LES ECHOS…. DE LA JOURNÉE DU PRIX DE L’INVENTEUR EUROPÉEN 2015

June 11th, 2015 was the day of THE party. Not the excellent Blake Edward’s 1968 film with Peter Sellers but Mr Battistelli’s lifetime’s achievement in the somptuous Palais Brogniart in Paris. The moderator paid him “the gracious Benoît Battistelli”… Etat de grâce? Well not quite.

The party was spoiled by none other than the French State Secretary for Digital Economy, Axelle Lemaire, sent in replacement of the French Minister of Economy, Emmanuel Macron, who had diplomatically declined the invitation.

First, according to sources among the organisers, Mr Battistelli did not want Ms Lemaire to speak but simply to hand out an award. Obviously, she refused. In her speech [1], she never mentioned the name of Mr Battistelli and dared to mention “the social conflict in the EPO and her concerns for the rights of EPO staff”. Bravo Madame!

“Les Echos”, a French newspaper acting as communication partner for the Office, had first reported on the event in the following way:

“Axelle Lemaire mentionne enfin les conflits sociaux qu’a connu, ces derniers mois, l’Office européen des brevets et rappelle son souci du bien-être des collaborateurs de l’Office.”

Colleagues of the EPO, who have a long tradition and solid expertise of finding quickly pertinent information found it (click here [2]) - just before the publication was censored (click here [3]) to suppress this “affront” to Mr Battistelli.

It does not end there.

Reliable insiders reported that at the end of the ceremony Ms Bergot (PD 43) rushed to the State Secretary to complain about her attitude, boldly stating that the Secretary had no idea how many great things were done at the EPO lately. The tone was such that Ms Lemaire had to remind Ms Bergot that she was addressing an official representative of France. Finally, no one had the courtesy to bid farewell to Ms Lemaire.

Un malheur n’arrivant jamais seul, in the “Huffington Post” (partly owned by “Le Monde”), three members of the French Parliament, three members of the French Senate, and a Member of the European Parliament published a tribute titled L’Organisation européenne des brevets, une zone de non droit en Europe? which reports on the troubled social situation at the EPO.

If one considers that according to members of top management speaking to us on confidential basis, about 2 Mio EUR of applicants’ money were spent (wasted?) this year for this “event”, we hope that the lunch served was at least good.

SUEPO Central
References:

[1] European Inventor Award 2015, Intervention of Axelle Lemaire, French State Secretary for Digital Economy, 11 June 2015, 12H45

Video available from:
- European Commission A/V Services starting from 109m40s
- SUEPO archive starting from 6m30s

« L'innovation c'est un impératif, un impératif économique. Et ce qui est vrai pour la technologie, l'est aussi pour l'innovation publique, les modes de gouvernance, l'innovation sociale. Et à ce titre, même si ce n'est pas l'objet de notre rencontre ce matin, le gouvernement français connaît les difficultés sociales qui s'expriment au sein de l'Office Européen des Brevets et à ce sujet, l'office a un devoir d'exemplarité, de transparence absolue dans le respect des droits des agents qui y travaillent. »
