SOCIALIST PRIMARIES IN FRANCE, TOWARDS THE REFOUNDING OF POLITICAL PARTIES

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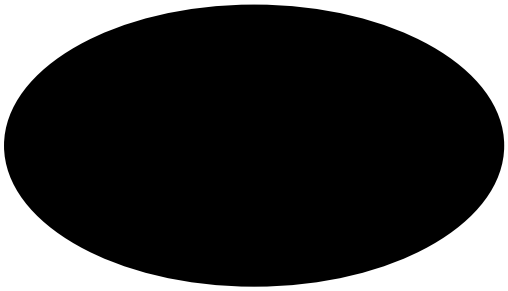

Yesterday, October 16, held in France the second round of the primaries of the French Socialist Party. As for two centuries, it is the French who are once again revolutionizing the way of doing politics in Europe and deepening the democratic debate in society.

Yesterday all the French who claimed to be on the left were summoned to the polls. It was enough to go to the ballot box, show your identity card and adhere to a kind of decalogue of values of the left. This simple fact is unprecedented in our old Europe and I find it especially attractive.

For the first time, a political party submits to a referendum the election of its candidate to hold the highest representation of a country: the presidency of a republic. It is true that other political parties (generally linked to the left) try to provide many of their decisions with an assembly component. Also the choice of their candidates. But in the end, it is the internal apparatus that decides such a choice in practice.

The French socialist party took a risky decision: open the election of its candidates to the entire social base of the left in France. The most optimistic hoped to reach a participation of one million people in the elections. Most predicted a much more discreet result. They were wrong! The primaries have been the greatest success of French socialism in recent years. Bringing together almost three million people in the process, the socialist party has managed to gather around itself the whole of the French left, its media force has multiplied halfway around the world and its credibility as an alternative to Sarkozy (regardless of the candidate chosen) has come to stay.

Finally, in the second round, François Hollande won without palliatives. A quiet man little given to excesses and, they say, with a certain lack of charisma and leadership. It seems that the French left wants a change based on tranquility and moves away from the most disruptive proposals of its main opponent, Martine Aubrey, and, especially, from the radical and spectacular proposals of the third party in discord, Arnaud Montebourg. Not everything was going to go my way.

In any case, these primaries have meant, from my point of view, a very important qualitative leap in French politics that, hopefully, will soon spread around these parts and not take a couple of generations to arrive...

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