

One step beyond - Saviour Formosa

I am still reeling, still bewildered, bemused that our soundings were ignored, feeling a strong sense of anomie, let down by a string of terrible events that derailed a dream we have been seeking and delivering upon. This island has gone one step...

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Fragmentation came in the form of MEPs who sought to undermine the nation in the EU and individual states, to the extent that they even form part of missions reviewing the country. Photo: Mark Zammit Cordina

I am still reeling, still bewildered, bemused that our soundings were ignored, feeling a strong sense of anomie, let down by a string of terrible events that derailed a dream we have been seeking and delivering upon.

This island has gone one step beyond rationality, serenity and grounding. Apologies to Chas Smash in Madness' 1979 debut statement: "Don't watch that, watch this!" This is my Malta now.

But I am still hopeful for the future and that pertaining to the next generation.

On November 13, 2017, I delivered an oration ('Conscience and the University's impact') – an oration that made me few friends, one that earned me no brownie points in my endeavour to achieve progress for my country and my career.

It brought rancour from the five pillars that make up our society such that I was perceived as an outsider in this land, a land no longer deemed fair or chivalrous.

Now that the third power of the State has fallen, where goes this State?

Just to put everything into perspective, years ago, the legislative power was taken to the dogs through boycotts and physical and psychological abuse. More recently, the juridical power was rendered null with its most eminent judges either charged or imprisoned, such that today we see continuous attacks on this power by those who sought to maintain the status quo.

Now the executive power has collapsed and needs brave souls to reformat it, not the screamers, not the sudden virgins, not the santo subitos, but wise mentors. Suddenly everyone has reverted to virginity: everyone forgets their input in mashing and smashing the current state of affairs.

Too late to say mea culpa: too late to recoup faith in those who degraded our forma mentis. Among such, the bishopric and the zeal to take sides and fan anomie. Also, the national politicians and their enthusiasm to forget the beam in their eyes and suddenly expect that everyone forgets their transgressions and corruption, past or present, effectively side-lining the genuine ones.

These events are made worse by national politicians driven to destroy their own party, effectively rendering this country a one-party state. Not amiss, those politicians who have since time immemorial surrounded themselves with persons of antisocial and at times criminal backgrounds, at times even themselves being accused of antisocial behaviour, MEPs included.

“ This farce is tiring and if parties have to be rent asunder so be it

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Further fragmentation came in the form of MEPs who sought to undermine the nation in the EU and individual states, to the extent that they even form part of missions reviewing the country, rendering such visits instantly suspicious – a situation not helped by the former President of the European Parliament who ignored my pleas to rectify the latter issue.

Salt was also added to the wound through civil society, which suddenly appeared for a presumed good reason, but is tempered by political infiltration and members with dubious pasts.

They were nowhere to be seen till a few years ago when we were tackling all parties for environmental and social change.

Again, this is a situation not helped by a media that is competing with the anarchic social media in dishing out untruths and, at worse, half-truths.

Finally, pointers to the citizenry who ignored the warnings.

This is the result of the failure of the State and continuous attacks on the rule of law, but we do not need EU intervention. We need to clean up our own cupboards first and collectively embrace the shocking reality to re-morph this society.

I have lived through war and peace but have never given up on the will of the populace to improve their social well-being.

Thus, it is time to forge ahead with structural change, pain points messaged till sore towards a new hope. It is time to stop demeaning and attacking the institutions, time to let the entities work and deliver, let the police do their work and let the judiciary work in peace.

More so, we must set up review boards to ensure corruption identification as well as to let the relative boards reform the Police Force and other enforcement entities within an integrated approach.

More vitally, the time is ripe to reactivate cold cases, so we stop bringing up old ghosts – ghosts that have torn this country apart – and uncover the history of offenses in the Maltese Islands. A veritable house of cards might fall, away from the current shouting game. It is also prime time to bring about the new republic without further hindrance by interested parties, such that we have been waiting for years only to be thwarted by narcissistic and desperate prima donnas.

Then get them to pull the same rope in national and international politics.

I call on the political parties to clean up their mess since all parties need to offer hope and unity within their ranks.

This farce is tiring and if parties have to be rent asunder so be it.

Time to bring in technocrats to manage ministries for a limited period, where capacity falls short. And of course, to ensure peace of mind, find a few national mentors to guide this country through the difficult period ahead.

There is hope yet for this country. Together, it can be done, though away from sensationalism, but in serene and enlightened thought with fortified action. Each to take a measured and meaningful step beyond, again quoting Smash.

“So if you’ve come in off the street

And you’re beginning to feel the heat

Well, listen buster

You better start to move your feet.”

Saviour Formosa is Professor of Criminology and Spatio-Temporal Environments.

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