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Epifani: “You are the frontier of this crisis”

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“This territory represents the frontier of this crisis. In good and bad aspects.” Guglielmo Epifani did not speak up in Malpensafiere, he did not need it. The representatives that took part in the tenth regional conference did not interrupt him, and when they did it, it was timidly to applaud. Like everyone, they are looking for words that have a meaning, in a moment in which everything seems not to have a sense. All the more so, if people belong to a party that appears isolated. Epifani claimed responsibility for the choices of CGIL, from the strike of 12th of March. “We are not isolated,” said the secretary, “there are no agreements in order to leave out anyone and the strike marked a moment that exceeded all our expectations. It is necessary to have the heart to go on and we are continuing our fight on behalf of a project for Italians who live and work seeking improvement here with us.”

The trade-union cohesion is a point that can harm those who have fought an internal struggle recently, like CGIL did. Two opposing motions inside the party are very fresh. It is also fresh the bill of the minister Sacconi regarding the insertion of arbitration in work cases, a rule that challenges the article 18. “We are running the risk of extending the frontier,” continued Epifani, “of the relation between us and others. The real problem is this, we have to set the model and the role of our trade union and the idea of confederation. Anyway, the prospect of cohesion has to be firm.”

“The arbitration, as it has been conceived, is a badly placed problem, because also at the moment it can be done and obviously we aren’t against it on principle. But this isn’t the heart of the matter, because Sacconi’s project obliges the worker to make a choice and in this way it hits him forever. If the worker can’t choose and the arbitration is based on equity, well then it isn’t a freedom anymore, on the contrary it is a freedom in less”, presses the Cgil Secretary General (Italian trade union).

Epifani remembers the importance of the transparence in the action of the trade union and of the representation through the bargaining. He has not forgotten his old allies, he has a lot to share with them on themes like revenue, education and welfare. He sends a clear message to them: “Here there isn’t only Cgil, Cisl and Uil (Italian trade unions) under discussion, but the idea of society based on rights of responsibility and democracy is involved”.

“Malpensa is a flop and is a demagogue that has been created by politics” states the Cgil Secretary with the microphone turned off, when on the stage he is being besieged by fans, journalists and body guards. Epifani knows very well that the crisis still hits a lot of workers and many companies, although politics and mass-media have already forgotten it. “The problems of work appear and disappear on the pages of the

newspapers. Don't speak about it as a choice and present it as the result of a cynical and cruel destiny, for it is a will. If you turn away and tell stories about this crisis, then you have to be responsible for it in front of your conscience, and then also in front of your country".

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