

from 10.9 and 11.6 in 1981 and 1984 respectively to 9.9 and that of the Eurocommunist KKE of the Interior from 3.4 in 1984 (1.4 in 1981) to 1.8. Certainly Papandreou was now able to argue that a significant majority of the total electorate had, *ex post facto*, given their sanction both to Saratzetakis' presidency and to the proposed constitutional changes. Mitsotakis acknowledged this, as his remarks during the campaign in effect obliged him to do, soon after the election by announcing that he now accepted Sartzetakis as the legitimate head of state. Nonetheless, the damage inflicted upon the legitimacy of Greece's political institutions in the constitutional crisis of March 1985 will take a long time fully to heal.

Greece and the Jews

JOSHUA DAVID KREINDLER

AS THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY of the end of World War II approaches, many Jews are unaware of the heroic role played by the Greek people to rescue their fellow citizens of the Jewish faith from a mutual enemy, Nazism.

In sharp contrast to the Roman Catholic Church and many Protestant churches, Greek Orthodox Christians, led by the valiant Archbishop of (all of) Greece, Damaskenos, protested against the racist decrees forced upon Greece by the Nazis which sought to differentiate between Greek Jew and Greek Gentile. At great personal danger did Damaskenos also personally instruct churches throughout Greece to hide Jews. To those who could not be hidden, Damaskenos issued false baptismal certificates. Gregorios, bishop of Chalkis, saved hundreds of Jews and hid the Torah scrolls in his church. After the war, he returned them to the Jewish community.

Angelos Evert, the Chief of Police of Athens and Piraeus, also saved Jews by issuing false identity papers to them. Ironically, Angelos' grandfather came from Germany, his name is German (i.e. Evert), so he was not under the close Nazi scrutiny to which other officials were subjected. Dimitri Papaioannou, a successful Greek-American businessman told me that his father was sent to Auschwitz for helping the Nachamoudi family of Athens. Mr. Papaioannou, who is active on behalf of Jewish causes, is proud that his father was martyred for "a people that gave the world so much, especially its greatest prophet, Jesus Christ."

Greece is one of the few countries where Jew and Gentile fought as brothers to rid their land of a common enemy. As Miltiatis Evert, son of Angelos Evert and a member of Parliament, said, "If it were to happen again, we would save our brother Greek." The dozens of Greeks I met expressed the same feelings of solidarity with the Jewish people. They were equally proud of Captain Mordecai Frizis, a Jew and the first Greek officer to fall in World War II, who was responsible

for ridding Greece of the first Italian occupation. The prominent Greek historian, Angelos Anastopoulos writes, "Without the strategy of Frizis and his attack on the Italian forces, the victory for Greece would not have been achieved."

The feelings of the Greek people for Jews extend also the state of Israel. Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou's policies are controversial, but only because they are misunderstood. Few, if any, Jews in the United States are aware of the fact that Papandreou was asked *by the American government* to offer a haven to Arafat since he is considered a moderate. Few Jews are aware of the declaration by Papandreou of August 1982 in which he stated, "The Jews of Greece are an *integral part of the Greek nation* (emphasis mine), and that while Greece recognizes the right of Israel to exist within secure and internationally recognized boundaries, it also feels that the Palestinians' rights to self-determination are necessary for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East." Contrary to what was said and written in the media, no Greek Jews were verbally abused or physically attacked during Israel's invasion of Lebanon. There was, however, strong criticism in the Greek media of the invasion. To insure that the minority of extremists in Greece would not seize upon this opportunity to attack Jews, Papandreou personally ordered all Jewish institutions guarded, and, thankfully, there were no incidents. Also, technological and cultural ties between Israel and Greece have increased under the Papandreou government.

The Greek and Jewish peoples are bound to each other not only by these ties of friendship and cultural exchange, but also by the suffering which both peoples have endured under oppressive regimes. These bonds should encourage Jews the world over to give their goodwill and support to the people of Greece.

But because many non-Greeks are unaware of the heroism of the Greek people under the Nazi occupation, as personified by Archbishop Damaskenos, the letter, a historic document that required "virtue and courage" to sign in those dark times, is included below.

**To the Prime Minister
Mr. K. Logothetopoulos
Athens**

Mr. Prime Minister,

The Greek people were rightfully surprised and deeply grieved to be informed that the German Occupation Authorities have already started to put into effect a program of gradual deportation of the Greek Jewish community of Salonica to places beyond our national borders and that the first groups of deportees are

already on their way to Poland. The grief of the Greek people was even deeper since:

1) According to the terms of the armistice, all Greek citizens, without distinction of race or religion, were to be treated equally by the Occupation Authorities.

