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THE FUTURE ACCORDING TO MATTEO RENZI: " ANOTHER JOB IN 10 YEARS, BUT FIRST LET'S CHANGE ITALY "

The Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi made his appearance this morning on the stage of the Santa Chiara Auditorium in Trento, almost three quarters of an hour late as compared to the schedule, dressed in jeans and a blue shirt and accompanied by Tito Boeri and Enrico Mentana. After this, he did not spare himself. In around an hour and a half, during what was effectively his first public appearance since the recent European elections, he touched on all the topics that are dear to him, from reforms, starting with the Senate, to "scrapping" ("in 10 years" he assured us "I should not still be doing this job"), taking in Europe, emigration and even communication and the current conflict with the RAI, obtaining numerous rounds of applause during his presentation. This is a summary of his speech, the most eagerly awaited at this 9th edition of the Festival of Economics.-

A unique alignment of the stars

"There is no single reform that will solve everything, an overall vision is required. I have no particular fears as regards the recommendations of the European Commission. If anything, what counts is what governments expect from the Commission.
Firstly: today we have a unique alignment of the stars: the widespread conviction that the choices made to date, all centred on rigorous parameters, have not allowed us to come out of the crisis. The rest of the world has made different choices. What is more, it is also necessary to discuss who has respected the European parameters, because to date only Germany and Italy have done so.
Secondly: it is necessary to change institutional leaders. Voting has not given an absolute majority to one candidate or another. There is not a Junker problem. That is a name , not the name. The vote did not express a strong request as regards a particular name but rather as regards what the Commission should do.
Thirdly: what will Italy do? We want to make an ambitious speech at Strasburg, not a discourse of little matter. And to continue: there are 183 billion euro of European funds and funding for cohesion and development that we must spend well. So politics must go back to doing its job, otherwise no economic measure will save it".

Europe, energy and immigration
Also noting the presence of the MD of Fiat, Sergio Marchionne in the room, Mentana, underlined how at the last elections Renzi ensured himself "40% of the market". On the strength of this result, can Italy ask for office in Europe as commissioner, President of the Eurogroup or in some other role? The answer was direct: "The Italian PD is the party which obtained the largest number of votes in Europe, more than the CDU. However, I do not believe that Italy must do battle in favour of the Italian identity. We must say: Italy is bringing a package of concrete measures for discussion. For example, regarding energy. We have no interconnections between France and Spain. What should we talk about? Or again: what should our relations be with Africa? With Libya for example, from where, incidentally, 96% of the immigrants who reach our

coasts depart, and who we deal with on our own? Europe tells us everything about fishing rights, but when it is a question of saving a 3-year-old child who is drowning, it looks the other way. I want a Europe with a soul. At the moment the name is of secondary importance".

Two groups competing for government of the county

"Can we really expect to solve the problem of unemployment with the Youth Guarantee? I am happy that it exists, but it is not enough. Either we have a serious discussion about global reform or else we will not go anywhere. First the institutional reforms: you live in an autonomous province, but elsewhere the problem of Title V of the constitution is important, both in terms of resources and the distribution of jurisdiction, in fields such as energy for example. The abolition of CNEL is just a starter – I know you are all worried about this.

Immediately after these reforms the next step is a new electoral law. The recent result shows that we can move towards two groups, I would like to say two parties, but at least two forces, that compete for government of the country. I would say that we will finish here as regards this law. Can the ceiling be raised further? I believe that we could do with a comprehensible threshold, 50 is too high but 37.5 makes one think of a temperature. The important thing is that there is a ballot, at the end of which it is clear who has won and you know who to blame. That is how it is in companies. We also need this for the country. For years we have had politicians who have been champions in finding alibis. I didn't make it because there was an argumentative coalition, the trade unions, the pests in Rome…But if you are there to govern you cannot continue to come up with excuses. If I do not succeed in making reforms it is my fault. In this sense the ballot is fantastic, because in the end there is always someone who wins".

The Senate? I would have given more space over to Mayors

So should the Senate be abolished, Mentana pressed? "If I have to state my opinion, I would have given much more importance to Mayors in Italy, because historically in Italy I believe that the municipalities and autonomous areas are stronger than the regions. But you could say to me: we have made the opposite proposal. The fact is that we are continuing a debate that has lasted 70 years. They have suggested that we have organised the reform of the Senate in a haphazard manner. But has anyone read the debates of the constituent assembly? Perfect bicameralism was a compromise found by the DC and the PCI, who could not agree on the role of the second chamber. Today, in a more serene climate, can we say that a Senate representing local authorities has a sense? Take note, it will not have senators paid to be senators, otherwise this would further increase the cost of politics. So our proposal is well-grounded. It is in line with other European countries and not plucked out of thin air. Having made this reform, then the fun finally starts. Afterwards we can also discuss the battle with bureaucracy and managerial groups".

Representative organisations and the inland revenue

Renzi was born in January 1975: in that year Mentana recalled, Agnelli and Lama signed an agreement on indexing wages to inflation, "an event that it is the symbol of pact-building, perhaps also at the expense of the country and its growth. Are representative organisations a problem?"

"From 1 July we will be at the head of Europe" replied Renzi "and it would be nice to arrive at that appointment with a serious programme as regards which representative organisations can make their contribution. However, without blocking everything. For example; the reform of the public administration. The first rule will be to abolish the ‘in concert' formula. Do we need to specify that in government it is necessary to work together? Hence we need to change our attitudes, and then the rules of the game, and do so in a hurry. On 13 June there will be the legislative decree, while by the end of the month we will deal with the legal process. We have a civil law system which needs to be reformed, but the administrative and accounting systems also have a few problems. We are little behind with the inland revenue: the offices are ready, but I have slowed everything down because there were some aspects to clarify. However, the tax system needs to become simpler. We have incomprehensible deadlines. There are serious countries where one pays taxes on a single occasion, whereas we have deseasonalised the work of accountants".

