

Notes on the nightmare of a Greek prison

In April 1970, 34 distinguished personalities from Greek public life were tried in Athens on the charge of plotting to overthrow the junta and the existing "social order." Among them was Professor Dionysos Karageorgas, a notable Greek economist who made the following statement from prison while awaiting trial. Karageorgas was sentenced to life imprisonment.

I was arrested in the afternoon of July 14, 1969 at the Aretaion Hospital (Athens) where I was transferred to be operated on, having been gravely wounded.

At about 10 p.m. of that same day and while I was still gaining consciousness from the anaesthetic I had taken for the operation, I became aware that two persons in civil dress, each one standing on either side of my bed were pulling my chest with great ferocity. At the same time they were shouting at me to confess to them who had given me the explosives which they had found in my house. Obviously, these two persons were policemen.

As I was not replying to their questions the two policemen continued for a long time to pull my chest with ever growing harshness, until exhausted by the operation and by such maltreatment I lost consciousness.

The next day, at about 11 a.m., Colonel Tzavaras in uniform and Colonel Karabatsos in civil dress came to the hospital room where I was kept in strict solitary confinement.

They told me that they would see to it that my wife would suffer no hardships, as well as my other relatives, if only I confessed who had given me the explosives, where did I intend to use them and, if I denounced those with whom I collaborated.

For about two hours these two officers were insulting me and this process went on for about a week.

Each one at a time, Tzavaras, Karabatsos and Mavroidis, accompanied by three or four policemen, came every day to the hospital threatening me that they would exterminate my wife and the rest of my family, insulting me rudely and leaving after staying one or two hours.

To the desperate condition in which I was because of my wounds there was added the anguish and fear caused by the threats of extermination of my beloved.

Family threatened

At the beginning of August — I do not remember which day exactly — Mavroidis and Favatas came to see me at the hospital. They said that their patience was over and as I was not telling them the truth they had arrested my wife, my mother, my brothers and my parents-in-law.

"They rot in the detention houses and curse you for that," said Favatas to me, to which Mavroidis added, "They will remain in detention to have a slow death, in case you don't speak."

They said also that my children — a six year old boy

and a five month old girl — were left to their fate and that no one was taking care of them any more.

The threats I was hearing for the past week and the convincing manner of these last statements made me believe that the police had indeed decided to exterminate my whole family. So, when the policemen left me I was overtaken by fear and had a nervous breakdown.

It was about 6 p.m. that I felt that my jaw twisted to the right while the right side of my head was getting numb and, when I tried to speak I realized that I was stammering.

Professor Mr. Tountas arrived then with other doctors. I noticed that they were worried and heard one moment Mr. Tountas saying: "They should stop the questioning in his condition."

Later, I knew I had had a stroke. From that day until I left the hospital to be transferred to the detention house there was no more questioning.

Professor Mr. Tountas and neurologist Mr. Kyklakos are in a position to certify that I had a stroke on the day I was questioned by Favatas and Mavroidis.

At the beginning of September — I do not remember which day exactly — I was transferred from the hospital to the detention house at Neon Herakleion police station.

After three days, Major Favatas and Captain of Gendarmerie Moroyannis came to the PS to question me. They treated me well on that day.

Their behaviour was relatively good also during the next four days when I was questioned at the Security (Asphaleia) sub-division at Nea Ionia.

It was on the next questioning, on September 12, if I am correct, that they began pressing me to admit that I took part in a resistance organization committee and to name the members of it.

When I refused to admit whatsoever they then began systematically to threaten me that they would maltreat me. Characteristically, Favatas said that he would hang me upside down and leave me there until I confessed, while Moroyannis said he would "knock me out." They threatened me that the same would happen to my wife.

military police

Next day the threats were even worse. They told me that the military were furious with my behaviour and that they had orders to hand me over to the military police (ESA) if I did not confess on that day.

They said that if I were to be taken by the ESA I would be sent by them to the Dionysos camp and, "I would not get out of there alive."

About one hour passed and I did not give in to their threats, and Favatas, furious, said he was going to call the ESA to come and take me. He actually dialled a number on the phone and I heard him saying: "We've got Karageorgas here at the sub-division and you can come and take him."

Ten minutes after Favatas made his phone call, Mavroidis entered the office where I was being questioned and I heard him saying that they called from ESA and told him "that they were coming to take Karageorgas tomorrow evening."

Next day, September 13 if I am correct, they again took me to Nea Ionia sub-division.

