

FROM THE EDITOR:

Click, Click, Hurray!

By Vanessa Diamataris

After a long-awaited 105 years, the Ethnikos Kirix/National Herald digital archive will be available to the public for free thanks to the generous grant of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

As the longest continuously printed Greek-language daily newspaper outside of Greece, this Archive will offer Greeks and Philhellenes alike a newspaper database to research our Community's rich history. Researchers will be able to track its incredible growth and evolution, decade after decade, and read about the fascinating and moving challenges, struggles and triumphs of our Greek immigrant friends and family.

With just a few keystrokes and a couple of clicks, members of our Community will be able to search for their families' histories in America and beyond.

The history of Hellenism in the United States, as well as around the world, has been printed in the Greek language on the pages of the National Herald from the day of its foundation on April 2, 1915 and in the English language from October 18, 1997. With the help and generosity of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, this invaluable history book will exist in perpetuity for all the generations to come.

Please visit our websites (ekirikas.com & thenationalherald.com) this weekend to access this historic archive. Let us know what you think and what you find! We look forward to hearing from you.

“Philoxenia Prevails” – Greece is Open

By Bela Tsilas

While Dr. Anthony Fauci warns, the United States is "still knee-deep in the first wave" of the coronavirus pandemic, Greece has handled the crisis as well as could be expected and is looking forward to summer tourists.

The world set a record for new coronavirus cases in 24 hours on July 10th, with 236,918 new cases, with the United States leading as the largest source of new infections. So far, Greece has managed to contain the coronavirus, with only 3,732 cases and 193 deaths compared to Spain with 300,988 cases and 28,403 deaths and Italy with 232,639 cases and 34,938 deaths.

This was not a given, considering Greece's elderly population and a weakened public health system following the 2008 eco-

nomics crisis. Motivated to avoid the missteps of its neighbors, the country's pandemic response was coordinated and aggressive. After several months of lockdown and the virus contained, Greece has begun easing lockdown restrictions and planning for tourism.

"Greece is ready to welcome tourists this summer by putting their safety and their health as a number one priority," declared Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

So how is Greece putting tourist and citizen safety first? How will tourism play out this Summer in Greece? The traumatic images of Italy served as a warning to the world and its neighbor Greece. Greece acted quickly to reinforce social distancing measures. On March 10, before most of Europe, Greece closed its schools. Soon after, cafes, restaurants, gyms, bars, retail stores, and museums shut down. Only those going to or from their workplace, shopping for food or medicine, visiting a doctor, or walking their pet were allowed to leave their homes. Citizens were required to carry an I.D. or passport with them, with a form naming one of the approved reasons to be out. Nonessential travel was limited, and people who came from abroad faced a mandatory 14-day quarantine.

Greece's remarkable ability to contain the spread of COVID-19 can be attributed to several factors: 1) politician's willingness to listen to scientists; 2) swift actions based on data and sci-

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College Student Biked 48 Days

TNH Staff

ATHENS – Kleon Papadimitriou, a 20-year-old college student at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland decided that he would bike back home to Athens, Greece after all flights were cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic, CNN reported, adding that the 2,175-mile journey took 48 days.

Papadimitriou told CNN, "it's just now dawning on me how big of an achievement this was. And I did learn a lot of things about myself, about my limits, about my strengths and my weaknesses. And I'd say I really hope that the trip inspired at least one more person to go out of their comfort zone and try something new, something big."

After three of the flights he booked to get home to Greece were cancelled, he told CNN that "by the first of April I knew that I would spend at least the next month in quarantine in Aberdeen," so he decided to cycle his way home, researching what he would need, preparing for his trip by buying a bike and supplies including a tent, sleeping bag, bread, canned sardines, and peanut butter, and told his parents and friends about his plans. His father suggested an app that would allow his family to track him and soon he was on his way.

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Aghia Sophia Conversion Outrages



AP PHOTO/EMRAH GUREL

A man waves a Turkish flag outside Aghia Sophia following Turkey's Council of State's decision to convert the former cathedral-turned-mosque that now serves as a museum back into a Muslim house of worship. The Council of State threw its weight behind a petition brought by a religious group and annulled a 1934 cabinet decision that changed the 6th century building into a museum.

Archbishop Speaks on Ag. Sophia

By Theodore Kalmoukos

BOSTON – Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, speaking exclusively to The National Herald about the conversion of Aghia Sophia into a mosque, expressed deep concern regarding the course Turkey is taking. He said, "now we have to wonder what the re-conversion of Aghia Sophia signals for the future of all minorities in Turkey. Diversity is strength, not weakness."

The Archbishop said that, "I hope that our community, the Omogenia here in the Diaspora, takes this heartbreak to heart. We need vigilance and advocacy at a level we have never imagined."

The entire interview follows:

The National Herald: Your Eminence, what does this decision by Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan mean for relations with the Christian world in general and with the Ecumenical Patriarchate in particular?

Archbishop Elpidophoros: The Christian world is deeply pained by this move, and indeed the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Its status quo as a monument was an indication of acceptance of past history and current realities. We had hoped that the last years would have brought about more inclusion for the religious and ethnic minorities of Turkey. We had hoped for the re-opening of the Theological School of Halki on the island of Heybeliada. As you know, before I was

elected Archbishop of America, I was the Abbot of the Holy Trinity Monastery and the School there, a monastic institution since the Ninth Century. Now we have to wonder what the re-conversion of Aghia Sophia signals for the future of all minorities in Turkey. Diversity is strength, not weakness. There should be no more room for monolithic views of society in the modern world. Look how the pandemic has reminded all of us – negatively for sure – of how interconnected and interdependent we truly are. We need to accept that the unitary versions of societies no longer work, even for the majority.

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Better Late Than Never for Vacationing

By Stavros Marmarinos

TAMPA, FL – Many members of the Greek-American community prefer to wait a little longer rather than skip this year's summer vacation in Greece due to the coronavirus pandemic. Speaking to The National Herald, some of them from various cities noted that they are not much concerned about their stay in Greece, which dealt so successfully with the pandemic from early on, but about the trip by plane, which may be full of passengers from different areas, as well as wearing masks for many hours of the flight.

Nikos Apostolopoulos, a businessman and president of the Hellenic Congress of America, who lives in Charlotte, NC, goes every year for about two-months vacation to Greece. He comes from Karpenisi in Evritania and besides his hometown he also visits Athens, Evia, Preveza, and Lefkada, always with his friends from Greece.

"This time of year, I always went to Greece, but now I will wait and if all goes well, I will go for Christmas and New Year's," he told TNH.

He is not worried about his stay in Greece, as the situation there is an example for many countries and is not comparable to the United States. But he is concerned about traveling by plane, due to the large number of passengers and their various places of origin. "However, my friends in Greece call me almost every day, ask me how I am and advise me to be careful. None of them encouraged me to visit the homeland."

Nick Intzes, President of the Nisyros Society of Florida, said that he has not ruled out a holiday in Greece this year, where he usually stays for more than three months. "I'm worried about the trip by plane, that is, how many passengers it will have, as well as the mask I have to wear for so many hours all the time. I am not afraid of stay-

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Constantinos Sofikitis on His Latest Project

By Eleni Sakellis

NEW YORK – Constantinos Sofikitis shared the details of his latest project, Marabou Aegean, with The National Herald. Sofikitis is a professional photographer and member of the LensCulture society (Magnum Photos) successfully carrying on his family's deep-rooted ties to photography, his greatest inspiration being his father, highly acclaimed Greek photographer Dimitris Sofikitis.

Of his project, Constantinos Sofikitis told TNH, "Marabou Aegean is a journey to the inhabited islands of the Aegean composed of a historiography of emblematic individuals, represented through images and accompanying texts, with the aim of preserving and commemorating the true essence of each island."

Among his honors, he was awarded first place in 2017 at the Sony World Photography Awards (Open, Street Photography category), was shortlisted for the title of Best Photographer in the same competition for the Street Photography category, and named Best Greek Photographer by Sony.

Sofikitis noted that "Marabou Aegean sets out to uncover the untold stories of the people of the Aegean islands; observing the occupations at risk of becoming extinct and the



CONSTANTINOS SOFIKITIS

Zampeta Anagnostopoulou on the island of Anafi.

local customs and traditions that are unique to each island.

"It is the inhabitants of these islands who embody the heart and soul of the Aegean. A collection of folks who aren't simply linked together by a nickname, a rare talent and a characteristic gaze, but by the unique stories that form the identity of our Aegean. Diverse

people whose common characteristic is their love for the place they call home, a passion to preserve its history and an endless longing for life," he said.

"Through this project," he continued, "we seek to get to know these people, their faces weathered from the salt and honest gazes, and become part of their gripping stories told in

the little traditional cafes (kafenelia) – spaces that are unfortunately becoming extinct and thus jeopardizing the existence of the many narratives that play out within them each day.

"The coffee table book that will emerge from this project,

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displaying the material collected from visiting around 70 inhabited islands of the Northeast Aegean, the Cyclades, the Sporades islands and the Dodecanese, will display a folklore identity since it serves to preserve fragments from the lives of the islanders. For this reason, there is a greater emphasis on the photographic depiction of these individuals within an environmental portrait. A form of narrative photography that manages to masterfully depict the individual's personality whilst simultaneously revealing information about their past, long lost memories, and the history of the island itself.

