

FEDERALISM OR BARBARIANISM

Plea for a European federalist initiative

“The filthy idol of the sovereign state must be dispelled from everyone’s heart”.

Luigi Einaudi

Nationalisms in the 1900s have caused appalling tragedies, causing humanity to plunge at the very bottom. The fanaticism and selfishness arising within the European geopolitical space, due to what Einaudi called "the filthy idol of the sovereign state", have twice led the European States to fight each other, looking down from a mountain of millions of dead, with the annihilation of any public and private ethics.

Starting from that point, to restore the fundamental values of criticism and freedom for all, some illustrious minds conceived the essential – rather than ideal - design of the European unity. That’s how, at the end of the Second World War, the institutions of that which has become the current European Union were born, out of an effort of cooperation and partial renunciation of all brute pursuit of national interests, based on the agreement of the most advanced components of the three great traditions in the continent's political cultures: liberalism, socialism and popularism.

Nevertheless, the building up of a united and federal Europe was very slow; it was then almost abandoned, due to prevailing national economic interests; and in recent years, in practice, it has been distorted, with the reduction of the idea of European unity to a simple bargaining of States represented by their governments.

The United States of Europe were quite a different political and social project: their notion rests on the recognition of a common identity, historically founded on the Greco-Roman culture and on those shared values originated and risen in the European countries and embodied in the declaration of freedom, equality and brotherhood, which have made the European people the Forerunner of human existence based on the rights of the living and on the creation and distribution of a well-being that, historically, has never been equalled.

The betrayal of those ideals has triggered, as a reaction, the rebirth of the filthy nationalist idol, which, as a metastasis, is bringing about the fall of values, the questioning and emptying of democracy itself, the foray of massive lack of culture, growing misery, the prevalence of the tummy on the mind and the onset of racism that we had hoped to be finally buried.

However, it is up to the institutions of integration, which so far have proved inadequate, to pick up the banner of a common European democratic feeling. If any of the member States does not find itself in this pool of common values and policies, they shall take the responsibility of leaving Europe, renouncing the many privileges that it still guarantees them, and slipping back under the domain of authoritarian powers.

Nationalism must be nipped in its raising. Europe cannot continue to finance countries that are already advancing on the authoritarian path, if not totalitarian slope. Europe cannot tolerate contradictions between its own Constitution, although not strictly federal, but inspired by the values of democracy and of an even closer cooperation, and the Constitutions of member States.

Never before have liberalism, socialism and the best popularism been in such a crisis since the end of the Second World War. The reasons are many, it is certain that in Europe Communism has done immeasurable damage, but perhaps the main one is that everyone has forgotten about their public policies, their values, becoming caricatures of themselves. They have chased the racist rights, which have always been anti-European, even welcoming some members in their so-called European "parties", paradoxically radicalising them. Certainly, it cannot be claimed that they have been superseded by a more modern thought. Only the Greens, as of now, have built a true party, cohesive and coherent, and consequently more federalist, while the other more recent formations, like the 5 Star Movement or GUE, have as single common denominator either the nostalgia for the Communist ideology or ideological antagonism. The sovereignty of the "god, country and family" and the consequent populism are prehistoric in comparison, they have already been demolished once, and they will be tomorrow as well. Liberalism socialism and popularism today in Europe have an historical duty: to truly create the United States of Europe as an example for the world and as an antidote to the growing metastasis. The well-established failure of functionalism, grotesque and rachitic substitute of a true federal culture, calls for it.

How to do it? There is no technicality with unamended Treaties that allows a full change of direction from the error of functionalism of the 60s. We need a restoration of initiative, frankly and

bravely political, to define new rules capable of reviving the tired fabric of rules of a Union without any soul or strength.

A political initiative that in the upcoming months, perhaps for the last time, the great political traditions of liberalism, socialism and popularism can take on to oppose a true plan to the advance of nationalist demagogy.

To push them to this apparently courageous step, in reality indispensable and realistic one, the movements that have defended for decades, in good faith and with immense efforts, that little bit of Europe that was there, must in turn dissolve the underlying misunderstanding, repudiate functionalism and embrace the federalist battle without reserve.

The basic program is promptly sketched.

Overthrow past community policies by 180 degrees and dissolve all today's tolerated contradictions. And do so soon.

Finally give sovereignty to the European Parliament and constituent powers. Even with a forced assumption by it of responsibility, perhaps self-proclaiming it.

Dismantle the existing political groups, which constitute a mass of power that, on the inside, contains very heterogeneous political representations, expelling without hesitation and without regard the components that are not attributable to the history of the respective political cultures, sold off for some funding useful for the re-election of their colourless and therefore increasingly irrelevant national delegations. The new groups should be the representation of true European parties, and the respective national parties should be only branches of those.

Build the federal State with the countries that share the goals and objectives of federalism and that meet ambitious democratic requirements. Establish an area of economic solidarity and free trade with other countries, but without political impositions. The United States of Europe cannot be considered as such if they do not provide for a massive transfer of sovereignty, which is the exact opposite of what is craved by sovereign policies.

The new European constitution must contain the indispensable clause on the basis of which, as is the case today with regard to national budget policies, which must meet certain criteria, there will be periodic monitoring of the permanence of political conditions, individual freedom, free public debate, citizens' rights, today only mildly verified once and for all for the entry into the Union. It already seems to hear the usual silly invocations to realism and common sense (which is not

always good thinking) of too many people that for more than half a century have hampered the way of a true federalism with palliatives and technicalities that are now to collapse definitively in front of the rise of the sovereign plague.

Without a true federalist initiative, which raises popular expectations, political vision, serious programmatic commitments, defining rights of freedom and democracy for all, and therefore finally understandable for citizens, the next European elections of 2019 can only be the moment of triumph of nationalisms. Whose next step, as history teaches us, will be to exacerbate mutual relations and give new life to the eternal European war.

No conquest of peace and civilization is achieved forever. The eunuchs of common sense must deal with it, and finally choose between federalism and barbarianism.

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