



Solidarity for Ukraine – 01/10/2023- issue 20 – *Vae victis*

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The Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering (iriv) is associated to the international solidarity for Ukraine attacked by Russia on 24th February 2022. After a pandemic that has weakened democratic countries with the disturbing rise of conspiracy theories and hate speech on social networks, we do hope this war in Europe will be an opportunity to reflect on a new solidarity, among European and international allies. This issue is the 10th for 2023 and the 20th since the beginning of the war in Ukraine... « Maldonne » or misdeal is the term used in the gangster world to refer to a situation that has not been “fairly” played. When we made a «newcomer», a «blue», believe that he would be «freed», after following a well-drawn protocol, which may last for years, prepared by a plethora of

«professionals», at the end of the process, he hopes to be inducted into the «brotherhood» of the «Brave». The «blue» is armed with patience because he sincerely believed in the cause. The outcome of the fight could only live up to his expectations after such an obstacle course. His amazement is total if he realizes that he is on a Mount in Auvergne while he thought he was on the track of the Everest when the «Braves» end up making him unfair proposals. The mountain gave birth to a mouse. In the world of thugs, it is called «gourance» for mistake. In a more demanding language, one would evoke a masquerade. The Russian camp is expert in the matter - low blows and masquerades are raining, the strategy of the losers. The Ukrainian side has been fighting a fair fight since the start, which should lead to victory – only the Gentlemen deserve to win. *Vae victis*.

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* le logo a été dessiné par Caritas Canada en février 2022

The clown strategy

In the American film "Indecent Proposal" (1), the character played by Robert Redford offers the wife of a young couple that is going through a difficult financial situation to spend a night with the wife in exchange for a large sum of money that would get them out of this bad step.

In the gangster world, an expression full of understatement is more threatening- «we will make a proposal they cannot refuse». Any refusal could lead to bloody reprisals. In the American movie «Godfather» (2), we remember the head of a horse cut in the bed of a Hollywood tycoon, a promising stallion that had cost him a fortune, because the tycoon had the bad idea not to understand a proposal made by the Corleone clan.

In a professional context, another equally shocking form of “indecent proposal” is to suggest a job that is far below a person’s qualifications and experience. This is a typical case of “race to the bottom”, whose explanation is very prosaic, in general financial: to break prices by suggesting that they would be fixed according to the mission without considering the profile and experience of the people who would fulfil it. This strange calculation is generally doomed to failure and leads to a brain drain. The best people do not remain if they are so devalued. They speak to better informed and inspired people. Considering an artistic setting where the law of supply and demand is fairly basic, the salary of an actor is fixed according to his/her reputation, which is calculated by his/her career, his/her «book», which includes his/her training (for example in a prestigious school) but also all productions (film, television or theatre) in which he or she participated. A plus is obviously the number of admissions in theatres for their latest film or play. The “return on investment” is assessed by producers who can adjust their budget accordingly, the price of merit. It is always a bet on the future, keeping in mind that failure is to aim low.

Let’s consider a diva, whose training is prestigious (Conservatoire in France, Royal Shakespeare Company in the United Kingdom, or Julliard School in the United States), with a career of more than thirty years in productions of very good level. She decides to take a new international step in her career. Impresarios offer her a tour with a company of clowns who have experienced a glorieole in a francophone amateur festival. We imagine that the salary to which she could claim would be the image of this strange suggestion coming from the moon. If the diva accepted this indecent proposition, the consequences would be disastrous. Her audience would be disappointed to see her fall so low. It would be a loss of reputation and the star would suffer from this downgrading which would also raise embarrassing questions: would she be cornered? would she suffer from an addiction? If the “winner takes it all”, the “loser loses all”. In any negotiation, of course, one should consider several scenarios, if they correspond to the interests of each part and that they are not openly against one part against the other. A good “negotiation” is based on the well-known “win-win” strategy.

Russian masquerade

The Russian president has multiplied indecent proposals. Europeans realized his unfair strategy at the Vilnius summit on 28 and 29 November 2013. The 28 EU Member States and six Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) were represented. The Presidents of the European institutions were also present. This was a crucial summit for the Eastern Partnership: Georgia and Moldova hoped to sign association agreements. But in Ukraine, the Kiev government decided to suspend the process and delay the signing of the association agreement. Protests took place in Ukraine for cooperation with the European Union, which led to the Maïdan Revolution in February 2014, which led to the annexation of Crimea and Donbass the same year by pro-Russians (3).

