

A FORCE FIELD AGAINST REASON

A response (perhaps a rant) to *Adults in the Room*

by

Yanis Varoufakis

Varoufakis is not and never was a professional politician: an old hand at the game of gaining power, keeping power, compromising with power, adjusting to power, submitting to power and, whatever the price, maintaining a position close enough to power to smell it in his nostrils and stroke its shiny skin. That was and is not him. For all of his tenure as Finance Minister, during a time when his country was nailed to the cross of capitalism; when Germany in particular was perfectly willing to forget its historical debt to Greece and, once again, to destroy democracy: for all of that time he was struggling to persuade the powerful to accept the obvious point that Greece was being sacrificed to support a system that favoured very few and even fewer inside Greece.

The book is very well written and the story of an outsider becoming an insider only to become an outsider again is very gripping. Perhaps, however, the greatest endorsement of what he has to say comes from the attacks upon him by those that capitulated to capitalism; by those that claimed that financial suicide was life-enhancing; and by those that were simply not up to the job. This is not just a story about Greece. It is a tale for all members of the European Union, especially those in the Euro zone, and for anyone puzzled by the gap between rhetoric and reality.

The book is finished but the story goes on. Inside Greece taxation has risen in order to fund foreign banks. Why would you pay such tax if you could avoid it? Greek society does not benefit from those taxes. The public utilities of Greece have been flogged off to vultures that make Margaret Thatcher look like Lady Bountiful. Something else has been flogged off in the car boot sale of public assets. It is dignity. How dignified can it be to have a government that prostitutes its people? And, meanwhile, Greek's political pimps pretend that their 'Everything must go' sale of the country was a success. Who pays the price? Who takes home the money? Not the public! Not even the politicians! Bankers take home that money: they and the politicians that long ago exchanged their public beliefs for their private comfort blanket of power. All they needed was someone to blame. Varoufakis provided the blameworthy victim. The more right he is the more wrong he is painted.

The parallels are obvious. The more anti racist is Corbyn the more racist he is painted by racists. The more he advocates a fair society the more he is attacked by the beneficiaries of unfairness. Truth is smothered by lies. Instead of enquiring and explaining journalists are paid to peddle prejudice.

Varoufakis and Corbyn are the guilty ones. How dared they point out that the Emperor has no clothes? We have long known that inequality is bad for us: ultimately bad for all of us. Many times Varoufakis mentions conversations with powerful people who know this: who were fully aware of the wrongness of what they were doing to Greece. They, nevertheless, went ahead with their plans. It was as though the more cogent, coherent and comprehensive became his arguments the more resistance he encountered. Confronted by reason power erected a force field. Varoufakis is very fond of quoting from Star Trek so maybe it occurred to him that when under attack the captain of a star ship would order defensive shields to be raised. Those shields would weaken under sustained attack. In the case of Greece it seems as though the shields against reason became stronger the more that reason attempted to get through.

What, however, shall be the consequences if Varoufakis and Corbyn and others are defeated? Shall our lives be better? No, they shall be worse.

Cliff Jones, 31st. August 2018