

Palazzo Chigi fort against parties' siege

Given the circumstances, the extraordinary European Summit of the past weekend has gone quite well for our country; a little less for the supporters of the EU project, who miss the way in which the crisis from Covid-19 has terribly accelerated the transformation of the common European space (underway for some time) into a forum marked by the opposition between the nations that are part of it. Which promptly emerged during the last and exhausting round of negotiations in Brussels. Italy has secured the beauty of €209 billion, far more than the 172 indicated in the original plan of the Commission. The money is great, according to some even too much for the limited programming and spending capacity of a country that every year is unlikely to spend more than a third of the European funds received from the EU budget. And without even wanting to reflect on the meaning of the wild celebrations for having obtained loans and subsidies from nations essentially extraneous to ours, nor that we hadn't even questioned the succession of failures that had made them so necessary. In fact, at this point the political issue at stake is already another, more specifically concerning the decisive management of the raining money that will bathe Italy in the coming months. All this while in the background the fuse of the ESM bailout fund remains dangerously triggered: the center-left PD sees it indispensable to secure the national health system, while the co-ruling populist M5S rejects the fund as a possible Trojan horse crafted in Brussels to facilitate the conquest of Italy by the Troika. The political events of the past few hours are more than a clue to what awaits us in the next weeks. On

the one hand, in fact, the fort of Palazzo Chigi stands isolated while working on the Italian Recovery Plan which must be presented to the European partners after the summer break (we are the only ones who have not yet done so); on the other hand there is the parties' siege, which agree on the need to set up as soon as possible a special bicameral commission to oversee the fund spending. After the thunderous applause paid to the premier for his Brussels result, the immediate reassurances of Mr Conte himself on the need to bring in the Parliament and to establish a political control room (activating one of the many existing inter-ministerial committees, that for European Affairs of Minister Amendola) did not allay the fears of the ruling coalition. In addition to the issue of fund management, parties fear to enter another era of powers centralization in Palazzo Chigi after that of the health decrees signed by the prime minister that raised several controversies. The ESM debate is also part of this government-ruling majority push and pull, all the more so now that the Cabinet is preparing to approve another fiscal gap worth of €25 billion and the Treasury raised some concern about the health of Italy's public finances. The bulk of the European funds will not arrive before a few months and even then the resources will still be subject to scrutiny of EU partners: for this reason the PD sees the opportunity to bring the result home, relying on the possible support of Forza Italia (whose contribution could be decisive already at the Senate vote on budget at the end of July) and waiting for the M5S to finally surrender to the reality principle.