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ΕΙΣ ΜΝΗΜΗΝ ΝΤΙΝΟΥ ΛΕΒΕΝΤΗ**

ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΗΣ ΝΟΑΜ CHOMSKY

*Imminent Crises:
Social, Political, Ethical*



ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ

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ΣΚΕΠΤΙΚΟ

Ο αείμνηστος Ντίνος Λεβέντης υπήρξε μία διακεκριμένη προσωπικότητα με ανεκτίμητη συνεισφορά στην κυπριακή κοινωνία. Ως πρόεδρος του Ιδρύματος Λεβέντη, σε μία περίοδο που υπήρξε αποφασιστική για την ευρωπαϊκή πορεία της Ελλάδας και της Κύπρου, ανέδειξε τον πολιτισμό τους και διευκόλυνε την ένταξή τους στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Διεθνώς αναγνωρισμένη προσωπικότητα, διορίστηκε το 1977 ως Μόνιμος Αντιπρόσωπος της UNESCO στην Κύπρο και εργάστηκε με ζήλο για την προστασία της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς της Κύπρου και την επαναπροσέγγιση των Ελληνοκυπρίων με τους Τουρκοκυπρίους. Το 1995, ο Ντίνος Λεβέντης διορίστηκε μέλος του Συμβουλίου του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου, το οποίο βρήκε ένα σπουδαίο, δημιουργικό και σεμνό συμπαραστάτη. Ως μέλος του Συμβουλίου του Πανεπιστημίου, ο Ντίνος Λεβέντης συνέβαλε σημαντικά στη θεμελίωση της αναγκαίας υλικής και επιστημονικής υποδομής και στην επίτευξη των στόχων του Πανεπιστημίου, ώστε να αποκτήσει το ίδρυμα διεθνή παρουσία στον επιστημονικό χώρο.

Στον επικήδειο του Ντίνου Λεβέντη, η Judith Herrin ανέφερε χαρακτηριστικά: "Μιλούσε λίγο, χαμογελούσε πολύ και προέβη σε αναρίθμητες καλές πράξεις". Ήταν πολυμαθής, καλοσυνάτος και, προπάντων, σεμνός. Η σεμνότητα είναι μία λέξη που κυριαρχεί στα κείμενα που αναφέρονται στην προσωπικότητα και στον χαρακτήρα του.

Αναγνωρίζοντας την ανεκτίμητη προσφορά του σημαντικότερου αυτού ανθρώπου, που απεβίωσε το 2002, η Σύγκλητος του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου αποφάσισε να καθιερώσει ετήσια διάλεξη εις μνήμην του, που θα πραγματοποιείται περί τα μέσα Μαΐου, στο πλαίσιο των επίσημων εορτασμών του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου για την Ημέρα της Ευρώπης. Οι ομιλητές, διακεκριμένες προσωπικότητες, θα προσκαλούνται στην έδρα του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου και τα κείμενα των διαλέξεών τους θα εκδίδονται σε ειδικό τεύχος. Έτσι, το Πανεπιστήμιο θα διατηρήσει ζωντανή και θα τιμά τη μνήμη ενός ευπατρίδη της Ευρώπης, που συνέτεινε όσο λίγοι στην πρόοδο του ανώτατου πνευματικού ιδρύματος της ιδιαίτερης πατρίδας του.





ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΥΤΑΝΗ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟΥ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΗ ΣΤΑΥΡΟΥ Α. ΖΕΝΙΟΥ

Ευχαριστώντας σας εκ μέρους της πανεπιστημιακής κοινότητας, που έχετε έρθει απόψε εδώ, για να γιορτάσουμε μαζί την Ημέρα της Ευρώπης, ενθουμούμενοι τον Ντίνο Λεβέντη, επιτρέψτε μου να σας καλωσορίσω με ένα απόσπασμα από το έργο «Διανοούμενοι και Εξουσία» του Παλαιστίνιου ακαδημαϊκού Edward W. Said:

Το ζητούμενο δεν είναι η άσκηση κριτικής επί της κυβερνητικής πολιτικής. Αλλά η αντίληψη της κλίσης του διανοουμένου ως κατάστασης συνεχούς επιφυλακής και διαρκούς επιθυμίας, να μην επιτραπεί στις μισές αλήθειες και τις 'κοινώς παραδεδεγμένες' απόψεις να συμπαρασύρουν τους ανθρώπους.

Όταν η Σύγκλητος καθιέρωσε πριν από τρία χρόνια την Ετήσια Διάλεξη εις Μνήμην Ντίνου Λεβέντη, είχε βεβαίως υπόψη της την απόδοση τιμής προς τον επιτυχημένο επιχειρηματία, τον ευαίσθητο περιβαλλοντολόγο και τον αρχιτέκτονα της προβολής του πολιτισμού της Κύπρου, τον άνθρωπο που υπηρέτησε το Πανεπιστήμιο από της ίδρυσής του μέχρι τον πρόωρο θάνατό του ως ο προστάτης της Ερευνητικής Μονάδας Αρχαιολογίας, ο εμπνευστής των ερευνητικών προγραμμάτων του Ιδρύματος Λεβέντη, ο φιλόanthρωπος που στήριξε μέλη του προσωπικού σε δύσκολες στιγμές.

Αλλά, κυρίως, η σειρά των διαλέξεων – που προσφέρονται από διακεκριμένους στοχαστές από τον παγκόσμιο χώρο των επιστημών, των τεχνών, των θρησκειών ή της πολιτικής – αποτελεί την ανταπόκρισή μας στη φωνή του Ντίνου Λεβέντη. Ο οποίος μας θύμιζε πάντοτε, με λίγες προσεκτικά επιλεγμένες φράσεις, την υψηλή αποστολή του Πανεπιστημίου ως του πρώτου ανώτατου εκπαιδευτικού ιδρύματος της χώρας. Και υποδείκνυε τις βαριές μας ευθύνες έναντι της κυπριακής κοινωνίας.

Για τη φετινή διάλεξη έχουμε προσκαλέσει τον άνθρωπο που με αξιοζήλευτη συνέπεια, σπάνιο θάρρος και αταλάντευτη εντιμότητα ενσαρκώνει τον κριτικό διανοούμενο της εποχής μας όσο κανένας άλλος. Τον γνωστό στοχαστή και διακεκριμένο επιστήμονα Noam Chomsky. Τον οποίο και ευχαριστώ θερμά για την εδώ παρουσία του.

Η επιλογή του συγκεκριμένου ομιλητή για την Τρίτη Ετήσια Διάλεξη αναδεικνύει τον ρόλο που καλείται να διαδραματίσει το Πανεπιστήμιο για τη δική μας κοινωνία: Ο Noam Chomsky αποτελεί, σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, υπόδειγμα συμπεριφοράς! Το οποίο, ως Πανεπιστήμιο, επιδιώκουμε να υιοθετήσουμε.

Όταν ο Noam Chomsky παρατηρεί ότι η επιλεκτική καταπολέμηση της τρομοκρατίας ενορχηστρώνει με άκρατο κυνισμό την άσκηση βίας των δυτικών χωρών, ή χαρακτηρίζει τον ρόλο των μέσων μαζικής ενημέρωσης στις φιλελεύθερες δημοκρατίες ως μηχανισμούς κατασκευής της κοινής γνώμης και μεταποίησης της σε συναίνεση, ή υπερασπίζεται το δικαίωμα του Γάλλου καθηγητή Forison όπως εκφράζει ελεύθερα τις ακραίες, ομολογουμένως, θέσεις του ... δεν επιζητεί την άσκηση κριτικής επί οποιασδήποτε πολιτικής. Αλλά, επιδιώκει όπως φωτίσει τη συχνά παραγνωρισμένη τρίτη διάσταση του κάθε θέματος.



ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΥΤΑΝΗ

Και εμείς, όταν υπερασπιζόμαστε την αυτονομία του Πανεπιστημίου της χώρας, αντιστεκόμενοι στον περιορισμό της με νομοθετικές ρυθμίσεις, ή καθορίζουμε κριτήρια εισδοχής φοιτητών που διασφαλίζουν τον ρόλο του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου ως κέντρου αριστείας, ή υποδεικνύουμε ότι τα προγράμματα σπουδών δεν προσφέρονται με μόνο κριτήριο την αγορά εργασίας δεν επιζητούμε την άσκηση κριτικής. Αλλά, ανταποκρινόμαστε στον ρόλο μας ως η σωκράτεια αλογόμυγα της πόλης, η οποία προκαλεί, προβληματίζει και εισάγει 'καινά δαιμόνια' στην κοινωνία μας.

Όταν αντιλέγουμε ή θέτουμε ενοχλητικά ερωτήματα σε δημόσιο επίπεδο, τότε ακολουθούμε την κλίση του διανοουμένου όπως βρίσκεται σε κατάσταση συνεχούς επιφυλακής, για να μην επιτραπεί στις «μισές αλήθειες» και τις «κοινώς παραδεγμένες» απόψεις να συμπαρασύρουν την κοινωνία μας.

Τότε γινόμαστε συνοδοιπόροι του Noam Chomsky, τον οποίο θα τιμήσουμε αύριο απονέμοντάς του τον τίτλο του Επίτιμου Διδάκτορα του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου, και ο οποίος μας τιμά απόψε με την εδώ παρουσία του.

Ακολουθώντας με συνέπεια τον δύσκολο δρόμο του διανοουμένου φιλοδοξούμε, όπως το έθεσε ο μεγάλος ριζοσπάστης στοχαστής, να γίνουμε «παράγοντες ηθικής» και όχι «υπηρέτες της εξουσίας».

Τιμούμε τότε με έργα, και όχι μόνο με λόγια, τον αποψινό τιμώμενο, τον αείμνηστο Ντίνο Λεβέντη.





**INTRODUCTION TO NOAM CHOMSKY
BY DR KLEANTHES K. GROHMANN,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
OF THEORETICAL LINGUISTICS**

I believe I can speak for the entire academic and administrative community of the University of Cyprus stating that it is a great honour for us to welcome Professor Noam Chomsky, Institute Professor at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to present this year's Leventis Lecture, the third lecture in memory of Dino Leventis.

As the Courtauld Institute of Arts put it in its spring 2003 newsletter, Dino Leventis – who unfortunately passed away a year before my wife Joy and I moved to Cyprus – "oversaw a wide-ranging programme of support for education, research, conservation, and publication." And "although the principal areas of support focus on Hellenic history and culture, the Foundation can look back on achievements in other areas as well," which we might describe here as 'humanistic'. And humanistic, Noam Chomsky certainly is – in more than one sense of the meaning of the word.