“The main idea behind this project is a modern yet traditional documentation of the lives of the people living on the Aegean islands. Intertwining a narrative of words and printing the photographs on paper in the form of a coffee table book will help to ensure these unique individuals and what they stand for is preserved forever. Whilst the video recordings, thematically in the form of episodes as well as collectively in the form of a documentary, will allow for the reproduction of the material for both televised media and internet content. Finally, the material will be used wisely and distributed to be displayed at periodic exhibitions, museums and galleries. This project is aimed at an audience of all ages, however, a greater emphasis will be placed on a younger audience who via a visually modern layout, the use of video to be shared on social media along with the exhibits, will have the chance to completely immerse themselves in this experience of the Aegean, to discover its people and learn the history of this unique region in the most unedited and true-to-life way,” said Soffikitis.

“Moreover, in partnership with Katerina Papadopoulou and her band Notio Toxo – one of the most well-known bands performing traditional music focused on sounds from the Aegean – a series of sound and video recordings will be created at unique locations across the Aegean islands – monasteries, caves, lighthouses or abandoned homes. Thus, incorporating traditional musical elements from each place with the aim of celebrating Greek her-



Photographer Constantinos Sofikitis spoke to The National Herald about his latest project.



Nikos Vlavianos on the island of Amorgos.



Stamatis Vatougios on the island of Ikaria.

itage and culture as well as uncovering forgotten aspects of the Aegean."

A sample of the individual episodes is available on the Marabou Narrations YouTube channel: shorturl.at/zDFM6.

When asked about how the global coronavirus pandemic has affected the project, Sofikitis told

TNH, visits to the islands stopped for a while, like everything else, due to the situation, but for some time now I have been in the Aegean again to complete the portraits on all the islands. There is a lot of interest from institutions, museums and private entities and I am trying to approach the Ministry of Culture and pub-

lishing houses so that I can distribute the book when it is completed along with other events in the Greek community. In addition, a few months ago I received an invitation from Yale University to present this project (it was launched at the end of April) but due to COVID it was postponed until after the summer."



Dimitris Karistinaios on the island of Folegandros.

He concluded, "our main concern and deepest aspiration is to ensure the support of the project via sponsors who will also treat the material produced as part of their own legacy. We are seeking sponsors-fellow travelers who will join us on this journey to discover these uncharted and forgotten fragments of our heritage."

... of our country.”

Sofikitis has also posted images from the project so far on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/B6TeRp6AsUk/> and <https://www.instagram.com/p/B7LroOiAwRh/>.

**Follow Sofikitis on Instagram:
c_sofikitis and Facebook.**

Announcement from The National Herald / ΕΘΝΙΚΟΣ ΚΗΡΥΞ

Dear members of the Community,

We are incredibly proud to announce that
**the historical 105-year-old Archive of the
ΕΘΝΙΚΟΣ ΚΗΡΥΞ**

as well as the 23-year-old Archive of

The National Herald

will be available through our newspapers' sites

STARTING THIS WEEKEND

Access to the Archives is FREE thanks to the generous grant of

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Look through our Archive and discover your family's history - from 1915!

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Archives of Greeks outside of Greece - the Archive of The National Herald.

We can't wait to share it with you all

ekirikas.com ■ thenationalherald.com

There’s More to Cyprus Than the Beach: Activities & Excursions

By Andrea Busfield

Cyprus has the cleanest bathing waters in Europe, it’s in the Top 10 of countries most prepared for the easing of lockdown restrictions and it averages 300 sunny days a year – all of which makes the island an increasingly attractive holiday destination for Greeks.

Cyprus effectively closed for business in March as the Coronavirus pandemic swept westwards.

Now, thanks to the government putting health over wealth, Cyprus is considered to be one of the world’s safest travel destinations – and it has opened its doors once again to other ‘safe’ countries, including Greece.

Other ‘Low-Risk Category A Countries’ given the green light to return include Austria, Australia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germans, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Switzerland.

While passengers initially had to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR test conducted within 72 hours prior to departure, this requirement was relaxed yesterday (20/6/20) for Category A countries.

Of course, with some countries waiting on the Category B list to get in, and some countries not making a list at all – step forward America and Great Britain – the Cypriot authorities expect to see only 30% of the usual number of tourists that visit the island each year.

However, there is good news for those that do make it because Cyprus received two timely accolades this month with an EU report confirming that 99.1% of Cypriot bathing waters are of excellent quality and an Oxford University study placing Cyprus in the Top 10 countries most prepared for the easing of lockdown restrictions thanks to its low infection rates.

In March, Cyprus was roundly applauded for taking a tough stance as the pandemic reached Europe. After closing all airports and imposing lockdown, the early restrictions largely paid off with the number of COVID-19 infections now standing at 985 (correct as of June 19) and deaths at 18.

Naturally, tourism paid a heavy price and with the holiday season well underway, the island is now working hard to cast off its traditional summer-sun image to reveal a broader appeal as a year-round, high-quality destination.

To this end, the government has been actively – and successfully – courting investment in new ventures including sports tourism, agricultural tourism, nautical tourism, and medical tourism.

George Campanellas, Chief Executive of Invest Cyprus, said: “Cyprus has acted bravely and honourably throughout the coronavirus crisis, which means we can now begin the journey of re-establishing the island as an ideal holiday destination – and an ideal location for tourism investment.”



Scuba diving, cycling, horseback riding, and husky sledding are just a few of the activities to enjoy while in Cyprus.



He added, “over the past few years, we have seen increasing interest in diverse tourism opportunities with significant investments, including hotels, MICE facilities, sports centres and projects in rural areas on the island. Though the last few months have been tough on everyone, not only Cyprus, the government’s handling of the crisis has shown that Cyprus not only has more to offer than sea

and sand, but an eye on the bigger picture.”

Although the island’s beaches are again open and many hotels stand ready to welcome guests with extra sanitation procedures and social distancing measures, there are many other delights the island has to offer.

Here are our top picks away from the usual sand-and-sea excursions:

Cycling: Good weather, idyllic scenery and challenging routes are fast making Cyprus a go-to destination for bike enthusiasts – with the route to Mount Olympus topping the bucket list of many avid cyclists.

Paphos-based Aspire Cycling welcomes some 600 cyclists a year. There are two cycling seasons to choose from – late February to early May and late October to early December – and all bikes are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after every rental. Prices for a week’s tour start from 165€ and this year the tour company has a ride-for-four-days-pay-for-three offer on their rentals.

Email: cyprus@aspirecycling.com

Horse Riding: George’s Ranch is a premier equestrian

mers and a decrease in fishing – all of which means, visitors to the Kalliopi Dive College are in for a treat.

Scuba diving has always been a sport governed by strict hygiene protocols, but following the pandemic, staff at this centre have adopted even stricter measures in accordance with DAN Europe guidelines and Ministry of Health directives.

A five-dive package costs €250 and includes kit, tanks and transfers to and from dive sites. Until the season ends in November, the college also has a ‘Bring

ing a rural valley outside Simou village in Paphos you’ll find three authentic Mongolian Yurts offering a unique, sustainable, off-the-grid ecological bed and breakfast experience.

With panoramic, breath-taking views of the Cypriot countryside, Yurts in Cyprus is ideally situated for winery tours, hiking holidays or star-gazing away from the light pollution of towns and villages.

Open all year round, the yurts are popular with tourists and residents. Prices start from €90 for one night and €595 for



centre lying a stone’s throw from the Sea Caves in the west of the island. With the white rock coastline at its feet and the lush green of Paphos Forest at its back, George’s Ranch has a vast array of hacking options to suit every rider, from absolute beginners to serious equestrians. As well as lessons, the Ranch offers week-long packages tailor made for individual riders ranging from €260pp to €320pp. Riders have to arrange their own flights and accommodation, but the staff are happy to help with recommendations.

Email: info@georgesranch-cyprus.com

Diving: Thanks to the Coronavirus, marine life along the coast has flourished – due to less maritime traffic, fewer swimmers and a decrease in fishing – all of which means, visitors to the Kalliopi Dive College are in for a treat.

a Buddy’ discount of up to 50% to encourage more couples and families to explore the wonders of the Mediterranean together.

Email: kalliopi@cytanet.com.cy

Bird Watching: Every autumn and spring, twitchers flock to Cyprus to catch a glimpse of the Masked Shrike, Collared Flycatcher, Cretzschmar’s Bunting, Purple Herons, Bee-eaters and Black-headed Wagtails as well as homegrown winged wonders such as the Cyprus Scops Owl, Cyprus Warbler and Cyprus Pied Wheatear.

For details on packages available including flights, accommodation, all meals, transfers and birdwatching excursions email: info@limosaholidays.co.uk

Green Getaways: Overlook-

a week.

Email: info@yurtsincyprus.com

Husky Sledding: Yes, you read that right – husky sledding on the sunshine island of Cyprus.

Despite its enviable reputation as a sunspot, Cyprus gets enough snow in the winter for skiing holidays and husky rides. Conditions for sledding are usually good by late December or early January, which is when you will find Australian Ali Rhind – along with her adorable dogs Dolce, Lulu and Dante – ready for action in the Troodos mountains.

A 90-minute session for up to six people costs €195 euros.

Email: alirhind@yahoo.co.uk

Montreal Times Features Three Greek White Wines

TNH Staff

MONTREAL – Greek wines continue to impress wine connoisseurs around the world. A recent article in the Montreal Times highlighted Greek white wines on June 23, noting that “Greek wine culture goes back to as early as 4000 BC when the first wild vines were domesticated in the northern region,” and “Greece has more than 200 native wine grapes that include Xinomavro, Assyrtiko, Agiorgitiko, Savatino, and Roditis.”

“Greece is blessed with a rich and varied terroir, from mountains to lush valleys and volcanic islands,” the Times reported, adding that “the soil is quite healthy and the temperature is quite clement, with plenty of sunshine in the summer and a warm autumn.”

The “dynamic Montreal agency” Oenople, “the brainchild of Theo Diamantis” was also highlighted by the Times

for introducing many “artisanal producers such as Hatzidakis, Thymiopoulos, and Argyros,” to wine connoisseurs in the area.