Mavroidis, Moroyannis and three other men in civil dress whom I do not know entered after a while the office where I was. Mavroidis again began the threats and the rest were all at the same time shouting in a deafening way over my head.

One hour later Favatas came in, in a frantically wild mood and began hitting me on the face shouting: "You dirty beast, I will break you. You are offending the prestige of the gendarmerie and its hundred years' old tradition by making us learn from the ESA things you should have told us by now."

That moment Mavroidis stood up to go and said: "Take him to the little room."

They took me to a small room next to the office. They ordered me to stand with my back to the wall. There, in that position, Favatas but mainly Moroyannis began to hit me in an inhuman way.

Favatas standing on my right was hitting my face. Moroyannis in front of me, with his hands linked, hit my head, with his knee he was hitting my belly and the genitals and was kicking my legs.

The beating lasted for a long while. Weakened by the operation I had a fortnight ago, I couldn't stand the beating any more and fell unconscious onto the floor.

When I recovered I realized that they had put me on a writing table. Favatas was taking my pulse and someone else was wetting my head. The beating was repeated the next day in exactly the same way.

Upon leaving the office Moroyannis kicked me many times from behind on the waist and on my bandaged amputated right hand. This made me sink to the floor, my face was bruised while my bandages became red with blood.

Imported explosives

Two days later I was taken again to Nea Ionia sub-division for questioning. This time Favatas and Moroyannis wanted me to admit that I had asked V. Papazisis to bring explosives from abroad.

Because I denied this imaginary thing I was submitted to a new beating. But this time being so exhausted I couldn't stand it for long. With the first blows from Moroyannis I began losing consciousness. That moment I felt they were putting something on my head, but I was not in a position to know what.

Next day in my cell I realized to my utter disgust that spittle, mixed with cigarette ends and other dirt were stuck on my head. It seems that the moment I was losing consciousness they put on my head the paper basket full of rubbish and spit.

During the last ten days of September and for the first time something strange happened to me. Although I was fully conscious of my daily transfers from Neon Herakleion to Nea Ionia for questioning, this was not so while on my way back after the end of the questioning.

Although the questioning had ended and I was being taken back to Neon Herakleion I was under the illusion that the questioning was still going on, that they continued to ask questions, to threaten, to insult and to beat me.

When I regained my senses I was wondering to find myself in my cell. Often these hallucinations went on until the next day. I had nightmares that my wife was maltreated by policemen and calling help to me, by boy in rags, a beggar wandering in the streets, my baby daughter dead in her cot.

I could not explain to myself these hallucinations which caused a nervous shock to me to such an extent that I had completely lost my willpower. It was in this condition that I gave to Moroyannis at about the beginning of October, a written testimony.

To the above I should add that the strict solitude I was confined to for five whole months was for me one of the most terrible ordeals. During this time I know absolutely nothing of the fate of my family, as any sort of communication with them was forbidden.

Conditions in the detention house of the Neon Herakleion PS were horrible. The cell was a filthy place, 2 x 3 m., damp walls, a concrete floor and an opening a few centimeters wide to let in light and air so to speak.

For three months I was locked in that horrible place from which I was not allowed to go out except to get to the nearby WC. I slept on the ground on a very thin and filthy mattress which because of the dampness was unbearably wet.

I was eating my food on the ground of my cell. In spite of my repeated requests I was not allowed books or periodicals or any sort of print. By the end of November the natural resources of my resistance were finally exhausted and I was often taken by neurotic anguish.

given books

They let me then have books and transferred me to Nea Philadelphia PS where I was detained with another person.

A few days later when visits to political prisoners by representatives of the International Red Cross were due to start, they took me to the General State Hospital to treat my ear.

It should be noted that since mid-October I had asked for treatment, as my ear was continuously secreting pus but no one paid any attention then.

This delay caused a chronic otitis which I could have been spared had I been treated in time, as Mr. Papathanasopoulos, director of a specialized clinic for such cases, affirmed.

After being released from hospital I was transferred on December 22, 1969 to Averof Prison where, being no more under solitary confinement, I am detained with other political prisoners under really good conditions.

Finally, I should point out that I was put to the above ordeals — depicted in general terms and poorly described above — while actually being in a terrible condition of health, with my right hand amputated, with the drum of my right ear destroyed, completely exhausted by four operations on my hand and my right eye and a continuous buzz in the right ear.

Averof Prison, January 12, 1970
(signed) D. Karageorgas
Professor of Panteios High School for Political Sciences

other Western countries. With the growth of military establishments during the Cold War, armies elsewhere are in a position to stage coups and take over power. The first appearance of tyranny in Europe since World War II ought to be a warning all over the world.