To some, Noam Chomsky is known as a linguist, the founder of generative grammar and instigator of the 'cognitive revolution' in the mid-1950s and the subsequent development of the biolinguistic approach to human language, which gave rise to the interdisciplinary study of cognitive science and its creation as an academic discipline. We will hear more about this tomorrow, when the University of Cyprus is going to award Professor Chomsky with an honorary doctorate.

To many people, however, Noam Chomsky is known for quite different achievements. Ever since the 10-year-old Noam Chomsky wrote an editorial in his school newspaper of the fall of Barcelona in the Spanish Civil War some 67 years ago, he has been a keen observer of current political events and social injustices, and has put them to paper or made himself heard in many other ways. It is this part of Noam's life that appeals to many – his outspokenness, his continuous fight for the disadvantaged, his honest and rigorous research and dismantling of fact and fiction in the media, in political discourse and action, and in intellectual thought.

As human beings, we can count ourselves fortunate to have had people like Noam Chomsky as fighters on the humanistic forefront in the difficult second half of the 20th century, and even more so in the beginnings of a rather strange 21st century. There is simply too much to say about Noam's activist life to squeeze into the five or ten minutes I have to introduce him, so I will simply present three of my favourite Chomskyan catch phrases.

- "Manufacture of Consent" – Originally coined by the early 20th-century US liberal Walter Lippmann, the title of the 1988 book by Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, and employed in the documentary *Manufacturing Consent* by two Canadian filmmakers from the early 1990s, the notion of "manufacturing consent" is closely tied to Noam Chomsky's active role as media commentator and analyst as well as sniffer-outer of non-violent state and media propaganda, within the United States but also outside.
- "Culture of Terrorism" – Personally, I construe this phrase, also the title of one of Noam's books from 1988, with many aspects of US foreign policy and world hegemony, be it in Central America as in the mid-1980s or in other parts of the world, including the US itself. Noam's unyielding efforts in uncovering these facts and acts is in itself an admirable



achievement. Shockingly, this kind of activity is necessary even today, 15 years after the end of the Cold War, over 30 years after Vietnam, and well after other landmarks in Noam Chomsky's most famous writings and devastating critiques.

- "Responsibility of Intellectuals" – Apart from an essentially Cartesian philosophy, Noam also follows the humanistic footsteps of the Enlightenment thinker Wilhelm von Humboldt who defined the institution university, and here I'm quoting from Milan Rai's *Chomsky's Politics*, as "nothing other than the spiritual life of those human beings who are moved by external leisure or internal pressures toward learning and research." Noam Chomsky's addition is that "[t]he extent to which existing institutional forms permit these human needs to be satisfied provides one measure on the level of civilization that a society has achieved." To continue with Rai, "Responsibility of Intellectuals" is not only the title of Chomsky's first adult political essay, it is also "at the heart of his political writings" – as Chomsky put it, "[i]t is the responsibility of intellectuals to speak the truth and expose lies."

In the linguistics community it is sometimes rumoured – jokingly, of course – that there must be many Chomskys. One Noam Chomsky couldn't possibly be the brilliant linguist churning out article after article and book after book, one might say. And then there is the political activist jetting across the globe to be heard but also to listen, giving an enormous number of speeches and interviews, relentlessly fighting for the underdogs and the oppressed, of whom there are too many in this world to make it a truly happy place.

Or think of the Noam Chomsky who replies to virtually every letter and email sent to him. In fact, when I was a first-semester undergraduate student at the University of Wales, I sat down one winter night, after reading Raphael Salkie's biographical



introduction, *The Chomsky Update*, where the last sentence seems to be embedded in my mind as encouraging the reader to write to Chomsky (though after double-checking this a few days ago, I could not find any evidence for this encouragement) and I penned a brief letter – in my terrible handwriting, two or three pages long, quizzing him on his thoughts on how efforts of nationalistic identity in minority states could possibly be brought in line with an essentially anarchist belief system. Well, less than two weeks later I received a type-written two-page letter from one of those Noam Chomskys whose job it must be to reply to all the fan mail.

Amazingly, it read just like anything else Chomsky writes. All these Noam Chomskys must thus be well synchronized, so that each one can copy his style to perfection. If one considers lastly that Noam Chomsky, from what one hears, is also a dedicated family man and has been so successfully for a long time, in spite of his fulfilled academic and activist life, the ‘many-Chomskys’ hypothesis seems hardly plausible.

I thus interpret these observations to mean that we have here with us tonight a man dedicated to academic excellence, political activism, relentless fighting, and, of course, life itself, within the family and beyond. Noam Chomsky is then a wonderful testimony to the human power that we all have, but that some of us could try to access a little harder: each one of us can make the world a better place. Noam has been on this path for a long time and will, I’m sure, continue treading it. If anything, let the next 40 minutes or so sink in and decide for yourselves which line you want to adopt.

I now give you: Noam Chomsky!





**IMMINENT CRISES:
SOCIAL, POLITICAL, ETHICAL
BY PROFESSOR NOAM CHOMSKY**

I would like to say a few words about some imminent crises, and what can be done about them: 5 crises, to be more precise. Two of them should be at the top of everyone's agenda of concern, because human survival is at stake. Two others are by far at the peak of popular concern, so polls reveal. The fifth is a crisis of the dominant moral and intellectual culture. It is scarcely discussed at all, but I think it is at the root of the other four, and should be of particular concern to people like us – people who are called "intellectuals," a term that means that we enjoy sufficient privilege and resources to have ample opportunities, and may choose to use these opportunities to enter into the public arena in one or another fashion.

The two crises that literally threaten human survival are nuclear war and environmental catastrophe. The former is extremely serious, and extensively discussed, but primarily within narrow professional circles. Their conclusions are dire. In the journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, prominent strategic analysts warn that Washington's "transformation of the military," vastly expanding offensive capacity and militarizing space, carries "an appreciable risk of ultimate doom" – and they call for a coalition of peace-loving states to counter Washington's aggressive militarism – led by China! We have come to a pretty pass when such thoughts are expressed at the heart of the establishment. Former defense secretary Robert McNamara sees the likelihood of "Apocalypse soon" if these policies are pursued. Senator Sam Nunn, a highly respected conservative who has been in the forefront of efforts to prevent nuclear war, warns of "an Armageddon of our own making" unless serious steps are taken to reverse the current course. Many others agree. The threats are well

understood, and are being consciously enhanced; the Iraq invasion is only the most glaring example. Not of course because that outcome is desired by the political leadership, but because survival of the species does not rank high among their priorities; or the priorities of the general intellectual community, judging by the attention devoted to these matters.

Former NATO planner Michael McGwire, writing in Britain's leading journal of international affairs, joins others in outlining the reasons why under current policies, "a nuclear exchange is ultimately inevitable." Comparing the two crises that literally threaten survival, McGwire has this to say: "By comparison with global warming, the cost of eliminating nuclear weapons would be small. But the catastrophic results of global nuclear war would greatly exceed those of progressive climate change, because the effects would be instantaneous and could not be mitigated. The irony of the situation is that it is in our power to eliminate the threat of global nuclear war, but climate change cannot be evaded."

He is right on both counts. Means to end the threat of nuclear war are known, and the required steps are even a binding legal obligation, but the only force that can compel states to undertake that obligation is an aroused public. And though climate change cannot be evaded, we can make its effects much worse – and perhaps catastrophic even within the next few generations – by failing to deal with it appropriately now.

With these pathetically inadequate observations about the very real risk to decent survival of the species, let's turn to the two crises that are the peak of current concern: Iraq and Iran. The crises are severe, and could easily escalate. There are also opportunities to mitigate them, but they will not be pursued unless they are openly and frankly discussed, and I think they are not – which leads to the fifth crisis, within the intellectual and moral culture of the privileged.

It is hardly a secret that Iraq and Iran are of great concern to the West because they are at the heart of the world's major energy reserves, recognized by Washington 60 years ago to be a "stupendous source of strategic power," the "strategically most important area of the



world," and "one of the greatest material prizes in world history." Naturally, Washington was dedicated to control this stupendous prize, in large part because such control provides "critical leverage" against industrial rivals, European and Asian, in the terminology of planners. Zbigniew Brzezinski in this case, referring to gains from a successful occupation of Iraq, echoing thoughts of George Kennan in the early post-World War II years, when he recommended that control over Middle East oil would provide the US with "veto power" over rivals. As elsewhere, the primary threat to such control has been indigenous nationalism, which might pursue an independent course. For years, the pretext was that the threat was Russia, but that was a routine reflex all over the world and rarely stands up to scrutiny. In this case we need hardly consider it, since it has been officially abandoned. When the Berlin Wall fell, and the Soviet pretext was no longer useful, the Bush #1 administration released a new National Security Strategy, explaining that everything would go on as before but for new reasons – pretexts, to be more accurate. The huge military system is no longer meant to contain Russia, but has to be expanded because of the "technological sophistication of third world powers." And the US must maintain its intervention forces aimed at the Middle East, where "the threat to our interests ... could not be laid at the Kremlin's door," contrary to decades of fabrication. As is normal, all of this passed without comment – another illustration of the fifth crisis.

Policies towards the Eastern Mediterranean evolved within the same framework. Planners have regarded the region as part of the system of control of Middle East petroleum and its distribution to the industrial world. Turkey has provided major military bases for operations directed to the Gulf region, and is serving that purpose right now. That is why such fury was aroused in the US government and media when the Turkish government followed the will of 95% of the population and refused to play its assigned role in the invasion of Iraq – a demonstration of the sincerity of Washington's devotion to democracy which, as is conventional, did not sully the reverence for the "messianic mission" declared by the leader. US intervention in Greece in 1947 was motivated in large part by concern over "the possible loss of the petroleum resources of the Middle East" if the



revolt against the right-wing government imposed by British military force was not crushed – I am quoting the CIA – and those concerns persisted right through Washington's support for the only restoration of fascism in Europe, in 1967. Greece remained within the Near East section of the State Department until the US-backed fascist regime was overthrown in 1974. Cyprus was a major British military and intelligence base, used for the overthrow of the parliamentary government of Iran in 1953, the Suez invasion in 1956, and US-UK military actions in response to the 1958 coup in Iraq, the first break in their control over this stupendous source of strategic power. As British Prime Minister Anthony Eden put it, without Cyprus, Britain would have "no certain facilities to protect our oil," with dire consequences at home. Our oil, which happens to be in someone else's country. Again the stand is routine. A few years earlier, George Kennan had urged that "the protection of our resources" must be a major concern, and since the main threat is indigenous, we must realize that "the final answer might be an unpleasant one," namely, "police repression by the local government." Kennan as you know was at the extreme liberal humanist end of the planning spectrum, soon removed in favor of harsher figures.