Russian pressure was well explained in a documentary by Norma Percy who was able to interview key actors (European and American in particular) to know the bottom of the cards, the other side of the scene. The backstage is often revealing (4). Vladimir Putin's hostility has not escaped three key female politicians - the President of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaitė, the head of European diplomacy, the British Catherine Ashton, then High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The then President of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso (2004-2014), explained the attitude of the Russian President by his frustration and vexation at having been removed from the circle of great nations. American President Barack Obama had «dared» to speak of Russia as a regional power that was no longer playing a game with other Western countries. The narcissistic wound was formidable. This affront had to be washed away. Rancour and resentment would therefore be the explanation for the Russian offensive in Ukraine as before in Georgia (in 2008), another country that Russia intended to resume to the Western influence.

Indecent proposals are usually accompanied by a war of attrition. It began in 2014 with the first annexations of Ukrainian territories. Eight years later, Vladimir Putin thought that the rotting of the situation would have worked in his favour. He had acquired some glories in Syria with the «little green men» of the Wagner (5) and a partnership established on this occasion with equally disloyal and threatening allies on the international scene (Syria, China, and Iran). Vladimir Putin also managed to destabilize Western public opinion in 2016 with Brexit and the Cambridge Analytica affair or during the American presidential elections to support their Republican candidate Donald Trump against Democrat Hillary Clinton. The indecent proposals of the Russian president also worked in Russia when he masterfully robbed the Russian oligarchs who had brought him to power to succeed Yeltsin. The «masquerade» seems to have stopped with Ukraine which was not defeated but also with the mutiny of Wagner in June 2023 even if it was bloodily stopped (6). Russian oligarchs must have remembered the fate they were promised, which was not just a threat for some of them. (7)

The « clown » was not Ukrainian.

From the beginning of his mandate, the Ukrainian president was the subject of an obvious strategy of destabilization. His opponents tried to discredit him on all fronts. He was not a star comedian, producer, and animator, he was a second-rate «clown». He was not a political leader, democratically elected by the Ukrainians, with an overwhelming majority, he was a «balloon» that would be deflated. He was not a sincere man, he was a wishful thinking that they would discourage.

However, some elements should have alerted the Russian president to all kinds of «advisers». Volodymyr Zelenski succeeded in a very competitive field, the audiovisual, where there are many called but few elected officials. The Ukrainian president was also not badly elected, on misunderstanding, but very comfortably by his voters. His popularity has never declined; the confidence of the Ukrainians has been constantly renewed. Another element is that President Zelenski never gave up, never wavered, or changed his strategy despite the pressures that has been unleashed since the beginning of the war. It is therefore quite surprising that the harassment never stopped and that one could believe that he would let himself be «beaten». The Russian strategy was not only sterile, it was also profoundly stupid and bad. So much blindness so long is really surprising.

The Ukrainian president is a talented and creative man. His opponents should have given him more consideration. Under an appearance of lightness, desired by his first profession of humoristic artist, there is a businessman who knew how to conduct his career. It is much deeper than the caricature of «clown» that the men of the Kremlin could give of him, with constancy and obstinacy. The «master minds» were mistaken about his character which they considered superficial while he was smarter than them by thwarting their masquerade.

Volodymyr Zelensky trapped Vladimir Putin on his ground, he used his weapons. The Russian president, who had much more financial and human resources, thought he was playing the «stars», the Ukrainian president has taken the lead role. The Russian president felt very strong, supported by a whole «band» of «whistlers», Volodymyr Zelenski rallied friends and allies to his cause. The Russian president played with cunning and mocked him, President Zelenski ridiculed him in front of his supporters. The affront was even more scathing for Vladimir Putin because he thought the victory was played out in advance. It was settled like musical paper. One can understand the bitterness, the bad feeling, the increasingly open and personal hostility of the self-proclaimed «hero», who became an outsider, an outcast, the one who ridiculed himself and did not fulfil his contract. He lost face, he looked pale. He lost his superb, his morgue. He was no longer the mocker but the mocked, no longer the instigator of the game but the toy of a situation that eluded him. It is difficult to recover from a rigged fight where his opponent was supposed to bite the dust. The reaction of bad players is then low blow and petty little revenge. Clowns can also be sad.

New Deal- *Vae victis*

American multimillionaire Warren Buffet had this remark struck under the seal of common sense after the financial crisis of the years 2007-2008 which had led to spectacular bankruptcies, including the fall of the investment bank Lehman Brothers in the United States. «It is when the sea recedes that we can see swimmers swimming without swimsuits».

After a long period of (reciprocal) observation, various experimentation and testing, with mixed feelings on both sides, the «Braves» may decide to finally get to the negotiating table. Remote messages are sometimes incomprehensible especially when they are poorly transmitted, by emissaries who are not up to the task, and whose messages are unfriendly. The time for bickering is over, everyone knows what to expect. One can remain on an impression of «bad deal» or “maldonne”; each stakeholder will bring his version of the facts, his «legend». If the negotiators are honest, they will clearly state their expectations and make a proposal worth being taken into consideration. If they do not have the means of their ambitions, if they have addressed interlocutors who are beyond their means, or whom they do not need, it is not a tragedy to admit it. It is most inelegant to attack an interlocutor on his or her personality, and to blame him or her for the failure of the negotiations when he or she was only made proposals that he or she could not accept by sending false friends who did not want the negotiations to succeed.

