

The High Level of Spirit in Poland

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It seems that it should be important to any fraction of the European Parliament to understand the feelings of the ordinary Polish citizens on the issue of the recent European Constitution crisis if it wants to enforce itself with the Polish MEPs, and to have Poland on its side. As a Pole and, at the same time, as the member of the SME-Union at the EPP-ED, I would like to see the largest newcomer to the European Union being associated with the most powerful and sensible fraction.

Poland is too proud to take opportunity to keep silent on demand of someone, even if this is an European VIP. She will be joining the European Union in the dramatic circumstances caused by some states which were trying to shout her up and to take her by surprise to sign the uncompleted European Constitution.

But Poland, unlike any other of the ten new EU member countries, has won its freedom and sovereignty through her own, fierce and long fighting, and now it expects more than any other country to see guaranties and support for those values rather, than the rude treatment, as she faced recently. The vast majority of Polish people feel that the EU wants to deceive them on withdrawing from the Nice Declaration.

The strongest demand of sticking to the Nice Treaty expressed Jan Maria Rokita, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Circle of the Civic Platform, a political party, closest to the EPP-ED. Not many observers have noticed what else he had said, immediately when the failure of the December Summit became obvious, and when some media had started blaming Poland for it. In the TV interview, he expressed his „well reasoned” hope that now his

party’s closest friends in the European Union would show whether they are real friends, and whether they chose to support and defend Poland. He, obviously, meant the EPP-ED. I have not heard the answer to this request yet. The other Poles either.

As a matter of fact, the EPP-ED is almost not known to Poles. The Polish citizens do not know the difference between the fractions in the European Parliament. The Poles even do not know that the Polish MEPs, although chosen in Poland, would officially represent the interest of the European Union, not that of their own country. Poles, in the vast majority, do not think about the European Parliamentary elections because they are too much occupied with internal matters, and they became, additionally, dishearted by the Nice case. It is a real danger that they simply will not go to the polls on 13th of June 2004.

There are mere two spots on the map of the Polish electorate where there is some knowledge about EPP-ED present; it is micro village inhabited by the politicians, and it is the small-to-medium network of SMEs, covered by Unicorn SME-Union Poland. Through its media contacts, conferences, seminars and contests, and - most important - through its cooperation with other Polish business organisations, Unicorn delivers the knowledge not only about the mission, successes and challenges of the SME-Union but also about its mother organisation. The best example on how Unicorn successfully operates can be the 4th of October 2003 Conference in the Polish Parliament during which it signed the Mutual Recognition Agreement with the Civic Platform, in the presence of the Presidium of the SME-Union. Some observers believe that this symbolic act of the small and medium size Polish businessmen’ support given to the Civic

Platform gave this party the rise of popularity in the recent opinion polls from, at that time 14% to 26% in January 2004.

For two years now, Unicorn has been making excellent PR for the SME-Union and for the EPP-ED on the „entrepreneurship” issue. Due to the participation of Unicorn in all major events organized by the SME-Union, and some of the EPP-ED, it is able to present the EPP-ED fraction as the only one in the European Parliament which really cares about entrepreneurs and about removing barriers from them in the European Union.

There are two issues which may bring recognition and sympathy of the Polish voters to the EPP-ED. One is the Nice-European Constitution agenda, very difficult and delicate matter, which must be handled with the extreme care. The second issue is the business opportunities for Polish SMEs and welcoming climate enabling engagement of the Polish high spirit of the entrepreneurship to the European Union, at which issue Unicorn is ready to assist EPP-ED, if asked to do so.

Poland has regained the fast economic development (3.8% growth of GDP in 2003) thanks to the good monetary management and to the export activity of the SMEs. More than 7 million people working in Polish SMEs and more than 3 million unemployed can be convinced to support the EPP-ED in the oncoming elections if they are shown how serious and how effective the fraction is on the issue of entrepreneurship which allows the development of businesses and the job creation. Poles are very keen to take immediate part in the USA-EU

economic race towards free global market and they will expect the green light to the European Union’s markets to establish their own businesses and to be able to undertake work immediately after the 1st of May 2004.

Unicorn SME-Union Poland has prepared the impressive supporting programmes for the European Parliamentary Election’s Campaign which have received the patronage of Dr. Jacques Santer, the President of the SME Union, Professor Leszek Balcerowicz and the Robert Schuman Foundation, and which will be co-organized with the Civic Platform. „The Polish Spirit of the Entrepreneurship - the Chance for Poland and for the European Union” Programme includes conferences in all major cities, dozens of seminars and workshops in Polish communities. The culminating point will be 21st May 2004 when the multinational conference with the participation of the delegates from all new member countries will be held in the Polish Parliament, planned as the kick-off to the election. Participation of the EPP-ED personalities at all those events is strongly welcomed.

Unicorn SME Union Poland believes that it should have at least one of its representatives in the European Parliament in the EPP-ED fraction and therefore it will place their candidates possibly on the Civic Platform list.

