

## IL PRINCIPE....

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*«When many alleged leaders, kill each other, over who is superior, more competent, stronger and smarter, then surely they are all nothing more than mediocre.*

*All they do is to make a spectacle out of themselves in front of their subordinates.*

*The mere appearance of the one with the natural charisma of a Leader, is enough to make the inadequate stand aside, and the subordinate bow before him».*

**Niccolo Machiavelli, 'The Prince', 1513.** (Adapted from the Greek translation)

At the time the present thoughts are being written, the presidential elections of the Republic of Cyprus have not taken place yet, the new Leader is unknown, and thus the followings, do not concern a specific person, the elected by the people president of the Republic of Cyprus, but in contrary, they concern the context, the surrounding, in which these elections are going to take place.

Going back to Machiavelli... The present pre-election battle, out of which the leader of the Republic of Cyprus will emerge, has undisputedly confirmed the first sentence of the above passage, has vehemently refuted the second one, and has left the third one to be judged in the future.

Prospective leaders fight over who is going to be the next President, the nation is desperately seeking for the right candidate to pin its hopes on, and the true Leader with a natural charisma, is nowhere to be found.

Dominions were always acquired «... either by the arms of the prince himself, or of others, or else by fortune or by ability...». These words were written by Machiavelli 500 years ago, and the upcoming presidential elections in Cyprus, will unfortunately prove him right, when the worst case scenario will occur. The candidate, who will emerge as the leader of the country, will undoubtedly have been benefited by foreign arms, arms of others, and also will have based his election- to a great extent to say the least- on fortune.

In the present presidential confrontation, three factors can be seen as foreign arms, arms of others, and at the same time as fortune, for the prospective leaders.

The first factor is, of course, the ruinous governance of the previous leader. An extremely painful governance, for both the people and the country, accompanied by a host of errors, criminal acts and/or omissions, unforgivable laxity and negligence- words that cannot bear the burden of the outgoing leader, among all others. It is without a doubt, an external factor, a factor created by the arms of others and by fortune, favorable for the candidates, who intend to be the next Leader.

Nothing could seem worse to the eyes of the people, than what has preceded. Now, every alternative - especially one that comes in a nice package, even with a faulty content - seems lifesaving. Presidential candidates are not confronted by the ghost of the competent, loved and venerable previous Leader, against whom they must prove their superior capabilities. They are only confronted by each other, all graded on a scale of mediocrity. Consequently, a previous leader, who has absconded and has left behind a nation in absolute despair, and a country in absolute decomposition, is undoubtedly a foreign weapon and a favor of fortune, beneficial for those who will claim the position of the leader soon after.

The second one, is the tremendously painful and resounding failure, of the effort of the so-called intermediate space, to identify and emerge the natural Leader, the charismatic one, who would have made, with his own weapons and abilities, both prospective leaders and people stand aside and bow. An effort with great potential, enclosing the hope of the majority - if not the whole- of the people, which unjustly failed, merely because few of its communicants - not many-, have set their personal interests and ambitions, above the interests of the people and the country, above what the national morale and consciousness -which they now earnestly evoke in their speeches, firing up the crowds, supporting moderate leaders, who will probably satisfy their personal ambitions- require.

As a result, the prioritization and over-valuation of the Ego, the lack of vision and the absence of the sense of responsibility, concluded to be a foreign weapon, an indication of fortune, which gave impetus to the candidacy of all prospective leaders, and will also support and ensure the election of one of them.

The third factor, is the so-called "crisis", and here the word refers to both the concept of the economic crisis, as well as the concept of the deeper crisis of principles and values. The "crisis", with the meaning mentioned above, is not merely a cliché phrase, used to describe a theoretical situation, is a reality that, as regards to our country, has already led to the demolition of what we would call "Well-governed State".

This situation of the total and holistic "crisis", has evoked a feeling in people, that Mr. Costas Vaxevanis has described in a beautiful way. *«.... The look of fear that no logic can filter, no hope can reverse. There is no worse fear, than an indeterminate fear. You do not know what to fear of, and you end up being afraid of everything. Shortly before the end, you fear your own fear and you end up being afraid of yourself. The streets are full of these looks. People who do not know what they should be afraid of ....».*

This deep and holistic "crisis", thus, causes us fear, and in the midst of fear and panic, we desperately try to choose a mediocre leader. But our choice is not based on the abilities, the positions, the ideas and the virtues of the mediocre candidate leaders. Our choice is guided by their superficial positions and statements, by the use of proper communication tactics, and by their successful invocations of our emotions. These feelings of ours, provoked by the "crisis", make us willing to accept mere promises as principles and values. They make us able to forget the mistakes of the past, ready to follow the attentively created and promoted image of the candidate that acts and behaves, as if he were a charismatic Leader. All these simply because fear has blurred our judgment. And so the "crisis", a foreign arm, a fatal event, has benefited the prospective presidents, and brought them closer to becoming the leader.

*«... To understand the nature of the people it needs to be a prince, and to understand that of princes it needs to be of the people...»*, wisely Machiavelli wrote five centuries ago.

And we have understood a lot. But unfortunately we remained in search for a person, to reverently place our hopes on, hopes for the present and the future, hopes for ourselves, our children, our country... We remained in front of our prospective leaders, in front of mediocre, that foreign arms and fortune benefited... We remained in seek of a Leader....