In recent years the system of military bases and regional gendarmes has extended far more widely, particularly in the last few years, with essentially the same goals. Crete is a major US air and military base, used for current and perhaps imminent military attacks.

In the torrent of discussion about the problem of Iraq, the most crucial questions, such as these, are systematically evaded. The same was true throughout the wars in Indochina, and still is today, in commentary and even scholarship. In the Iraq case, the issues are much more far-reaching. Basic US war aims in Vietnam could be achieved merely by violence. In the terminology of planners, Vietnam was a "contagious example" of independent development that could "infect others," leading to erosion of US domination of the region and maybe even loss of Japan. The solution was to destroy the virus and to "inoculate" the region by imposing brutal tyrannies. That was effectively achieved, with extraordinary savagery that does not register in Western intellectual culture and consciousness. But



nothing like that is possible in Iraq. Analogies are commonly drawn between the two cases, but only by keeping to the approved doctrinal framework of benign intentions undermined by mistakes, rather in the manner of the Soviet press during the invasion of Afghanistan – another illustration of the fifth crisis.

Putting aside doctrinal blinders, what should be done in Iraq? Before answering, we should be clear about some basic principles. The major principle is that an invader has no rights, only responsibilities. The first responsibility is to pay reparations. The second responsibility is to follow the will of the victims.

The responsibility to pay reparations to Iraqis goes far beyond the crime of aggression and its terrible aftermath. The US and Britain have been torturing the population of Iraq for a long time. Recent history alone – and that is far from all – includes their support for Saddam Hussein during his worst crimes and after the end of the war with Iran, then again after the Gulf War of 1991, when the conquerors effectively authorized Saddam to crush the Shiite rebellion that might have overthrown him, for reasons that were frankly explained: the NY Times reported that there was a "strikingly unanimous view" among the US and its allies Britain and Saudi Arabia that "whatever the sins of the Iraqi leader, he offered the West and the region a better hope for his country's stability than did those who have suffered his repression"; the term "stability" is a code word for "following orders." An unthinkable option – then and now – is that Iraqis should rule Iraq independently of the US. Then followed the murderous sanctions regime imposed by the US and Britain, which killed 100s of 1000s of people and devastated Iraqi civilian society, strengthened the tyrant and forced the population to rely on him for survival, and probably saved him from the fate of other vicious tyrants, some quite comparable to Saddam, who were overthrown from within despite strong support from the US and UK to the end of their bloody rule. All of those actions, and much more, call for reparations, on a massive scale, and complicity in crimes extends to other great powers as well. But the deep moral/intellectual crisis of Western society prevents any thought of such topics as these.



The second responsibility of invaders is to obey the will of the population. British and US polls provide sufficient evidence about that. The most recent polls found that 87% of Iraqis want a "concrete timeline for US withdrawal," up from 76% a year earlier. If the polls really mean Iraqis, as the reports in the press say, that would imply that virtually the entire population of Arab Iraq, where the US and British army are deployed, want a firm timetable for withdrawal. I doubt that one would have found comparable figures in occupied Europe under the Nazis, or Eastern Europe under Russian rule.

Bush-Blair and associates declare, however, that there can be no timetable for withdrawal. That stand in part reflects the natural dislike for democracy among the powerful. But rejection of the popular will in Iraq goes far beyond that. Simply consider the policies that are likely to be pursued by an independent and more or less democratic Iraq. Iraqis may have no love for Iran, but they would doubtless prefer friendly relations with their powerful neighbor. The Shi'ite majority has ties to Iran and has been moving to strengthen them. Furthermore, even limited sovereignty in Iraq has encouraged efforts by the harshly repressed Shi'ite population right across the border in Saudi Arabia to gain basic rights and perhaps autonomy. That is where most of Saudi oil happens to be. Such developments might lead to a loose Shi'ite alliance controlling the world's major energy resources and independent of Washington, the ultimate nightmare for planners – except that it might get worse: the alliance might strengthen its economic and possibly military ties with China. The US can intimidate Europe: when Washington shakes its fist, leading European business enterprises pull out of Iran. But China refuses to be intimidated. They have a 4000-year history of contempt for the barbarians. That is the basic reason for Washington's strategic concerns with regard to China: not that it is a military threat, but that it poses the threat of independence, unacceptable for small countries like Cuba or Vietnam, and certainly so for the heartland of the most dynamic economic region in the world, the country that has just surpassed Japan in possession of the world's major financial reserves and at current growth rates will match the scale of the US economy in a decade, using the correct measures.



In brief, some measure of sovereignty and democracy in Iraq could easily lead to the collapse of one of the highest foreign policy objectives of the US since World War II: control of the world's major energy resources. The desperate US-UK efforts to prevent authentic sovereignty and democracy are readily understandable.

The lively debate about exit strategies means very little unless such realities as these are confronted. They are ignored, in accord with a leading principle of intellectual life: what Hans Morgenthau, the founder of modern international relations theory, described as our "conformist subservience to those in power." That sets narrow bounds for debate. When the Russians invade Afghanistan, or Saddam invades Kuwait, no one has any hesitation in condemning it as criminal aggression, and attributing to them rational strategic-economic objectives, such as access to Middle East energy resources. When the US and UK invade Iraq, such issues are off the table. The goals were noble, if misguided, and the term "aggression" is unspeakable. That is common practice: Vietnam is another striking case: even 45 years after the Kennedy administration directly and brutally attacked South Vietnam, the word "aggression" cannot be spoken. With the most marginal exceptions, debate is narrowly confined to the spectrum bounded by the hawks, for whom the war was a "noble cause" that could have been won with sufficient will, and the doves, for whom it began with "blundering efforts to do good" though by 1969 it had become clear "that the intervention had been a disastrous mistake," that the US "was in a position where it could not impose a solution except at a price too costly to itself." I am quoting Anthony Lewis in the New York Times, at the dissident extreme of commentary. Of some interest is the fact that in that same year, 1969, 70% of the American population regarded the war as "not a mistake" but "fundamentally wrong and immoral," apparently unable to adopt the proper stance of conformist subservience to power.

We return here to the fifth crisis. One of its salient features is rejection of the most elementary of moral principles: the principle of universality, which holds that we apply to ourselves the same standards we apply to others, if not more stringent ones. Thanks to



the firm rejection of that principle, it cannot be that we commit aggression, declared at Nuremberg to be the "supreme international crime, differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole" – all the evil in the tortured land of Iraq that flowed from the US-UK invasion. But that cannot enter into debate – unlike the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, and other crimes of enemies, easily characterized as criminal aggression, war crimes.

It is not that the concept of "aggression" is ill-defined. Quite the contrary, it was defined clearly enough by US Justice Jackson, Chief of Counsel for the Prosecution at Nuremberg, in terms that apply unequivocally to the invasions of Vietnam and Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait, and many others. Justice Jackson also eloquently affirmed the principle of universality. In sentencing Nazi war criminals to death, he stated that "If certain acts of violation of treaties are crimes, they are crimes whether the United States does them or whether Germany does them, and we are not prepared to lay down a rule of criminal conduct against others which we would not be willing to have invoked against us We must never forget that the record on which we judge these defendants is the record on which history will judge us tomorrow. To pass these defendants a poisoned chalice is to put it to our own lips as well." But the moral and intellectual crisis of the educated classes in the West places such thoughts under a strict ban; not by law, or by state power, but by conformist subservience to power.

Let us turn next to Iran and its nuclear programs, and consider a few facts that should be in the forefront of debate but are scarcely to be found. To begin, until 1979 Washington strongly supported these programs. During those years, of course, Iran was ruled by the brutal tyrant installed by the US-UK military coup that overthrew the Iranian parliamentary government. Today, the standard claim is that Iran has no need for nuclear power. Henry Kissinger explained that "For an oil producer such as Iran, nuclear energy is a wasteful use of resources," so they must be developing nuclear weapons. As Secretary of State 30 years ago, Kissinger held that "introduction of nuclear power will both provide for the growing needs of Iran's economy and free



remaining oil reserves for export or conversion to petrochemicals," and the US acted to assist the Shah's efforts, untroubled by his horrendous human rights record and conquests. The most enthusiastic advocates of an Iranian nuclear power program were Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, joined by Paul Wolfowitz and other top Bush administration planners. US universities were arranging to train Iranian nuclear engineers, doubtless with Washington's approval, if not initiative; my own university, for example, despite overwhelming student opposition. Today the Cheney-Rumsfeld regime has made it clear that not even the slightest step towards developing nuclear energy will be tolerated.

The Iranian nuclear programs, as far as is known, fall within the country's rights under Article IV of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which grants non-nuclear states the right to produce fuel for nuclear energy. The Bush administration argues, however, that Article IV should be strengthened, and I think that makes sense. When the NPT came into force in 1970, there was a considerable gap between producing fuel for energy and for nuclear weapons. But with contemporary technology, the gap has been narrowed. However, any such revision of Article IV would have to ensure "unimpeded access" for nonmilitary use, in accord with the initial bargain. A reasonable proposal was put forth by Mohammed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency: that all production and processing of weapon-usable material be placed under international control, accompanied, "above all, by an assurance that legitimate would-be users could get their supplies." That should be the first step, he proposed, towards fully implementing the 1993 UN resolution calling for a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FISSBAN), which bans production of fissile materials by states. ElBaradei's proposal, regrettably, was dead in the water. The US political leadership, surely in its current stance, would never accept an international authority. ElBaradei's proposal has been accepted by only one state, to my knowledge: Iran, last February. That suggests one way to resolve the current crisis – in fact, a far more serious crisis: continued production of fissile materials by individual states is likely to doom humanity to destruction.



Washington also strenuously opposes the FISSBAN treaty, regarded by specialists as "the most fundamental nuclear arms proposal." Despite US opposition, in November 2004 the UN Disarmament Committee voted in favor of a verifiable FISSBAN. The vote was 147 to 1, with 2 abstentions: Israel, which is reflexive, and Britain, which is more interesting. The British ambassador explained that Britain supported the treaty, but could not vote for this version, because it "divided the international community" – divided it 147 to 1.

We gain some insight into the ranking of survival of the species among the priorities of the leadership of the hegemonic power and its spear-carrier. As usual, the vote was not reported, and all of this is unknown, apart from activists and dissidents, and specialists on arms control. More evidence about the fifth crisis.

