**Μια ντροπή για την Ελλάδα και την Ευρώπη**

**Έκκληση προς τους Προέδρους Γιούνκερ και Τουσκ από εκατοντάδες ακαδημαϊκούς και συγγραφείς**

**Να σταματήσει η πολυετής κυβερνητική καταδίωξη της Athens Review of Books**

Το περιοδικό *The Athens Review of Books* (ARB), το ελληνικό αντίστοιχο του *New York Review of Books*, δημοσίευσε επιστολή αναγνώστη που αναφερόταν στο πολιτικό παρελθόν τού μέχρι πρότινος Έλληνα Υπουργού Εξωτερικών Ν. Κοτζιά ως στελέχους του ΚΚΕ, χαρακτηρίζοντάς τον φανατικό σταλινικό («*γκαουλάιτερ του σταλινισμού*»). Ο Ν. Κοτζιάς (συγγραφέας βιβλίων με τα οποία υμνούσε το ολοκληρωτικό καθεστώς Χόνεκερ και τη δικτατορία Γιαρουζέλσκι) άσκησε αγωγή κατά του περιοδικού ζητώντας αποζημίωση 250.000 ευρώ.

Δικαστικές αποφάσεις θεώρησαν ως συκοφαντικό τον χαρακτηρισμό «*ακραίος* *σταλινικός*», παραβλέποντας ότι είναι αξιολογική πολιτική κρίση για ένα δημόσιο πρόσωπο. Υπάρχουν ενδείξεις ότι ο υπουργός και η κυβέρνηση επενέβησαν στην λειτουργία της Δικαιοσύνης προκειμένου να ευοδωθεί η δίωξη κατά του περιοδικού. Μία από τις ισχυρότερες είναι ότι στον Άρειο Πάγο, ανώτατο Δικαστήριο της χώρας, η εισηγήτρια της υπόθεσης πρότεινε να γίνει δεκτή η αναίρεση της ARB, διότι παραβιάστηκε η νομολογία του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικαστηρίου Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου και το Ελληνικό Σύνταγμα, αλλά η ίδια αργότερα καταψήφισε, χωρίς καμιά αιτιολογία, την τεκμηριωμένη γραπτή εισήγησή της και εν συνεχεία επελέγη από την κυβέρνηση Αντιπρόεδρος του Αρείου Πάγου.

Από τον Ιούλιο του 2017 ο Υπουργός Εξωτερικών έχει δεσμεύσει τους λογαριασμούς της εκδότριας και του διευθυντή της ARB και τα έσοδα του περιοδικού από το Πρακτορείο Διανομής Τύπου, με προφανή στόχο το κλείσιμό του.

Ημεθόδευση της πολυετούς εξοντωτικής δίωξης της ARB αποτελεί ακραία κατάχρηση της δυνατότητας που δίνει ο ελληνικός νόμος στους πολιτικούς να ασκούν αγωγές για αποζημίωση κατά εντύπων ζητώντας υπέρογκα ποσά. Και μάλιστα να τις κερδίζουν, παρά την νομολογία του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικαστηρίου Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου, εκφοβίζοντας έτσι τον Τύπο και αποτρέποντας την άσκηση πολιτικής κριτικής. Περίπτωση τόσο παράλογης και τόσο απηνούς καταδίωξης όσο αυτής του (πρώην) Υπουργού Εξωτερικών εναντίον της ARB δεν έχουμε γνωρίσει τις τελευταίες δεκαετίες στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Πρόσφατα κατατέθηκαν στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο τρεις διαφορετικές ερωτήσεις Ελλήνων ευρωβουλευτών προς την Επιτροπή σχετικά με την δίωξη της ARB, ενώ ο αρχηγός της αξιωματικής αντιπολίτευσης δήλωσε ότι «*η καταδίωξη της Athens Review of Books είναι ντροπή για την Ελληνική Δημοκρατία»*. Πριν λίγες μέρες μάλιστα ο πρώην Υπουργός ομολόγησε δημοσίως ότι «*εθήτευσα στη σταλινική αριστερά*» (23.10.2018), πράγμα που στην αγωγή του θεωρούσε συκοφαντικό και το οποίο δέχθηκαν τα δικαστήρια!

Κύριε Πρόεδρε της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, κύριε Πρόεδρε του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου, σας παρακαλούμε να εξαντλήσετε όλα τα μέσα που διαθέτει η Επιτροπή και το Συμβούλιο για να σώσει ένα έντυπο που τιμά τα ελληνικά γράμματα και τον ελληνικό Τύπο.

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