

With the sole purpose of discrediting and compromising the just struggle of our nation for freedom and human rights, the foes of Macedonia (and also those persons who are not correctly informed as to the substance of the Macedonian problem and the frightful terror which rages within our subjugated country) have often directed defamatory accusations against the Macedonian movement for liberation. In regard to these delusions, the greater percentage of which are fabricated by the Serbian and Greek authorities, the Congress feels bound, in the name of peace, truth, and justice, to make the following elucidations:

The Macedonians are waging a struggle for the attainment of their human, national, and religious rights. They want nothing which does not belong to them; but also, they shall not surrender anything which is their own.

An unequalled affront will be flung at justice and peace, if the necessary steps are not taken to stop the abominable oppression which exists in our downtrodden country.

At the present, the enslaved Macedonian people are deprived of all right to open and lawful defense. Therefore, recourse to unlawful resistance is the one means now possible to them in their struggle for national self-preservation. Consequently, only today's brazen rulers of Macedonia are responsible for such unlawful incidents as have been executed in the past by our enslaved brothers and sisters—incidents which may very likely occur again in the future, if the necessary steps are not taken to grant at least the most fundamental national and religious prerogatives to the Macedonians, which were guaranteed to them in the Treaty for the Minorities.

The Macedonian emigration in America, Canada, and Australia, organized in the MPO, proclaims once again its firm adherence to the principle of a Free and Independent Macedonia. It was the noble English statesman, William Gladstone, who pointed out that a Free and Independent Macedonia was the only possible and just solution of the Macedonian problem and also the most effective method of establishing a lasting, just peace in the Balkans.

Expressing the sentiments of the major part of the Macedonian emigrants in North America, the Congress avouches their sincere loyalty to the United States and Canada and also their infinite gratitude to these two great nations, where they have found kind refuge. Furthermore, the Macedonian people shall be always thankful to all individuals and organizations who, in any way whatsoever, have upheld our just cause. The Seventeenth Regular Congress of the MPO wholeheartedly greets all worthy and noble friends of Macedonia.

EXPOSITORY STATEMENT

The Conditions in Macedonia under Greek and Serbian Bondage

The Seventeenth Regular Congress of the Macedonian Political Organization deems it its urgent duty to divulge to the enlightened public opinion of the world the following shameful facts, which attest fully the inexpressible sufferings of the unfortunate Macedonian people.

After the advent of the present Greek dictator, Metaxas, into power, the terrorism practised in Macedonia by the Greek authorities has taken on

fearful proportions. The present Greek government, denying the nationality of the Macedonian Bulgarians, has instituted in Macedonia under Greek rule an inquisitorial regime unparalleled in its cruelty. The savage persecution of the Macedonians by Dictator Metaxas is a flagrant transgression of the most elementary human laws. For example, use of the Bulgarian language—even in private conversations among the members of a family group—is strictly forbidden in this section of Macedonia. The Macedonian emigrants in America and elsewhere in the world cannot send letters to their dear ones; nor can they receive such letters, if these are written in Bulgarian. After such letters are thoroughly censored by the local police authorities, they are returned to the addresser with the notice, "Addressee unknown." Furthermore, hundreds of Macedonian Bulgarians who have never uttered a word of Bulgarian in public have been banished to the islands; while still others are punished with heavy fines and beatings by the police authorities. Even old people are beaten and cruelly tortured. In many villages, night schools for the study of the Greek language have been opened, which all elderly people—even septuagenarians—are compelled to attend. Those for whom it was impossible to learn Greek were mercilessly maltreated, upon the suspicion that they were boycotting the Greek assimilatory policies in Macedonia. Lately, eighty-three villagers from the county of Lerin, most of them inhabitants of the village of Breznitsa, were marshalled into court by a large police convoy, because they had been speaking in their native tongue. Each was given a fine varying from three hundred to eight hundred drachmas. Many of the leading Bulgarians are tormented on the pretext that they are engaging in communistic activities. With similar false fabrications, the Athens News Agency is assiduously endeavoring to deceive the public opinion of the world in regard to the cruel persecutions, to which the Bulgarian element in Macedonia under Greek rule is subjected. We could enumerate thousands of incidents which would manifest the ruthlessness of the Greek authorities with regard to our enslaved country. As we have pointed out in our declaration, we are ready to accept an impartial international investigation, which can establish the authenticity of the above-said facts.

No less tragic is the state of our subjugated brothers and sisters in Macedonia under Serbian rule. The Yugoslav rulers, likewise, repudiate the national characteristics of the Macedonian Bulgarians. The Bulgarian churches of the Macedonians under Serbian bondage are closed; the schools are abolished. The possession of a Bulgarian bible is considered a punishable crime by the Serbian police authorities.

The MPO of the United States, Canada, and Australia signifies its willingness to support the above-stated facts with additional detailed information; for the facts, herein exposed, are but a minimal example of the real suffering of the Macedonian people.

The Congress heartily thanks all individuals and organizations who will turn their kind attention to our just demands, which we forward in the name of truth and peace.