In 2004, the European Union and Iran reached an agreement on nuclear issues: Iran agreed to temporarily suspend its legal activities of uranium enrichment, and the EU agreed to provide Iran with "firm commitments on security issues." As everyone understands, the phrase "security issues" refers to the very credible US-Israeli threats and preparations to attack Iran. These are no small matter for a country that has been tortured for 50 years without a break by the global superpower, which now occupies the countries on Iran's borders, not to speak of the client state that is the regional superpower, even apart from its hundreds of nuclear weapons.

Iran lived up to its side of the bargain, but the EU, under US pressure, abandoned its commitments. Iran finally abandoned the bargain as well. The preferred version in the West is that Iran broke the agreement, proving that it is a serious threat to world order.

In May 2003, Iran had offered to discuss security matters with the US, which refused, preferring to follow the same course it did with North Korea. On taking office in January 2001, the administration withdrew the 'no hostile intent' condition of earlier agreements and proceeded to issue serious threats, while also abandoning promises to provide fuel oil and nuclear reactor. In reaction, North Korea returned to developing nuclear weapons, the roots of another current crisis. All predictable, and predicted.



There are ways to mitigate and probably end these crises. The first is to call off the threats that are virtually urging Iran (and North Korea) to develop nuclear weapons. One of Israel's leading military historians, Martin van Creveld, wrote that if Iran is not developing nuclear weapons, then they are "crazy," immediately after Washington demonstrated that it will attack anyone it likes as long as they are known to be defenseless. So the first step towards ending the crisis would be to call off the threats that are likely to lead potential targets to develop a deterrent – nuclear weapons or terror, the only viable options they have.

A second step would be to join with other efforts to reintegrate Iran into the global economy. A third step would be to join the rest of the world in accepting the FISSBAN treaty, and to join Iran in accepting ElBaradei's proposal, or something similar – and I repeat that the issue here extends far beyond Iran, and reaches the level of human survival, quite literally. A fourth step would be to live up to Article VI of the NPT, which obligates the nuclear states to take "good faith" efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons, a binding legal obligation, as the World Court determined. None of the nuclear states has lived up to that obligation, but the US is far in the lead in violating it – again, a very serious threat to human survival. Even steps in these directions would mitigate the upcoming crisis with Iran. Above all, it is important to heed the words of Mohammed ElBaradei: "There is no military solution to this situation. It is inconceivable. The only durable solution is a negotiated solution." And it is within reach, though not until barriers on discussion of crucial issues are overcome.

Let us return to the principle of universality, perhaps the most elementary of moral principles, and the foundation of any version of just war theory that can possibly be taken seriously. Justice Jackson's remarks, which I cited above, are one critically important affirmation of the principle – rejected, with virtual unanimity, in our intellectual culture. There are other important affirmations of the principle that suffer the same fate. One critical case has to do with the basic problem of world order: the justification for the use of force in international affairs. The modern regime of world order is based on the UN Charter, which bans the threat or use of force unless



authorized by the Security Council or in self-defense against armed attack until the Security Council acts. The phrase "armed attack" is conventionally interpreted in terms of Daniel Webster's principle, which extends it to cases where "the necessity for action is instant, overwhelming, and leaving no choice of means, and no moment of deliberation." Any other resort to force is a war crime, in fact the "supreme international crime." In 2004, a High Level UN panel was convened to consider the adequacy of these provisions in today's world, including leading Western figures, among others former US National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and the distinguished Australian diplomat Gareth Evans, head of the International Crisis Group. The Panel concluded that the restrictions on the rule of force in the Charter should be neither rewritten nor reinterpreted. Its conclusions were reaffirmed at the UN Global Summit last September. Neither the review panel nor the Summit granted any new "right of intervention" to individual states or regional alliances, whether under humanitarian or other professed grounds, nor established any "responsibility to protect," contrary to what was widely alleged in commentary.

The High Level Panel added that "For those impatient with [reaffirming the Charter], the answer must be that, in a world full of perceived potential threats, the risk to the global order and the norm of nonintervention on which it continues to be based is simply too great for the legality of unilateral preventive action, as distinct from collectively endorsed action, to be accepted. Allowing one to so act is to allow all."

In endorsing the elementary moral principle of universality, the Panel surely had in mind prevailing intellectual opinion in the West. The end of the last millennium must have been one of the low points in the generally dismal history of intellectuals. In the US and Europe, respected voices reveled in the "normative revolution" underway, as US foreign policy had entered into a "noble phase" with a "saintly glow." For the first time in history a state was dedicated to "principles and values," acting from "altruism" alone. At last the "enlightened states" would undertake their "responsibility to protect" the suffering everywhere, led by the "idealistic New World bent on ending



inhumanity." I am quoting only from the left-liberal end of the deluge in the US and Europe, including the most respected voices. The illustrations offered collapse under the slightest examination, and during those years, the idealistic New World and its European allies were conducting some of the most horrendous atrocities of those ugly years, all suppressed with impressive efficiency. But none of that matters in a disciplined intellectual culture.

Of the major crises that confront the human species, perhaps the most severe is the crisis of the moral and intellectual culture among elite sectors of the most powerful states. There are others who commit worse crimes, and it is convenient to focus on them, not those for which we are responsible and can therefore easily bring to an end. Furthermore, Western power alone can deal constructively with the two Middle East crises that are the current chief concern in Western state practice and doctrine, and the two vastly more serious crises that literally threaten human survival, imminently.



ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟ ΒΙΟΓΡΑΦΙΚΟ ΤΟΥ NOAM CHOMSKY

Ο καθηγητής Noam Chomsky έλαβε διδακτορικό δίπλωμα στη Γλωσσολογία από το Πανεπιστήμιο της Πενσυλβανίας το 1955. Υπήρξε υπότροφος του Πανεπιστημίου του Χάρβαρντ από το 1951 μέχρι το 1955 και, έπειτα, έγινε μέλος του ακαδημαϊκού προσωπικού του Ινστιτούτου Τεχνολογίας της Μασαχουσέτης (MIT). Το 1961 διορίστηκε τακτικός καθηγητής στο Τμήμα Σύγχρονων Γλωσσών και Γλωσσολογίας, το οποίο σήμερα ονομάζεται Τμήμα Γλωσσολογίας και Φιλοσοφίας. Από το 1966 μέχρι το 1976 κατείχε την Έδρα *Ferrari P. Ward* στις Σύγχρονες Γλώσσες και τη Γλωσσολογία και το 1976 διορίστηκε καθηγητής του Ινστιτούτου.

Με το έργο του, ο Noam Chomsky έθεσε ήδη, από τη δεκαετία του 1950, τις βάσεις της γνωστικής επιστήμης και της σύγχρονης θεωρίας της γλωσσολογίας, καθώς και τα θεμέλια για την έρευνα του επιστημονικού πεδίου που έγινε ευρέως γνωστό ως Γενετική Γραμματική (*generative grammar*), με την εξέλιξη της οποίας ασχολήθηκε ενεργά.

Πάνω από είκοσι πανεπιστημιακά ιδρύματα διεθνώς απένειμαν στον Noam Chomsky τον τίτλο του επίτιμου Διδάκτορα. Είναι μέλος της Αμερικανικής Ακαδημίας Γραμμάτων και Επιστημών, της Εθνικής Ακαδημίας Επιστημών των ΗΠΑ, καθώς και πληθώρας άλλων επαγγελματικών και ακαδημαϊκών συλλόγων. Έλαβε πολυάριθμες τιμητικές διακρίσεις και έδωσε διαλέξεις ανά το παγκόσμιο σε θέματα που αφορούν στη Γλωσσολογία, τη Φιλοσοφία, την ιστορία της Διανόησης, αλλά και τις Διεθνείς Σχέσεις και την εξωτερική πολιτική των Ηνωμένων Πολιτειών της Αμερικής. Είναι συγγραφέας πολλών βιβλίων και εκατοντάδων άρθρων και έχουν ήδη εκδοθεί αρκετές βιογραφίες, που παρουσιάζουν τη ζωή και το έργο του.





ΠΑΡΑΡΤΗΜΑ

Συνεντεύξεις του Noam Chomsky σε κυπριακές εφημερίδες

Όπως ήταν αναμενόμενο, η επίσκεψη του καθηγητή Noam Chomsky στην Κύπρο έτυχε ιδιαίτερης προβολής σε όλα τα μέσα μαζικής επικοινωνίας.

Ξεχωρίζουν τρεις συνεντεύξεις που παραχώρησε ο διακεκριμένος επιστήμονας σε ισάριθμες εφημερίδες. Παρατίθενται στο παράρτημα με την έγκριση των δημοσιογράφων, που πήραν τις συνεντεύξεις.

Το Πανεπιστήμιο ευχαριστεί τους Χρύσανθο Χρυσάνθου, δημοσιογράφο στην εφημερίδα *Ο Φιλελεύθερος*, τον Paul Θεοδούλου, αρχισυντάκτη στην περιοδική έκδοση *Global Dialogue* και τον Μενέλαο Χατζηκωστή, συντάκτη στην εφημερίδα *Cyprus Weekly* για την ευγενή τους χειρονομία να επιτρέψουν την επαναδημοσίευση των συνεντεύξεων σε αυτόν τον τόμο.



Ο κορυφαίος αμφισβητίας διανοητής Νόαμ Τσόμσκι μιλά στον Φιλελεύθερο

Ημερομηνία δημοσίευσης: Κυριακή, 21 Μαΐου 2006

Πρεσβεύουν την κουλτούρα του πολέμου

«Δύο ώρες διαύγειας» τιτλοφορείται ένα πρόσφατο βιβλίο, το οποίο περιλαμβάνει συνομιλίες με τον Νόαμ Τσόμσκι. Έχουν κυκλοφορήσει πολλά παρόμοια βιβλία, σε σημείο που να διερωτάσαι πόσο ανεξάντλητος μπορεί να είναι ένας άνθρωπος. Ο γράφων είχε τη δυνατότητα για μια 20λεπτη συνομιλία με τον Νόαμ Τσόμσκι, τον επιστήμονα ο οποίος διέπρεψε όχι μόνο στη Γλωσσολογία αλλά και στον δημόσιο κριτικό λόγο. Ο άνθρωπος αυτός μπορούσε να σιωπήσει, όπως και τόσοι άλλοι, επαναπαυόμενος στη βολική του καρέκλα ως καθηγητής στο περίφημο Τεχνολογικό Ινστιτούτο της Μασαχουσέτης (MIT). Τόλμησε, όμως, να τα βάλει με την παντοδύναμη προπαγανδιστική μηχανή, η οποία επιχειρεί να μετατρέψει τους ανθρώπους σε άβουλο κοπάδι. Τόλμησε να επικρίνει την κρατική πολιτική των ΗΠΑ, οι οποίες πρεσβεύουν και εφαρμόζουν την αιματοβαμμένη κουλτούρα του πολέμου. Τα θέματα αιχμής στη διεθνή πολιτική και ο πολυσυζητημένος κίνδυνος ενός πυρηνικού ολέθρου ήταν στο επίκεντρο αυτής της συνομιλίας.