The late winemaker Harimidos Hatzidakis in Santorini was noted for producing “piercing Assyrtiko white wines,” the Times reported.

The varietal Roditis “via the amazing Tetramythos producer in the Peloponnese region,” was also noted by the Times as it “can be used to create light white wines with notes of citrus, almonds, and minerals,” and “the wines can be light to medium bodied, quite modest but in the hand of talented winemakers such as the Spanos brothers, it can reach greatness.”

Thymiopoulos Vineyards according to the Times “had a cult following among the natural wine cognoscenti of Montreal,” and “back in the day, his rose from Xinomavro used to sell privately and always was selling out fast.”

Slavos was also highlighted by the Times as “a winemaking dynasty [that] still carefully tends their vineyards under a biodynamic philosophy,” and “the mantra of the winery is to craft wines that are a reflection of the terroir of Cephalonia, with fauna, flora, soil, and micro-climate all adding to the diverse influences on the vine and cultivars.”

The Times also noted three Greek white wines to try:

“Tetramythos 2019 Roditis Patras, 100% Roditis - Very fragrant with soft aromas of pear, lemon blossom and a hint of apricot. Medium body and crisp with mineral notes. Long and lingering finale recalling green apple. For \$15, it is unbeatable in amazing quality. Perfect for poultry BBQ dishes.

“Domaine Slavos Alchymiste 2019, 50% roditis, 10% vostilidi, 10% zachyntino, 10% tsaousi, 10% moschatela et 10% robola - A beautiful exotic white perfect for a warm summer evening. Floral with nuances of orchard fruit and a ravishing minerality. On the palate, is quite ample enveloping your palate with its citrusy undertones. Very long aftertaste. Lots of quality for under \$20. This wine should be great with grilled fish or oysters.

“Thymiopoulos Atma 2019, 70% xinomavro (blanc de noirs), 30% malagousia - This is quite the wine for under \$15. Beautiful tropical fruit undertones combined with sensational mineral and floral tones. On the palate, it is light to medium body with lots of citrus character. Incredible mouthfeel and elegance. This is the wine to have with fish,” the Times reported.



Glass of white wine.

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St. Demetrios High School in Astoria Celebrates a Unique Graduation

By Christodoulos Athanasatos

ASTORIA – St. Demetrios High School in Astoria held its graduation ceremony on July 11 with best wishes for the future for the Class of 2020 and encouragement to stay strong and overcome any obstacle, as they did with the unprecedented consequences of the coronavirus pandemic.

The attendees, wearing masks and practicing social distancing, warmly applauded the graduates, who are now spreading their wings in the next chapter of their lives.

Among those present, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and Consul General of Greece in New York Konstantinos Koutras gave moving speeches.

Among the students, Valedictorian Athanasios Karageorge, as well as Salutatorians, Theodora Mitsakis and George Tsiros, also spoke movingly during the ceremony. It should be noted that for the first time in years, the Honorary President of the School Board, Nick Andriotis, did not make a speech at the graduation. However, he told The National Herald that it was his choice and that he had addressed the students earlier, privately.

St. Demetrios High School Principal Helen Karagiorgos gave the welcoming remarks and referred to the special occasion during which the graduation ceremony took place, noting that, even with strict adherence to health protocols, the decision was made to honor the deserving graduates.

“The graduates deserved a night to honor them. We are proud of you and what you have accomplished, under the most difficult conditions that any other generation has experienced. Many of you started from



The St. Demetrios High School graduation ceremony for the Class of 2020 took place on July 11 with His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros among those present.

Kindergarten and St. Demetrios School became your second home,” said Karagiorgos.

Archbishop Elpidophoros in turn pointed out the difficult conditions under which the 2020 class graduated from high school, expressing confidence that this experience will also shield it from the challenges of the future.

“With this pandemic and masks, you will have these photos and tell your children in the future that ‘we started with the biggest and most difficult problems in life, but we did it.’ You will have other images, the icon of Saint Demetrios, but you will also have the images of teachers and professors. You can forget the knowledge, but what will remain in your memory and in your heart is the image of the teacher who with a lot of patience tried to teach you things, knowledge, good behavior, love, respect, to teach you humanity,” said Archbishop Elpidophoros, who noted that “the Greek Orthodox treasure never ends.”

The value of Greek education in modern times was also mentioned by Consul General of Greece in New York Konstantinos Koutras, who reminded the graduates of the comparative advantages offered by sectors such as the development of technology, but also the fact that they will be carriers of culture from two different currents, the European and the American.

“What Greece means is now a new experience for you young people. First of all, the concept of distance no longer exists. This practically means that in the future, you may be working for an American company from a

Greek island. You can even become tomorrow’s government adviser, as other Greek-Americans are doing now, as we speak. The challenge for your generation is not whether you will be able to come closer to Greece, but whether you will want to,” said Consul General Koutras.

In his speech, Valedictorian Athanasios Karageorge pointed out that graduation is “a big change that will determine our future,” and expressed confidence that “everyone is prepared for the next step.”

“We will have these moments inside us forever, not only me, but every student who graduates. Nobody knows where the road will lead us, but what I know for sure is that we are all prepared for the next step,” said Karageorge.

Mitsakis thanked the teachers of St. Demetrios and referred to the new challenge, college. She said, “I will take the lessons learned here and all this support system that I have had all these years and I will move on to my next adventure, Fordham University. It will be something new and a little scary, but who doesn’t love these situations, right?” Her co-Salutatorian George Tsiros closed his speech by talking about the health and social situation, reiterating that all these situations will make him and his classmates more determined and strong.

“Although the Class of 2020 has experienced a pandemic and a great deal of social tension, all of this has made us stronger and prepared us for future challenges. We, the Class of 2020 of St. Demetrios Astoria, will push

ourselves to succeed, because that is what we learned from this school, the best in New York.”

The graduates of the class of 2020 are: Panagiota Asprogerakas, Anthony Baka, Ioannis Boukas, Christian John Cina, Maria Dellai, Andreas Gritsipis, Emily Hammer, Athanasios Karageorge, Marios Konnaris, Demetra Koumoulis, Panagiotis Krampis, Alexandra Kremmydas, Maria Kyriakopoulos, Andres Labora, George Larcey, Erasmia Mastora, Theodora Mitsakis, Eleftheria Petrou, Konstantinos Psarros, Michelle Sanchez, Sofia Silva Brazil, Georgia Synodinos, Matina Theodoropoulos, Savvas Tserkezidis, Melina Tsiropoulos, George Tsiros, Demetrios Tzanetatos, Ximena Vargas, Steven Voumvourakis, Harry Zekkas, and Yannis Zogopoulos.

Constantine and Patricia Mavroyannis Scholarship

TNH Staff

WASHINGTON, DC – The AHEPA National Educational Foundation, in partnership with the Mavroyannis family, is proud to continue to meet its commitment to make higher education affordable and accessible with the availability of the Constantine and Patricia Mavroyannis Scholarship, announced Supreme President George G. Horiates and National Educational Foundation Chairman George Vorkas on July 9.

The Constantine and Patricia Mavroyannis Scholarship is open to graduate students who are either Greek or of Greek heritage and are enrolled in a PhD program in either theoretical physics or physical chemistry in the Faculty of Science at a North American university. The scholarship is in the amount of \$5,000 and will be awarded in the fall semester.

Thanks to the generosity of Dr. Constantine and Mrs. Patricia Mavroyannis, this scholarship recognizes scholastic achievement and an interest and commitment to studying theoretical physics or physical chemistry by providing financial assistance to Hellenic graduate students to pursue their studies in these fields.

The purpose of the Constantine and Patricia Mavroyannis Scholarship is to recognize the importance of education – specifically, to reward and encourage educational achievement by Hellenes in the fields of physics and chemistry and thereby support Hellenic contribution to the global scientific community. The scholarship honors the life and accomplishments of Dr. Constantine Mavroyannis, an internationally renowned career theoretical physicist with the National Research Council of Canada, and his wife, Patricia.

Supreme President George G. Horiates stated, “we are proud to be able to partner with the Mavroyannis family and assist in providing this wonderful gift to students who qualify. For nearly 100 years, AHEPA has advocated for educational advancement by providing more than one million dollars annually in scholarships. We thank all of our members for their staunch support of education.”

Since its inception, the scholarship has been awarded to eighteen recipients.

Details concerning the requirements to apply and application cover sheet are available online: <https://files.constantcontact.com/cd989cac001/ed753ed1-185e-4dfe-8285-8651cf25f25d.pdf>

Karras’ Football HOF Shirt Available

TNH Staff

CANTON, OH – Commemorating the late Greek-American Alex Karras and his election to the Pro Football Hall of Fame’s Class of 2020, an exclusive, officially licensed t-shirt is now available for fans of all ages. Football legend Karras played defensive tackle for the Detroit Lions from 1958-1962 and 1964-1970.

Besides his extraordinary football career, Karras whose Greek roots are from Chios, went on to a successful acting career as well. He is perhaps best known for his role on the 1980s TV sitcom Webster, but his first major role was playing himself in the film Paper Lion (1968) based on the book by George Plimpton. He also appeared in the Mel Brooks comedy Blazing Saddles (1974).

The 100% cotton, short sleeve t-shirt features, on the front, a screen print design with the enshrinee’s name, the team name, along with the words PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME and a football with year of induction.

The shirt is available online through the Pro Football Hall of Fame website for \$24.99. More information is available online: <https://www.profootballhof.com/alex-karras-class-of-2020-elected-t-shirt/>.

It should be noted that due to the global coronavirus pandemic and as a public health precaution, the Pro Football Hall of Fame and the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce rescheduled all events associated with the 2020 Enshrinement Week Powered by Johnson Controls for August 5-9, 2021.

