. National borders were abolished and globalization started to rule, so borders of the Left have been changing accordingly, but they haven't totally vanished. Actually, they are still extremely strong. The deep changes, which affect the societies, lead politics to call themselves into question. The rapidity of changes which derive from science, technology, from the power of global finance, the complexity of the economic relations, induce the Left to a self-analysis, obviously leaving untouched the three pillars which, today as before, distinguish them from the Right wing: redistribution of the wealth, extension of the fundamental rights and of the civic responsibilities and increasing the levels of freedom and democracy.

The Europe of the founders doesn't correspond to the one we know today: it is a crippled and incomplete Europe. It is far too bureaucratic, not close enough when it comes to choices related to foreign policies and in conflict with the economic policies. This Europe doesn't create hopes and emotions. A new founding pact is necessary in order to reintroduce the reasons of a century-old history in the newborn century and makes a competitive pillar in the world out of the European Union, with a distinctive role in the processes of globalization, offering an European model to the world, different from the American and Chinese ones. A fresh European patriotism is needed, not based on the rhetoric of the financial statements.

Many people decide nowadays to migrate and that's a sign of a world showing a very low self-esteem: more and more exiles and refugees are disembarking, not anymore dreaming and looking for a job, as it happened previously, trying to fit

in and starting a process of integration in the land they chose as their destination: those who make landfall somewhere, deciding to escape from the uncountable and terrible wars and uncertainty in Africa and Middle-East, just add their own poverty to a spread disintegration in our communities. The Mediterranean sea is an European border. Two are the consequences of it all: every country of the EU need to help the refugees, as long as it is a great democracy's duty to be responsible and offer asylum. Those who will live among us, will have to respect the laws, enjoy the fundamental rights, share the principles of freedom and of democracy. The goal is to reach an active multiculturalism and an inclusive citizenship both in rights and obligations, characterized by the respect of the cultural differences, which could, though, harm the founding values: no religious prevalence on the laic law, full respect of the rights of women and gender equality. Hence, freedom, sharing, responsibility based on our values. It is not a matter of identity values, but of constitutional and universal values, which have been settling in Europe for centuries, thanks to the extreme efforts of the forces of progress.

The representative democracy has especially been using, both in Italy And Europe, the decisive role of the political parties. Today democracy looks frail in the face of global markets and finance and the parties aren't able anymore to represent the civil society, therefore the middle class is in crisis. A massive reforming operation is needed, exactly as it happened right after the end of the Second World War: the political view has to prevail on economical orthodoxy. The Party of European Socialists must obtain the leadership and serve as an example especially in order to overcome national egotism. The core of our view, as European Socialists, is the Welfare State, and, at the same time, the independence of people, their freedom to choose and follow new opportunities. If today the Welfare State, as we created it, it doesn't suffice, it is mainly due to the limits set by the national government. To rethink and found in a new light the national social governments has become necessary, so is to support those who are in need and deserve it, but have no opportunities or social conditions in order to emerge. Above all, though, it is important to build a new European Welfare State, with common standards related to the opportunities and warranties: to do so, a fiscal capacity of the European Union is essential. To be nostalgic about the old-style national welfare is not an option, as long as they could only be supported today through a wicked competition between strong and weak countries in Europe. The government forces have to join together so that they can rule the new financial economy, and find there the resources to sustain our social models. Freedom has to be linked to the power of every single citizen of controlling their own life, with the capability to express their own talent and choices, despite the status and wealth discrepancies. If the Left trust in the nostalgia of a glorious past, they won't be able to project themselves into the future and if they accept the new conformism of the financialized economy and of the reduction of the public expenditure to whatever social cost, they lose

their path. They should be cross-eyed. One eye here, and one beyond the daily borders. A pioneers' ambition shall be the solution, then. Heretics in order to not die in the past.

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