Since the beginning, Vladimir Putin’s strategy has been to make everyone believe that he was playing the game - in Russia, the oligarchs who brought him to power ; on the international stage among Westerners who believed that he had abandoned the belligerent objectives of the USSR and that the Cold War was over; in Europe, he has lulled political leaders by offering cheap gas and oil and at the same time by buying opinion leaders (such as former heads of government, prestigious actors, etc.) (7). The awakening of the West was even more brutal.

The Latin expression «*Vae victis*» dates to the Gallic War. It would have been used by the Gallic Brennus, after a victory over the Romans. He would have added his sword in addition to the repairs already required. By extension, the expression means all the vexations, torments, that a victor inflicts on a vanquished (8). *Vae victis* - «Woe to the vanquished» is the bravado that translates the outcome of an unbalanced fight; it sounds like a provocation.

Vladimir Putin was sure to win. He had not even considered losing. The fight was a foregone conclusion. As a bad loser, unaccustomed to the rules, he redoubled attacks and brutality. Obsessed with his fixed idea, he did not even realize that things were escaping him.

A poem by 19th-century American writer and journalist Ambrose Bierce is entitled “The Brave respect the Brave” (9). Against all odds, the «clown» was Russian from the beginning in the so unequal fight of Russia against Ukraine. The Ukrainians have played their “fair” card and deserve to win. Luck favours the bold. *Vae victis*.

- (1) Adrian Lyne « *Proposition indécente* » (*Indecent Proposal*), Etats-Unis, 1992.
- (2) Francis Ford Coppola « Le parrain », Etats-Unis, 1972.
- (3) Commission européenne- Sommet de Vilnius: l'Union européenne se tourne vers l'Est , 29-11-2013 -
<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/fr/headlines/world/20131127IFG27656/sommet-de-vilnius-l-union-europeenne-se-tourne-vers-l-est>
- (4) Norma Percy (2022) « Face à Poutine », série de trois documentaires diffusés sur Arte, mardi 21 mars 2023
- (5) « *les soldats "fantômes" de Poutine en Syrie* »- cité par Lucas Minisimi,« Groupe Wagner » dans « Le Monde », du conflit en Syrie à l'invasion de l'Ukraine, 15 avril 2022-
https://www.lemonde.fr/m-le-mag/article/2022/04/15/groupe-wagner-dans-le-monde-de-la-guerre-en-syrie-a-l-invasion-de-l-ukraine_6122308_4500055.html
- (6) avec l'explosion en plein vol d'Evgueni Prigogine et ses lieutenants en août 2023
- (7) Paul Moreira, « Poutine et les oligarques », France 2, diffusé pardi 19 septembre 2023
- (8) Par exemple l'ancien chancelier allemand Gerhard Schröder (associé à la société russe Gazprom avant de devoir y renoncer sous la pression) ou l'acteur français Gérard Depardieu qui avait un passeport russe et a l'habitude de fréquenter les dictateurs (tchéchène, coréen du Nord ...)
- (9) Larousse en ligne , téléchargé le 25 mars 2023
- (10) Ambrose Bierce (né en 1841) « The Brave respect the Brave ». <https://blogazoi.com/the-brave-respect-the-brave-by-ambrose-bierce/>

Contacts utiles pour aider l'Ukraine

Nous souhaitons partager les contacts suivants

- 1- Syndicat national des journalistes d'Ukraine (National Union of Journalists of Ukraine)-
[HTTPS://NUJU.ORG.UA/](https://nuju.org.ua/)
- 2- paroisse ukrainienne Saint Volodymyr – 186 boulevard Saint Germain 75006 Paris –
paroisse.st.volodymyr@gmail.com
- 3- mission catholique de l'Eglise polonaise en France suggère également le lien suivant :
<https://mission-catholique-polonaise.pl/polska-we-francji/pere-brzys-la-mcp-lance-une-initiative-nationale-pour-aider-lukraine/>

Voici une liste d'associations & ONG - **Source** : <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/actualites/A15542>

Support Ukraine – une plateforme accessible sur - <https://www.supportukraine.co/>

Croix-Rouge Française - [Croix-Rouge française](https://www.croix-rouge.fr/Nos-actions/Action-internationale/Rechercher-un-programme/LA-CROIX-ROUGE-FRANCAISE-EN-UKRAINE) pour des dons financiers, en soutien de la Croix-Rouge ukrainienne, au Comité International de la Croix-Rouge - <https://www.croix-rouge.fr/Nos-actions/Action-internationale/Rechercher-un-programme/LA-CROIX-ROUGE-FRANCAISE-EN-UKRAINE>