We students living in Canada, must not remain indifferent, thinking that Greece is a small remote country thousands of miles away. Vietnam is a small, remote country too. And there are striking analogies between the situation in Greece now and what happened in Viet Nam 13 years ago.

Andreas Papandreou

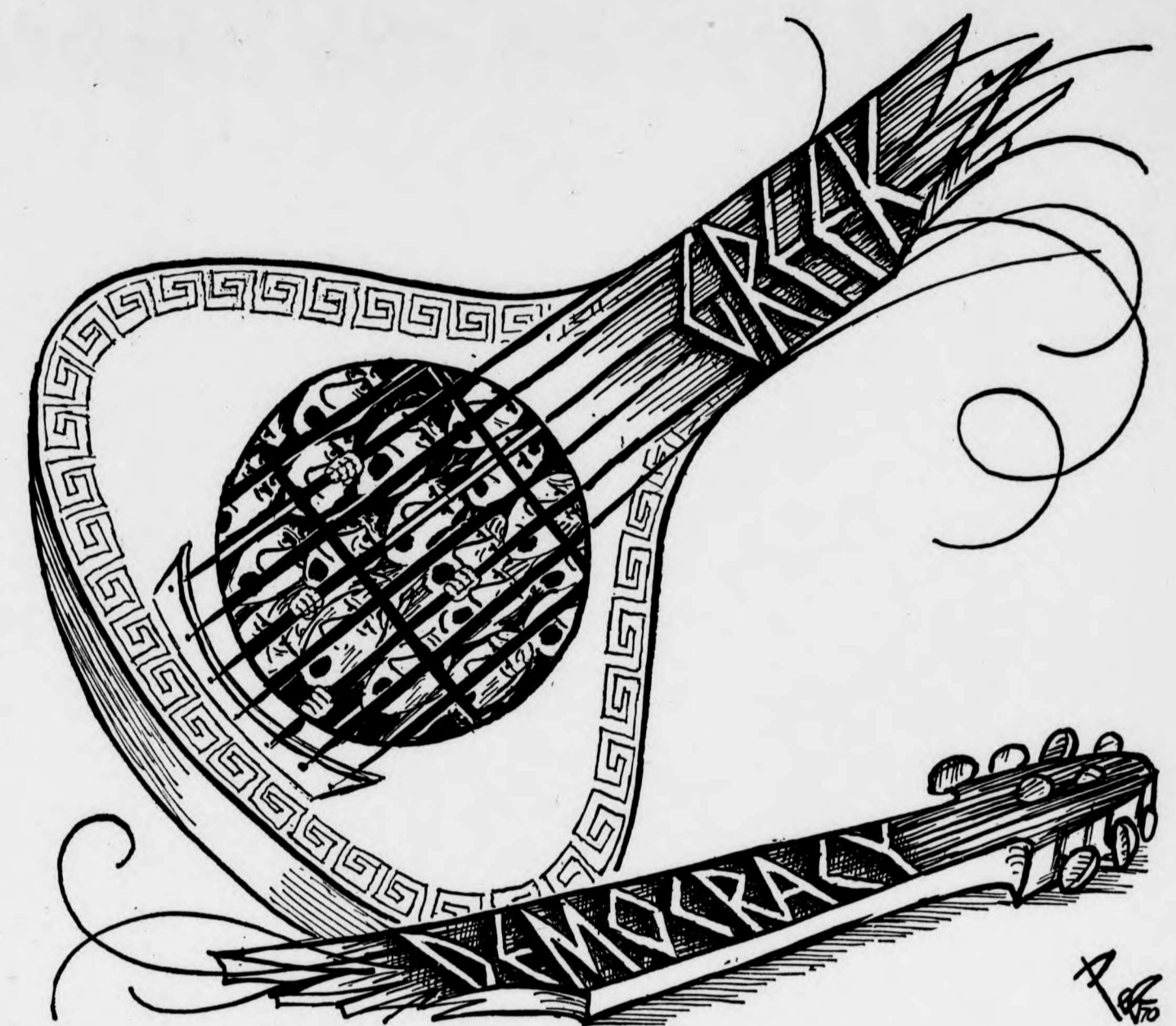
Andreas G. Papandreou, 51, has suffered imprisonment and exile twice in his life as a fighter for democracy. The first time was in 1936. He was eighteen then and had organized a resistance cell against the Dictatorship of General Metaxas. He was caught and his interrogation resulted in a broken jaw. Upon release he left for the United States where he became a student at Harvard University, receiving his Ph.D. in economics in 1942. This was the beginning of a highly distinguished career leading to the chairmanship of the Economics department at the University of California at Berkeley.

