

Hi everybody !

Some greetings from Strasbourg where we had the last session of this mandate.

You are going to work on populism and the rise of populism in Europe.

I think we should make a difference between the analyses of some political parties that are considered populist and their solutions.

As far as the analysis is concerned, one could share reasonably some of their critics. I mean the fact that we have a very slow growth in Europe compared to the USA for example is not a good result. EU was meant to provide prosperity, to provide jobs and welfare and of course many people are suffering... I am myself chairing the intergroup fighting "Extreme poverty" in this parliament and I can only confirm the social situation is very worrying. But the populists have in common something that is really sad is that having sometimes a good analysis of the problems, they don't provide solutions, they don't provide reasonable solutions.

Of course, in the political debate in a democracy, there should be no taboo in the debate but they should be debate with rational arguments and to leave the euro without saying how we would tackle the problem of competitive devaluations, to stress the fact there is a social or a tax dumping in Europe and add a monetary dumping would be absolutely a disaster for the European economies.

They don't tell us how Europe would be seen in the world as an entity in front of China, in front of the US – we have achieved something huge in Europe – we are a continent, we have five hundred million people in the European Union, 28 member states. We have provided democracy and freedom all over Europe. And If we want to defend our values and our interests in front of the rising powers, we can not remain at the national level. If we close the borders, it will be a mess for everybody. We will loose one of the very nice freedom we enjoy in Europe which is to travel without borders without showing a passport without changing money.

So that is the reason why we have to be very serious in front of the populists, not ignore what they say admit that they might have some points but provide the good European solutions in order to avoid this rise of nationalism. Remember what François Mitterrand said in this parliament in 1995 : "Le nationalisme c'est la guerre"

Bye bye.