

Europe Is Too Expensive - But It Is Possible to Get Out

The Lisbon Treaty introduced a huge amount of obligations, but also the legal possibility of secession.

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On december 1st, 2009 the Lisbon Treaty about the functioning of the European Union became effective. Italy (recently committed to a shameful gossip, worth of a brothel) almost did not realize it. But this Treaty was lightheartedly approved by the Italian Parliament, with no direct or indirect involvement of the citizens. This Treaty will deeply affect our future, our independence and our lives. The text was printed on the official *Gazette* of the European Union (it weights 1,98 kilos), and is an almost inextricable tangle of regulations: they represent our final surrender to the bureaucrats of Brussels. Right now, anyway, 80% of the regulations published on our *Gazette* comes from Europe; with the Treaty it will become 90%. The most discouraging aspect of this legislation is the devilish approach of the Ethical State. The last thing that they are commanding us to do is losing weight, eating this instead of that, and so on.

Considering this situation, many of us found some encouragement in one consideration: among so many regulations (including those concerning Justice) the Lisbon Treaty introduced one good thing: the juridical possibility of unilateral secession. Which implies a cultural maturity that in Italy is still miles away, with the only exception of the work of very few forefront intellectuals, who have a libertarian approach. The first problem that should be solved is the relationship with the Monetary Union. The years of the mandatory and obligatory optimism are gone; and in all countries (especially in Italy, that willingly penalized itself from the beginning) we are feeling the burden of a rule that does not allow the single Countries to have a currency exchange corresponding to their

economic situation. Martin Feldstein from Harvard outspokenly denounced this problem, with no hypocritical obeisance to a reality that was never critically examined.

The costs of Europe, on the other hand, are enormous, and finally our Accounting Court denounced this outspokenly. In 2008, moreover, Europe gave back to Italy 10 billion euros *less* than in the previous year. But in 2008 belonging to the European Union became more expensive for us, because the charges increased 73,3%. This imbalance cannot be accepted. This European state of affairs comes on top of such an Italian situation that even a natural born optimist as Francesco Micheli (the finance icon of Italy, interviewed by Osvaldo De Paolini) said that he does not see *"a common political approach aimed at solving the problems"*. And this also is the core point of the crisis. *"Ours - Micheli also said - is the Country of waste. In times of crisis, there are fewer assets and it is a shame to waste them. The first priority must be the reduction of public expenditure. With a resolute choice, it would be possible to cut 30% of the income, and to use the 70% that is left to finance the real and true needs, creating extra money for poorer people, so that they will be able to increase their expenditures"*.

"I am not the only one that thinks in this way - Micheli said - there are a lot of surveys on this subject, but no (Italian) government ever tried to do something in his direction." An example? *"The abolition of the annual state tax on cars, which could be simply included in the price of gas"*.

Trying to do it - trying to starve the "beast" of public expenditure, is the only way to give a boost to our economy. But trying to do it means to cancel centuries-old encrustations, eliminating absurd privileges, closing down Agencies whose only goal is to survive - the "ConSORZI di Bonifica" are a classic example. This would also mean to fight against the enemy who is at our door: *"The currency in dollars - Micheli said again - very soon will start to claim the most dreaded tribute: a growing inflation that will set fire to the gunpowder of the next crisis"*.

We are talking about trying seriously to *"starve the beast"*. With president Reagan inflation dropped from more than 10% in 1981 to less than 4% in 1983. And to *"starve the beast"* Reagan used the only effective method: he lowered the fiscal burden on earnings from 70% in 1980 to 28% in 1986. And lowered the military budget, which was 4,7% of GDP in 1980 and 3,1% in 1988. Together with Margaret Thatcher the maximum tax on income was reduced from 80% to 45%. *"The revolutionary change induced by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher - Feldstein wrote - meant such progress that today it is not possible to*

turn back". Reagan and Thatcher *tried to do it*, and made it. They made *real* reforms, showing that it is possible to do real reforms. But they were *real* statesmen, too.

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