Papandreou returned to Greece in 1959 to start an economic research centre in Athens. In 1964 Andreas joined his father in his fight against the right and very quickly became the focus of a new Greek politics.

The reaction of the King and the right to the populist movement led by the Papandreou resulted in Andreas' second imprisonment. On the night of April 20, 1967, a month before scheduled elections which would have swept the Papandreou once again to power, the army pulled a coup d'etat. Andreas and 8,000 other Greeks were dragged from their homes and thrown into prison.

Papandreou stayed in solitary confinement for eight months until mounting international pressure forced his release. He left for Paris upon release where he organized the Panhellenic Liberation Movement (PAK) to fight the Greek dictatorship.

In 1969 he came to Toronto where he now heads up the Graduate Programme in Economics at York University and continues his resistance work against the Greek junta.



But the melody lingers on

Freedom week brings music, dance

The Greeks are coming to York University! The Students for a Free Greece are presenting a Festival of Greek Music, Folk Dance, and Theatre as part of the Greek Freedom Week activities. The Festival will take place on Friday, November 20, at 8:00 p.m. in the Burton Auditorium.

Master of Ceremonies at the Festival will be former CBC news broadcaster Stanley Burke.

George Kotsopoulos, the talented folk singer who gave a highly successful performance at York a few weeks ago, will be among the entertainers appearing at the Festival. Mr. Kotsopoulos plays Greek gypsy, flamenco, and classical guitar and is an exponent of the "new-wave" of Greek music. His interpretations of the songs of Theodorakis, the composer who wrote the music for the movie "Z", were well received by the students who saw his last performance in the Winter's Common Room.

Nickos and Vakis, a duo who are now performing regularly at Zorba's in Toronto, are also scheduled to appear. They play bouzoukia, a mandolin-like instrument, and guitar. Pop or "people's" music is their idiom.

Two folk dance groups will be presented. The Aristophanes experimental group specializes in Pan-Greek dances; that is, dances which are popular throughout Greece. The other group is the Cretan dancers. Their dances originated on the island of Crete. Both

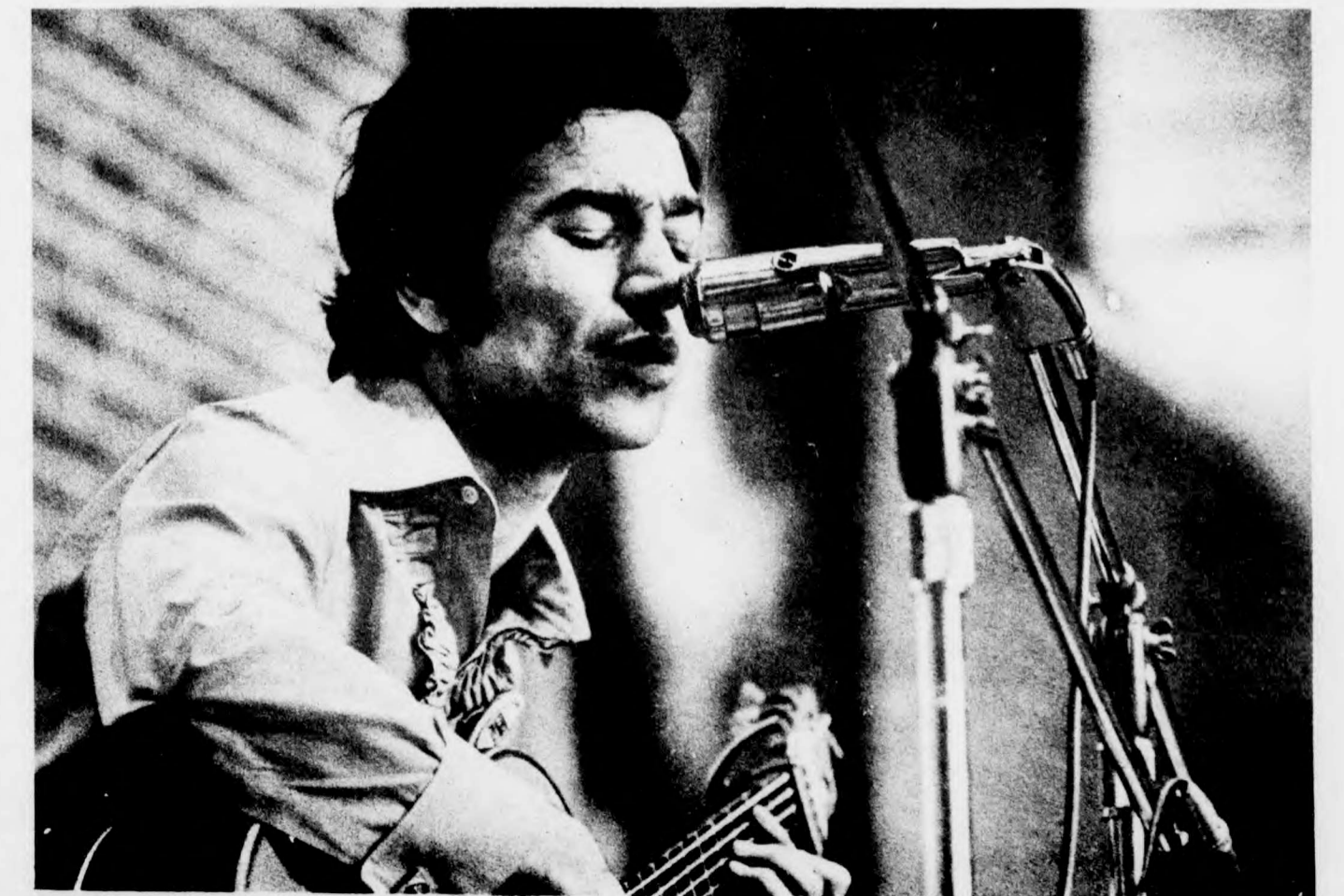
groups will perform in their native costumes and the Cretan dancers will be accompanied by musicians playing the lyra, a violin-like instrument played on the knee, and the laouto, a type of bass mandolin.

