
Rep. Gennaro Migliore

Today, We Need a New Peace of Westphalia

Rep. Gennaro Migliore, group leader of Rifondazione Comunista in the Chamber of Deputies, spoke after Lyndon LaRouche, at the Cenacolo Hall in Rome Feb. 13.

Good evening. I would like to thank Lyndon LaRouche and the correspondents of *EIR* very much for this occasion, which I think can represent a precious opportunity to reflect on the issues which have been raised here. A precious opportunity, including because—and maybe I'll say this with a little irony—some of the opinions which have been expressed here regarding the Bush Administration, if they had come from a party such as ours in Italy, would absolutely be considered the most exemplary expression of anti-Americanism. However, we think that in the contemporary world, it is necessary to trace out networks and guidelines for actions among those who, in different countries, think that a new, more just economic and social system can be established; a system based



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Rep. Gennaro Migliore (left), leader of Rifondazione Comunista, and Rep. Andrea Ricci, member of the Budget Committee in the Chamber of Deputies. Migliore made clear that their differences with the Bush Administration were not an expression of anti-Americanism; both support LaRouche's call for a New Bretton Woods conference.

on social justice, which avoids wars, and which in this manner leads to increasingly broad democratic and popular participation.

I would like to pick up on some of the points which have been mentioned here, by LaRouche, in particular, the question of the “spark of optimism.” Over the course of the years, our work has been guided by this spark of optimism, without which we would not even have been able to represent the theme of politics as a tool for change. We are in the middle of a period of deep political crisis, we are in the middle of a deep crisis caused by forms of exclusion, which are widespread in the United States in particular, but which, alas, are increasingly becoming part of the heritage of our society as well. This is a deep crisis, not only of the relationship which exists between those who govern and those who are governed, but of the very meaning of making policy in a society. And thus the resistance is found, in my judgment, and our judgment, in particular, in those movements which in recent years have made the demand for a global alternative to the world political and economic system, the reason for their actions. We have called them movements for a better world; they which were born, not coincidentally, precisely in the United States, and in particular in Seattle in 1999, and which then spread throughout the world and found certain locations which have symbolically represented centers for the development of alternatives, in the case of Porto Alegre [where the World Social Forum was held for several years—ed.], or other events which have

taken place in recent years.

Certainly, the long wave of these movements has also influenced part of European politics, and Italian politics in particular; in particular, we see the connection between these movements and the peace movement, which has also had a strong presence in the United States and Great Britain, that is, in the two military powers which most contributed to “preventive war,” in Iraq, in particular, but also Afghanistan. There we have seen impressive pacifist movements come together, as has also happened in our country, which have contributed to changing politics, and which, above all, led to a victory such as that against the extreme right-wing government of [Silvio] Berlusconi, and generated an expectation of change which led to the withdrawal of Italian troops from Iraq, and also a very serious discussion regarding our presence in other theaters of war. This is to say that this spark of optimism exists, and it is that which I think has actually driven some of the political processes which have taken place—the possibility of change.

The Role of the Youth Vote

The importance of the youth vote in the recent Democratic victory in the House of Representatives was also mentioned. Well, in Italy also, without the youth vote, there would not have been a victory against the right-wing government. Since we have a differentiated system here, it's very easy to quantify it: In the last elections, approximately 400,000 more people voted for the Chamber of Deputies than voted for Senate, and since we won the Chamber by slightly more than 20,000 votes, it's easy to establish the direct link with the youth vote, because as people know, you must be 25 to vote for the Senate, but only 18 to vote for the Chamber.

However, to return to the political tasks before us—and this meeting is an opportunity for discussion—I think we should attempt to develop in a more structural manner the communications between those who believe there should be a different perspective for the global economic and political system. This perspective can be made stable through forms of cooperation which, in part, can take place through cooperation among publications, and in part also through explicit communication at the institutional level. There are many aspects related in particular to the relationship between the United States and Europe, and the United States and Italy, which I think would be proper to deal with, together with political and institutional entities, which would thus be able to hear, from us, and not only from themselves, an opinion regarding what is taking place.

Indeed, a recent subject of controversy on the Italian political scene, the doubling of the Vicenza air base for the 183rd U.S. brigade, was the subject of a discussion in the Defense or Foreign Affairs Commission. And on this point, Senators Kennedy and Kerry intervened, to state that this doubling of the base is not appropriate, based on their opposition to the expanding war, and thus the expansion of troops within the European and Middle East areas.

In this sense, I think it would be useful to make these positions public, and make them known to our respective communities, in order to avoid (especially in a political situation such as that in Italy, which is often marked by provincialism and diatribes, including within our own majority) being affected by disinformation, which is one of the main arguments in support of conservatism. Disinformation is often present when the opinions of the majority are shaped by, and when protections are erected for, established powers.

War as the Last Resort of Politics

I would like to make a final consideration, regarding the reference to the Peace of Westphalia, and the effect which it had on the history of our continent, and on world history, I think. At that time indeed, the end to a war was being written, and an equilibrium was being created, an equilibrium which was in fact based on the recognition of the existence of nation-states. Nation-states became the entity within which decisive choices in economic, foreign, and military policy were to be implemented, and at that point, war was considered the last resort of politics, such that other forms of negotiation were to represent the tools of politics.

I think that today, with such an extensive monopoly of force on the part of the only imperial power in the world, the United States, that is—and despite the fact that new powers are emerging in the world, such as China and India, which can compete on an economic level, and participate in the dialectic with Europe, but they can not compete with U.S. military power at all—we have to set the goal of forming a great new global pact. This new global pact must, above all, go beyond the right to the discretionary use of force, which has produced disasters, as we can tragically see in Iraq, for those populations, but also clearly for the entire international community.

Today, the issue of the strengthening of supranational organizations, and their democratization, starting with the United Nations, and the relationship which must exist between these organizations and individual nation-states, is certainly the challenge which we all face in this new phase of globalization of the planet. I think that to this end, we must join the energies and experiences which we dedicate to the questions of how to change our world.

I thank you for this meeting with Lyndon LaRouche, and all of the guests who have participated, and I hope this dialogue can continue.