

**2/2012**

**November 2012**

**RUSSIA AND THE EU  
THE INEVITABLE RAPPROCHEMENT**

Sir Basil Markesinis QC FBA



**CENTER FOR EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**  
University of Nicosia

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SIR BASIL MARKESINIS QC, FBA was born to an English mother and a Greek father in a family of lawyers and politicians who hailed from his father's side from Vicenza, Italy and from his mother's side the Greek island of Chios and London. He has held Chairs in the Universities of Cambridge, Leiden (The Netherlands), London, Oxford, and Texas and taught as a Visiting Professor in over a dozen other Universities including Paris, Munich, Bonn, Munster, Rome, Siena, Genova, Brussels, Ghent, Michigan (Ann Arbor), Cornell, and Berkeley. He has written forty three books on law, geopolitics, psychobiography and art many of which have been translated in French, German, Greek, Italian and Chinese. In 1997, on the advice of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, he was appointed Queen's Counsel and in 2005, on the advice of Prime Minister Blair he was Knighted by Her Majesty the Queen for "services to international relations". He is Commander of the Legion d' honneur and Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Merit (France); Grand Officer of the Order of Merit (Germany); and Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Merit (of Italy) and a Member of the Academies of Athens, Belgium, Britain, France, the Netherlands and Rome (Academia dei Lincei). Sir Basil has served as Conseiller scientifique of the First President of the French Supreme Court; Senior European Advisor for the international law firm Clifford Chance; and Member of the Board of Administration of the Onassis Foundation.

RUSSIA AND THE EU  
THE INEVITABLE RAPPROCHEMENT

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## **Change and Reaction<sup>1</sup>**

Changes in nature, health, the political environment, all invite adaptation. This can take the form of biological changes, alteration of life style, or reviewing of traditional policies. All these reactions have one aim: survival. Herbert Spencer first formulated the idea that the survival of the fittest means the survival of the most adaptable though most attribute this idea to Darwin who, indeed, later adopted it. Inaction to the change is the conservative's response. If this does not lead to instant death - literally or metaphorically - it results in 'weakening'. This dialectic pattern affects all aspects of life and is inescapable.

## **The Phenomenon in Geopolitics**

In the world of geopolitics the seismic change which concerns us today came at the end of "the Cold War". The reactions to it followed the patterns suggested above. Biological or, in this case, geopolitical, evolution took place. The singular - evolution - conceals in fact a variety of responses. Variety is a rule of nature; though not all adaptations are equally successful.

Some states were quick to perceive how they could exploit the new environment to their advantage. Turkey is the prime example of this trend; indeed its far-seeing former President Ozal had sensed the change coming before it arrived and had been re-positioning his own country accordingly. Basically, he saw a new world emerging in the Black Sea region; but also in the Arab world. He concluded that his country should change its role from being a defensive bulwark for the USA to something new: less devoted to the pretence that it was European; less rigidly attached towards ethnic purity within its borders (and thus more open to the Kurds); less contemptuous of the Arab world with which it shared an old religion. The political shift was reflected in a shift of gravity from Istanbul to central and East Turkey from which the President hailed.

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<sup>1</sup> This is an enlarged version of a lecture entitled RUSSIA AND THE EU: THE INEVITABLE RAPPROCHEMENT, delivered on November 20<sup>th</sup> at the Center of European and International Affairs of the University of Nicosia in Cyprus at the invitation of its Director Professor Andreas Theophanous for the Conference EU-RUSSIA RELATIONS: THE RHETORIC AND THE RECORD.

A brilliant thinker, now that country's Foreign Minister (Ahmet Davutoğlu), building on the work of earlier intellectuals, helped shape the next step. Turkey's roles would no longer be defensive for the benefit of others but expansionist in pursuit of its own interest. I said 'expansionist' not 'aggressive' for the new policy would attempt to project its strength through 'soft power' and would derive its intellectual vigour from the country's own past. Soft power, however, never meant that real power would not be there as well, to be seen to exist.

Azerbaijan is another country which learnt to play the game of being friendly with everyone or, better put, playing everyone against everyone. Today, it is more than surviving, whereas it could have been weak had it chosen to work solely with the Americans, the Russians, or the Turks (with whom, after all, it shares an ethnic identity). Maybe, the new regime in Georgia may move in a similar direction, though Georgia is not as wealthy as Azerbaijan so its options may be less extensive.

The way living creatures and state entities react to changes in the political environment determines their survival or their decay. In the battle for survival nature always has losers as well as winners. Greece offers the best example of decay, I hope not irreversible. The descendants of Odysseus no longer have either his ingenuity or adaptability. Corrupted – literally and metaphorically – by the consumerist spirit of the 1990's, which their short-sighted political leaders tried to exploit to their advantage, they began the downward spiral move which neither the reputedly 'reforming' Prime Minister Simitis in the early 2000's nor the 'inactive' Mr. Karamanlis had the guts to confront during their respective terms of office (1996- 2004; 2004-2009). To their successors – Mr. Papandreou (with the assistance of Mr Venizelos) and Mr. Papadimos – thus fell the kudos of "finishing Greece off." The jury is out on the performance of the present Prime Minister. My own gut feeling is that history will judge them all harshly; for unlike morality which can find excuses, and justice which relies on defenses to mitigate its harshness, history judges only by results; and it judges in a pitiless manner.

## **Earthquakes come with Warnings**

I described the end of the Cold War as a seismic change. It was just that. Yet before it happened it gave its warnings as all earthquakes do. The Seismic Institute in Ankara, as stated above, noted its coming; the one in Langley, Virginia, did not. Strange you might say given that the latter is technically one of the best equipped in the world. Yet it liked to derive its information through technical gadgets not 'feet on the ground' and thus lacked the human sensitivity to understand 'foreign *social* substructures' and detect the coming of major *political* tremors. It thus failed to pick up the signs that came out of Kuwait in 1991 concerning the imminent invasion by Iraq. A year earlier it again failed to notice that a huge earthquake in Eastern and Central Europe was going to lead to the collapse of a major 'dividing wall'. And yet the warnings were there; and more are coming concerning their future and ours. *Nouveaux riches* can afford to buy expensive gadgets to 'observe' people; but often they lack the experience which a long history brings in understanding them.

## **The Shifting Tectonic Plates**

The signs of the relationship between the declining Europe and the post-War USA were obvious ever since the latter like a modern Aphrodite had emerged from the froth of dying colonialism. I collected a sample of these signs in my book entitled *A New Foreign Policy for Greece found in American and English books*; and many more exist for those interested to see for themselves why the seismic indications are, once again, abundantly clear to anyone who *wants* to notice them. I italicized *wants* rather than used the word *can*; for in geopolitics those who deliberately close their eyes to coming changes are political criminals. Those, on the other hand, who do not see them coming because their lack sensitive antennae are simply naïve or just badly informed; unfit for the role they wish to play; deserving instant dismissal. These signs point in one direction: Europe and America have for many decades been drifting apart politically just as their continents did geologically in pre-historic times.



