

Mr Tsipras' insightful incoherence – my reply in The Guardian, 24th July 2017

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24/07/2017



In a [Guardian interview](#) (24 July), the Greek prime minister, Alexis Tsipras, having admitted to “big mistakes”, was asked if appointing me as his first finance minister was one of them. According to the interviewer, Mr Tsipras said “Varoufakis ... was the right choice for an initial strategy of ‘collision politics’, but he dismisses the plan he presented had Greece been forced to make the dramatic move to a new currency as ‘so vague, it wasn’t worth talking about”.

Given that I presented my plans to Mr Tsipras for deterring the troika’s aggression and responding to a potential impasse (and any move by the troika to evict [Greece](#) from the eurozone) before we won the election of January 2015, and I was chosen by him as finance minister (one presumes) on the basis of their merit, his answer reflects a deep incoherence.

Either I was the right choice to spearhead the “collision” with the troika of Greece’s lenders because my plans were convincing, or my plans were not convincing and, thus, I was the wrong choice as his first finance minister.

Arguing, as Mr Tsipras does, that I was both the right choice for the initial confrontation and that my plan B was so vague it wasn’t worth the trouble of even talking about is disingenuous, albeit insightful, for it reveals the impossibility of maintaining a radical critique of his predecessors while adopting the Tina (There Is No Alternative) doctrine.

As my account of the events of 2015 is on the record (see my recent book, [Adults in the Room](#)), I wish to add nothing further here about that period. What matters now is the task of ending Greece’s desertification, which is proceeding at a harrowing pace under the provisions of the third bailout, its new unsustainable loans and its growth-debilitating, self-reinforcing and self-defeating austerity. Is playing “model prisoner” to our lenders a better plan than the one Mr Tsipras dismisses as “weak and ineffective”? That is the question.

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Monday 24 July 2017 13.36 BST Last modified on Monday 24 July 2017 17.21 BST

[Original Guardian site](#)