

11.2.2016 Sardinia. The shockwave of the Corsican election

In the course of my contacts as president of the European Free Alliance in the run-up to the General Assembly in Aiacciu on 1 April, I visited Cagliari on 2 February to meet the new leaders and elected representatives of the Partito Sardo d'Azione.

Cristiano Solinas, new party officer and member of the Sardinian Regional Council, first organised a meeting with the Council president, Gianfranco Ganau, member of the PD, the Italian socialist party. He had just heard the news, and it is difficult to describe his enthusiasm at the prospect of a meeting with the two presidents of the new Corsican territorial authority who have scheduled an official visit for 11 and 12 February. His reaction, widely reported by the Sardinian press which had given extensive coverage to the meeting between the EFA and the PSd'Az highlighting my role as a Corsican nationalist leader, demonstrates the impact that our victory in Corsica has had in the *isola surella (sister island)*.

The meeting with the PSd'Az leaders which followed at the regional council offices was an opportunity for all those present to contemplate their difficulties in Sardinia while Corsica is forging ahead. With ten different nationalist bodies, the Sardinian movement understands that its fragmentation is a clear factor in its stagnation. Cristiano Solinas, the brand new leader of the PSd'Az, wants to go ahead with turning this page and hopes that his party, which is celebrating its 95th anniversary this year, can make use of its status as an "elder brother" to set up a fruitful dialogue with all those involved. And he is counting on the support of the EFA, and particularly its Corsican and Catalan movements, to move this internal debate forward. There will be a strong Sardinian delegation at Aiacciu on 1 April.

Sardinians are suffering increasing economic, social, environmental and cultural problems. The island is penalised by its isolation, and aspires to a "territorial continuity" the absence of which hampers its tourism and all its economic activity. The traditional political class has become totally outmoded in a deep crisis where the Sardinian people aspires to rediscover its destiny by itself and for itself, putting into question the overwhelming emphasis on the relationship with Rome, its political intrigues and its statist approaches which are further and further from the expectations of Sardinian autonomy.

If the Sardinian national movement can find itself again, there is no doubt that it will move back to a central position in political life, which, in the eyes of Europe, will strengthen the developments which we want to promote in Corsica against a centralising State still more stubborn than that of Italy.

Finding out almost "live" that the first official visit by our elected representatives would be a trip to Sardinia, I felt great satisfaction, I was able to see how happy those I was meeting were, and I felt strongly that over these thirty five years, the EFA has not been preaching in the desert!