These geological shifts turned into visible cracks after the end of the Cold War which was manifested in three important areas. This means that nowadays ever-fewer politicians are justified in ignoring them. These cracks posed the following questions.

- (i) Would the West exploit the decaying Russia of Mr. Yeltsin and with the doctrinal backing of neo-conservative thinkers try to destroy its empire while building its own business-linked neo-colonialism? Alternatively, would it help find a way to co-exist with its old adversary? The positive answer to the first option was so tempting that naturally it trumped the second. But in life you do not always eat the best looking mushrooms!
- (ii) This decision was followed by the formal abandonment of a doctrine that had dominated since the Treaty of Westphalia: the inviolability of state sovereignty. This, too, occurred with the birth and growth of the doctrine of preventative war. History - alas - supports the idea that power trumps justice and morality. Yet does not history also teach us that there are times that a partial victory is more desirable than the dangers that accompany the human wish to be triumphalist?
- (iii) The importance of this departure from well established doctrines of international law opens a can of worms which are causing us trouble. For there remains no agreement as to who should judge: (a) the need for such pre-emptive action – UN, NATO, a major power on its own? (b) how to evaluate the seriousness of threat which calls for such action? (c) whether reasons other than enemy aggression – e.g. humanitarian catastrophes – can also be used as excuses to invade other countries or interfere with their affairs.
- (iv) There was a fourth consequence to the changes wrought to the international system in the nineties. It concerned the increased use of human rights in international political battles. Because it is important it deserves a heading of its own.

## **Hypocrisy and Human Rights**

Interfering in the affairs of other countries, mainly in order to take control of their natural resources – Caucasus, Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, most recently the Eastern Mediterranean - enhanced the urges of new colonialism and with them their unacceptable consequences.

I am referring here not just to the 'right' to invade or bomb other countries, but also to the glaring neglect of the rights of local nationalities to self-determination such as that denied to Palestinian's for decades; the propping of absolutist regimes such as that of Egypt of Sadat and Mubarak; the resurrection of tyrannical regimes – such as that of Colonel Khadafy - solely to further the economic interests of a British oil company; the blaming of Russia when this finance-based intervention failed, and so on. When all these 'exploded' – and again and true to form the possibility was missed by the Seismographic Centre at Langley, Virginia - and finally, in 2001, touched in an ugly and unacceptable manner the USA itself, a radical shift in human rights laws took place. This knee-jerk reaction was unfortunate; but it also displayed the arrogance of power in so far as it justified – in the eyes of Mr. Bush's America that it could extend its laws to other countries. That this was allowed to happen, and it did with the disgraceful institution of rendition, was partly the result of the subservience which other countries showed towards the USA. The reader of this essay will notice, if he reads this essay in its entirety, that this is one of my major concerns over how the relationship with America often works.

Let us be clear about two things to understand the basis of our objections concerning the human rights revolution in and by the USA.

First, rendition, water boarding, Guantanamo, are huge violations to any human rights regime. Secondly, it made the West's invocation of violations of human rights by others - say the Russians or the Chinese - much more hypocritical than it had been in the past. A second sign of hypocrisy was the deafening silence America maintained when the violations took place in

countries supporting its own financial and defensive interests: Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Yet it was quick and intemperately expressed, usually by that forgotten figure of the American Constitution - the Vice President - when these officials condemned violations in Russia or China or when they were inciting countries in the Russian periphery to escape the gravitational pull of Moscow. Only if and when the USA was trying to obtain Russian or Chinese co-operation on a particular issue – e.g. the imposition of an embargo on Iran – would such hypocritical condemnations temporarily be set aside.

Does all this mean that I condone human right violations? *Most emphatically not; but it does mean that I condemn their selective invocation.* It also does mean that I abhor when the issue is being raised for purely political motives; and it does mean that accusing others for violating human rights does not confer on the accusers the right to commit their own violations.

In the context of the last point I thus ask were rendition, water boarding, or the operation of Guantanamo compatible with human rights? Or can in such cases friends of the USA respond with the argument that these are deviations 'limited in extent' compared with the *systematic* violations found in Russia or China? If that is a valid response I confess I misunderstood the reading of my "Ten Commandments" which, from now on, I must understand as saying "though shall not commit ten murders or more" or "though shall not commit adultery repeatedly, but one or two your God will somehow find it in his heart to excuse." Indeed, *The Acts of the Apostles* tell us – 13. 22 – that David, the psalmist, was not only forgiven as an ex-murderer *and an adulterer*, but that he was seen as "a man after [his i.e. the Lord's] own heart." I am not aware how religious writers have defended this wording, but to a lawyer it sounds un-necessarily broad.

Religious hermeneutics are not included in my list of interests; the violation of ethical principles, however, is. I do not believe this assessment can depend on "quantative transgressions", though repetition can enlarge the gravity and

thus determine the punishment! If the horrendous act of 11 September 2011 could 'authorize' two wars and an estimated total of hundreds of thousands of dead – many innocent civilians - in Iraq and Afghanistan why were Russians condemned for 'over reacting' to the activities of equally ruthless Chechen rebels? NO, again! He who wishes to 'play around' with notions of morality in the domain of politics must approach this notion with "clean hands" – an expectation impossible to satisfy by politicians from the days when the Ancient Athenians massacred the Citizens of Melos and even argued, in a speech of chilling cynicism, that even the Gods would agree with their philosophical stance on the matter.

### **Living in the Age of Misinformation**

The communication revolution of our times is a fact; its full potential, however, in political warfare is still being studied. My own interest is less in the 'knowledge expansion' it has resulted since I think much – not all - of this new knowledge is trash and acquired through the intellectually dubious means of 'face-book' and 'twitter' at the cost of time which could have been used more productively. What I am interested in, however, is the expansion of the ability to misinform modern citizens and the way this can operate on the mind of people and even transform their role as active citizens.

Misinformation is at least as old a phenomenon as warfare which means the history of man; but in modern times it has been practiced in more sophisticated and thus more sinister ways since it can affect its recipients psychologically. A *comparative* discussion of the issue has yet, I think, to be attempted in particular with a view to discover (a) which country is best at it and (b) what means precisely are utilised to achieve this aim. Finally, (c) the psychological effects on the minds of those on which it is practiced are also of enormous but unexplored significance.

Yet some brief comments about the way the media have behaved in Greece, especially during the last five or six years of its ever-deepening economic crisis, may provide a useful first sketch of the phenomenon and its

consequences. It is a practice that brings utter shame to the former government of Mr. Papandreou and gives him a "first" that few sensible people would ever wish to have their names associated with.

Greece, like most countries in recent times, has lived beyond its means. Politicians, who knew, ought to have known or – to take the most favorable scenario for them – once they became aware of the arrival of the credit crunch did next to nothing to deal with its consequences, have much to answer for. They are the ones primarily behind this misinformation game for it facilitated their survival in office. They encouraged it and, one suspects, even financed it.

