

“I TOLD YOU SO”

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(www.rieas.gr) **Publication date:** 9 November 2016

Note: The article reflects the opinion of the author and not necessarily the views of the Re-search Institute for European and American Studies (RIEAS)

Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst.

Isaiah 50:2

If we open a quarrel between past and present, we shall find that we have lost the future.

Winston Churchill

“I told you so” is one of the oldest admonitions in the book. Whether it is used as an expression of *Schadenfreude* or a justified conclusion in the face of undeniable facts, “I told you so” is in practice the recognition that **failure has overtaken** both those who tried and those who ignored or bypassed the unmistakable signs of trouble. And while the former deserve appreciation and recognition, the latter make up a heavy stone hanging around the neck of any society.

The former warn and suggest solutions. The latter dismiss reason and tangible evidence as undue “worrying” since “things will work themselves out.” The former highlight the risks of discounting realistic outcomes consistently across time. The latter prefer “round tables,” stuffed shirt conferences, fatuous

speechmaking, and promises of low cost “solutions.” The former propose long-term goals. The latter adapt to what the “public” (read, the mob) finds pleasing and work tirelessly to gaslight those who express even the slightest critique.

This page, I am allowed to suggest, has always focused on *trying*. In recent weeks, I reviewed the entire archive of RIEAS commentaries going back to 2007. The I-told-you-so element emerged as the distinguishing characteristic of the archive.

Greece and her politicians, “intellectuals,” and “opinion makers” have banned the mere thought of preparing for the future by *learning from both the past and the present*. Today, as the country labors in asthmatic spasm, our “vanguard” is still in deep slumber. Denial and politicking dominate the day. No amount of illuminating the facts seems capable of pushing both government and the “sovereign people” into an effort to save the country from foundering.

It was already obvious in 2009 that Greek society and her leaders were unwilling to adopt tough choices. In January 2009, we [wrote](#): *“Greeks aren’t unique in their dislike of the idea pain and effort to correct a rapidly deteriorating situation. Yet, a closer examination of ‘majority attitudes, especially in the wake of the most devastating civil unrest the country witnessed since the end of World War II [December 2008], uncovers some disturbing trends not usually met in developed Western polities to which Greece insists it belongs.”* These trends included the complete lack of popular backlash at the [massive destruction](#) inflicted upon Athens and other Greek cities in December 2008; the majority “understanding” -- and, thus, **legitimizing** -- indiscriminate violence as reasonable protest; and widespread popular passivity after years of post-junta “progressivism” which distorted, undermined, and bankrupted Greek democracy. We concluded that *“the Greek political ‘system’ -- the one that has so successfully nurtured catastrophic illusions since the fall of the junta -- has now reached a stage where posturing for ‘progress’ won’t provide the temporary outlet that has served Greek political parties at the ballot box. The chips are down.”*

In March 2009, after a gang of “reasonable protesters” stormed Kolonaki square in downtown Athens to attack, smash, and vandalize banks, shops, and parked cars and terrorize passers-by with sledge hammers and crow bars, we [suggested](#) that *“Greece is beginning to see the effects of a lengthy process of political and social erosion that has undermined key parts of the State and is causing critical failures that cannot be righted by firefighting measures, political posturing, and yet another round of poppycock finger pointing.”*

Confused politics, plenty of left-“progressives,” and a tendency to ignore world trends were also setting the stage for the Moslem illegal immigration that

has now made dangerous inroads into the country.¹ In May 2009, we noted: *“One of the most persistent myths of Greek diplomacy is Greece’s ‘immaculate’ relations with the Arab, and by extension, the Islamic world. The myth emerges from the traditional skepticism of postwar Greece toward the State of Israel and economic ties with some of the Arab countries, which went through a peak in the 1970s only to decline to near extinction since. Greek political leaders accepted the myth as part of a widespread anti-American narrative that stressed good relations with all those ‘oppressed’ by US and Western intervention. The Palestinian issue and its embrace by left-wing Greek political parties added to the persistence of the myth and its perpetuation to this day.”*

