

Editorial 200

Centre d'Estudis Jordi Pujol (CEJP)
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Five years have gone by since the *Centre d'Estudis Jordi Pujol* took its first steps. And this weekly bulletin, a key part of our activity, has reached its number 200. We feel, therefore, that this is a good moment to reflect on what we have done over this time and evaluate its impact.

To begin with our main focus, what we call the deepening of IVA (Ideas, Values and Attitudes) we can without a shadow of a doubt say that these concepts have acquired more relevance of late, perhaps in part due to our contributions. It is anyway a fact that values are on everyone's lips. But are values lived out or interiorised? Or are they merely crutches that come in handy for spinning policies or justifying managerial or personal decisions? Do values really exist without their being practised? Does practice legitimise values? At present they sometimes seem to be more discursive resources than axes of human and collective behaviour. But we are beginning to note signs of a change in behaviours and in paradigms. Surely the crisis has been a catalyst for this change.

The economic crisis has rocked old, utopian dreams and familiar places. The lightness, the frivolous attitudes and the facile, trite-ridden talk have waned. The country has hardened. And we now accept, more honestly, without fooling ourselves, budgets that in times of fat cows were unquestionable. The party is over. The times of ideas, the times of politics and the times of accountability are aligning themselves, and might even coincide.

What a shame we have had to endure this drastic economic meltdown in order to understand that the foundations of the euphoria and relativism were flimsy and insecure. That we could not carry on like *nouveau riche*, nor disassociate ourselves from our customary moral and attitudinal referents. An advertisement for a beer has had to remind us of it. And welcome it is, because the message is the same as ever, but comes with the complicity of the most modern instruments of marketing. It aptly sums up the future. Let's be what we are, without renouncing anything and let's go about doing things as we have always done, with imagination, perseverance and talent.

Weighing up which areas are better off today than they were five years ago, we find, for example, education, despite the challenges and handicaps it still has to tackle. Society is nowadays conscious that we were not moving in the right direction, as international reports have made clear. The *Centre d'Estudis Jordi Pujol*, by way of *EDU21*, has worked positively to rethink and contribute to improving this situation. On this note, the new Education Law takes in many of the proposals we have been advocating for some time: the pivotal role of the teacher as a driving force of the system of education, the enhancement of their initial and ongoing training, knowledge assessment of pupils, the strengthening of the headmaster's role in schools, the restoration of authority and respect in the classroom, the independence of schools and their evaluation, the shared responsibility of families in their children's education, and so forth. But legislation alone is not enough. There is

still a need to win over much corporate and protectionist reluctance, yet the direction is clear and the future, in this case, looks brighter than a few years back.

Despite the perplexity, difficulties and obstacles of the economic downturn, we also positively value the initiatives that are taking place in many sectors and areas of our society. Our country's assets. From the arts to entrepreneurial projects, research, international outreach, sport and social schemes. The many examples emanating from civil society underpin the confidence in our potential. They are proof of the healthy ambition to play a part on the global stage without complexes, and they provide the clearest examples of the vitality the country continues to enjoy. It confirms that with rigor, quality and work there is a future, and we have a future.

We have likewise addressed in these bulletins very important questions that are not going at all well, that have become twisted and will need time to be remedied.

Last week we referred to the juncture at which [Europe finds itself](#). Europe has lost economic clout, its foreign policy is vague, its low birth-rate has left it weakened and the flood of immigrants to shore up the shortage of workers has given rise to uncertainty surrounding its identity. Politically weak with little institutional cohesion, Europe lacks strong leadership to speak with one voice and to promote and export its assets: a model welfare state, the best economic model that allows the compatibility of wealth creation and its distribution, democratic values and respect for human rights, and the basis of reason. And we also said that in all this, Catalonia can do little. We can only point it out and contemplate possible improvements, since the very honest process of reflection bolsters our strength and inner growth.

We have also insisted, in this bulletin, that Catalonia's relationship with Spain has deteriorated, that the project forged during the transition to democracy is in tatters. People used to say that once the Government of the Generalitat was no longer in the hands of the nationalists, the grievance with the Spanish state would be solved, that fraternal relations would be restored. That another Spain was possible. And this has not happened. Now the divide is greater than ever. In spite of our commitment, our serious, positive, loyal and brave stance during the many extremely difficult years as a factor for stability in favour of the general interest. The reaction has been one of contempt and indifference, although we admit we have also made mistakes. Some years ago we said that when Baltic freezes over, we have to be patient and wait for fairer weather. Now is the time to stay in port, to work internally, to fortify ourselves, recover our self-esteem, take stock of our assets and use them carefully in an ever more open scenario.

To play the trump cards we have at our disposal, we need to have, last but not least, effective politics. Politicking must regain prestige in public action and press forward with firm commitments. Politicians must avoid disrepute, combat disassociation, the idea that "they're all the same". They must approach politics with a sense of duty, with pluck, instilling hope, mapping out yearnings. In short, politicians must together and transform this situation of pervading gloominess and disenchantment of recent years with dynamic, firm and clear political action.