2) The Greek Jews have proven themselves not only valuable contributors to the economic growth of the country but also law-abiding citizens who understand fully their duties as Greeks. They had their share in the common sacrifices for the Greek country and were always on the front line of the struggles of the Greek nation to defend its inalienable historical rights.

3) The law-abiding nature of the Jewish community in Greece excludes a priori any reason that it may be involved in actions or acts that might endanger, even in the slightest, the safety of the Military Occupation Authorities.

4) To the national conscience all the children of common mother Greece appear to be an inseparable unity; they are all equal members of the national body without regard to religion or dogmatic differences.

5) Our holy Religion does not recognize any superior or inferior qualities based on race or religion, stating that: "There is neither Jew nor Greek" (Gal 3.28), and in this manner, condemns any attempt to discriminate or create racial or religious differences.

6) Our common fate, in days of glory and in periods of national misfortune, forged inseparable bonds among all Greek citizens, without exemption, no matter what their race.

Certainly, we are not unaware of the deep conflict between the new Germany and the Jewish community nor do we intend to become defenders or even simply judges of world Jewry in the sphere of the great political and economic affairs of the world. Today we are interested and deeply concerned with the fate of 60,000 of our fellow citizens, who are Jews. For long, we have lived together in slavery and in freedom and we have come to know their feelings, their brotherly attitude, their economic activity and, what is even more important, their irreproachable patriotism. True witness of this is the great number of victims offered without regret and without hesitation by the Greek Jewish community on the altar of duty when our country was in peril.

Mr. Prime Minister,

We are certain that the thoughts and feelings of the government agree with those of all the rest of the Greek people on this

matter. We believe also that you have already taken the necessary steps and applied to the Occupation Authorities to rescind the grievous and aimless measure to deport the members of the Jewish community of Greece.

We hope indeed, that you have indicated to those in power that such a harsh treatment of Jews who are Greek citizens, as opposed to Jews of other nationalities in Greece, makes the instituted measure even more unjustifiable and therefore morally unacceptable. If it is security reasons that justify it, we think that it is possible to suggest a solution, and to take measures such as the detention of the active male population (except children and the old) at a specific place on Greek territory under the surveillance of the Occupation Authorities, so that their security is guaranteed even against a hypothetical danger, and the Greek Jewish community will be spared of this deportation which is threatening it. In addition, we note with regard to the above measure that the rest of the Greek people will be willing, if asked, to guarantee without hesitation for their brothers in need.

We hope that the Occupation Authorities will realize in time the aimlessness of the persecution of Greek Jews in particular, who are among the most peaceful and productive elements of the country.

If, however, they insist on this policy of deportation, we believe that the government as the bearer of any political authority left in the country, should take a clear stance with regard to these events and let the foreigners bear the full responsibility of committing this obvious injustice. For we believe that no one should forget that all actions during these difficult times, even those that lie beyond our will and power will be reviewed some day by the nation and will be subjected to historical investigation. During that time of judgment, the aspect of responsibility assumed by the leaders will weigh heavily upon the conscience of the nation, if the leaders fail, to make bold and express the most justified protest of the nation against measures like the initiation of the deportation of the Greek Jews which insult our national unity and honor.

With respect,
Damaskenos
Archbishop of Athens and all Greece

Signatures of the heads of the major cultural institutions and organizations follow:

The President of the Academy of Athens, the Rector of the University of Athens, the Rector of the Polytechnical School of Athens, the Rector of the High School of Economic Studies, the President of the Medical Association of Attica, the President of the Roll of Barristers of Attica, the President of the Union of Notaries of Athens and the Aegean, the President of the Journalist's Union, the President of the Association of Greek Authors, the President of the Culture Association, the President of the Piraeus Chamber of Commerce, the President of the Athens Professional Chamber, the President of the Greek Association of Chemists, the President of the Athens Association of Pharmacists, the President of the Dentist's Association, the President of the Athens Craftsman Chamber, the President of the Piraeus Association of Pharmacists, the President of the Greek Actors, the President of the Greek Association of Pharmacists, the President of the Medical Association of Piraeus, the President of the Athens Association of Commercants, the President of the Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Vice-President of the Greek Union of Theatrical and Musical Critics, the President of the Medical Association of Callithea, the Secretary General of the Panhellenic Association of Dentists, the President of the Greek Industrialists Union, the General Director of the Refugee's Organization, the General Director of Social Health Organization.