On the eve of the October 2009 general elections, which brought to power George Papandreou, we emphasized the [“fallacy of relief”](#) which Papandreou peddled with great success as it turned out. With just a few fateful steps, the winner of that election led Greece straight into the open arms of the waiting creditors and made her the vehicle of rescuing French and German banks at the expense of the country’s wellbeing for generations. By March 2010, Greece was [“a country on the verge”](#) thanks to Papandreou’s suicidal “management” of the creditors’ onslaught. Faced with demands by Germany & Co to agree to transferring 12 percent of her GDP to creditors for an undetermined number of years and try to survive, Greece, under Papandreou’s “leadership,” foundered.

In the following years, Greece kept sliding under “governments” which competed with Papandreou’s in how to sink the country ever deeper in the morass of the creditor-controlled so-called “bailout.” While the village went up in flames in order to save it, our “leaders” broke new records of dishonesty, corruption, and deceit. In September 2012, we [posited](#) that *“Greek administrations since the disastrous election of Papandreou’s socialists in October 2009 have done everything in their powers to tear Greece’s society and economy to shreds, with noted success”* and we added: *“Few realize that the ‘rescue’ plan sinks Greece deeper in debt by the day. All the ‘rescue’ money goes directly into the pockets of the lenders with the borrower (Greece) piling more debt by the day on top of an already unmanageable mountain of liabilities created by headlong borrowing over the last twenty years.”*

With our political duds leaving no stone unturned in pursuit of creditor wishes, we [suggested](#) the obvious in early 2013: *“In the case of Greece today we meet the unprecedented example of a relatively developed country, member of such*

¹Moslem pressure now directly intervenes in Greek domestic politics and government decision-making for [fear of reprisals](#) in the form of terrorist action. A [Greek Gateway to Jihad](#) is another tangible fear connected to illegal Moslem immigration.

coalition giants as the EU and NATO, being forcibly reverted to a stage of underdevelopment, deprivation and pauperization through the means of asymmetrical economic warfare conducted by lenders and “saviors” wishing to deliver an “example” to other ‘profligate’ countries.” In May 2014, we [looked](#) at the European “union” as an entity “already experiencing manifestations of dystopia,” a conclusion that has become now routine, and we suggested that “Brussels is engaged, half consciously, half unconsciously, in building up its negative relevance in world affairs. And this trend, right now at least, appears irreversible.”

Throughout these years, our view that Greek governments, irrespective of their ideological hues, have failed miserably to uphold the national interest has not changed. On the eve of the election that brought the present party coalition to power, we [proposed](#):

It is obvious that an election now or later won't make any difference in the real crisis facing Greek society. Greece's national assets have been thoughtlessly and nonchalantly mortgaged into perpetuity by her own “leaders” in order to satisfy the demands of creditors. Greek governments continue to fail in their fundamental duty and mission “to protect and uphold” the welfare of the country and her people against all enemies, external or internal. This is no idle rhetoric. It is a harsh truth that is reconfirmed daily by the actions of the Greek political class. Whether Samaras or SYRIZA, the fate of Greece appears sealed in the direction of doom, unless a miracle happens.

A quick look around us confirms the harsh truth of the above observation. It also tells the story of what is about to happen again, and again, and again if Greece continues on her present merry-go-round. And we will keep telling you so.

Is there a way out?

Additional reading

1. James Pettifer, *The Making of the Greek Crisis: New Revised Edition: 2015*
2. Zoltan Pogatsa, *The Political Economy of the Greek Crisis* (Kindle Ed., 2014)
3. Aristidis Bitzenis et.al. (Editors) *Reflections on the Greek Sovereign Debt Crisis: The EU Institutional Framework, Economic Adjustment in an Extensive Shadow Economy* (2013)
4. [“Clinton sought secret info on EU bailout plans as son-in-law's doomed hedge fund gambled on Greece”](#)
5. [“Euro to Dollar: Here’s Why the Euro is Doomed in 2016”](#)
6. [“Greece needs substantial debt relief, surplus targets unrealistic: IMF”](#)