Still with Greece, and as late as 2007 and early 2008, high placed politicians were thus assuring their compatriots that their "economy" was "well armored" – "θωρακισμένη" were the then Prime Minister Karamanlis' words - against the economic crisis which began in earnest with the collapse of Northern Rock in England and the Lehmann Brothers scandal in America. Naturally, they were not.

The blame not just for the lack of information but also for failing to prevent these financial disasters (or limit their effects) should spread to England and the USA as well. For we now know that the regulatory authorities of both of these countries had enough information in their possession to expect something of that kind could happen. We also know they did nothing to prevent it, while credit evaluation agencies, which have such power to destroy State economies these days, had given an unhesitant clean bill of health to Lehmann brothers a few months before its fatal heart- attack.

If the politicians did not do their job properly neither did the Press carry out its main duty as a watchdog against abuses. To return to Greece, which I believe I know best, my impression is that their main concern remained their own financial interests; and these were best served, by reporting what the government of the day wanted them to report. On the whole, they still do and this may explain in part the collapse in their sales.

That such attitude towards journalism meant constant political flip-flopping to stay 'close' to whoever was/is in power worries me little since I readily confess I have become accustomed to the most extreme form of political opportunism which flourishes in Greece. Again, I mention this for I find it unconvincing to try and draw a convincing line between the morality of the Press in the Western world and Russia. In Greece at any rate this flip-flopping has been the favourite hobby of its media moguls. The consequence? In recent years they contributed mightily to the breaking of the nerve of the Greek people. The combined action was part of the Papandreou practice to numb the population by contradictory messages, alternatively imposing harsh austerity measures and then predicting salvation. This (lethal) game was played every three months or so as Greece approached the moment of bankruptcy and had to agree to new measures of austerity in order to get more money from Europe and the IMF. Such Scottish baths kept the most inefficient government Greece ever had in power for close to three years. For the ever-more-battered electorate did not even dare to complain too much, let alone protest in the streets fearing that if it did it would not only see its earning dip further but its jobs disappear. Many in Greece believe, indeed hope, that some of these politicians may, along with the co-operating Press, one day may be called to account before the courts for their actions and (possible) illicit gains made while in office.

*This is the aspect of misinformation that interests me most. It is the ability and willingness to use it to affect if not destroy psychologically the minds of the electorate; and the way it was practiced in Greece remains to be studied scientifically; but its psychological effect must not be underestimated.*

What were the consequences of such massive deception? As stated, the case of Greece must one day be studied closely for it is exceptionally dark. Yet the effects are visible for all to see. Note, for instance, how 'tame' the destitute – nowadays even hungry – Greeks have been rendered compared to their Spanish or Portuguese who at least still retain the moral stamina to protest against mismanagement and economic oppression, unemployment and fall of

earnings. And what about the volatile and excitable Greeks? Numbness and submission has clouded their minds and impeded any action until the moment of the volcanic explosion arrives as it most surely will.

In this conference, however, we are discussing another topic: the relations between the EU and Russia. *So we must look at the use of misinformation to sabotage such rapprochement for this too has happened in a very systematic manner. For there, too, similar techniques have been used by the Press, especially to so-called serious 'bourgeois' Press.*

### **Misinformation as it Mutated into Dishonesty Expanded into Propaganda and Impeded all Ideas of Cooperation with Russia**

Our glance at this issue should best be attempted under two headings.

First, we must note that the scale of the misinformation practiced has turned into systematic deception. Multiple deceptions in fact since this was practiced by all who have been desperate to prevent the resurgence of Russia from the depths it had sank during the Yeltsin years. Here we must note briefly through whom this misinformation was practiced.

The world press and international business (which actively links its business operations to international politics) played a key part in promoting this anti-Russian campaign, the latter at any rate when they were deprived a share of Russia's wealth. The 'Atlanticist Movement', in existence during the Cold War, was reactivated from the 1990's onwards, became well endowed, and instructed to expand its activities through the various NGO's – such as the Marshall Fund and its affiliates or partners which were spawned all over the world, but especially in Europe and parts of the Middle East. In part overtly politically, but often operating under the cloak of think-tanks and academics promoting their intellectual independence, these organizations worked hard to promote the kind of ideas that America or its industrialists favoured in order to spread further their economic influence. One suspects that few would regard this as either a 'grand' or 'worthy' cause so, one is not entirely surprised to see

it found appeal with some journalists and academics nurturing a desire for the political limelight.

Here in Cyprus I need say little about the dubious activities of these bodies and their Greek affiliates who played such a big but happily unsuccessful role in trying to impose upon you the Annan plan. Suffice it to say that some of the same people are now active in Greece; and their efforts, mightily supported by the section of the Press which remains (inordinately some would say) loyal to American interests and ambitions. For they hardly miss an opportunity to undermine *any* links my country of origin *might* develop with Russia ***not – it should be stressed - instead of those it has with America but in addition to them.***<sup>2</sup>

However, active and well financed these activists may be, their numbers are declining – in Greece at least. More importantly, among the population at large which is aware of their existence and the threat most people feel they pose towards Greek interests nowadays they receive nothing but contempt. In the absence of a *genuinely* free press, the best proof of this 'negative' reaction springs out at once from even a cursory look at blog sites which are increasingly consulted by ordinary people in the hope to obtain snippets of more accurate information. From this vantage point of view at least the standing of these 'intellectual Atlanticists' has declined in Greece since they have lost such aura and prestige which their academic members liked to claim that they had in the early years of their appearance as an organized pressure group.

The second topic we must mark out for future detailed study is *how* this deception against Russia has been practiced in Greece. As stated, here the effort which these agencies and their active members made was to destroy the limited business links which Mr. Karamanlis' government created with Russia during his premiership. These were the years when Russian rejuvenation was

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<sup>2</sup> This is the only sentence in the entire essay which is printed in bold for those who specialise in misinformation have been quick to argue that I am anti-American instead of stressing my consistently declared preference for a multi-dimensional foreign policy.



taking place as lost parts of its empire were returning to its fold (e.g. Ukraine) or being subdued after thoughtless rebellion were stirred in them by the Americans. Georgia is, of course, the paradigm; though other efforts to incite rebellion made by Vice Presidents Cheney and Biden must not be forgotten, especially because of the strident language used by both Vice Presidents.

The Karamanlis (courageous) attempts to give a role to Greece in the energy field met with huge opposition by these quarters; and when he took the next step and indicated his willingness to buy arms from Russia, the decision - one suspects - was finally taken to overthrow him. It takes time for such claims to be proved by the publication of official documents; but that, at least, is the prevailing opinion in Greece at the time of writing.