According to the Pro Football Hall of Fame’s website, more than 100 Gold Jackets (living Hall of Famers) return to the Hall of Fame each year to be a part of the Enshrinement Week Powered by Johnson Controls. Nowhere else are fans able to see and interact with as many Hall of Famers in one place at one time as in Canton during the annual celebration.

After a nearly three-month closure, as the entire nation locked down to slow the spread of the global coronavirus pandemic, the Pro Football Hall of Fame reopened its doors to the public on June 10 with health and safety precautions in place for visitors to the museum.

To learn more about the Pro Football Hall of Fame, visit: <https://www.profootballhof.com>



ASSOCIATED PRESS, FILE
Alex Karras.

College Student Biked 48 Days

Continued from page 1

The journey began on May 10 as Papadimitriou cycled across Scotland and England, 35-75 miles a day, he told CNN. Then, he took a ferry to the Netherlands and continued through Germany, then Austria, and down the east coast of Italy where he boarded a ferry for Patras, and then continued to Athens. Along the way, he camped out in “fields and forests,” CNN reported, noting that Papadimitriou took time each day to write about his progress and update his family and also contacted friends and acquaintances living in the countries he passed through and who offered “a bed and a shower,” as an alternative to his camping out.

Papadimitriou told CNN, “as a relatively introverted person, I was forced to kind of get out of my comfort zone in the sense that if I did not do some things, I would not have a place to stay, I would not have water. It forced me to kind of have those interactions and reach out.”

“On June 27, nearly 50 days since he first got on the road, he arrived back home, where his family along with dozens of friends, as well as complete strangers who had been tracking his progress, were waiting to celebrate his arrival,” CNN reported.

“It was very emotional. Coming from a family from two parents that were very adven-



ANA-MPA
Kleon Papadimitriou, the 20-year-old college student who biked from Scotland to Greece during the pandemic.

turous in their younger years, seeing me kind of follow in their footsteps, I think is very emotional to them and obviously gives me a lot of meaning. But I think if anything, they felt relief,” Papadimitriou told CNN.

Following his return home, Papadimitriou has now left Athens for a summer job and told CNN that he is “still reflecting on his seven-week bike ride.”

He told CNN, “I think I improved as a person, I’m more confident in myself, I’m more confident in my abilities. If I didn’t know that I’ve done the

trip and you asked me now if I could it, I would say no, how could I do all those things?”

After his successful cycling home, Papadimitriou told CNN that he is “now looking forward to the ‘next big thing.’”

His advice for those considering the “huge undertaking” of a 48-day journey by bicycle, “when you set the bar really high and you attempt to reach a really ambitious goal, whether you achieve it or you don’t, you will have improved. You will learn things about yourself and you will surprise yourself,” Papadimitriou told CNN.



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The Stavros Niarchos Foundation is the lead supporter of the Hellenic Film Society USA. Additional support is provided by the Onassis Foundation USA, the Kallinikeion Foundation, and the Queens Council on the Arts.

New Metropolitan of Imvros and Tenedos Enthroned by Ecumenical Patriarch

IMVROS – The enthronement of the new Metropolitan Kyrillos of Imvros and Tenedos will take place, on Saturday, July 18, 2020, at 12 noon at the Dormition of the Virgin Mary Cathedral in Panagia, Imvros. His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew will be officiating.



METROPOLIS OF IMVROS AND TENEDOS
His Eminence Metropolitan Kirillos of Imvros and Tenedos who will be enthroned on Saturday July 18.

The same evening Metropolitan Kirillos will officiate at the Great Vespers at Saint George church in the village of Aghioi Theodoroi, which is the birthplace of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. On Sunday, July 19, the new Metropolitan of Imvros and Tenedos will preside over the Divine Liturgy, at the church in Panagia, in the presence of the Ecumenical Patriarch. The following weekend, July 25-26, the Metropolitan will accompany the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in his visit to the island of Tenedos to celebrate the Feast Day of St. Paraskevi. It is reminded here that Metropolitan Kirillos of Imvros and Tenedos was unanimously elected by the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Throne at the suggestion of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, on March 9 and on March 17 he arrived in Imvros and assumed his archpastoral duties. Because of the Coronavirus pandemic crisis, his official enthronement ceremony was postponed as it was more important to implement all the precautionary measures indicated by the health authorities at that time.

Virtual Rally on July 18 for Candidate Dr. Natalia Linos

TNH Staff

BOSTON – A national virtual rally in support of Greek-American Dr. Natalia Linos, candidate for Massachusetts' Fourth Congressional District will be held via Zoom on Saturday, July 18, 12 PM EDT.

Participants are invited to join and show your support for Natalia's campaign and to learn more about her candidacy.

RSVP online: <https://bit.ly/NFC-July18>

Dr. Linos is a Harvard-trained epidemiologist, experienced public servant, and mom of three. She is the Executive Director of the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at



Dr. Natalia Linos is running for Congress.

Harvard. Previously, she worked at the United Nations and as the Science Advisor to the New York City Health Commissioner. She lives in Brookline, MA with her husband, Paul, and their three young children, Amalia, Leonidas, and Alexandra. She is running to ensure our government's decision-making is grounded in science and equity.

The campaign thanked the host committee: Drake G. Behrakis, Eirini Iliaki, Vasilis Kafkas, Domenica Karavitaki, Jamie Monovoukas, Yiannis Monovoukas, Elizabeth Prodromou, Irene Souter, Georgios Vettoulis, and Endy Zemenides.

Learn more at nataliaforcongress.com.



Left to right: EMBCA Executive Vice President Marina Belessis Casoria and EMBCA Founder and President Lou Katsos, Dr. Peter Stavrianidis, and Prof. Ismini Lamb at a previous event.

EMBCA Online Zoom Event on 1821

TNH Staff

NEW YORK – On Sunday, July 26, 2 PM Eastern Time, the East Mediterranean Business Culture Alliance (EMBCA) presents the 200th Anniversary of the Hellenic Revolution of 1821 and Hellenic Genealogy Tourism Panel Discussion via Zoom and in association with Hellenic Genealogy Geek (HGG), the National AHEPA Hellenic Cultural Commission, AHEPA New York

District 6, and AHEPA Hellas.

EMBCA's President Lou Katsos, the Chairman of AHEPA's Hellenic Cultural Commission and the Governor of New York AHEPA District 6, will host the panel discussion. Katsos also hosted the first National Hellenic American Genealogy Conference in 2015 in New York with HGG, an organization with 25,000 Facebook members. The video of the first conference is available for viewing on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/4n70gTIB-MxM>.

The July 26 panel will include, among others, HGG Founder and President Georgia Stryker Keilman and Gregory Kontos, the Founder of Greek Ancestry, based in Patra, Hellas, both well-known as Hellenic genealogy researchers.

This event will be the first of many leading to the 200th Anniversary of the Hellenic Revolution of 1821 this coming year.

AHEPA Chapter 170 Presents Event Online

TNH Staff

HEMPSTEAD, NY – On Thursday, July 30, 7 PM, AHEPA Constantine Cassis Chapter 170 and the AHEPA Family of Hempstead will present an online event, Introduction to Byzantium, live via GoToMeeting as part of the Hellenic History Series with special guest presenter Vassilios (Billy) Chrissochos.

A Q&A session will follow the presentation. Participants can use their computer, tablet or smartphone to attend.

More information about the event is available online: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/977434421>.

More information about AHEPA Constantine Cassis Chapter 170 is also available online: <http://www.ahepa170.org>.



AHEPA logo.

Archbishop Elpidophoros Visits Local Police

NEW YORK, NY – His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America visited his local Police station, the 19th Precinct, which covers the neighborhood of the Archdiocese, and dialogued with Captain Kathleen Walsh and members of the force, including three Greek-Americans, Officers Stephan Koustoubardis, Irene Prentzas, and Panagiotis Koutsoudilakis. The Archbishop had been desirous of such an encounter for some time, especially because of his commitment to the New York Police Department (NYPD) St. Paul's Society, whose members are composed of Greek-American & Eastern Orthodox Law Enforcement officers from federal, state, and local police agencies.

In his remarks at the Station today, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros said:

"I know that 2020 has been a particularly difficult year for us all, and especially for you essential public servants. I want you to know that you are in my prayers and in my heart, as you continue to strive to serve the public good and the good people of the City of New York with professionalism, compassion, and empathy. You are often put on the line and I want you to know that as your fellow-citizen and as a religious leader in our city, you are not forgotten."



PHOTOS GOA

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America speaks with Greek-American officers at the 19th Precinct Police Station in New York. Right: His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America visited his local Police station, the 19th Precinct in New York. The Archbishop speaks with Captain Kathleen Walsh.



Better Late Than Never for Vacationing in Greece

Continued from page 1

ing in Greece, because I will be at my house there and I will be able to go, as I want, to the shops, wearing a mask. Besides, Greece did well in the precautions against coronavirus."

Intzes noted that if the situation does not change by the end of August, he can go on holiday to Greece in September and October. He has been going to Greece every year for the last five years. He usually stays at his house in Monastiraki of Nafpaktos, but also visits Nisyros.

Nikos Bardis, President of the Ionian Cultural Federation of America, and founder of the Panatha USA Sports Club in New York, takes his family vacation to Greece every year. "For this year, we are waiting day by day to see what happens," he said. "I'm thinking of going in October, if the conditions allow. We always go in August. This year, my children would have gone in June and I in August."

He usually purchases plane tickets in February, so that he can find the best prices, as he did this year from Emirates.

Bardis comes from Kerkyra and always goes there. For this year, he had planned to visit Lefkada, Kefalonia, and other areas.