Καθηγητή Τσόμσκι, έχετε έρθει από τον Λίβανο και, γενικά, ταξιδεύετε πάρα πολύ. Τι εντυπώσεις έχετε αποκομίσει από την Κύπρο, το νησί το οποίο Αμερικανοί αξιωματούχοι χαρακτήριζαν, στη δεκαετία του '60 - '70, ως «Κούβα της Μεσογείου», λόγω της αδέσμευτης πολιτικής της;

– Είμαι εδώ μόνο για μερικές ώρες και, προς το παρόν, οι πρώτες διαπιστώσεις μου είναι ότι έχετε εντυπωσιακές καταιγίδες! (Γελά, διότι λίγη ώρα προηγουμένως είχε ξεσπάσει απροσδόκητα στη Λευκωσία καταιγίδα με χαλάζι). Όμως έχω διαβάσει, έχω μελετήσει και έχω γράψει γι' αυτό. Στην περίοδο του Μακαρίου, η Κύπρος θεωρούνταν ως ένας κίνδυνος. Όμως, αυτήν τη στιγμή, η Κύπρος χαρακτηρίζεται (και μπορείτε να το διαπιστώσετε από την ιστοσελίδα της αμερικανικής πρεσβείας) ως μια κοινωνία που λειτουργεί ομαλά, είναι ανοικτή σε συνεργασία με τις ΗΠΑ αλλά και στην αμερικάνικη επιρροή.

Έχετε συναντήσει πολλούς ηγέτες διεθνώς. Ποιος ήταν η πιο ενδιαφέρουσα προσωπικότητα για σας;

– Έχω συναντήσει ηγέτες, όπως την Ιντίρα Γκάντι παλαιότερα, πριν από μερικές εβδομάδες τον πρόεδρο της Δομινικανής Δημοκρατίας. Πριν από λίγες μέρες βρισκόμουν στον Λίβανο, όπου γνώρισα πολλούς ανθρώπους, από υποστηρικτές της Χισμπολλάχ μέχρι φιλοαμερικανούς ηγέτες και πολλούς άλλους. Ο καθένας είναι μια διαφορετική προσωπικότητα.

Συναντήσατε ποτέ τον κ. Μπους;

– Όχι, ποτέ.

Τι θα λέγατε στον κ. Μπους, αν ήταν τώρα ενώπιόν σας;

– Αν θα ήθελα να μάθω για την αμερικανική πολιτική, δεν θα μιλούσα στον κ. Μπους ή στους συνοδοιπόρους του, στον Ράμσφελντ, στον Ντικ Τσέινι, αλλά στους διαμορφωτές της αμερικανικής πολιτικής. Πάντως, δεν έχω καμιά διάθεση να τους μιλήσω. Και, φυσικά, αυτό είναι αμοιβαίο! (Χαμογελά με νόημα).

Έχετε ένα όραμα και αγωνίζεστε γι' αυτό, δηλαδή για έναν κόσμο χωρίς πολέμους. Μήπως, όμως, τελικά, αποτελεί ουτοπία αυτό το όραμα, έστω κι αν πρέπει συνεχώς να επιδιώκουμε κάτι τέτοιο;



ΠΑΡΑΡΤΗΜΑ

– Δεν το νομίζω. Για δεκαετίες, ίσως για αιώνες, η Ευρώπη ήταν η πιο αιματοβαμμένη περιοχή στον κόσμο, με συνεχείς πολέμους, μαζικές δολοφονίες. Στον 17ο αιώνα, 40% του πληθυσμού είχε εμπλακεί σε ένα μακροχρόνιο πόλεμο χωρίς τελειωμό. Ο πιο μεγάλος στόχος των ευρωπαϊών ηγετών ήταν να αλληλοσκοτώνονται. Μέχρι το 1945 συνεχίστηκε αυτό. Και ο μόνος λόγος για τον οποίο σταμάτησαν οι πόλεμοι ήταν το ότι οι Ευρωπαίοι συνειδητοποίησαν ότι η επόμενη φορά θα έφερνε την ολοκληρωτική καταστροφή. Η βαναυσότητα είχε ξεπεράσει τόσο πολύ τα όρια, που θα αφάνιζε τον κόσμο. Η κουλτούρα της βαναυσότητας που επικρατούσε ανά τους αιώνες στην Ευρώπη, σε συνδυασμό με την τεχνολογία του πολέμου, την κατέστησε ικανή να εξολοθρέψει τα πάντα. Η στρατιωτική ιστορία αποδεικνύει ότι στην Ευρώπη ο πόλεμος είχε αναχθεί σε επιστήμη. Αυτή η εποχή έληξε. Δεν πρόκειται να υπάρξει άλλος πόλεμος στην Ευρώπη, η οποία πέρασε σε ένα νέο στάδιο ενοποίησης. Κι αυτό μπορεί να συμβεί κι αλλού. Ας πάρουμε τις ΗΠΑ. Για πολλά χρόνια στην Ιστορία τους προσπαθούσαν να εισβάλουν στον Καναδά, αλλά τελικά εδραιώθηκαν τα σύνορα μεταξύ των δύο χωρών. Το ίδιο και με το Μεξικό, την άλλη μεθόριο, όπου οι ΗΠΑ κατέκτησαν το μισό Μεξικό, το οποίο ονόμασαν Νοτιο-Δυτικές Πολιτείες. Αλλά οι πιθανότητες για ένα νέο πόλεμο με το Μεξικό είναι τώρα πολύ περιορισμένες. Αυτό είναι ένα δείγμα ειρήνης, που εδραιώθηκε στη Βόρεια Αμερική και σε άλλες περιοχές του κόσμου επίσης. Για παράδειγμα, η Ιαπωνία δεν υπάρχει πιθανότητα να θελήσει ποτέ να εισβάλει στην Κίνα. Άρα, δεν αποτελεί ουτοπία ο τερματισμός των πολέμων. Οι πόλεμοι που διεξάγονται τώρα είναι πολύ διαφορετικοί. Σε αυτούς εμπλέκονται μεγάλες δυνάμεις και ανυπεράσπιστοι εχθροί. Αυτό αποτελεί ένα είδος πολέμου. Ένα άλλο είδος πολέμου είναι η ευρωπαϊκή αποικιοκρατία. Πάρτε για παράδειγμα τις απερίγραπτες πολεμικές συγκρούσεις ανά το παγκόσμιο. Κάποιες από αυτές έχουν να κάνουν με τα σύνορα. Παρ' ολίγο να οδηγηθούμε σε πυρηνικό πόλεμο στο Πακιστάν πριν από δύο χρόνια. Πώς φτάσαμε μέχρι εκεί; Εξαιτίας της κληρονομιάς του βρετανικού ιμπεριαλισμού. Παρά ταύτα, απο-



δείχθηκε ότι είναι εφικτός ο τερματισμός των πολέμων, όπως έδειξε η εμπειρία της Ευρώπης.

Είχαμε, όμως, τον πόλεμο στη Γιουγκοσλαβία. Οι ΗΠΑ ήταν νικητής σε δύο Παγκοσμίους Πολέμους, χωρίς πολλές απώλειες, τη στιγμή που η Ευρώπη καταστράφηκε δύο φορές. Προβλέπετε ότι αυτό το σενάριο μπορεί να επαναληφθεί και για τρίτη φορά;

– Ο πόλεμος στη Γιουγκοσλαβία είναι μια περίπλοκη υπόθεση. Ωστόσο, η αφορμή για αυτόν τον πόλεμο δόθηκε από την Ευρώπη. Συγκεκριμένα, η Γερμανία αναγνώρισε την Κροατία πρόωρα, παραγνωρίζοντας μια σημαντική πληθυσμιακή μειοψηφία και, έτσι, προκάλεσε τη διάσπαση της Γιουγκοσλαβικής ομοσπονδίας, με αποτέλεσμα τα πράγματα να πάρουν τραγική τροπή. Υπήρξαν πολλές εξωτερικές πρωτοβουλίες, μεταξύ των οποίων και από τις ΗΠΑ, που κατέληξαν στον βομβαρδισμό στο Κοσσυφοπέδιο, γεγονός που εξυπηρετούσε τα συμφέροντα των ΗΠΑ. Αυτή η πρωτοβουλία δεν είχε να κάνει με ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια, όπως διατείνονταν η κυβέρνηση Κλίντον. Το να κερδίσεις έναν πόλεμο, είναι ο δυτικός τρόπος να βλέπεις τα πράγματα. Ο πόλεμος δεν τέλειωσε. Οι ΗΠΑ εισέβαλαν στο Ιράκ και απειλούν τη Βενεζουέλα. Πώς να το πιστέψει κανείς; Επομένως υπάρχει πρόοδος, μέχρις ενός σημείου, στον τερματισμό των πολέμων.

Μετά το τέλος του Ψυχρού Πολέμου πιστεύαμε ότι δεν θα βρεθούμε ξανά αντιμέτωποι με τον κίνδυνο μιας πυρηνικής καταστροφής. Γιατί επανέρχεται αυτός ο κίνδυνος στην επικαιρότητα;

– Συμφωνώ με τις Αμερικανικές Υπηρεσίες και τους κορυφαίους στρατηγικούς αναλυτές, όπως ο υπουργός Άμυνας, ότι ο κίνδυνος για πυρηνικούς πολέμους αυξάνεται. Ίσως αυτήν τη στιγμή να είναι ο πιο μεγάλος κίνδυνος από την εποχή της κρίσης με τους πυραύλους στις αρχές της δεκαετίας του '60. Ένας λόγος για τον οποίο συμφωνώ επίσης, είναι η επιθετική στρατιωτική πολιτική της κυβέρνησης Μπους. Από μόνη της δημιουργεί κινδύνους. Μπορεί κάποιος να προβλέπει τους πιθανούς στόχους και, άρα,



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τους κινδύνους. Η Κίνα, μια πυρηνική δύναμη που δεν έχει αναπτύξει πυρηνικό οπλοστάσιο, αρχίζει να το κάνει, απαντώντας στις απειλές της κυβέρνησης Μπους, στη στρατιωτικοποίηση των πάντων, μεταξύ άλλων και του διαστήματος. Όλα βαίνουν όπως είχαν προβλεφθεί. Γι' αυτό τώρα βρίσκονται άνθρωποι, όπως ο Μακνάμαρα, οι οποίοι μιλούν για «Αποκάλυψη» σύντομα. Εκτός κι αν αλλάξει αυτή η επιθετική στρατιωτική πολιτική.