Journalists these days spend their time in practicing the art of *communicating* messages *formulated on the basis of the strategic considerations they wish to promote*. So the overthrow of the conservative Prime Minister, who had 'impudently' taken it upon himself to diversify a policy of dependence on the USA, was to take a subtle form. In the summer of 2009 he was thus persuaded by 'so-called political allies' to hold elections in order to lose them and thus allow his disorganized opponent - Mr. Papandreou - to come to power unprepared. This would mean that he would hold on to power only for a few months giving Mr. Karamanlis the chance to return to power as a "wronged but now justified" politician. During the interregnum, his part as leader would be held by a 'loyal' subordinate who would keep the 'chair' warm for him. All, of course, had to enjoy the support of Washington which, however, had, acting on its own, already ensured that Mr. Papandreou would not be as troublesome to them as his late (and gifted) father had been at times.

The attempt to interfere in the internal politics of another country was, again, nothing new. *The history of modern Greece cannot be written without discussing these often blatant interventions, most in the recent past, engineered or carried out with the tacit support of the USA to check Russia's*

*influence, often a real - but also on occasions - a fabricated threat.* But we must give credit to the usual plotters for this time at least they had designed a democratic apparel to arrange for the shift of power to persons more amenable to their wishes and had not authorized (or tolerated) a military coup as they did in 1967. In any event, one can only *hope* that the fashion of coups has now passed for good in Greece.

Yet the electorate did not share such plans and (a) punished the Right for its ineffective management of the economy and the general air of corruption which it had generated during its reign, especially during its last two years in office (2007-2009) and (b) the candidate most widely seen as a 'suitable' successor to Mr. Karamanlis was routed by the conservative party when the time came for them to choose their next (supposedly some thought) interim leader.

This electoral result must have caused so much concern both to the media and the NGO's and those who place much weight on the wishes of American foreign policy. For, to begin with, Mr. Karamanlis' successor looked as if he might continue his innovating role in foreign policy. Indeed, earlier in his career, he had given signs of such independence of mind. Not unnaturally therefore, those close to American interests and anxious to keep Greece as far removed from Russia as they could thus launched a sustained - often defamatory - campaign to degrade him in the eyes of the electorate as power-thirsty and unelectable. What they chose to attack was the new leader's belief - in the event proved correct - that the imposed measures of austerity would bring a recession and stunt even further such chances as there were for growth. The pressure on him must have worked, at least in part, for through a series of policy reversals the current Prime Minister soon gave tangible signs that he was not going to rock the boat so ably steered towards the rocks by the ferociously anti-Russian press.

Whether, during these years, Russia did what it could to improve its image is another matter and I leave it to them one day to evaluate whether their own policy might have been more subtle on this point. Perhaps the answer will be found in its internal politics, which only recently *appear* to have been put back on track again.

The little that has been said hardly even scratches the surface of the problem. Yet it shows how difficult it is even to talk about European Russian co-operation *in the present climate of anti-Russian feelings carried out systematically by America-leaning NGO's and their friendly press everywhere in Europe*. This, incidentally, use of soft power to fight Russia is an area of the overall conflict in which America holds a strong lead since Russia has not mastered the art of using NGO's to do their dirty work. Nor can they compete with western propaganda techniques. Let the eminent Russians present at this conference ponder over these observations rather than take offence at them!

The phenomenon is thus not only found in Greece. For instance, *The Times* in England is a good example of a paper constantly urging Europeans to support the failed American policies in Central Asia. Thus, time and again, they urged the British to keep the soldiers in Afghanistan even though we foretold then what we now know has happened: waste of human lives solely to save face for those who wrongly conceived a useless war. Rarely, too, is a chance missed to 'jibe' at Mr. Putin or to complain when his country impedes the use of embargoes or the use of force somewhere in the world.

As we shall explain in the next two chapters, however, this does not mean that all of the above cold war warriors have won the battle or frustrated in perpetuity all attempts at normalizing relations with Russia. What inspires this last-mentioned belief is the realization of the extent with which power is world over, shifting in the direction of new centres. Again, we have nothing historically unexpected in this phenomenon; the most than can be said is that the shift was brought forward in time because America's wars expedited its financial fatigue.

## **Power is Shifting Globally at the Expense of the Traditional Players**

My conviction that this intellectual battle in favour of an EU-Russian co-operation is not over is thus strengthened by the fact that power is shifting away from the USA and even more rapidly and radically from Europe as it now stands while Russia faces difficulties of its own among which – in my view – the gravest are three: its deficiency in modern technology; its inability to attract foreign capital at a time when Europe and America are experiencing an unprecedented economic crisis (the recent Rosneft- BP deal being an interesting development); and its grim demographic situation which suggests a steady ageing of its Russian population. These signs suggest different (but also similar) kinds of weakness – in Western Europe and Russia – and may thus prompt the realignments I for one would welcome. Let us look at these ideas in slightly greater detail.

The weakening of the USA is slow because its undoubted wealth, its favourable geographical conditions (compared to the less favourable ones nature gave to Russia) and its wondrous technology will always ensure it a prominent place in world politics *though no longer the first one or the sole one*. The setback suffered to American interests in the Caucasus, Iraq are known. After eleven years of war, two thousand dead and over 17,000 injured young men and women, America is also leaving Afghanistan defeated *without one of its proclaimed aims having been satisfied*. Indeed, an important ally it had at the beginning of the War – Pakistan – is no longer a reliable friend – a set-back which the USA has tried to overcome by shifting its attention to India. What does it have to show for such humiliation other than a Nobel Prize for Peace which should have been given (with a little bit less haste) to its undoubtedly gifted President, though not for Peace but for his admirably developed social conscience?

The weakening of American power and prestige can also be seen in North Africa and the Middle East. The Arab Spring, which at the beginning the USA was not sure whether to welcome, simply accept, or oppose is now showing some signs that it could turn into an Arab Winter Frost; Egypt no longer

qualifies for the title of "American ally" – only American money – Qatar is shaky; Yemen is, I believe, as good as lost; Somalia now houses the independent remnants of Al Qaeda; the shift of policy towards the Far East yet another indication that the days when the USA could conduct simultaneously two and a half wars at the same time, a boast of the (distant) past. I say nothing of its economic troubles and how much its recovery has come to depend upon its junior partner – Europe – manages to turn itself around assisting American exports.

These economic troubles are, in fact, more significant than most believe they are. For present purposes I feel one in particular is worth noting. MY betting is that even among the American military there is – currently at least – no appetite for further overseas wars. For, in my view, the military understands, even if the extreme Right does not, that what the military needs most is a reinforcing of the country's economic foundations without which it – the Army – cannot work.

Yet I must also warn of some of the future headaches the USA will face once its elections are out of the way, headaches which Europe would be wise not to let affect it.

Most of them will be related to the continuing instability and uncertainty which reigns in Libya, Syria, Iran, and over the Palestinian issue which has not - and cannot be – easily buried, as well as the considerable likelihood of civil war breaking out in Afghanistan once the American troops have departed without all likely-hood having suppressed the Taliban threat. (This, incidentally, is going to be a headache for Russia as well; and it may in part explain the latter's willingness to assist Americans in their difficulties to re-supply their dwindling troops by making available to them the use of Russian airports.)