"There is concern everywhere," Bardis added. "And staying here and thinking about vacationing in Florida, also poses a lot of problems these days."

Angelos Sakis, former president of the Cretan Association based in Palm Harbor, Florida, is always thinking about vacationing in Greece and despite



ELENI SAKELLIS

Many Greek-Americans are still planning to visit Greece to enjoy a beach view like this one on the island of Kos. Below left: Honorary club president Nikos Bardis at the Panatha USA soccer fan club, Astoria. Below right: Angelos Sakis, former president of the Cretan Association in Palm Harbor, FL.



COURTESY OF ANGELO SAKIS

the pandemic, he is still planning the trip for this year. "It's a bit difficult, of course, but in our hearts it's always home," he said. "We will be patient for a while and as soon as the situation changes, we will go in September. We leave the door open, because if we close it from now on, it will be difficult in the summer."

Usually, Sakis goes to Crete with his family in early July. He previously would stay for a while in Athens, where his mother lives, and then continue on to Crete, and other nearby islands. The family always has weddings or baptisms of friends and relatives to go to. Last year, he stayed in Greece for four months.

Isidoros Bilarikis, a businessman from Brooklyn, and his wife Anna visit Chios, where he comes from, but also Athens and other parts of Greece, every July and August. Bilarikis usually books the tickets at the last minute, he told TNH.

"Right now, I'm waiting, and we're ready, as soon as I see that things are better," he said. "I have not ruled out our trip this year, because, thank God, in Greece they have no problems so far."

Bilarikis' biggest concern is air travel. He is thinking of going to the end of July and staying until the middle of September. "Especially on my island, Chios, they have no problems with the coronavirus and all our friends and relatives are constantly inviting us. There are also acquaintances of mine who were ready to go, but the airlines had canceled their flights. With the opening, they are ready to go to Greece."

GOINGS ON...

Goings On will not be appearing in this week's issue due to the measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, including the restrictions on large gatherings of people which has already led to the postponement or cancellation of many community events.

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GREEK GASTRONOMY

Classic Dolmadakia, Stuffed Grape Leaves, to Enjoy

By Eleni Sakellis

Dolmadakia, stuffed grape leaves, are a classic Greek recipe with many variations depending on the region. They are a specialty on the island of Kalymnos in the Dodecanese where they are known simply as filla (leaves). Though they are readily available in restaurants and supermarkets, homemade dolmadakia are relatively simple to make. Once the stuffing is made and you get the hang of the rolling technique, stuffed grape leaves will become a favorite recipe in your Greek cooking repertoire.

The idea to use grape leaves as a wrapping for food probably goes back to prehistory, and at least to the cultivation of grapes which began 6,000 to 8,000 years ago. Stuffed vegetables are common in the cuisine of the Mediterranean, the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus, Russia, and Central Asia. Most of the recipes for the filling include rice, ground meat, or grains, onion, herbs like dill, mint, or parsley, and spices. The meatless versions are cooked with olive oil and can include only rice or a combination of rice, herbs, onions, and raisins or currants, and/or nuts. Use the combination of herbs you prefer to personalize the dish. Stuffed grape leaves are often made with other stuffed vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants.

Grape leaves in the jar are readily available in most supermarkets these days, though if you happen to grow your own vines, feel free to pick fresh leaves and use them for stuffing. When using fresh leaves from the vine, small to medium-sized leaves work best for stuffing since the larger leaves can be tough to chew no matter how long you boil them.

Dolmadakia, Stuffed Grape Leaves

- 2 pounds ground beef
- 4 tablespoons Greek extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 1 can (28 ounces) tomatoes, chopped
- Greek sea salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup rice
- 1 teaspoon dried mint or 3 tablespoons fresh mint, chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh dill and/or parsley



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TNH/ELENI SAKELLIS

- 1 jar of grape leaves (1 pound) or fresh grape leaves
- Water

To make the filling, brown the ground beef in a large saucepan or Dutch oven. Drain any excess fat and add the olive oil and the onions. Sauté until the onions are translucent. Add the chopped tomatoes, the water, half a teaspoon of salt and half a teaspoon of freshly ground pepper. Bring up to a boil and add the rice. Stir in the herbs of your choice and remove from heat. Allow to cool slightly. Meanwhile, set a pot of wa-

ter to boil and remove the grape leaves from the jar and rinse under cool water. If using fresh leaves, remove any stems and rinse thoroughly under cool water. Then, cook the whole grape leaves, whether from the jar or fresh, in the boiling water for 5 minutes; drain in a colander.

Cover the bottom of a large pot or Dutch oven with any torn grape leaves. Place one grape leaf on your work surface, place a spoonful of the rice mixture in the center of the leaf's dull side, tuck in the sides and roll to form your dolmadaki. Continue with remaining grape leaves and filling. Place the stuffed grape leaves in pot or Dutch oven, layering them as needed. Once finished rolling and placing the stuffed grape leaves in the pot, pour just enough water to cover them in the pot. Place a plate to keep the stuffed grape leaves submerged, and place a cover slightly ajar on top of the pot and cook over low heat for about an hour or until the filling is cooked through.

There should be some cooking liquid left after a half hour, but check in case it evaporates too quickly before the stuffed grape leaves are done in which case more water can be added and you can continue simmering until done.

OUR WEEKLY BOTANIST

Pistachios: The King of Nuts in U.S. and Greece

By Evropi-Sofia Dalampira

Whenever you think of Mediterranean region, even if you haven't been there yet, you imagine something like California. Such a diverse climate in both regions gives you the opportunity to explore the whole Earth in a ride. Indeed, California's Sierra Nevada and Central Valley have a warm dry summer and cool wet winter, a Mediterranean climate. Coastal areas and the influence of ocean or sea give a wet cool breezy nature and saltiness to costal shrubs in both regions. The mountains are alike also, with heavy snowfalls in the high altitudes. Valley, deserts, and woodlands evoke in you the urge to inquire, explore, and enjoy.

The similar climates create conditions for cultivating the same plants. This is why specific regions of California as well as the Mediterranean are famous for pistachios. A delightful dry nut tree.

Pistachia vera is not native to Greece but cultivation dates back to 18th century. Even if Greek production is not one of the highest, the brand respected. Iran, its country of origin, is first in production and the United States (mainly California) is second. Californian pistachios are also among the highest in quality. The famous pistachios from Aegina 'fistiki Aeginis', an island of Greece near Athens, is now character-

ized as a Protected Origin Product (POP) from European Union, which means that no one else can use this name like a brand name because of their special organoleptic characteristics and ultimate quality.

Pistachio fans supporting this beautiful and unique nut not only for its taste but also for its nutritional value. All dry nuts are an "explosion of nutrients" for humans. Imagine creating a new plant with nuts designed to be very nutritious – it would be like the beloved pistachio! In human beings 28 gr of pistachios (a handful), gives you vitamin B1, B6, 'good fats' for your blood and heart, cooper, manganese, fiber, and antioxidants ... with only 160 calories! Adding them as a snack, or in your food is super easy: raw in green salads, cooked in rice or in cookies and cakes! Choose the unsalted unprocessed pistachios for less calories, more nutrients, and earthier taste!

** The above is not medical advice but mere suggestions for improving your diet. Before reach herbal use you should consult your doctor, especially those who have health issues, are pregnant or are under the age of 6.*

Evropi-Sofia Dalampira is an Agriculturist-MSc Botany-Biology and PhD Candidate in Agricultural-Environmental Education and Science Communication.



LITERARY REVIEW

Travel Books by Patrick Leigh Fermor to Add to Your Summer Reading List

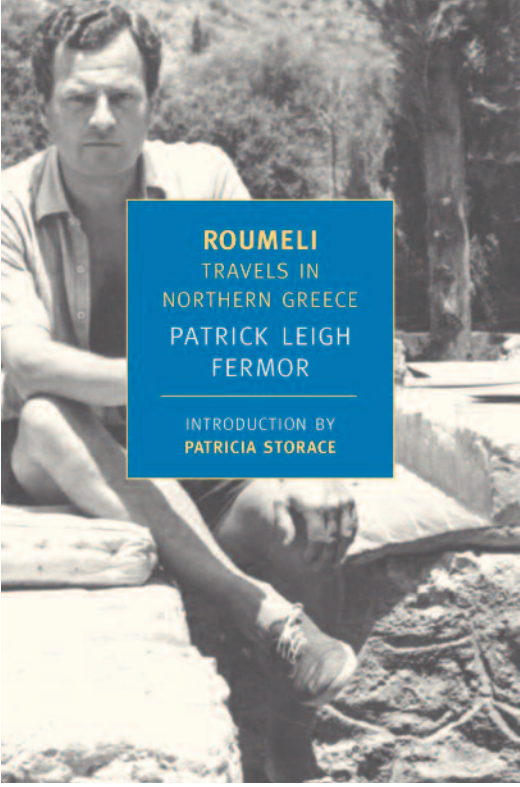
By Eleni Sakellis

Patrick Leigh Fermor (1915–2011), an intrepid traveler, heroic soldier, and Philhellene, is widely considered one of the finest travel writers of the twentieth century. In 1934, at the age of 18, he decided to walk across Europe to Constantinople, trekking through nine countries and teaching himself three languages along the way.

At the outbreak of World War II, he left his lover, Princess Balasha Cantacuzene, in Romania and returned to England to enlist. Commissioned into the Intelligence Corps, he became one of the handful of Allied officers supporting the Cretan resistance to the German occupation. In 1944, he commanded the Anglo-Cretan team that abducted General Heinrich Kreipe and spirited him away to Egypt. A journey to the Caribbean, stays in monasteries, and explorations all over Greece provided the subjects for his first books. It was not until he and his wife had moved to Mani in southern Greece that he returned to his earliest walk as the subject of his subsequent books.

