

# An Imaginary Conversation

This is a dialogue that never took place, but if it had, this how it might have developed

Kyriakos: And now that we have finished discussing Greek-Turkish relations and European issues, let us deal, dear Angela, with a very serious aspect of our bilateral relations. It concerns the destruction caused by your country to Greece from 1941 to 1944. I will just mention a few facts that we must remember: The total population of the country during WWII was reduced by 13.5% and Wehrmacht destroyed about 1770 towns and villages during the occupation. Until now Germany has been quiet on this issue. Don't you think that it's about time, 80 years after this catastrophe, for the German government to assume its share of responsibilities on this issue?

In 1946 we submitted officially to the German government a list of antiquities that had been stolen by the German army during the occupation. This list contains 8500 movable items. It's quite a number isn't it? They were never returned to us and they appear in museums, auctions and private collections. We want them back my dear Angela, they are part of our civilization, our history, they belong to us.



concern:

- The damage inflicted upon Greece and its population during the occupation
- The return of the obligatory loan of the Bank of Greece to the third Reich which, including interest, amounts to approximately 400 billion euros.
- The payment of the remaining reparations of the first World War that are still outstanding
- The return of the archaeological artefacts and other cultural goods that were stolen from Greece.

Can you imagine that had you paid us the 400 billion euros from the obligatory loan, my people would not have been submitted to the poverty caused by the memoranda that you imposed upon us. You also acknowledged the mistakes made in implementing the memoranda.

I listened carefully to what you said on the necessity to continue the dialogue with Turkey but I did not hear you supporting the opening of a dialogue with Greece.

You have rejected four verbal notes that we had sent you asking for the opening of negotiations for war reparations and the return of the obligatory loan. Why?

If justice prevails, the bilateral relations between Greece and Germany will be enhanced, and the souls of those killed will at last rest in peace. This will also send a strong and permanent message against fascism which is something that you also strongly want.

I am sorry Angela, if I spoke too much. I wanted, as you can understand, to take advantage of the publicity that your visit to my country has created, to inform indirectly the German people about how relations between us really are. Because German citizens, based on misinformation provided to them, believe that Greeks are lazy and thus working against the interests of the Germans. Can you imagine how autonomous and

independent we would be today had we received the 400 billion euros from the occupation loan. That's all I had to say and with pleasure I would like to hear you now

Angela: Kyriakos you should have told me all this earlier. Two months ago I received a letter from five Greek organizations mentioning exactly these issues. You are right about what we owe you.

When I hand over the Chancellery to my successor, I will inform him about this serious matter that preoccupies Greece and I will propose that negotiations with Greece be opened. It is the only thing that I can now do. But from your part don't forget this issue and insist on it.