This is no place to go into the roots of all these problems beyond re-stating that in different ways they can be linked to errors in American foreign policy and their current insolubility explained by the decreasing ability of America to

cope with so many draining overseas problems. But whatever the causes of these festering wounds, the fact is that the temporary suspension of their solution - in part because of the American elections - cannot be prolonged into the new-year. That much seems reasonably certain. Less clear is how they might be solved if, indeed, they can be solved in a way which would satisfy the interests of the USA.

The above predictions cannot be pleasing to Americans; yet still more ominous must be the realization that their continued existence will offer new opportunities to the irrepressible Mr. Putin to be 'mischievous' to the (potential) advantage I think of his own country. If this is a plausible prediction, and personally I believe it is, America's declared ability to focus on the Far East will also be affected.

The rippled effect of the above suppositions could be inestimable. Were I a serving politician I would be irresponsible in not taking all of the above into account in shaping the foreign policy of my country for the foreseeable future and, this notwithstanding, the American superiority in technology, including military technology, which I think will remain undisturbed for some time yet to come.

Wise statesman across the world must shape their plans upon America remaining enviably advanced on the technological front but increasingly weak on the international one and thus unable to maintain for long its present status as the "first power" in the world, especially if it does not manage to sort out its finances. This should cause no surprise to students of history since this is a fate which no great Empire managed to escape. Yet the signs of American decline - gradual though it is - have one peculiarity: no other great power - Rome, Byzantium, or the Ottomans - stayed at the top for as short a time as have the Americans.

So, what about Europe? Could we in its weakness detect the signs of a possible resurrection if the idea of co-operation between the EU and Russia gained wider support? I believe this could be argued and, indeed, it would become the spring board for new initiatives if the EU members could ever shake off their feeling of dependency on the USA. But is it Europe's messy economics that lead me to this conclusion of unstoppable decline? The answer is negative. The real reason for the pessimism is the diagnosis that Europe as a living organism is suffering not from one but many ailments.

For one thing my Continent has none of the American strong points but many weaknesses of its own. It thus lacks raw materials; it is politically fragmented; its financial crisis is getting worse; its decision to follow the American example and print money will, in the future, be felt more in Europe than it will be in the USA for a variety of reasons not least because its currency is not a reserve currency for the rest of the world; because it visibly lacks leadership and the financial and structural mechanisms to take rapid decisions in political, military, and even economic matters are simply non-existent. As against this decline we must immediately note the rise of Far East, soon to be rivaled by the Indian Sub Continent and, in South America a third potential centre of wealth headed by Brazil where, not only raw materials exist in great abundance but also – and this is crucial – the cost of manufacturing production remains infinitely lower than it is in Europe.

What power or even influence can such a fragmented and seriously overburdened by social costs collection of once prominent centres of culture (but now ghosts of what they once were) aspire to? Without a blood transfusion this beautiful organism is dying, further weakened by the growing and divisive issue of immigration which it cannot solve because of its misconceived liberalism, its lack of faith in itself, its unrestrained talent to spend more than it earns, its suicidal love affair with political correctness which prevents it from discussing issues openly and frankly.

The more one studies contemporary Europe the more one may love it – as I do – but the more depressed one must also become about its future if it does not change in many important respects. I am not original in making this point; nor am I original in seeing the rise of the Far East and the Indian sub-continent galloping towards us. My originality, such as it is, is limited to stating my views bluntly and this only in the hope that causing a fright might shake us out of our current complacency. If I am attacked for being honest, I do not mind; at the very least, it is better than being attacked for being dishonest!

### **Complementarity**

It is against this kind of assessment that the partnership with Russia begins to hold out increasing appeal even if one realizes, *as one must*, that such a dream would prove difficult to turn into reality. This means attempting new thinking which, in practice, translates into a transfusion of new blood which both sides - i.e. the European Union and Russia – need. We must, therefore, begin by asking if their blood types are compatible. I believe they are; and only prejudice (in part justifiably born from Soviet abuses during the Cold War era) and conflicting hegemonic ambitions (mainly between the USA – not Europe - and Russia) make people unable to see the compatibility. But let us begin briefly with culture.

Anyone who has studied Russian history, literature, and art knows its close connection with that of Western Europe, France and Germany in particular. In fact, if we start our survey with modern Russia, and ignore for the moment the close religious, linguistic, and legal links with Hellenic Byzantium, we must begin with the Dutch influence which Peter the Great first introduced as part of his Herculean and often brutal re-orientation of Russia towards the West. Catherine the Great was, of course, German; so her nationality provided yet another link with her country of origin. I say, yet another link, for if we look at the Napoleonic Wars a few decades later, many will be surprised to note that apart from Marshall Kutuzov the bulk of the Russian Generals, including the Minister of Defense, was German.



In the 19th century the Germanic influence, especially in science and letters, increased considerably. An account of scholarly contacts between these two countries can verify this; but we can even see it reflected in literature. A mere glance of all the books which Bazarov, the ambitious of self-destructive hero of Turgenev's *Fathers and Children*, (Отцы и дети and not as invariably translated Fathers and Sons) leaves through at every house he visits show that they are German. Indeed, about the end of that century, Russians are so confused between the desire to acquire a Western identity versus the pull to retain their Slav and Orthodox origins is so great that it is epitomized in the Vreubel's famous painting of *The Flying Demon* (inspired by Lermontov's famous poem). This, incidentally, is no single work of art, no isolated example, but a widely recognized painting which captures the Russian ambivalence on the eve of the Revolution.

This is not the kind of conference where one – sadly perhaps - expects a cultural guide through Russia's literature or art to suggest – I would go as far as saying to argue – that cultural reasons do not separate Russia from the West. Nor do I have to remind you the reason why these links have been conveniently forgotten by many of us in Europe. Undoubted communist brutality, displayed towards Russians themselves as well as the citizens of Eastern Europe, forms part of the reality of our recent past; and we cannot forget it or, better still, we can only place it aside to the extent that we did with our similar deeply held abhorrence for what Germany and Japan did during the same period.

That this can be done is proved by the fact that in these two cases (Germany and Japan) we did exactly that and managed to set aside past suffering and on the shattered links built useful alliances. This only goes to show that it is not the atrocities that divide us but the presence or absence of a willingness – stemming from business necessity or philosophical belief in forgiveness - to make a new start. If we could manage this with Fascist Germany and the brutal Japan of the forties, why can't we do it with Russia? Do not let anyone argue that the Russian atrocities were worst than the German or Japanese for

I will then return to my 'standard accusation': hypocrisy disguising other interests. If the interests that encourage division are no longer sustainable, the hypocrisy should go as well!

