

# Democracy and Federalism

Why do we need to 'federate the federalists'?

The reasons are many, but we should first ask this question today: why have we not yet done it ?

With so many people declaring themselves to be Europeanists who cite Altiero Spinelli and federalism, why in 70 years have we not yet managed to make a significant step forward towards federalism, or at least its premises?

Even today don't we want to do it with the sovranisti attack on the other side of the Atlantic? With Steve Bannon - former director of the far-right journalist Breitbart News and former strategist of Donald Trump - who proposes to European and Italian citizens, including our Minister of the Interior Salvini, to join the "the Movement" whose stated objective is to be the home of all the world's sovereignists. And, in the short term, to bring together the European sovereignists in view of the upcoming European Parliament elections of March 2019 to win this coalition.

Dear federalist friends ... what are we waiting for becoming aware of what is happening in Europe and what is at stake and to react accordingly? Do we want to awaken from the torpor and get out of this resignation to the disintegration of Europe through the various Exit that will follow in addition to that already in place in Britain?!

I hope that today's day , organized in the wake of the "memorable" - but irrelevant in terms of media notoriety - 12 of May in which the representatives of 13 pro-European associations signed a common declaration in favor of the Federal Republic based on the Constitution - represents the start of this awareness for making a decisive step towards the realization of the federalist project.

## SHORT REVIEW OF FAILURES AND POSSIBILITY OF REDEMPTION

Before starting the relaunch phase of the federalist adventure, let us briefly review the history of previous attempts that unfortunately turned into "lost opportunities".

- Since the end of the Cold War to the Treaty of Maastricht (1992), European countries have not been able to transform the current confederal EU structure into a real European federation, in the "United States of Europe", thereby putting at risk the survival of the European Union and the results achieved, but also by making it even more uncertain to hope for a more united Europe in the future.
- Some weak attempts to improve the EU have been made with the European Convention in 2004 and with the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009. But none of these attempts succeeded in overcoming the real obstacle that makes the creation of a true federal Europe still impossible. : the intergovernmental system, which we could synthetically define as an accumulation of conflicting national interests.
- Moreover, these attempts failed when trust in the EU was very high today, that confidence is appreciably falling, the only way to overcome this crisis situation is to trigger a significant change, a "quantum leap", starting a process "Bottom up" involving all federalist movements and organizations and citizens in favor of a more

democratic, responsible and united Europe, by launching a federal Constitution for Europe, which goes beyond the current treaties and the intergovernmental system in favor of the creation of United States of Europe.

But how can we start this virtuous process of change and, moreover, who will be the protagonists?

Our answer is written in the subtitle of this meeting: "federating the federalists" and the main actors must be the movements, associations and organizations that declare themselves Europeanist and federalist, some of which are in this room, and that I hope will be ready to "change approach" and organizational model in order to reach the "critical mass" necessary to provoke the desired change.

Of fundamental importance is to create an "ad hoc" body that brings together all federalist movements and that this body is itself a federation: the federation of federalists.

Without this organization it will be difficult (and this confirms the past history) to create a federal Europe.

#### FEDERAL ALLIANCE OF EUROPEAN FEDERALISTS: OUR PROPOSAL

The federalist federation realizes the "vertical division of powers" between the federal organization and its member organizations / movements.

At the central level of the federation are represented only the common and shared interests of the associated organizations (shared sovereignty). While the particular interests of the individual organizations are represented and protected by the organizations themselves (individual sovereignty). The Federation of Federalists therefore has no involvement and interference with the level of the particular interests of its affiliated organizations.

This "vertical division" of powers thus allows to federate under a single banner movements and associations operating in different sectors and with different social political orientations, provided that there is the common will and of each of them of achieving the same objectives.

FAEF is the federal body founded last May in Milan that will allow to unite associations of different political / ideological orientation that consistently pursue the same common goal: to realize the United States of Europe founded on the Constitution.

What prevents the federal union of the movements that proclaim themselves federalists is, beyond the labels, the lack of homogeneity of the "ultimate goal" to be reached, in other words it is the "false or apparent federalism".

For example, there are those who want to build a federal Europe through adjustments to the Lisbon Treaty. They are opting for the maintenance of EU intergovernmental governance, which is not federalism and so on ...

Fortunately, there are others, among them our FAEF promoter committee, which aim to mobilize European society through basic associations to create a united Europe in the federal sense through the creation of a federal constitution.

They chose the method devised by the founder of European federalism, Johannes Althusius, around 1600 and, more recently, by Altiero Spinelli: a genuinely democratic "bottom-up" method, consistent with true federalism.

#### FAEF: THE PROGRAM IN BRIEF

FAEF intends to "federate the federalists" with a completely new approach, helping to create a federal Europe through a "bottom up" process based on the constitution. If the various federalist movements spread across Europe will not be available to aggregate themselves as we have said, they will never be able to realize a federal Europe.

We are today faced with the difficult task of creating a huge change: a turning point that can only take place if we succeed in making aware a significant number of European citizens and activists through the involvement and the federalization of movements starting from the European cities as happened in Milan May 12, where a small "snowball" was launched, which, with the contribution of all European activists, will become a beneficial avalanche, aggregating hundreds of European movements and associations. They will form the Federation of European federalists being able to ask by "One voice" to the European Institutions and National Governments the United Europe founded on the Federal Constitution that we have been hoping and waiting since decades.

Long live the Federal Europe!

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