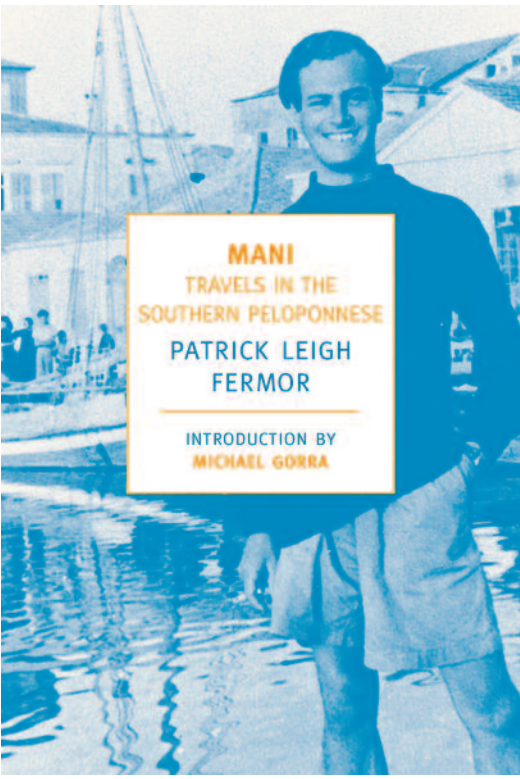
Mani: Travels in the Southern Peloponnese by Patrick Leigh Fermor confirmed his reputation as one of the finest writers of prose in the English language as he takes the reader on a journey through one of the most isolated regions in Greece, cut off from the rest of the country by the towering range of the Taygetus and bound in by the Aegean and Ionian seas. In the book, Leigh Fermor explores remote villages, swims in the Aegean and Ionian seas, and finds history wherever he goes in Mani.

Leigh Fermor has been described as “a cross



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between Indiana Jones, James Bond, and Graham Greene,” and bridges the genres of adventure story, travel writing, and memoir to reveal an ancient world living alongside the twentieth century.



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Mani is a companion volume to Leigh Fermor's celebrated Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece which offers readers the opportunity to immerse themselves, along with the author, in northern

Greece. Leigh Fermor travels to monasteries, among shepherds, and throughout the hills, mountains, and rugged coastline of this enchanted land, Roumeli, which is not to be found on present-day maps. The name once given to all of northern Greece, stretching from the Bosphorus to the Adriatic and from Macedonia to the Gulf of Corinth, evokes a world where the present is inseparably bound up with the past.

In the book, Leigh Fermor wanders through this mysterious and yet very real region. He visits Sarakatsan shepherds, the monasteries of Meteora, and the villages of Krakora, and then takes on a mission to track down a pair of Byron's slippers at Missolonghi. As he travels, Leigh Fermor highlights the inherent conflicts of the Greek inheritance, the links to the classical and Byzantine heritage, the legacy of Ottoman oppression, along with an underlying, even older world, traces of which are found in the hills and mountains and along stretches of barely explored coast.

Leigh Fermor's Words of Mercury: Tales from a Lifetime of Travel is a career-spanning anthology from the great traveler and travel writer. The book includes pieces from every stage of Leigh Fermor's adventures, from his journey through Eastern Europe just before the outbreak of the Second World War to his encounter with voodoo in Haiti, to a monastic retreat to Normandy to try to write a book. Also included is the story of one of his most well-known exploits from the war, his planned and executed kidnap of a German general under British orders.

The above-mentioned books are all available online and in bookstores and libraries.

GREEK AMERICAN STORIES

Labor Disputes

By Phyllis (Kiki) Sembos
Special to The National Herald

That Sunday, Dixon's five were discussing the time when Yiannis's daughter Barbara had given birth to twin boys, now eight years old. "I remember," said John laughing. "Then came the question on naming them. Of course, they had to be named after both 'papous'. Timotheos was Barbara's father-in-law, and he stood aside while the big decision was being discussed." Grinning, Kipreos said, "That's right! And, George was the one who came up with a scientific solution of choosing which one was Yiannis and which, Timotheos."

Dimos, nodding enthusiastically, recalled that event. He turned to George and said, "What a day! I remember Barbara, her husband, and all of us stood watching and wondering when you announced that there is a scientific way to choose." John con-

tinued. "That's when George placed a rolled up ten-dollar bill in the one tiny hand and nothing happened. He just laid there in his crib and slept. Then you placed it in the other baby's hand and he woke up and grabbed it and held on tight. Then, you raised your head and announced, 'H8ou o Yiannis!'" They laughed aloud recalling the incident. Turning to George, Dimos asked, "I wonder if the choices were wise and deserved. Do you know, George?"

Setting down his coffee, George explained seriously. "Oh, I believe science did the job well. Let me give you the proof." Everyone's attention was pinned on George as Yiannis sat unperturbed, drinking his coffee, letting George say his piece. "Last week, my wife went to see Areti for something and came home and told me what she witnessed in front of the building where Yiannis lived. She noticed the two



boys in front of the building having set up two separate lemonade stands with Yiannis sitting in a folding chair between them, to watch the kids while he was taking toll, pencil and pad in hand.

Grinning, John said, bet he drank some lemonade to see if it was good quality and didn't pay for it." George shook his head. "Right! Then, he just sat and watched. A few customers came and went as Yiannis kept count at twenty-five cents a cup." They turned to Yiannis who sat listen-

ing but not responding. "That right, Yiannis," asked John. Yiannis nodded and reached for a donut in silence. "An hour later, he went up to both stands and checked if the money was safe and then drank his second cup of lemonade from little Yiannis' stand."

"Well, sitting in the sun, all those hours, you can get pretty thirsty," pointed out Kipreos, sympathetically. George smiled. "That's when little Yiannis stuck his hand out and told him, 'two

cups! That'll be fifty cents, Papou.'" Again, laughter. "The apple doesn't fall far from the apple tree," said Joh, wiping his eyes. Dimos asked Yiannis, "did that bother you?" Yiannis shook his head. "No! Hey! He's a chip off the old block, that's all. It proves he's a good business man like his Papou." Setting down his coffee, he added, "but, what bothered me was, at the end of the afternoon, when we added up the profits," said Yiannis, a little peeved. "What happened?" asked Kipreos. Shaking his head slowly, Yiannis explained, "Timotheos' cup was full. He had three dollars and some change. I checked and it was right. Then, I checked Yiannis' cup and It didn't match with what I tallied. Yet, he had more customers than Timotheos, having placed himself near the busy corner."

Everyone listened intently, waiting for the results. Finally, he told them, "when I showed him my tally, Little Yianni, jiggling his

pocket, says to me, 'Papou! What about my labor? I charge fifty cents an hour for my time working. So, I took what belongs to me plus the two cups of lemonade you drank. I earned it!'"

George's head came up, reflecting pride. "There's your proof, gentlemen! Didn't my science do a good job? Einstein couldn't have done a better job choosing who is who." Laughing, all heartily agreed with George. After a short silence, Yiannis lifted up his hand and said, "But, he who laughs last, laughs best." All attention was pinned on Yiannis. Kipreos asked, who laughed best?"

"I did! Like one business man to another, I took out of little Yiannis's cup one dollar for services rendered." Confused, Dimos asked, "what services?" Picking up his cup of coffee, Yiannis nonchalantly, said, "what about my labor! I charge fifty cents an hour for babysitting services. I earned it!"

Eparchial Synod on Aghia Sophia

NEW YORK – His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America as soon as the sad news broke about the decision of the Turkish government to convert Aghia Sophia, the magnificent Cathedral of the Orthodox Church, into a mosque, convened a teleconference of the Eparchial Synod, which issued the following announcement:

“Today, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros convened a special session of the Holy Eparchial Synod, and with great sorrow and heartfelt anguish informed its members of the decision made by the Turkish government earlier today to convert Hagia Sophia of Constantinople into a mosque.

For Orthodox Christians around the globe, and also for the entire Christendom, Hagia Sophia, Constantinople, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate are sacred spiritual centers and comprise a repository of our Christian Faith and tradition. Therefore, we call the Turkish government to respect the pan-Orthodox and pan-Christian consciousness, which today has been deeply wounded by this decision.

We hope that this decision is not a manifestation of the deterioration in the stance of the Turkish government toward the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other religious minorities in Turkey.

The hierarchy, the clergy, the monastics, and the faithful people of our Holy Archdiocese are deeply distressed, and pray fervently that peace, love, and well-being will prevail in that region and that the Turkish government annuls this decision.”



Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan delivers a speech during an arts biennial opening in 2018 inside Aghia Sophia, a UNESCO world heritage site.

Pan-Rhodian Society Apollon NY Chapter Releases Statement on Aghia Sophia

TNH Staff

NEW YORK – The Pan-Rhodian Society of America - Apollon New York Chapter No. 3 officers and board members on July 10 issued the following statement on the status of Aghia Sophia:

“The Pan-Rhodian Society of New York - Apollon, strongly condemns Turkey's decision to turn Hagia Sophia into a mosque, a decision that brutally insults the historical memory of a world cultural symbol, Christians around the globe, and the entire civilized world. Along with the Hellenic Government, we call on the International Community to assume its historic responsibilities. Chapter President Nikos Kartalis Vice President Kalliopi Ziangos Treasurer Thalia Tzorzis-Vlepakis Secretary Eleni Sakellis Board Members” Savvas Sotrilis Petros Chatzimichalis Katerina Frangopoulou Ereni Chatzimichalis Evangelia Platella

Patriarch of Jerusalem Released Statement on Aghia Sophia Status

TNH Staff

JERUSALEM – The Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Theophilos III, released a statement on July 8 drawing on the experience of the Christian community in the Holy Land of the demands of coexistence, to call on the government of Turkey not to turn the Aghia Sophia into a mosque.