In any event, we also have here to face a matter of principle. A painful past may teach; it can also warn people as to how to see problems coming and stop them in their tracks. But can it - should it - as a matter of principle determine future conduct?

In the *Four Quartets*, the poet T. S. Elliott spoke of time past and time present making time future. That is all right in literature and maybe in real life *when times are normal*. But those who live in novel, dangerous, indeed times of unprecedented instability, the future will be shaped by the few who can visualize it correctly through lateral thinking and with the interests of their people at heart. For in such times relying on past experiences or nurturing past enmities is rarely helpful. For, by definition, the present moment is so unprecedented, that it cannot be addressed by applying to it old formulas. The solution will thus ultimately depend, on the demands of survival; physical pre-eminently, economically but also spiritually at the next level. Then imagination will have the say; and courage will finally clinch the decision to adapt to a changing world or die.

My argument, today, for the coming together of the EU and Russia, will thus be based on pragmatic economic and geopolitical grounds. The other reasons - the cultural associations I mentioned briefly above - are there only to remind us that *culturally it is infinitely easier for us to establish a bond with Russia than it will ever be to do the same with the admirable (but very different) worlds of the Muslim Religion or the Far East with which immigration is these days creating an artificial cohabitation*. That, at any rate is my opinion; and, as will be clear from all said thus far, I am not a politician trained in the art of saying things which are different from what I genuinely believe! What is more, I do not believe I am alone holding such beliefs.

So this subheading is entitled complementarity and it refers to the economic, defense, geopolitical, complementarity which I believe exists between Russian and the EU. Only those infected by American propaganda or, because of advanced age, are unable to change a life's thinking, will not follow my logic. Indeed, I do not think I need to argue this point extensively since this *rapprochement* is already visibly happening between Russia and Germany and, to a lesser extent, France; and all this happening not only in the energy field and will not be limited to it.

Of course, it makes sense first of all if one realizes that the complementarity in 'needs' and 'offers' exists in the important energy domain; but it is not obvious only there. Thus, note also the easier access to capital and technology in the West and look at the huge resources yet to be exploited in the East. The Russians need the former; we need the latter. Similarly, never forget the major sources of valuable minerals in the East and recall the total poverty in the West. Realize the huge markets waiting to be invaded in the East, and recall the vital need for exports in the West. And since we are talking of energy resources let us bear in mind the Russian policy practiced with success by Mr. Putin who has used his excessive energy wealth to kick start investments and further foreign policy initiatives.

The immensely imaginative initiative of former President Tassos Papadopoulos, completed by the current President of Cyprus and transformed by the addition of Israel shows what courage and imagination can do which to most is unimaginable. For his effort to build the Cyprus/ Israel link and take the first decisive steps to exploit their mineral resources must be contrasted with Greece's hesitations to join actively this project. Even allowing for easily detectable objections, the mentality displayed by Greece towards its Eastern neighbor – *with which incidentally I would hope to see one day closer links replace the links of fear and submission which now exist* – as well as the utterly disgraceful willingness of successive Greek governments to cow-tow to the wishes of certain industrialists who may feel they will lose from such a exploitation of gas resources *may* explain Athens' prevarications. These two

examples show how the underlying complementarity can only be exploited if imaginative people are in power to seize the opportunities offered to them at this point of the historical continuum.

I spoke harshly of my people or - rather - of their governments for I honestly believe that Greece is in desperate need of a true and strong leader to confirm to demonstrate to my compatriots the realities which many of them suspect exist but dare not support with their voice and vote. And how can they achieve this in a world dominated by a brain-washing media serving a variety of interests, including of course their own financial greed, but relegating to the bottom of their priorities the interests of their country? Yet the Greeks and, I venture the thought the Cypriots as well must see these chances and grab them. *For ordinary people see opportunities and miss them; and clever people see opportunities and grab them and great people create opportunities!*

These are not only general observations; these are reflections closely linked to the subject-matter of our conference for they identify the obstacles which must be overcome to achieve the EU-Russian cooperation some - I most certainly - would like to see develop soon.

Economics are important but they are not the be all and end all of my thinking. Beyond such interests, one also finds a host of geopolitical issues which could justify the basis of new and closer links between Europe and Russia.

Look, for instance, at the turmoil that prevails in North Africa, the Middle East, the Caucasus, even Central Asia. There is a verity of reasons behind this turbulence; but everywhere one also finds the American factor. I blame it persistently because it constantly stirs trouble in far-away lands in the hope of gaining some advantage for its energy, military, or export industries - who, for example, can forget what they led the former Georgian President do and see his country halved in size. More importantly, however, I blame the Americans because they impose and exploit the subservient relationship of

European countries and lead them to get involved in its overseas wars even though in fact they have no real interest in them. *It is this last point which galls me most!* A greater European independence from such tutelage might facilitate Europe to get her economic act together earlier and in a way that suits her own brand of capitalism with a social conscience. A moderate model in other words and not just a greedy one! Additionally, it could assist her to re-arrange its defense policy and expenditure.

The underlying assumption of this last geopolitical argument largely depends on one's assessment on how severe has been the effect of being dragged into America's overseas adventurism. The answer, I believe, varies from country to country with my adopted country – England – probably and unnecessarily having paid the highest price in lives and wasted money. Yet, even looking at the overall picture and including in it the costs of NATO which, for many of us, has lost its real reason for existence, I think Europe should look inwards towards Europe itself as the first step of restructuring itself in its own way its own future. It is this first step which I think will then, naturally, lead to the second: the gradual enhancement of economic cooperation with Russia - the subject of our conference and my ultimate goal.

My desire to get off the coat tails of the USA and its new business-coloured imperialism is thus not just based on the experience we have had thus far in Iraq, Afghanistan, or more recently Libya which is well known to all and is now water under the bridge. It is a desire to complete my disengagement from such an attitude because of what I see lying ahead in Syria, the Arabian Peninsula and, of course Iran. Given the way Americans put much of the weight of the Libyan war on European forces and the European purse, do I want us to become involved in new adventures or suffer the economic consequences which will flow from such restlessness?

In short, I see more such setbacks waiting to occur and I see no reason why the EU should share in the fall-out they will produce. This does not mean for instance that I have no humanitarian concern for what is happening in Syria.

But statesmen – if we had any – would not only be concerned how to upstage tyrants; but would also be looking for ways to ensure a smooth succession and viable alternatives which no one in the USA – so far as we know – ever bothered. What followed military operation in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya confirm my fears of what may follow of the crisis in Syria moves one gear up. God forbid, but do we have to wait for more innocent American (and maybe European) diplomats to be assassinated before Americans realize that they are NOT liked in this part of the world.