Πώς επιλέγουν οι ΗΠΑ τους εχθρούς τους; Γιατί το Ιράν είναι εχθρός και απειλή εξαιτίας της πυρηνικής τεχνολογίας, ενώ π.χ. το Ισραήλ και η Τουρκία δεν είναι ούτε εχθρός ούτε απειλή;

– Κατ' αρχάς, οι ΗΠΑ δεν αντιτίθενται στην πυρηνική τεχνολογία. Όλα αυτά τα προγράμματα πυρηνικής τεχνολογίας έχουν υποστηριχθεί από τις ΗΠΑ, στη δεκαετία του '70, στο ίδιο το Πανεπιστήμιό μου, το MIT. Εκπαιδεύσαμε Ιρανούς επιστήμονες, διότι οι ΗΠΑ θεωρούσαν ότι το Ιράν χρειάζεται πυρηνική τεχνολογία. Ο Ντικ Τσέινι, ο Ράμσφελντ, ο Κίσιγκερ έλεγαν ότι το Ιράν χρειάζεται πυρηνική τεχνολογία. Τώρα οι ίδιοι άνθρωποι λένε ότι το Ιράν δεν χρειάζεται τέτοια τεχνολογία. Σήμερα στους «Νιου Γιρκ Τάιμς», ο Ράμσφελντ είπε ότι το Ιράν αναπτύσσει την πυρηνική τεχνολογία για να αποκτήσει πυρηνικά όπλα, αφού δεν χρειάζεται πυρηνική ενέργεια. Όταν ρώτησαν τον Κίσιγκερ, είπε ότι ενόσω ήταν σύμμαχοί μας είχαν ανάγκη από πυρηνική ενέργεια, τώρα που δεν είναι σύμμαχοί μας δεν έχουν τέτοια ανάγκη. Εάν υπήρχε τέτοιο πρόβλημα με το Ισραήλ, θα βρίσκονταν οι τρόποι για μια διευθέτηση. Το Ιράν κατηγορήθηκε για εγκλήματα, όπως για την κράτηση Αμερικανών ομήρων. Όμως, από τότε, οι ΗΠΑ και η Βρετανία διέπραξαν απίστευτα εγκλήματα εναντίον του ιρανικού λαού. Πρώτα υποστήριξαν το καθεστώς του Ιράν, ύστερα υποστήριξαν τον Σαντάμ Χουσέιν στη σκληρή επιθετική πολιτική εναντίον του Ιράν. Ακολουθούσαν διαταγές και οι μεν και οι δε. Κατανοητό.



ΟΙ ΗΠΑ ΘΕΛΟΥΝ ΕΝΑ ΠΙΣΤΟ ΣΥΜΜΑΧΟ ΕΝΤΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΥΡΩΠΗΣ

Οι Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες πιέζουν την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση να αποδεχθεί στους κόλπους της την Τουρκία. Γιατί, κατά την άποψή σας, οι ΗΠΑ επιμένουν σε αυτό το ζήτημα;

– Ιδιαίτερα η κυβέρνηση Κλίντον είχε διαδραματίσει πολύ σημαντικό ρόλο σε σχέση με την Τουρκία. Δεν συζητήθηκε στη Δύση, διότι δεν συζητάμε για τα ίδια τα εγκλήματά μας. Αλλά ήταν η ίδια η κυβέρνηση Κλίντον που ήταν υπεύθυνη για τα ειδεχθή εγκλήματα εναντίον των Κούρδων στη δεκαετία του '90. Δεκάδες χιλιάδες Κούρδοι σκοτώθηκαν, πολλοί άλλοι ξεσπιτώθηκαν, υπέστησαν βασανιστήρια. Η Τουρκία έγινε ο πιο μεγάλος αγοραστής αμερικάνικων όπλων στον κόσμο.

Σε ένα μόνο χρόνο, το 1997, οι ΗΠΑ πώλησαν στην Τουρκία περισσότερα όπλα παρά καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια του Ψυχρού Πολέμου. Τα εγκλήματα της Τουρκίας ήταν πολύ χειρότερα από αυτά που καταλογίζουν στον Μιλόσεβιτς κι όμως δεν αναφέρονται στη Δύση. Ενόσω η Τουρκία ακολουθεί τις διαταγές και μπορεί να συνεχίσει να σφάζει μέρος του πληθυσμού της, να υποβάλλει ανθρώπους σε βασανιστήρια, είναι εντάξει. Όταν εμφανίστηκε η υπόθεση του Ιράν το 2003, η τουρκική κυβέρνηση ακολούθησε τη θέληση του 95% του πληθυσμού της, πράγμα που εξέπληξε, και αρνήθηκε να εφαρμόσει την πολιτική των ΗΠΑ στο Ιράκ.

Κόλιν Πάουελ και άλλοι είπαν στους στρατιωτικούς ότι δεν μπόρεσαν να επιβάλουν στην κυβέρνηση να αποδεχθεί τη χρησιμοποίηση των βάσεων εναντίον του Ιράκ. Ξεπεράστηκε αυτό και οι ΗΠΑ χρησιμοποιούν τις τουρκικές βάσεις για έναν πιθανό πόλεμο εναντίον του Ιράν. Οι ΗΠΑ θέλουν την Τουρκία να ενταχθεί στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση για τον ίδιο λόγο που θέλουν στην Ευρώπη και τους πρώην «δορυφόρους» της Ανατολικής Ευρώπης. Έτσι εξασθενεί η δύναμη σημαντικών κέντρων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, όπως η Γερμανία και η Γαλλία. Κύρια ανησυχία των ΗΠΑ, από τη δεκαετία του '50, είναι το ενδεχόμενο να προχωρήσει η Ευρωπαϊκή



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Ένωση σε ένα δικό της ανεξάρτητο δρόμο, όπως, για παράδειγμα, για τον έλεγχο των ενεργειακών πηγών στη Μέση Ανατολή.

Γι' αυτό οι ΗΠΑ επεκτείνουν και το ΝΑΤΟ, εντάσσοντας σε αυτό και τις ανατολικοευρωπαϊκές χώρες - δορυφόρους. Έτσι, με την ένταξη της Τουρκίας, οι ΗΠΑ θα έχουν έναν πιστό σύμμαχο στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Αυτό τα εξηγεί όλα.

ΟΙ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΙΟΙ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΟΥΝ ΔΙΑΤΑΓΕΣ

Γιατί η Ευρώπη ακολουθεί τις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες σε αυτούς τους καταστροφικούς πολέμους, όπως στο Αφγανιστάν, στο Ιράκ, και τώρα ίσως και στο Ιράν; Αφού η Ευρώπη πληρώνει εν μέρει τα σπασμένα, με την αύξηση της τιμής στο πετρέλαιο.

– Η Ευρώπη φοβάται πολύ εύκολα. Υπάρχει μια πολύ σημαντική διαφορά μεταξύ Ευρώπης και Κίνας. Για τις ΗΠΑ απειλή είναι η Κίνα, ενώ η Ευρώπη ακολουθεί τις διαταγές. Πάρτε για παράδειγμα το Ιράν. Όταν οι ΗΠΑ έδειξαν τη γροθιά τους και πίεσαν την Ευρώπη για να αποσύρει τις επενδύσεις από το Ιράν, οι μεγάλες ευρωπαϊκές εταιρείες υπάκουσαν. Η Κίνα επένδυσε κι άλλα.

Γιατί η Ευρώπη δεν αποφασίζει να αντιδράσει στη δύναμη του ισχυρού; Εναπόκειται στους Ευρωπαίους να απαντήσουν σε αυτό το ερώτημα. Όμως, είναι φανερό ότι η ευρωπαϊκή ελίτ δεν είναι πολύ διαφορετική από την αμερικάνικη. Έχουν τα ίδια ενδιαφέροντα, και κίνητρό τους είναι η επιδίωξη για κυριαρχία στον κόσμο. Συνεργάζονται, ώστε να διοικούν τον κόσμο. Υπάρχουν ορισμένες συγκρούσεις μεταξύ τους, όπως για το Ιράκ και για την Παλαιστίνη.

Οι Αμερικανοί για πολύ καιρό δεν επέτρεπαν στους Παλαιστίνιους να έχουν εκλογές, κι ο λόγος είναι ότι ο Αράφατ θα ήταν ο νικητής.



Και δεν μπορείς να επιτρέψεις ελεύθερες εκλογές, εάν πρόκειται να νικήσει «λάθος άτομο». Γι' αυτό και απέτρεψαν τις εκλογές. Αφού πέθανε ο Γιασέρ Αράφατ, νόμισαν ότι μπορούσαν να έχουν τον «σωστό άνθρωπο» στην εξουσία. Αυτό δεν πέτυχε. Τελικά, ο κόσμος εξέλεξε «λάθος άνθρωπο». Οι ΗΠΑ και το Ισραήλ αποφάσισαν να τιμωρήσουν τον κόσμο γι' αυτό.

Επομένως, η «μεσσιανική αποστολή» των ΗΠΑ να φέρουν τη δημοκρατία δεν περιλαμβάνει και το δικαίωμα των ανθρώπων να επιλέγουν την ηγεσία της αρεσκείας τους. Έκαναν λάθος επιλογή, έτσι οι ΗΠΑ και το Ισραήλ αποφάσισαν να τους βασανίσουν. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση έκανε κάποιο θόρυβο γι' αυτό αλλά τίποτα παραπάνω. Δεν εγκρίνουν αυτήν την πολιτική, αλλά δεν αντιδρούν.

Χρύσανθος Χρυσάνθου





Paul Theodoulou interviews Noam Chomsky

Sunday Mail, 21st May 2006

A piercing insight into global affairs

How to convey an idea of the intellectual distinction and attainment of Noam Chomsky, recipient in person last week of an honorary doctorate from the University of Cyprus?

Linguistics, like mathematics, is one of those disciplines for which there is no Nobel Prize, but if there were, Chomsky would undoubtedly be among the Nobel laureates. He is the pre-eminent figure in his field, his work having revolutionised the study of language and given birth to a whole new sphere of scientific endeavour.

A Nobel, however, would be small beer compared to the accolades that some confer on Chomsky. The philosopher John Searle has likened Chomsky's work to that of Freud and Keynes in importance. Another philosopher, Gilbert Harman, has written that Chomsky "may well turn out to be the Galileo of the science of the mind." And yet another, Jerry Fodor, puts him in the company of the mathematical genius and computer-science pioneer Alan Turing as having taught us "pretty much everything that matters about the cognitive mind that we have learned in the last fifty years or so."

