

The lust for power And its harmful consequences

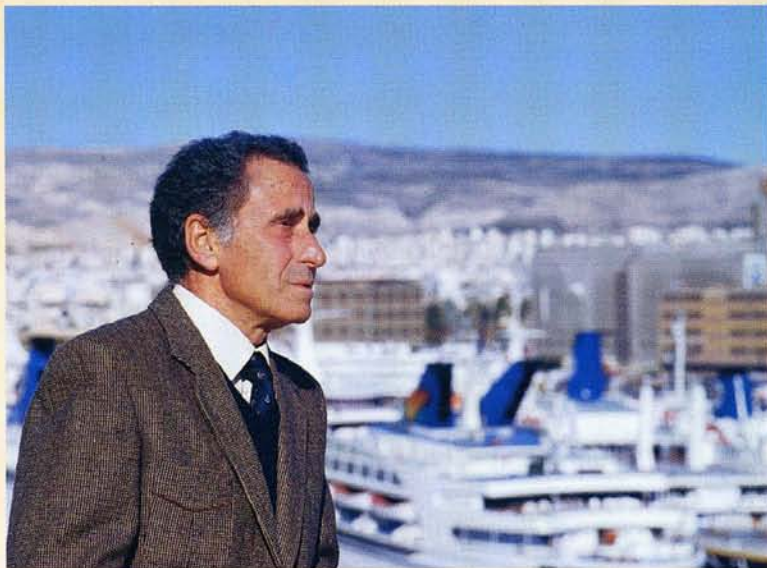
by Spyros Ranis

The world is nowadays in a bloody mess, thousands are losing their lives in conflict or from want, and people remain prone to be motivated into wondrous acts that honour our species, or agitated to hideous crimes. Both with the same staunch conviction that they simply discharge their duty, serving vital interests of the nation. It all depends on the political system and its quality. We, on the other hand, all know that the single thing History teaches is that, it nothing teaches a still in retrospect, may the past – 2433 years before today – be “amusing” if not didactic.

“The citizens went on killing those fellow countrymen who considered as enemies, and though each alleged that he persecuted only those trying to abolish the democratic regime, several were actually killed on personal considerations or vengeance and some that had borrowed money killed the lender. One could see death in any form. None of the atrocious acts seen in such circumstances was absent and even worse than that took place. As fathers killed their children, men were dragged from the temples and killed near them! Some died when they were walled up in the temple”.⁽¹⁾

Under such circumstances party membership and loyalty come to be regarded as the highest virtues, overshadowing all others and justifying the abandonment of all the restraints of traditional morality. Fanaticism and the treacherous intention to plot the destruction of an enemy were regarded as equally admirable: to recoil from either of these was to disrupt the unity of the party and wear away its Venerable Cause. Oaths lost their meaning and became tools of duplicity.

This state of terror arose as a result of the personal greed, ambition and lust for power that typically emerge once factional dissatisfaction has broken out. While the leaders of each faction adopted a fine-sounding slogan – ‘political equity for the people’ for the democrats and the ‘moderate rule of the best’ for the oligarchs –



they resorted to any evil trick available to them, and even eliminated those who belonged to neither party “either because they would not join them in the fight or out of jealousy that they might survive”.⁽²⁾

This new species of evil-doing spread throughout the country along with the revolutions. “In general, the men of lower intelligence won out. Afraid of their own shortcomings and of the intelligence of their opponents, so that they would not lose out in reasoned argument or be taken by surprise by their quick-witted opponents, they boldly moved into action. Their enemies, on the contrary, contemptuous and confident in their ability to anticipate, thought there was no need to take by action what they could win by their brains”.⁽³⁾

Reading above coverage, one’s reaction would be outrage on the endless bloodletting in Iraq, Afghanistan, the M. East etc. but this isn’t the case. No matter when and where always the lust for power, the greed for riches, economics and political deliberation set the stage and mount the ugly production. The war playwrights have plenty topics to work upon – religious dissent, the human rights, the social justice, the vital geo-space etc. etc... Though verses vary, the tune remains the same, given that, weapons make the same noise no matter where they are made. We are now – once again – at war, since our Prime Minister declared a deadly clash against corruption and for transparency. Actually

Notes:

* Thucidides

Historia

- 1) 3 – 81
- 2) 3 – 82
- 3) 3 – 83

MARITIME EDUCATION AND TRAINING

we aren't the ugliest of all. On Transparency International's 2005 index of perceived corruption, out of 158 countries, Afghanistan ranks 117 and we fare somewhat better.

Any war needs a strategy and it's impossible to fight corruption with 500.000 civil servants to regulate and control our overregulated ... market economy.

So, the first step should be to reduce this frightening crowd of public employees, but the crowd gets larger and I'll give you a sample α shipping is the jewel of our economy and our global pride. Our foreign trading fleet is the largest but we are in want of a national policy that will secure a good number of national marine Officers, keep Vessels in our Registry and apply the Maritime Cluster Concept, as every maritime nation does, and the E.U. strongly suggests. Our Shipping Minister established a new government branch under the name "Institute of Maritime Training" (I.M.T) to do what several hundred people in this Ministry already do.

It simply is a matter of appointing several sinecure "experts" in public doubtful duties, the I.M.T. - supposed to be party friends (?), but

there isn't the least concern for a cure on what heavily ails our public marine education. This year about 500 new entrants will be accepted in our marine public schools, about 300 will graduate 4 years later, and less than 200 will stay more than 5 years aboard.

By puffing further up an already inflated public sector, you simply promote bureaucracy - not transparency, in a field - all the worst - that private activity booms and thrives expatriated to ... 100 foreign flags (!).

Political parties always brandish a "Venerable Cause" flag, to cover their desire for domination - the steady bone of political contention in war and peace. Wooing votes is the sole concern, never mind for the public interest.

Actually the fright of the eventual "political cost" frosts any attempt for progress and turns a war for transparency into a virtual one.

Throughout History, equal practices bring equal results, in war and peace α but dear reader remember, "Democracy is the worst regime save all the others".

It's difficult to be good citizens, but it's the only remedy.