

Back in 2009 more than 2000 Catalans came all the way to Brussels to demonstrate because we had good reasons to suspect that there was a flaw in the Spanish democracy. We trusted the European Parliament as an institution that would protect us European citizens in front of any antidemocratic abuse.

Today many more thousands of Catalans have come back. We DO know now that Francoism is alive in Spain and we refuse to believe that Europe will just look away and let Spain use violence to suppress the democratic will of the people in Catalonia.

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU, BUT OUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES **ARE IN PRISON!**



CATALONIA

Capital Barcelona

Population 7.5 million

Area 32.108 km²

Government Jailed

A LITTLE CONTEXT

For 9 years we Catalans have been holding intense debates on issues such as democracy, the right of self determination, solidarity, responsibility, equality, respect for minorities, tolerance, the common good, economic viability of both Catalonia and Spain, self-respect... We have declared our will to create our inclusive, human-sized republic through huge demonstrations, and we have tried to solve the matter by holding a binding referendum with the consent of the Spanish government, which they have refused up to 18 times. We believe that the will of the people is at the root of democracy and it is a duty to provide the means to acknowledge it.

Finally, the referendum was held under the laws of the Catalan Parliament, which held a majority to carry out our mandate. Spain displayed great violence in an attempt to stop us from voting. We had to defend the ballot boxes with our bodies.

The relationship between the two governments has become increasingly difficult as we seem to speak two different languages (in fact we do!) Spain seems to depict reality in terms of victory and defeat, dominance and submission, honor and humiliation. Therefore, when we offer 'dialogue and mediation' they understand 'weakness' What to us is 'betrayal', to them is just 'taking a chance for victory', for fair play is not a value to them. Catalanofobia has become a political tool in their hands to win elections and distract people from cases of corruption.

They hold the media: words such as *democracy*, *freedom*, *the rule of the law*... are manipulated to the point of creating confusion in our own perception of reality.

But the crude reality is that Spain has imposed direct rule and detained Catalan leaders who did nothing but show respect for fundamental rights and carry out their electoral mandates. Now our

legitimate government has been sacked, our representatives put in prison or exiled, and we have non elected people ruling the Catalan institutions. But our wish for political emancipation will not wither.

The determination of the civil population to carry on with the right to decide about our future has caused Spain to have to show its true face. In doing so we have learnt a few things:

In Spain, you can concur to elections with an electoral program as long as you don't mean to put it into practice. The only reason why they don't forbid your ideas is because they can't.

Repression and totalitarian methods can be used in Spain to suppress the legitimate will of its citizens. Most 'progressive' Spanish political parties will consent with their silence

There is no separation of powers in Spain. The members of the judicial power are chosen by the parties who govern the country and submitted to them. Innocent people can be detained and put into 'preventive' prison irregularly in less than 24 hours if they happen to think in a way that may question those holding the power, whereas for people involved in cases of corruption it may take as long as 10 years to start their judicial processes.

Please, Europe, listen! Democracy should not be taken for granted. It must be defended. An equidistant position between democracy and repression is not possible. By saying this is a Spanish internal matter you are taking sides. When imposition, repression and violence are not condemned, then democracy stands on the weak side. Remember all the things you have learnt from your own past. Let's keep in mind that those who forget the past are doomed to repeat it.

SAVE THE EUROPEAN VALUES!

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out
Because I was not a Socialist

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out
Because I was not a Trade Unionist

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out
Because I was not a Jew

Then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak for me