The current building of Aghia Sophia was the Cathedral of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, the senior bishop of the Eastern Orthodox Communion, from its construction in 537 until the fall of Constantinople to Ottoman forces in 1453. Two prior churches at the same site served that purpose before 537. Aghia Sophia is therefore a place of significant spiritual importance to Eastern Orthodox Christians around the world.

Patriarch Theophilos draws on his experience in the Holy Land to call on the Turkish government to reconsider its decision to turn the building from a museum into a mosque, as it

was from 1453 to 1935. “It has been to Turkey's credit that for nearly 100 years it has administered the Hagia Sophia as a museum in order to maintain an extent of neutrality over the site,” he writes.

“Hagia Sophia today remains a symbol of tolerance... [doing] the best possible justice to the site, which without question was always intended to inspire awe and to glorify Almighty God... “As stewards of sacred heritage in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, for nearly 2,000 uninterrupted years, in a land over which three Abrahamic faiths lay equal claim, we strongly attest to the fact that accessibility promotes peace and mutual respect, whereas attitudes of exclusivity promote conflict and bitterness.

“We hope and pray, for the benefit of all people of good will, and for Turkey as a nation with the potential to influence our entire region down a path of growth and mutual co-existence, that the present status of the Hagia Sophia is respected and preserved.”



A woman takes photos of the Aghia Sophia, a UNESCO World Heritage site.



Pope Francis delivers his message after the Angelus noon blessing from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter's Square at the Vatican, Sunday, July 12, 2020.

Pope "Deeply Pained" over Aghia Sophia, Phanar Disappointed in Vatican

VATICAN CITY – After many weeks of scandalous silence Pope Francis on Sunday July 12 made an extremely brief reference to the conversion of Aghia Sophia into a mosque, saying he is "deeply pained" by the action.

In a very brief, improvised remark, Francis, speaking from his studio window overlooking St. Peter's Square, noted that the Catholic Church marked Sunday as International Day of the Sea, "and the sea brings me a little far away with my thought: to

The National Herald is in a position to know that Pope Francis decided to finally say something after he was informed that His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew expressed disappointment on Saturday July 11 about the Vatican's silence when speaking to a group of hierarchs at the Phanar.

The Roman Catholic Bishops of Turkey gave the green light to Erdogan since June to convert Aghia Sophia into a mosque. Turkish bishops won't contest plan to turn ancient cathedral into a mosque.

The Catholic News Service reported on June 19, 2020 the following: “Catholic bishops in Turkey pledged not to contest plans to turn Istanbul's ancient Aghia Sophia cathedral that now serves as a museum into a Muslim place of worship.

In announcing their decision June 18, the bishops backed government claims that the monument's future is a question of national sovereignty.

“We are a church deprived of juridical status, so we cannot give any advice on this country's internal questions,” the Turkish bishops' conference said in a statement sent to Catholic News Service.

“Although we would wish Hagia Sophia to retain its character as a museum, it isn't for us to intervene or even give our opinion on a decision which solely concerns the Republic of Turkey,” the bishops said.”

Similar position was taken by the Armenians.

AHEPA Condemns Conversion of Aghia Sophia

TNH Staff

WASHINGTON, DC – AHEPA Supreme President George G. Horiates on July 10 issued the following statement concerning the status of Aghia Sophia:

“AHEPA condemns in strongest terms the action taken today by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who formally changed the status of Hagia Sophia to a mosque following a Turkish court's decision that paved the way for him to do so.

“It is unfortunate and a disappointment that Hagia Sophia has fallen victim to Turkey's domestic politics. Today's action also is an indictment of Turkey's judicial system following Erdogan's purges and the diminished role and influence of Turkey's secular community in Turkish society under the tyranny of the Erdogan regime.

“We appreciate the swift response from UNESCO. “We call on the international community to hold Turkey accountable to the international bodies and conventions to which it is a signatory that stipulates Turkey's responsibilities to preserve its rich cultural and religious heritage.

“Hagia Sophia is the fifth instance of a former Byzantine church named Aghia Sophia to have been converted to a mosque during the past decade in Turkey, according to The Economist.

“Hagia Sophia is a gift to all humankind. Its value is universal and it must be preserved as such.”

AHEPA CALLS FOR BOYCOTT

The Order of AHEPA is calling for boycott of Turkish products. According to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, “U.S. goods imports from Turkey totaled \$10.3 billion in 2018, up 9.8% (\$924 million) from 2017, and up 122.7% from 2008.”

AHEPA wants those trends to stop, and informs the Community that, “among Turkey's top imports to the United States are carpets and other textile coverings (\$591 million). In fact, Turkey is the top exporter worldwide of hand-woven rugs at \$1.92 billion, according to the Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC). Therefore, a global Hellenic diaspora can play a role. For textiles, check your house linens and non-knit men's and women's suits.

However, it is with agricultural products where we in the United States can make a difference. In 2018, U.S. total imports of agricultural products from Turkey totaled \$1 billion.”

- Leading categories include: processed fruit & vegetables (\$191 million), tobacco (\$173 million), snack foods (\$121 million), other vegetable oils (\$116 million), and fruit & vegetable juices (\$89 million).
- Turkey produces two main types of oranges, the Washington Navel (75% of total crop) and the Valencia (20%).
- Animal products (\$46.2 million) include: non-filled fresh fish, honey, and cheese.

AHEPA's statement continues:

Erdogan's action ... cannot be allowed to stand ... No one can erase the truth

“So, please check those product and textile labels to ensure you are not buying Turkish products that support the Erdogan regime,” and “hit Turkey in tourism and travel as best as possible. Do not fly Turkish Airlines, the regime's national airline. Period. Michael Cohen, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and a former Pentagon official, suggested the EU and U.S. consider denying Turkish Air landing rights in a 2019 op-ed in The Washington Examiner over Turkish aggres-

sion in the eastern Mediterranean. This suggestion merits our community's strong support.

AHEPA DEMANDS SACTIONS ON TURKEY

The leaders of AHEPA urge members of the Community: “Ask your U.S. Senators to call on Majority Leader McConnell to have the Senate take immediate action to sanction Turkey. Please visit www.ahepa.org/sanction-turkey for more information.”

Supreme President Horiates notes that “the Trump Administration also has the ability to hold Turkey accountable for its acquisition of the Russian-made S-400 missile defense system by imposing sanctions on Turkish entities and individuals under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) for Turkey's acquisition of the S-400s, just as the Administration justly did with Chinese entities in 2018.”

Horiates said that “AHEPA will explore opportunities to rally the community, and bring all peoples together, at venues and sites to raise awareness to key audiences that Erdogan's action is unacceptable to a variety of communities, organizations, and sectors, and it cannot be allowed to stand ... No one can erase the truth...”

Archons Lament Decision to Transform Aghia Sophia

NEW YORK – The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate have published a statement on Turkey's decision to turn Aghia Sophia into a mosque. The full text follows:

“The Order of Saint Andrew, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate notes with great sorrow Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's signing Friday of a decree that converts Hagia Sophia, the foremost Christian Cathedral in the entire world for nearly a millennium, into a mosque.

Amid the pain and grief of this day, we take comfort from Almighty God, aware that the light of Hagia Sophia continues to shine in Orthodox Christian churches throughout the world, and cannot be extinguished, and that the voices of praise for our Lord Jesus Christ that once resounded there still proclaim our Orthodox Faith all over the globe. In whatever guise, Hagia Sophia still stands as a beacon of light, a monument of faith and of the power of God in the hearts of human beings.

At the same time, we call upon international bodies and the governments of the world to recognize that this unwise de-

cision casts a shadow over the commitment of the government of Turkey to religious tolerance and religious freedom. Hagia Sophia, as the foremost Cathedral in the Christian world for so many centuries, continues to be a source of inspiration for billions of Christians and people

of other faith traditions worldwide. To claim it as the property of one faith group alone is to deny its longstanding status as a living symbol of respect for all faiths and a part of our collective heritage.

The Turkish government's decision today was not a coura-

geous act, but a deeply ill-advised act of memoricide that ignores Turkey's rich Christian history and further threatens the religious freedom of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the remaining Christians of that land. It was undertaken in defiance of the United States, Russia, France, Greece, and many others.

We urgently hope that if this decision is not rescinded, that it will be implemented in a manner that continues to acknowledge and respect Hagia Sophia's thousand years as a center of Christian prayer and worship.

In advocacy of religious freedom,

Anthony J. Limberakis, MD
Archon Aktouarios
National Commander”

Dr. Anthony Limberakis, National Commander of the Order of St. Andrew, addresses guests at the opening reception for Third Archon International Conference on Religious Freedom as Conference Chairman Mike Manatos looks on.



Francis said no more but was clearly referring to the move by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to formally convert the monumental building from a museum into a mosque.

Istanbul,” the pontiff said. “I am thinking of St. Sophia and I am deeply pained.”

Francis said no more but was clearly referring to the move by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to formally convert the monumental building back into a mosque. The colossal Aghia Sophia cathedral was turned into a mosque after the Ottomans conquered the city in 1453. The Turkish secular government in 1934 decided to make it a museum.

Archbishop Elpidophoros Speaks Exclusively to TNH on Aghia Sophia

Continued from page 1

TNH: What do you think the Omogenia can do?