Médecins sans frontières - [fonds d'urgence](https://soutenir.msf.fr/faire-un-don/~mon-don) dans les pays limitrophes de l'Ukraine et cherchent à faire entrer du matériel médical et du personnel. - <https://soutenir.msf.fr/faire-un-don/~mon-don>

Secours populaire - lance un appel aux dons d'urgence à l'Ukraine .- <https://don.secourspopulaire.fr/ukraine/~mon-don>

Protection civile - un appel aux dons pour financer d'autres besoins (défibrillateurs, respirateurs, groupes électrogènes, etc.) : <https://don.protection-civile.org/soutenir>

Fondation de France - lance un [appel à la générosité](https://dons.fondationdefrance.org/solidarite-avec-les-ukrainiens/~mon-don?) pour soutenir les centaines de milliers de personnes affectées par le conflit en Pologne et en Roumanie - - <https://dons.fondationdefrance.org/solidarite-avec-les-ukrainiens/~mon-don?>

Agence des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés - situation d'urgence de niveau 3 pour la crise en Ukraine, le plus élevé.: https://donner.unhcr.org/fr/fr-fr/urgence-ukraine?_cv=1

Unicef - un besoin urgent de financement pour répondre aux besoins essentiels des enfants Pour faire un don sur le site [Unicef.fr](https://don.unicef.fr/b/mon-don?cid=322&_cv=1) - https://don.unicef.fr/b/mon-don?cid=322&_cv=1

ONG Care International - un [formulaire en ligne de dons d'urgence à l'Ukraine](https://soutenir.carefrance.org/) pour apporter une aide d'urgence aux populations et aux réfugiés - .- <https://soutenir.carefrance.org/>

L'ONG française ACTED organise des convois humanitaires pour l'Ukraine

association Solidarités International –pour envoyer des convois de vivres et biens de première nécessité, distribuer de l'eau et des repas aux réfugiés - https://dons.solidarites.org/b/mon-don?cid=880&_cv=1

Plan International, pour apporter aide matérielle et psychosociale aux jeunes ukrainiens et à leur famille, et [sollicite des dons](https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don) pour ce faire.- <https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don>

L'Aide médicale et caritative France-Ukraine - envoi de convois d'aide humanitaire, des soins aux blessés, des échanges de savoir-faire médical, une aide psychologique et organise des colonies de vacances pour les enfants orphelins - HelloAsso - <https://www.helloasso.com/associations/aide%20medicale%20caritative%20france%20ukraine/collectes/aider-ukraine-amurgence-help-ukraine/don>

Le Comité d'aide médicale Ukraine - réfugiés en transit dans l'ouest du pays, et collecte fonds, médicaments et équipements pour l'hébergement et les soins via ses partenaires français, l'association SAFE et l'organisation FONDEMOS. - <http://www.cam-z.org/en/news/121/>

JeVeuxAider.gouv.fr est la plateforme publique du bénévolat, - une page dédiée Mobilisons-nous pour l'Ukraine .- <https://www.jeveuxaider.gouv.fr/engagement/benevolat-ukraine/>

Les Banques alimentaires - une aide d'urgence à apporter aux frontières de l'Ukraine, dans les pays frontaliers accueillant des réfugiés - <https://www.banquealimentaire.org/urgence-ukraine>

La Protection Civile et l'Association des maires de France ont établi une [liste](#) (lits de camps, sacs de couchage, lingettes, conserves, pansements hémostatiques, solutions antiseptiques ...).

L'Association des maires de France a dressé les [lieux de collecte](#) à travers toute la France. Les Maires de France appellent à la [solidarité avec l'Ukraine](#) . De nombreuses villes de France organisent des collectes de produits de première nécessité - <https://www.amf.asso.fr/documents-les-maires-france-appellent-la-solidarite-avec-lukraine/41122>

La plateforme officielle « [Je m'engage pour l'Ukraine](#) » lancée le 8 mars 2022 par le gouvernement pour accompagner les Français souhaitant héberger chez eux des Ukrainiens réfugiés et accueillis en France.- <https://parrainage.refugies.info/>

Les associations, fondations, entreprises et collectivités territoriales peuvent utiliser ce [formulaire en ligne](#) pour renseigner leur capacité d'hébergement.- <https://www.demarches-simplifiees.fr/commencer/hebergement-personne-morale-ukraine>

Bibliothèque sans frontière (BSF) - elle mobilise et déploie, partout en Europe, des solutions d'urgence pour l'accueil et l'intégration des populations réfugiées. - <https://www.bibliosansfrontieres.org/2022/10/14/bsf-lance-bonjour-france-une-application-innovante-dapprentissage-du-francais-pour-les-refugies-ukrainiens/>