Of course, a Greek daily paper, in days long gone considered to be a valued pillar of thinking conservative society, can claim – as it did recently, that Americans are now accepted by all in Greece. (It did not quite say loved but we may yet hear that as well by one of its ‘unbiased’ writers.) For my part, I remain convinced that it is only a matter of time before the majority of the Greeks will hear the voice of the little boy crying “the King is nude” and wake up to the need to take hold of their own future. Middle Eastern countries, Egypt most prominent among them, have found out recently how long American friendship lasts! Who, in the future, will rely on American assurances now that we have seen how easily they evaporate under the Middle Eastern sun?

The Syrian collapse, however, to which I already alluded, is not only a humanitarian catastrophe; it also offers opportunities for Europe in general and Greece and Cyprus in particular to come closer still to Russia in exchange for benefits they would like to see acquired, *indeed need to acquire*, at a moment of heightened economic crisis. Israel could benefit as well from such developments in which it had a hand both directly but also through the mediation of Cyprus. This is not place to mention the “wish list” I would present to Russia were I in a position of authority trying to negotiate economic agreements with them. It is, however, as good an opportunity as any to show that the political instability in the Middle East may appear to some as an occasion for further attempts at interfering in internal politics of other countries whilst to the likes of me it is a further chance to explore business

opportunities with Russia to the advantage of all the negotiating parties. For in crises I always see opportunities.

We can extend this business kind of thinking to Europe itself and ask whether the United States is likely in the near future to reduce or increase its pressure on Russia. I believe that within its current limitations America will do the latter and the question, once again, is whether Europe wishes to be dragged into this kind of confrontation or could it profit from the underlying tension.

I feel confident Germany will avoid such a dilemma; but what about the former Eastern bloc, which still bears raw wounds from the days of Russian occupation? Might it, at first instance at least, find this question easy to answer by hurriedly replying "let us go on relying on the USA"? The answer, I believe, is a positive one. Yet, as part of a Europe gradually reformed, more united, and engaged in the gradual process of achieving a closer economic co-existence with Russia, might they not also begin to see the advantages of the scenario I am suggesting?

In such a new set up could they/we not try to re-negotiate a more cooperative status quo with Mr. Putin? After all, let us put ourselves in the shoes of the Baltic States or Finland? Have the expectations of the Eastern bloc countries from joining either NATO been fulfilled *in all respects*? Could not security issues – theirs as well as ours - all be furthered if Europe as a whole were to find a way to co-exist more peacefully and less antagonistically with the Russia? Is it really in the interests of the Baltic States to 'pin prick' Russia in the side by constantly threatening to install on their soil American missiles? Is this the best way to achieve long term peaceful coexistence? Or might the future be rosier if the whole European area was working together as an ever closer economic zone, producing and selling goods to Asia, Africa, the world? Has the energy dependence on Russia changed? *If this is dreaming, as many would accuse me of doing, why is it not better than keeping the nightmare of confrontation alive?*

I finish the sub-section by answering a question which may have arisen in the minds of those reading the above. Why have I said little about human rights and their current situation in Russia. Is this not a major obstacle to my ideas and plans?

I do not wish to return to my argument about hypocrisy, valid though I think it is and ask why do human rights violations cause such allergy when they occur in Russia and often – not always – pass unnoticed when they are practiced in Turkey which some European states wish to join the EU as a full member? Is it time, to invoke again my objection based on hypocrisy?

It would, I think be more productive to our discussions here today if, instead, I moved to a different and more appropriate arguments. My response is thus based on the conviction that if we ever managed to get going an ever-growing economic, educational, and cultural co-operation and exchanges between the two 'groupings' which formed once "two (different) worlds" the human rights problem would soon lose much of its acuteness. *For by osmosis the changes brought about through all the above-mentioned new contacts I just mentioned above would spread to the communication field and then affect the human rights domain as well.* This, in short, is an area where modern communications methods could help in the creation of the kind of environment which would enable us to profit from the free exchange of ideas in accordance with the law.

Practice confirms this prediction. We saw, for instance, how in the 1990's the desire of the Muscovites gradually grew towards all the modern signs of American life, music, dress, and even ... food. And, more recently, we are witnessing parallel changes, yet un-quantified, taking place in China's major urban centres as a result of economic reforms taking place in that country. The peace dividends can be many; and not only impact one's purse.

Of course, it is easy to accuse one as a dreamer. Personally, I find it a compliment; but if – when – it is leveled against me it will be meant as an accusation. But who cares? In very colloquial terms I hope I may be excused if



I say that "Personally I do not care a damn!" Even IF I am wrong, the approach I am suggesting is worth trying; for it cannot be conclusively condemned if no one has attempted it yet. And the benefits of it working outweigh the possible risks which those who only see risks in life and not opportunities always like to stress. To put it differently: by threatening each other we will never get anywhere. At some stage we must be willing to act. I, at any rate, belong to those who agree with Goethe's re-translation of the Gospel according to Saint John: "in the beginning was the act" not the word. (Am anfang war die tat). And if there is one thing that mere talking produces is verbal impediments to any form of innovative action. Let the traditional conservatives who thrive – almost by definition – on inaction opt for that solution; it will never be mine.

### **'Anti-America'? Or 'Against Specific American Policies'?**

Many reading this paper or listening to the abridged version being delivered *ex tempore* may be quick to describe it as "Anti America". *The answer is emphatically negative*; and no one who knows my family and personal background and the amount of time I have spent happily and productively working in the USA could sensibly maintain such a view unless of course he has other reasons to promote such misinformation.

Nor can I be "anti- America" when **I honestly believe and have written this repeatedly that it is in the interest of my country of origin to pursue a multi-dimensional policy and establish working links with as many important world players as it can.** Again, I set this idea in bold fonts as I did previously for one must deprive one's intellectual adversaries the chance of unintentional misunderstandings. Deliberate distortions remain, of course, a well used prerogative.

So I ask myself as well as my readers why is it wrong for a Greek, Cypriot, or European to believe in a multi-dimensional foreign policy which is practiced and respected when Turkey, Azerbaijan, and other countries adopt it? Why is America willing to tolerate Turkey often defying her openly if not even rudely

and not accept Greece or Cyprus to pursue its natural right to maintain working relationships with other nations? The difference between the two is not and should not be linked to the different size of these countries or their perceived strategic importance. Nations who have a complex about their size make *themselves* small and weak.

On the issue of the declaration of one's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) the comportment of Cyprus and Greece proves my point. For the former, smaller, half occupied, and totally unarmed country, through cunning, diplomacy, and sheer will power, defied Turkish threats whereas the latter country shamefully shriveled under colonial pressure. Why was action in the first case possible and the second inconceivable? The answer is, alas, obvious. In 2004 Cyprus had a true leader. Greece, on the other hand, has had Prime Ministers; but Prime Ministers are not, necessarily, 'leaders'; often they occupy 'prime ministerial chairs' because they are inactive, intellectual non-entities, compromise candidates, all willing to do the bidding of the financial establishments and the media moguls of their country. True leaders, of the like of Eleftherios Venizelos, have been exceptionally rare in Modern Greek history; and I think the same may be happening in Europe as divisions between member states reign supreme and encourage their Prime Ministers to place in the top posts of the European Union *pensioned off, totally unknown, or by definition compromise-inclined local politicians*. Since the italicized words are not terms that suggest leadership, imagination, energy action, innovation, but inaction, drifting, decay, the present European crisis can be seen as almost inevitable. Germany is invariably the only exception; but then when it does shows signs of leadership its past is immediately dredged up and dangerous ambitions are imputed to it! No wonder then that the truly able of our young are these days attracted to business, banking, and finance or high-powered research centres where originality is appreciated and rewarded but not public service.