Paris Iounou will act out the short play "Loneliness" written by Spyros Yannatos. The play is in English translation and tells of the dilemma of a Greek refugee. The author, Mr. Yannatos, is a refugee himself. Before he left Greece he worked as a newspaper editor.

After the presentations at Burton there will be a dance in the Vanier Dining Hall. Both rock and native Greek music will be supplied. Members of the Metro Greek community will be on hand to teach non-Greeks dances such as the Zorba, the syrtos, and the tsamiko. In addition, those attending will have an opportunity to sample some Greek food.

Tickets for the Greek Festival are available at the CYSF office (N108 Ross Humanities), office number S645 RH. The Students for a Free Greece table in the Central Square, or the Burton Auditorium box office. The price of admission is \$1.00 for students, \$1.75 for adults. This price includes admission to the dance. For those who wish to attend only the dance (which should begin around 9:30 p.m.) the charge will be \$5.00.

The Greek Festival promises to provide an unusual and interesting evening's entertainment.



Situation in Greece

By GEORGE PAPANATOS

Three and a half years have passed since a conspiracy of military men became the absolute rulers of the lives, property, thoughts, actions, opinions and education of eight million people — the Greek people.

What life looks like in Greece, the birthplace of democracy, can be understood by reading the 1,200 page report of the Human Rights Commission of the Council of Europe.

It was on the basis of this report, half of which deals with tortures of political prisoners, that the Council decided last December that the junta should be expelled from that body.

What happened in Greece is not an isolated affair. The country was not "saved" from the communist danger because no such danger existed. The united Democratic Left (EDA) took only 12% of the vote in the last Greek election of 1964. After three and a half years in power, the junta has been unable to bring forth a single piece of evidence for the threat of a communist takeover. Instead, the military junta took power because their American friends encouraged and helped them in order to "save" Greece from democratic elections. These elections might have meant that the Americans could not get from the Greeks whatever bases and facilities they wanted.

The Greeks know about the American involvement, especially since the U.S. dropped its so-called arms embargo against the regime in September; ("so-called" because, as the U.S. Senate found out last spring, the Pentagon had sent the dictators \$175 million in military aid in 1969 under the table.) The results can be disastrous.

Helen Vlachos, one of the most conservative of Greek publishers, has put it: "The youth of Greece, non-communist as yet... have been brought up to believe that the John Waynes and the good sheriffs always win in the end. Now they are discovering that in real life the John Waynes are beaten up, the honest sheriffs are in jail, and it is the nasty little terrorist who are being accepted and admired. Hollywood would never stand for it; why should we?"

Apathy by the Western nations is dangerous for still another reason. What happened in Greece may happen to