



ANA PALACIO

Former Member of the Council of State of Spain, former Senior Vice President of the World Bank, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain

Steven ERLANGER

Ana, I do not even want to introduce you, you have been everything. So Ana Palacio, over to you.

Ana PALACIO

I had an idea to say a few things that I am not going to say because I think that, thank you Hubert, you have really presented what there is there for us. I will make three comments.

First, I would like to take the lens back from the citizen. What is more puzzling with our citizens today, with profound repercussions on our political system, is that the surge of illiberalism is happening here in Europe, where rationality has been our defining feature. Rationality comes from the Enlightenment and dictates that the choices we make are largely based on interest. What we see today is a pervasive irrationality and emotion everywhere. In the end, however, Europe is a legal construction and all our instruments are geared towards that end. Our very system is a legal construction and legality is predicated on predictability and certainty. The opposite of predictability and certainty is emotion. This, in my view, is an issue we have to reflect on and reflect upon deeply.

Delving a bit deeper, one reason we see the surge of nationalism in our governments is that we still are states and even if some of us would like to be somewhere else, we are states. In our states, we are confronted by the challenge of transforming the classical party systems with classical agendas. Taking this to the European level, I second Hubert Védrine that we should create *une Europe puissance*. But while this is manifestly clear, we should be honest that our citizens do not share the idea of building more Europe. In fact, we find ourselves in an inter-governmental moment in the European Union. The crisis in the Commission is many things and first of them is a reflection of this inter-governmental moment with the splintering of the EPP and the PSC groups, whose work together pushed us forward through agreement and strong discipline.

My third comment is that this is no longer "our world" and it is difficult to adapt. It is not a European or a Western world and even though we say this out loud, we have not internalized it. Either we panic or we over-react. I think we have to look at what is coming with clear eyes and what is coming is very much in line with the comments made by Kevin Rudd. It is a bit of a contradiction of what I have said, but we have to rationally address our dependence on the United States, our transatlantic links.

Steven ERLANGER

Thank you very much.