As regards the USA my opposition is directed to "specific American ideas, philosophies, policies" which I think have harmed the USA (and, in some instances, Europe as well). I feel I am entitled to have these views and join in

this respect approximately 50% of the American population which appears to share my doubts about the policies of their own administration. For they, too, opposed the war in Iraq and Afghanistan; that, too, were deeply disturbed by rendition, water-boarding, Guantanamo; they, too protested against their laws that invaded their privacy; and they, too, are suffering by the economic consequences of un-necessary overseas wars. Are they, as well, anti-American?

For me as a European what is even more un-acceptable is for the countries of my Continent to be 'bullied' into joining these ventures which in no way serve their interests by invoking the treaties of dated organizations such as NATO which nowadays serve mainly American interests; by being subjected by lavishly financed propaganda exercised by their associated NGO's; in extreme cases by being subjected to hidden but serious political pressures to comply with foreign interests. *This last point I make as a son of a former Prime Minister of Greece who was subjected to such pressures and refused to succumb and, as a result, was toppled from office.* Democracies should not act in this way; and sovereign states should not be subjected to such behaviour. So I speak with knowledge and not lightly and I hope all who read this in good faith must pause and think seriously about this way of conducting foreign relations.

I am neither alone nor being unfaithful to my country if I adopt such views; and if I can claim the slightest degree of originality it is that I am one of the few who dares express in public what the many, often for understandable reasons, prefer to externalize in different ways or simply in whispers.

I not only feel entitled to my views and free speech; I am entitled to remind my readers that what I predicted in Greece during the past five years as a political commentator in many books and speeches have not been far from the truth. In 2008 for instance, and many times afterwards, I stated that the Afghan war would end as a second Viet Nam? Well, the Americans have not departed from the roof-tops of buildings, partly I suppose because that are not

that many roof tops on Afghanistan that can support the weight of helicopters! But they are leaving, and doing so thanks to the offer of Russian air bases which facilitate their supply as well as their departure. I also doubted at the time whether the expansion of the war in Pakistan would be a good idea. We now see that America is leaving Central Asia not only having failed to defeat the Taliban but additionally having managed to add Pakistan to its list of enemies? Is this what one calls a successful conclusion of a foreign policy initiative?

Given predictions of this kind, repeated in many subsequent writings and speeches, am I not entitled to worry about the effects of current American policy – I am not entirely sure what it is but that is, in itself, is a condemnation - in North Africa and the Middle East? Is it compatible with the rule of law to begin wars and invade countries under the pretext of humanitarian concern but in reality only because new technology has enabled the United States armed forces to kill foreigner soldiers and civilians with reduced chances of its own soldiers being killed in return? Was the War in Iraq, which indirectly led to hundreds of thousands of innocent dead and an indescribable waste of money, justified given that we know what the UN Inspectors suspected at the time namely, that there were no weapons of mass distraction in the country and that patience would have removed Saddam anyway? Is it not revealing to read the Secretary General of the UN at that time nowadays wonder openly – in effect criticize – the British for not trying to stop the American militaristic tendencies? Though staunchly pro-Israeli for all my life, have I not been right in arguing in favour of giving Palestinians their deserved autonomy and a viable state in exchange for a viable peace with the main neighbour? Could this not have been achieved through bold thinking and decisive action rather than setting up new and expensive 'Quartets' to whom no one is prepared to listen but whose members we must pay dearly? Since paying for such non-existent services ultimately falls on taxpayers, should I not be allowed to ask how my money is spent?

As I give this lecture in Cyprus there is some talk in the island of the desirability of joining NATO. Should not one be entitled to warn them to reflect carefully what role this expensive organization serves these days? Should not the Cypriots ask the Baltic States if they feel more secure for having joined NATO? Is not the answer to this obvious from the fact that they are all asking for the stationing of American soldiers – even a token handful – on their land in the (forlorn) hope that this – rather than NATO – would provide them with greater security? Should not one warn my Cypriots friends to avoid like hell “troikas’ of all kinds”? For did I not do that for my own country before the IMF was called in, was ignored, and yet proved right?

All of the above are legitimate concerns and they must be voiced if for no better reason than to warn my Cypriot friends. What makes my interventions dangerous in the eyes of *some establishments* is that they are uttered by an Academician, not an un-educated person unaccustomed to reflection; by a citizen who belongs to the upper middle classes not an anarchist rebel; by a man who comes from a traditional pro-West, pro-American, family and hasn’t the slightest association with any organization of the Left; from someone who comes from a long political family (which once lived and worked in two European countries) but has never in his life been a party hack in any of the seven European countries where he feels entirely at home and has worked for long periods of time!

Worry I am thus entitled to be and so, I think, must be my Cypriot friends. For my part, I feel entitled to invoke my academic credentials and geopolitical forecasting work on the eve of new dangers hovering around Syria, Lebanon, Iran, and the Arabian Peninsula. If they are to materialize, *I* wish my country and my Continent to have nothing to do with them.

But “*I*” is meaningless; ‘Greece’ is meaningless’ ‘Cyprus’ alone is ‘meaningless’. *But we would all cease being ‘meaningless’ if we acted as a more united Europe conscious that our basic interests are convergent but not always compatible – in all cases at least – with those of the USA.* And, a

combined action would not only be 'meaningful' but become 'effective' and more widely respected, if we were ever to co-operate more closely with Russia with which I tried to show we have more common points these days than most seem to have realized.

Such steps are far from easy to take. They require leaders and we do not have them; they require suppressing the opposition of organized interested groups and not all of us have fully realized how dangerous their activities are; above all, it requires a change of mentality. This last requirement is the most difficult to satisfy; for changing thinking habits requires arguments, patience, and time. We have the first; we should acquire the second; we do not have the third.

To the many arguments I mentioned in favour of a closer EU-Russian cooperation many contrary obstacles can be rightly invoked. But at the end of the day there is one argument which cannot be answered except by doing what I have recommended. Quite simply it is avoiding political and economic degradation for all of us in Europe if we do not find a way to mutate politically in accordance with the Darwinian ideas into something that can survive in the emerging world of NEW superpowers to which we no longer belong in the form we are now in.

Evolution takes time. I will not be alive to see it completed. In any event, I do not wish to be alive if prejudice and financial interests prevent it from even beginning to happen. For my Darwin tells me that in that case the species I am interested in will disappear.