Obsessed by communication

He continued: "We are all obsessed by communication, and of how tomorrow's newspaper will report the press conference. Nothing attracts a minister or a journalist more than the announcement of a deduction or a small detraction. The mechanism of change has just begun. People did not vote for me or for the PD,. They voted for change. It would be important to talk about industrial policy: what we will do in Piombino or what we will do for Termini Imerese… I am angry with myself because if there is something that I have not succeeded in explaining in the last three months it is the vision. Take note: in 10 years time, if our country is

serious I must have left politics. We must no longer be politicians for the whole of our lives. As we were the theorists of scrapping and turnover we must be aware that we must offer a good example ".

Manufacturing and culture do not cancel each other out

"Italy remains a manufacturing country, but it is possible to have a major manufacturing sector and at the same time not worry every month about walls falling down in Pompeii. Culture and museums can generate not only emotional and moral value but also jobs. In 10 years I expect to see an Italy that is …smart cannot be used, cool is even worse…felix is too Latin …let us say attractive. An Italy which the young people who have left wish to return to, but not because there is a plaintive communication from the Prime Minister's office. We are particularly good at running ourselves down. They tell me that I insist too much on storytelling and narration, whereas it is instead the first commitment. Then again it is undoubtedly necessary for anti-corruption measures to work. In my opinion things are seen differently by the real Italy and by 'insiders'. Sometimes we consider things to be priorities which are not viewed as such by citizens. At times I open the newspapers and see 10 pages of politics: why on earth?

"Breaking the deadlock in Italy": giving the go ahead for Mayors and works that have been waiting for 40 years

Have you any idea how much public property is in a situation of deadlock? I'll give you a piece of news. I will soon ask all Mayors to identify stalled projects within their areas. Clearly, for certain questions it is not necessary to consult the Mayor. We know that Bagnoli is a scandal, if we want an attractive Italy we cannot have this type of scandal. I will implement a special measure "Unblocking Italy", which allows those who want to do something to do it. This measure will make it possible to set in motion a series of works that have been at a standstill for 40 years. If we can succeed in doing this there will not only be positive effects on employment: we will also have an injection of confidence. Every time I pass in front of a public asset and my son asks me why that building is still in ruins I feel terrible. What should I answer? Because it is a public asset? Enough is enough: by summer we will have a specific measure, coordinated by the Prime Minister's office. We must take away our own alibis. We will ask: dear Mayor, or dear investor, why are you not proceeding? What is missing? A permit, a procedure? We will break the deadlock. Then we must aim for total transparency. I have signed the authorisation to declassify secret service documentation because I wanted to send a cultural message. We must get away from the idea that Italy is a murky country or the land of Aldo Biscardi's 'gomblotti'".

Expo is also a major opportunity for agriculture

Expo must represent a major opportunity for the country. We must revive the question of agriculture, Italian food and products. 20 years ago it was not cool to be a cook. Now in any case you are called a chef, and then there is the success arising from the interest generated by television broadcasts. For agriculture this has not yet happened. It is a world that should be recounted again. Also abroad".

The conflict with the RAI

Renzi was equally direct as regards the conflict with the RAI and the strike announced: "We did not ask to cut programmes or content. We requested, at a time in which the whole country is making its contribution towards renewing the State, that the RAI reorganise its regional offices or else sell Rai Way (an act blocked by the Minister Gasparri). Rai Way is not strategic for the RAI. So it can be sold. If it was my job to head the RAI I would think about it. It is easy: it is not a complicated operation. I do not want to interfere with the RAI in terms of supporting someone's career. I want to make a contribution in terms of content. And then Parliament, with its special commission, what proposals has it made for the next 20 years? What are the cultural proposals? TV must be directed at young people, because where is the Manzi (TN: historic teacher and broadcaster) of the Internet? This is the challenge. I find the position of the trade union to be incomprehensible. However, I would say: if they had announced a strike before the elections, I would have got 42% instead of 40%."

Finally, he responded to questions from young people in the room.

Immigration: "do we need a bigger presence in the countries of origin? Yes. For example in Libya. 96% of the immigrants arrive from there, even if the flows may originate in the Horn of Africa. So we need a role for international organisations worthy of the name. I believe there is also a need for rules within Europe. Britain is going in the opposite direction to the one followed to date. For example, London is the sixth most "Italian" city today around the world. We cannot have a European commissioner who says to us: you must

accept the refugees and then close the frontiers. We already know that we have to help those who are drowning, they do not need to tell us, but one cannot imagine a situation in which the Euro circulates in Europe, but not people".

School-work-university: "here too we need to begin to change the story. It is inconceivable that we say that those go abroad are geniuses whereas those who stay in Italy are dumb. Take note: at the MIT I met some extraordinary people, but not different from those that can be found here. I once met someone who told me: I am a brain abroad. No, let's say he was abroad. Clearly it depends on us, if the bureaucracy limits opportunities for young people, let's get rid of the bureaucrats, not the young people. After which, I will invest in a university that attracts young people from abroad, from all over the world. It is right that those who want to go should go, but I believe it is possible to construct a different Italy, where young people want to stay".

Businesses: "I do not talk about the past. Fiat is a piece of Italian history. I am interested in the present and the future and I am working so that the automobile industry can have a future in our country. I would also like to visit the factories in Detroit in autumn, as part of a tour that we will make in the USA. It is clear that we have worries about jobs: I am thinking of Termini Imerese, Sulcis and Taranto, places where a different kind of industrial pact must be conceived. Employment must also start to increase in the field of manufacturing. However, the priority is to change the underlying conditions and the rules of the game. Then it is important to invest in human capital". -

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