If philosophers hail Chomsky, that is because his work in linguistics is rich in implication for their subject, throwing suggestive new light on the nature of mind and knowledge. His name crops up in their writings as often as that of any other living thinker, and Chomsky participates in

their debate as an equal, having engaged with philosophical luminaries like Quine, Davidson, Dummett, and Putnam.

An awareness of the scale of Chomsky's achievement in linguistics / philosophy is undoubtedly reflected in popular tributes to his significance, such as his topping the 2005 *Prospect* magazine poll as the most important public intellectual in the world today. But such acclamations surely owe more to Chomsky's second major reputation, that of a political analyst and commentator on world affairs.

Chomsky's output in this field is prodigious. In more than 50 books going back some four decades, he has subjected the nature and effects of US power at home and abroad to a withering critique, typically buttressed by an awesome number of endnotes (is there a single US newspaper article, journal, policy paper or declassified government document that Chomsky hasn't read?).

Chomsky's arrival in Cyprus, then, was definitely an event, and the chance to interview him was not to be missed. His busy schedule presented a small "window of opportunity" (20 minutes) to talk to him at the Hilton Hotel in Nicosia. Opting to leave his technical work in linguistics and philosophy to one side (discretion being the better part of valour), I began by asking him about his new book, *Failed States: The Abuse of Power and the Assault on Democracy*. I put it to him that many readers might be surprised to hear that his prime example of a failed state is America.

In what sense can the global hyperpower be considered a failed state?

"Well," says Chomsky, "first I point out that the concept 'failed state' has nothing to do with the strength or power of the state, which is recognised. So, Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia were failed states by any rational criterion, but not because they were weak. Saddam Hussein's state was a failed state, but probably most strong at the time of his worst crimes.

"The concept of 'failed state' has many dimensions. The primary one is that it is a state that is either unable or unwilling to protect its own



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citizens from threats and dangers. Well, by that criterion, unfortunately, the US ranks very high. For a long time, but particularly under the current administration, it is following policies which consciously increase the threat of terror, the threat of nuclear war and terminal destruction, the threat of long-term environmental catastrophe, which may not be very far removed, domestic problems which are imposing an enormous 'fiscal train-wreck' burden on future generations, also not far removed. These are serious threats to the population of the United States.

"Another typical criterion of failed states is that they may have formal democratic institutions, but they don't function. That's a common property of failed states. Well, it's increasingly true of the United States, increasingly true of other industrial societies too, although they're a decade or two behind the United States following the same path. And by that I mean there's a growing and in fact by now an enormous divide between public opinion and public policy. In the United States it's easily demonstrable. It's a very free society so there's extensive investigation of public attitudes, public opinion on a great range of topics, and since it is a free society, we can obtain the results of those studies, and that's exactly what they show. They demonstrate that the two political parties are far to the right of the population on a host of major issues.

"This isn't very well known, because the media simply do not report the studies. And that's another criterion of failed states: information is theoretically available, but it is only in fact available if you either undertake a personal research project, which few people have the time or resources to do, or you're part of some kind of activist group, some group that's outside the formal system in which information does circulate."

What about the other element of his title, the assault on democracy? From whom does the assault come?

"From concentrated power," Chomsky answers immediately. "That means in part state power, in part concentrated private power. And they are closely interlinked. They have similar personnel, there's interchange, and so on. And the media are simply part of the system. They're major



corporations. And in fact the general intellectual community, what's sometimes called the 'political class', maybe 20 per cent of the population, of people with a high degree of privilege, education and resources, participants in one or another form of decision-making in the political system, the economic system, the ideological institutions, and so on, share a certain general culture and set of attitudes which is related largely to their institutional role. In fact, with marginal exceptions (there are always exceptions), you don't tend to be part of these institutions unless you have internalised and accepted those values and positions. So that's where the assault comes from."

That brought me to one of the theses most associated with Chomsky's name, the "manufacture of consent," a central aspect of which is the role of the mainstream news media in shaping public opinion in the service of power. I ask Chomsky to what extent he believes the performance of the US media in the run-up to the Iraq War confirmed or illustrated the manufacture of consent.

"Well, first, I can't take the credit for that doctrine," he says. "I borrowed it from Walter Lippmann, who's the leading public intellectual of the 20th century, and incidentally a progressive, Wilsonian-Roosevelt liberal. And his view, in his essays on democracy, was that there is what he called 'a new art of democracy,' namely, the manufacture of consent. And it's a good thing, he said, since what he called the 'bewildered herd,' the 'stupid and ignorant masses,' have to be protected from making mistakes, and therefore the 'responsible men' must be protected from the 'roar and trampling' of the bewildered herd, and since we can't do it by force any more - there's too much freedom - we have to do it by control of attitude and opinion. The public relations industry, one of its leading founders, also a Wilson-Roosevelt liberal, Edward Bernays, his term was 'engineering of consent'. It's the same concept: we, the 'responsible men,' must engineer consent to the right policies, because the public can't be left on their own. So I'm borrowing the concept. I don't share their values, but this is their own description of what should be done.

"With regard to the Iraq War, there was plenty of criticism, in fact unprecedented criticism, right at the heart of the establishment. But it's



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within a narrow bound. We can compare it, for example, with the criticism of the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, or Saddam's invasion of Kuwait. In that case, one hundred per cent of opinion bitterly condemned it (correctly) as aggression, a war crime. We have no hesitation in attributing strategic and economic motives to it: control of Middle East oil, whatever it might be. That's the normal way in which you approach the aggression of enemies. Not in the case of the Iraq War. Or the Vietnam War. Or any act committed by one's own power-system. There is a debate, but it's on political-pragmatic grounds: will it succeed, is it going to be harmful for our interests, is it extending our power beyond what's reasonable, should we take a more conservative position? No questioning at all of the goals, the goals by definition are noble. In fact, the liberal press describes it as perhaps the most noble war in history, fought to bring about democracy and freedom. So the questioning of motive and purpose, and the attribution of rational, strategic-economic goals, that's off the agenda. The only question that remains is, can we succeed?"

I next sound Chomsky out on the bitter dispute between Iran and the United States over Iran's nuclear programme - purely civilian, says Tehran, intended to produce nuclear weapons, says Washington. President Bush has declared that in dealing with the Iranian nuclear question "all options are on the table," leading to much speculation that the United States might take military action against Iran, possibly even nuclear strikes. Jack Straw, until recently Britain's foreign secretary, said that a military attack on Iran would be "inconceivable," and that the use of nuclear weapons against it would be "nuts." Is Straw right? I ask Chomsky.

"I think he's right that it's 'nuts'; whether it's 'inconceivable,' none of us knows. I mean, there's fairly good evidence that the Pentagon is opposed, and that US intelligence is opposed, and there is plenty of information leaking to the press indicating that they're strongly opposed, that the rest of the world is opposed. [IAEA chief] Mohamed ElBaradei made approximately the same, even stronger statements than Straw. But it doesn't mean it's inconceivable. The decision is in the hands of a very



small group of people - [US defence secretary] Donald Rumsfeld, [US vice-president] Dick Cheney, two or three others - and they will decide whether they choose to do it or not. If they do it, in my opinion, it would be an act of desperation. They have gotten themselves into an incredible catastrophe in Iraq, it must be one of the worst military catastrophes in history. And they don't see any way out. They can't stay in, they can't pull out. They may just try to hit the whole system with a sledgehammer and hope that something happens."

Could that sledgehammer be nuclear?

"That really is almost inconceivable," he replies. "Unless they're out of their minds. But, you don't know."

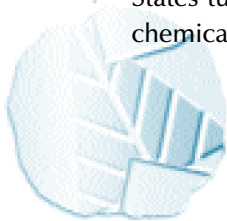
One option that doesn't seem to be on the table for President Bush is direct talks with Iran, which given the potentially catastrophic consequences of a US military strike on the Islamic Republic is perhaps a little surprising. Why does the US refuse to talk to Iran?

"Iran has offered to talk for years," Chomsky says. "Now there's discussion of [Iranian president Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad's letter [to President Bush], whatever one thinks of it. But a proposal came during [Mohammad] Khatami's presidency in Iran in May 2003. And several times since, Iran has offered to discuss all issues - nuclear, strategic, regional, and so on. The Bush administration simply flatly refuses.

"Since 1979, the US has been dedicated to punishing Iran. In American history, the way intellectuals and the media present the history, there's only one event in US-Iranian history, namely, the overthrow of the Shah and the taking of hostages."

As Chomsky wryly notes, this is a somewhat truncated reading of history: "A few things happened before that, and a few things happened after."

Immediately after the Islamic Revolution, Chomsky says, "the United States turned to support its friend Saddam Hussein, provided him with chemical and other weapons to support his aggression against Iran,



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straight outright aggression supported by the United States, Britain, Germany, Russia and others. The Reagan administration removed Saddam from the list of states supporting terror so they could provide him with weapons. For Iran, that was no joke. Hundreds of thousands of people were killed, the society was devastated. The US finally entered the war directly in 1987 to ensure that Iraq would win. Iran finally capitulated, and then came sanctions, other measures, and they simply have to be punished for their disobedience.”

So Iran represents unfinished business for the United States?

“It’s very similar to other cases,” he says. “Why has the United States been carrying out a virtual war against Cuba for 45 years? Actually, we know the reasons. In a free society, we know the reasons for the terrorist war launched by Kennedy for the economic strangulation. If you go back to the documents of the early sixties, declassified documents, it’s explained. It’s because of what they call Cuba’s ‘successful defiance’ of US policies going back 150 years, meaning to the Monroe Doctrine, which asserted - they couldn’t implement it at the time, Britain was too strong - but which asserted that the goal of US policy was to control the hemisphere. Successful defiance of that policy from 150 years ago is simply not tolerated. And it’s understandable, that’s the way international affairs work. There are all kinds of illusions, but the truth of the matter is that international affairs is rather like the Mafia: the Godfather does not tolerate successful defiance.”

Time for just one more question. I ask Chomsky about what many still regard, despite the Iraq imbroglio, as the greatest source of instability in the Middle East, and of friction between Islam and the West. Is there any life left in a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

“There’s a very simple answer to that question,” he says. “For over 30 years, the United States, unilaterally, has been blocking that settlement. There was one break in the pattern, namely, in Clinton’s last month in office. In his final month, there were negotiations within the framework of loose parameters that Clinton set. At Taba in Egypt, the highest-level Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, they came fairly close to an agreement, not fully, but close. Israel terminated the negotiations, so we



don't know what would have happened. They continued informally: Track Two, it's called. Again, high-level negotiators, but not official. That led to the Geneva Accord, released in Geneva in December 2002, which again is close to the long-standing international consensus. It was rejected by Israel, ignored by the United States, and therefore simply dismissed as ridiculous by the press. That's the barrier.

