

## Fintan O'Toole nails Greece, and Ireland

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I am a fan of Fintan O'Toole. His book *The Ship of Fools* was a classic. His writing for the Irish Times is exceptional. He had an [op-ed out yesterday](#) that is a classic on the Irish politician's ability to lie to maintain a fictional view of Ireland's special place in modern history. It is also precise and wholly accurate on Greece, about which he says:

*When the crisis hit in 2008, there might have been a moment of truth. Instead ... [a] new fiction was invented — that Greece could simultaneously have its economy shrunk by relentless austerity and pay back hundreds of billions of euro.*

*The startling thing about the current debacle is that no one really believes this story any more. The IMF has long since admitted that its calculations about the economic effects of austerity were wildly wrong. No objective analyst believes that Greece can pay back its debts.*

*And yet the story must be maintained: Greece must keep punishing its people to pay back the money being borrowed to make the payments on the unpayable loans. In the upside-down world we inhabit, Syriza, which has called a halt to this fiction, is a bunch of mad fantasists, while the troika that goes on acting as if the fictions were real is the voice of hard-headed realism.*

*Everything - from the lives of ordinary Greeks to the foundations of the [European Union](#) - must be sacrificed to the story.*

That is so true.

Please read the rest.