

March 6, 2022

SELF-CRITICISM

Regarding our actions, i.e., the actions of Greece, EU and NATO organizations, there are several things to regret.

Today, on the occasion of the war in Ukraine, (1) Germany is being rearmed and (2) USA troops are moving from German territory to Poland and the Baltic states. Consequently, we in **the West (USA and Europe) no longer adhere to the Yalta Conference Agreement** on "*the annihilation of German militarism, so that Germany can no longer threaten world peace*" after causing two World Wars with 120 million victims.

Contrary to what the West promised Russia in 1990, NATO and the EU expanded eastward to include regions that belonged to the former Soviet Union, rather than encourage them to act as a buffer between East and West. So **USA and Europe violated our promise to Russia under the 2+4 Treaty.**

For example, in 2004 EU and NATO accepted as members the Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), although they were former members of the Soviet Union and bordered Russia. It should be noted that these countries did not meet the criteria for joining the EU. So **we Europeans violated the EU treaties. Why?**

Our excuse was that we would "democratize" these countries. Let us take the example of Latvia. About twenty (20) years after joining the EU, Latvia has 200,000 inhabitants (mostly Russians) deprived of voting and other political rights. In 2015, Latvia passed a law on "moral education" providing the dismissal of schoolteachers who are not "loyal to the state". In 2019, nine (9) Russian TV channels were shut down. Even today Latvia does not guarantee gender equality and minority discrimination is rife in schools and work. So, **not only have we not democratized Latvia** in its 20 years of EU membership, but it continues its unhindered violation of core principles of EU membership.

Similarly nowadays, instead of encouraging the Ukraine to act as a neutral zone between West and East, we consider its entry into the EU (and possibly NATO) in the midst of a war with Russia. We are sending weapons to Western Ukrainians to fight Eastern Russian-speaking Ukrainians and Russians. That is, **we add fuel to the fire without taking into consideration the possibility of nuclear conflict.**

Shouldn't we wonder if we are acting insidiously and hypocritically **as predators** in the countries of the former Soviet Union?

Do we selectively remember human rights whenever it suits us, and forget them when it comes to the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the bombing of Yugoslavia, Serbia, Libya (by NATO) and Syria (by the United States), the American invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, often circumventing UN decisions? We Westerners want to export democracy, but, to judge from the results, we leave ashes behind, in the form of civil war and power vacuum. Instead of democratizing them we delay progress in these countries by 50 years or more, because we are not in good terms with their leaders. Could it be that **instead of democratizing, every time we touch gold we convert it to charcoal?**

Do we insist that borders are immutable only when it suits us? As members of the EU and NATO, did we not go along with the disintegration of Yugoslavia into seven countries? Why do we enable Germany to accomplish today some of Hitler's war aims, e.g., the breakup of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia? Can we be proud that NATO accomplished what Hitler desired?

Do we apply double standards? Was the USA right to intervene in Cuba in 1961 to overthrow Fidel Castro? Was Kennedy right in 1962 when he was ready for a nuclear war unless the Soviets withdrew their missiles from Cuba, which borders the United States? If so (because these are the real facts) why is Putin wrong today to demand that NATO should not expand to include the Ukraine, which borders Russia?

Shouldn't we wonder if we, USA, EU and NATO, operate as **pirates** with the aim of war and exploitation?

As for us Greeks, how can we turn alliances into enmity, and enemies (responsible for 2 World Wars at that) into allies, so easily? **Why do we forget** Germany's debt to Greece (Reparations, Compensation and Occupancy Loan) from World War II? **Why do we accept** paying our debt to them when they themselves arrogantly and hypocritically refuse to pay their debt to us? Why do we allow Germany to be rearmed when in the 2nd WW Germans exterminated 13% of the Greek population and destroyed 1770 Greek villages and cities?

Nowadays, in the case of Ukraine we are suddenly holier than the Pope. Not only did we condemn the Russian invasion, but send weapons to Western Ukrainians. At least the Serbian president said that he would denounce the Russian invasion of Ukraine if the West denounced the NATO attack on his country. We did not even dare to mumble that **we would denounce the Russian invasion of Ukraine only if the USA and Europe denounced the Turkish invasion of Cyprus**. Do we work in the interest of Greece or of somebody else?

Helen Savaki,
Professor Emerita of Medicine,
University of Crete, Greece.