"Right now, the United States and Israel are taking over the territory. Jimmy Carter just had a good article about that: he's correct. It's called 'convergence,' and the story you read in the press, in the New York Times, is that Israel's withdrawing from the West Bank. No. As Carter pointed out correctly, they're taking it over. They're annexing the areas of the West Bank that are valuable - where the water resources are, the arable land. They're cutting through the rest of the territory with salients that divide it into unviable cantons, separating it from East Jerusalem. The US government is supporting it, otherwise they couldn't do it. The US press is describing it as a withdrawal, and praising Israel for its 'bold decision to withdraw from the West Bank.' It's exactly the opposite. Jimmy Carter is exactly accurate. And if that continues, then the [two-state] solution is dead. But that's not graven in stone. The American population is in favour of a two-state settlement. That's another one of those enormous divides between public opinion and public policy."

*Paul Theodoulou,
editor of the journal Global Dialogue,
published by the Centre for World Dialogue*





Menelaos Hadjicostis interviews Noam Chomsky

The Cyprus Weekly, 19th May 2006

Noam Chomsky: answers to Cyprus' solution lie within

Noam Chomsky's appeal to Cypriots for a sincere soul-search into the underlying reasons why reunification efforts continue to be stymied could strike some as odd.

Against the convictions of a swath of Cyprus's political elite, the preeminent linguist-scholar whose political writings have vaulted him to the status of being "one of the most important intellectuals alive" insists that the answers lie within rather than without.

"I think people in Cyprus should ask themselves honestly whether they're looking for an external excuse for their unwillingness to make the kind of compromises that would lead to an internal reconciliation," he told The Cyprus Weekly in an interview.

"It's very easy everywhere to blame someone else for problems and very often it turns out that the problems are internal."

Chomsky, who was on the island to lecture and receive an honorary degree from the University of Cyprus, cited Lebanon as a prime example of a popular predisposition to project internal problems onto a nefarious cabal of external enemies conspiring to keep the country mired in conflict.

“I just came from Lebanon and yes, everyone there would like to argue that it’s the Jewish lobby, it’s the United States, it’s Syria, it’s somebody, which is partially true, but most of the problems are internal to Lebanon,” said Chomsky.

“That’s very easy to believe and convenient to believe and there is usually some element of truth to it, I mean yes, great powers have their interests but it’s just a little too convenient,” said Chomsky.

“I think it’s very important everywhere, not just Cyprus or Lebanon, but everywhere, to ask to what extent our problems are internally generated and can we at least ameliorate the problems by moves that we ourselves make instead of falling back on the excuse that there are great forces out there that we can’t deal with.”

Perhaps the avuncular Chomsky, a soft-spoken 78-year-old, overlooks the fact that America’s regional proxy Turkey is an integral part of the island’s internal problems and any Cypriot introspection cannot but involve its recalcitrant neighbour to the north.

Chomsky said Cyprus has traditionally been in the crosshairs of global powers because of its proximity to Middle Eastern energy.

But to wrest itself free from “the whims of the great powers,” Cyprus must settle its own internal affairs to have a stronger voice under its new persona as EU member in a tripolar world also composed of North America and Asia.

“There has to be some form of settlement internal to Cyprus. If there isn’t, yes, Cyprus will act at the whim of great powers. If it unifies in some reasonable fashion, accommodating the separate interests - and there ways to proceed in that direction - then it can have more independence,” said Chomsky.

“Remember, the Western interest in Cyprus has been because of the Middle East...it was part of the system of control over the production and distribution of the world’s energy. It doesn’t play quite that role today but it’s not terribly different. It’s still part of that system and what



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happens in Cyprus depends in the first place on solving its internal problems. That has priority and with its internal problem reconciled, it would become a functioning part of the European Union.”

Yet the vision that Chomsky holds for the future is bleak and fear-inducing as the United States - faced with a declining economic might and waning political influence on the global stage - tries to reassert its control over the world’s major energy sources by playing it’s sole remaining ace-in-the-hole - a military force whose dominance “is unprecedented in human history.”

“It has about half the world’s military expenditures. And technologically, it’s far more advanced than any military system and it’s extending it...A large part of the reason for the US invasion of Iraq, pretty likely is to try to gain sufficient control over Middle East energy so that Europe will not go an independent path. That goes way back to the early 1950s. That was discussed among US planners. The US must have what they call ‘veto power’ over its industrial rivals. The main way to have ‘veto power’ is to control the energy resources of the world,” said Chomsky.

Yet economic rivals like China aren’t intimidated, said Chomsky, as evidenced by the Chinese president’s visit to Saudi Arabia immediately after his trip to Washington last month.

“He went to Saudi Arabia to establish better contacts. Saudi Arabia is China’s biggest Middle East partner. That’s the core of the energy system and that’s a slap in the face of the United States both on the part of China and Saudi Arabia.”

But for all its military might - and to his own surprise - the United States is failing in Iraq - a mission Chomsky labeled “a catastrophe.”

“It should have been the easiest military victory in history. It turned into one of the world’s worst military catastrophes and right now, Washington is in serious trouble.”

“Just think what might happen. Just imagine the prospects for an independent Iran. Probably ally with Iran, its Shiite majority. Right across



the border in Saudi Arabia, the population is mostly Shiite that's been bitterly repressed. Any success in Iraq is stimulating autonomy pressures. That's where most of the Saudi oil is," said Chomsky.

According to Chomsky, Washington's recourse to arms is compelling potential targets to react - with potentially catastrophic results.

"There's only two forms of reaction - nobody's going to compete with the United States in military force - the two forms are nuclear weapons and terror. So what the US is stimulating is nuclear proliferation and terror. And they know it.

"In fact the assessment of US intelligence is that a 'dirty bomb,' a nuclear weapon, is virtually inevitable. People like Robert MacNamara estimate the probability to about 50 percent in the next decade that a major nuclear strike could happen."

Chomsky argues that the scions of American power politics - Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Vice-President Dick Cheney - appear unfazed by the prospect that their stridently "forward-leaning" policy might unleash a veritable Pandora's box.

That's especially so as Washington threatens military action over Iran's controversial nuclear program.

"The Pentagon is opposed, US intelligence is opposed, Europe is opposed, the International Atomic Energy Agency is opposed, in fact the whole world is opposed, but we don't know what Rumsfeld and Cheney are thinking.

"They're in a desperate situation. Maybe they will decide the situation is bad enough, so they might as well hit (Iran) with a sledgehammer and see what happens. Maybe they'll get away with it," said Chomsky.

That mode of thinking could bring about a long-debated 'clash of civilisations' and Chomsky sees the two greatest exponents of that as being none other than the world's greatest enemies - US President George W. Bush and al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.



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“There are people in favour of a clash of civilizations. The two leading ones are Osama bin Laden and George Bush. They are allies, pressing for a clash of civilizations. Nobody else wants it,” said Chomsky.

In this cauldron of conflict, is the UN still relevant as a viable peacemaking forum?

Chomsky says it depends. The US public fully supports the United Nations to take a leading role in peacemaking on a global scale with Washington willingly subordinating itself to the world body.

However, that’s not the official view.

“The US government on the other hand, says John Bolton – he’s very frank – says the UN does not exist. If it is an instrument of US policy, that’s fine, otherwise it can get lost.

“The record of (US) vetoes is very illuminating. People say correctly that Iraq didn’t live up to Security Council resolutions. Well, the strongest way of violating UN Security Council resolutions is to veto them. That’s the strongest possible violation.

“Since the mid 1960s, when the first US vetoes were made, the US is far in the lead in vetoing resolutions on every issue you can think of. Britain is second and nobody else is even close. That’s the attitude toward the UN,” said Chomsky.

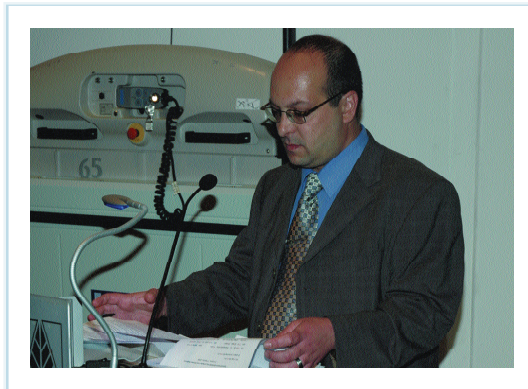
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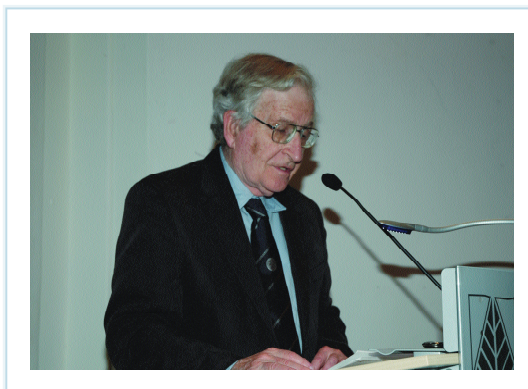
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Ο Πρύτανης, Καθηγητής Σταύρος Α. Ζένιος



Ο Επίκουρος Καθηγητής Kleanthes K. Grohmann



Ο Καθηγητής Noam Chomsky

ΤΡΙΤΗ ΕΤΗΣΙΑ ΔΙΑΛΕΞΗ ΕΙΣ ΜΝΗΜΗΝ ΝΤΙΝΟΥ ΛΕΒΕΝΤΗ



Στιγμιότυπο από την εκδήλωση



Στιγμιότυπο από την εκδήλωση

ΤΡΙΤΗ ΕΤΗΣΙΑ ΔΙΑΛΕΞΗ ΕΙΣ ΜΝΗΜΗΝ ΝΤΙΝΟΥ ΛΕΒΕΝΤΗ



Μέρος του κοινού που παρακολούθησε τη διάλεξη μέσω οθόνης, στην εσωτερική αυλή του Πανεπιστημίου



Στιγμιότυπο από το τέλος της εκδήλωσης

Γενική Επιμέλεια: *Δώρος Μιχαήλ*
Υπεύθυνη Ύλης / Συντονισμός: *Κατερίνα Νικολαΐδου - Πιερρόνι*
Σχεδιασμός / Σελίδωση: *Μαρία Γαβριήλ*
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