Archbishop Elpidophoros: What we can and should do is to educate our neighbors and our political establishment about the plight and the situation that affects our brothers and sisters of all faiths. This could be seen coming for quite a while; the conversion of the Aghia Sophia cathedral in Iznik in 2012 (Nicaea, the site of the Second Ecumenical Council), the Aghia Sophia Church in Trabzon in 2013, and the ruling that has converted the Church of Chora – one of the greatest artistic achievements of the Orthodox Faith – into a mosque late last year. I hope that our community, the Omogenia here in the Diaspora, takes this heart-break to heart. We need vigilance and advocacy at a level we have never imagined.

TNH: What actions have you taken and what do you expect from the U.S. authorities?

Archbishop Elpidophoros: The past days have been literally non-stop for me. I convened the Holy Eparchial Synod and we published a press release and a synodical encyclical. We did the same with the Executive Committee of the Assembly of the

Orthodox Bishops in America. I have been swamped with calls of expression of support and sympathy, as well as inquiries about the implications of this inexplicable move by the Turkish government. I have responded to requests for interviews to national and international outlets, and I chose to use our social media channels to inform and educate multiple constituencies in the USA and around the world.



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America.

And I will not relent in my efforts. As for our government, we can say that there has been a sensitive response, one with empathy from political leadership. But as we say in America, there is little use in closing the barn door once the horse is out. We have much to do to educate ourselves about our own history, and in this process, we would have educated and engaged our government. But we must never lose hope. It is the assurance of things not yet seen, as the Apostle says. Therefore, we must apply ourselves with even greater vigor.

TNH: Does the fact that you came from Constantinople prevent you from expressing yourself freely about the actions and decisions of the Turkish government?

Archbishop Elpidophoros: I express myself as I choose, and always cognizant of my ministry as Archbishop and as a faithful son of the Ecumenical Throne. I believe that this time calls for circumspection and reason, even in the midst of heightened emotions. I hope that everyone can put their pain in the service of our mission, to serve the world with love, compassion, and truth. My experience as a Constantinopolitan helps me to discern that of all things we



His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros with his spiritual father and mentor His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

want to do, some can have results, some can succeed, and some can make things worse. Because the question here is

this: do we just want to protest in order to feel better, for our own for internal consumption, or do we want to have results?

There is a wise saying I learned in Constantinople: "Do you want to eat grapes or just hit the vine dresser?"

Expressions of Outrage over Aghia Sophia

By TNH Staff

The outpouring of outrage along with hopes for a reversal of the decision to turn Aghia Sophia into a mosque have been circulating around the world and throughout the Greek-American community. In addition to declarations printed on their own in this edition, more statements from leaders of the Orthodox Church, the Diaspora, and international organizations follow.

Interim World Council of Churches General Secretary Rev. Prof Dr. Ioan Sauca wrote to Turkey's president Recep Tayyip Erdogan:

"Dear Mr. President, Since it began functioning as a museum in 1934, Hagia Sophia has been a place of openness, encounter and inspiration for people from all nations and religions, and a powerful expression of the Republic of Turkey's commitment to secularism and inclusion and of its desire to leave behind the conflicts of the past.

Today, however, I am obliged to convey to you the grief and dismay of the World Council of Churches – and of its 350 member churches in more than 110 countries, representing more than half a billion Christians around the world – at the step you have just taken. By deciding to convert the Hagia Sophia back to a mosque you have reversed that positive sign of Turkey's openness and changed it to a sign of exclusion and division."

Patriarch Theodoros of Alexandria and All Africa Alexandria writes:

"I was informed with great sadness and concern, of the

conversion into a mosque of the most historic Christian monument in the East, Hagia Sophia.

This challenge shakes things up and muddies, even more, the already troubled waters due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Instead during this period when we must all fight together in harmony against the invisible enemy of this pandemic, Turkey adds another big thorn in the peaceful coexistence of peoples and religions."

Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece, Greece's leading churchman declared:

"Turning religion into a tool for party, geopolitical, and geostrategic purposes reflects on the person attempting it. The affront and hubris are not related to Orthodoxy and Christianity alone, but to the entire civilized world, to every thinking person regardless of religion."

An official statement of the Church of Greece added that it "immediately makes international appeals and calls, calling for the restoration of the Monument and its return to its proper use and status."

Hellenic College–Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology issued a statement that it, "strongly protests the decision strongly protests the decision of the Turkish government to turn Hagia Sophia into a mosque. This decision strikes at the core of religious and cultural sensitivities and identities, and we are opposed to it on moral, ethical, cultural, and religious-freedom grounds ... It is a sad day for humanity in the twenty-first century when old military conquests continue to be relived and revived centuries

later without recognition of the cultures and monuments those victories tried to destroy."

Congresswoman Dina Titus (D-NV) sent a letter to the Turkish Ambassador to the United States.

The text of Rep. Titus' letter, dated July 9, follows: "Ambassador Serdar Kilic Embassy of Turkey 2525 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20008 July 9, 2020

Dear Ambassador Kilic,

I write to express deep concern with the Turkish government's consideration of changing the status of the Hagia Sophia. This 1500-year old site is deeply important to people of many faiths and backgrounds, and designating it as a mosque would damage its legacy and be detrimental to Turkey's reputation and its relationships with other countries in the region and around the world.

For more than 80 years, Turkey has preserved the Hagia Sophia as a museum that is universally admired and revered. As an UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Hagia Sophia offers glimpses of architectural and artistic masterpieces from Ottoman and Byzantine culture that are significant to human history. As you know, the Hagia Sophia also served as the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople for nearly a millennium and thus holds spiritual and historical significance for Orthodox Christianity. Today it is a symbol of peaceful coexistence and respect among religions. Converting the Hagia Sophia into a mosque would isolate Christians who deeply

value the site and further sow division in an already tense region.

On July 1, Secretary Pompeo issued a statement urging the Turkish government to maintain the status of Hagia Sophia m a museum. It is critical that this site remain accessible to people of all faiths and that its history is preserved. I urge the Government of Turkey to support the Hagia Sophia's preservation in a manner that respects religious pluralism and its rich history. Thank you for your attention to these concerns.

Sincerely,
Dina Titus
Member of Congress"

NYS Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis, candidate for the U.S. Congress and Michael Tannousis, candidate for the New York State Assembly issued statements about Turkey's action. Malliotakis said, "Hagia Sophia is a UNESCO World Heritage site because of its exquisite architecture and unique history as a Greek Orthodox Christian patriarchal cathedral, a Roman Catholic cathedral, and an Ottoman mosque. It should remain as such for all religions and all the world to enjoy."

Tannousis said, "President Erdogan's decision to undo Hagia Sophia's status as a museum is unconscionable and demonstrates his indifference to the faith of millions of individuals across many different backgrounds. While Hagia Sophia may be on Turkish soil, it belongs to the world. As many nations are currently facing an unprecedented global health crisis, it is time for people of all faiths to be unified, not divided."

Candidate Chris Zannetos Condemns Conversion

Chris Zannetos, who is running for Congress in Massachusetts' 4th Congressional district, responded to the decision to convert Aghia Sophia into a mosque. The full text follows:

"I strongly condemn the Turkish government's decision to re-convert Hagia Sophia, believed to be the world's oldest house of religion, into a mosque.

Designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, the iconic monument of Christianity was specifically designated as a museum in 1934 and, under the charter, any modification of its status requires notification and review by the world body.

As our global attention is focused on the pandemic, Turkish President Erdogan has taken an action that is destabilizing and wrong. Greeks, Cypriots, and Orthodox Christians worldwide know firsthand the history of Turkey's unilateral and aggressive acts in complete violation of international convention, most notably in Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as its mistreatment of Orthodox Christians in Turkey. We cannot allow this latest aggression to stand.

I proudly join the call of the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate – of which my late fa-

ther was honored to be a member – to the international bodies and governments of the world to recognize that this decision by Turkey casts a shadow over its claims of a commitment to religious tolerance and freedom.

I call on President Trump to use his considerable influence with President Erdogan to back down from this ill-advised move and return Hagia Sophia to its status as a museum, respecting its internationally recognized origins and history.

I urge Congress to reiterate loudly and clearly to the Turkish government its determination that US foreign and military assistance support is intended for countries who respect the rule of law and international human and religious freedoms.

Hagia Sophia does not belong to Turkey or to any one faith, and this act should be condemned. As the Canonical Orthodox Bishops of America rightly said in its statement: 'It has been, for more than a millennium, a place of rich cultural and inspiration' and 'should remain open to all as a sign of co-existence and peace among all peoples of good will.'

America is stronger and more secure when it fights for freedom everywhere."

UNESCO Deeply Regrets Turkey's Decision

TNH Staff

PARIS – On July 10, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) released the following statement concerning the decision to convert Aghia Sophia from a museum to a mosque:

"The Director-General of UNESCO deeply regrets the decision of the Turkish authorities, made without prior discussion, to change the status of Hagia Sophia. This evening, she shared her serious concerns with the Ambassador of Turkey to UNESCO.

Hagia Sophia is part of the Historic Areas of Istanbul, a property inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. 'Hagia Sophia is an architectural masterpiece and a unique testimony to interactions between Europe and Asia over the centuries. Its status as a museum reflects the universal nature of its heritage, and makes it a powerful symbol for dialogue,' said Director-General Audrey Azoulay.

This decision announced today raises the issue of the impact of this change of status on the property's universal value. States have an obligation to ensure that modifications do not affect the Outstanding Universal Value of inscribed sites on their territories. UNESCO must be given prior notice of any such modifications, which, if necessary, are then examined by the

World Heritage Committee.

UNESCO also recalls that the effective, inclusive and equitable participation of communities and other stakeholders concerned by the property is necessary to preserve this heritage and highlight its uniqueness and significance. The purpose of this requirement is to protect and transmit the Outstanding Universal Value of heritage, and it is inherent to the spirit of the World Heritage Convention.

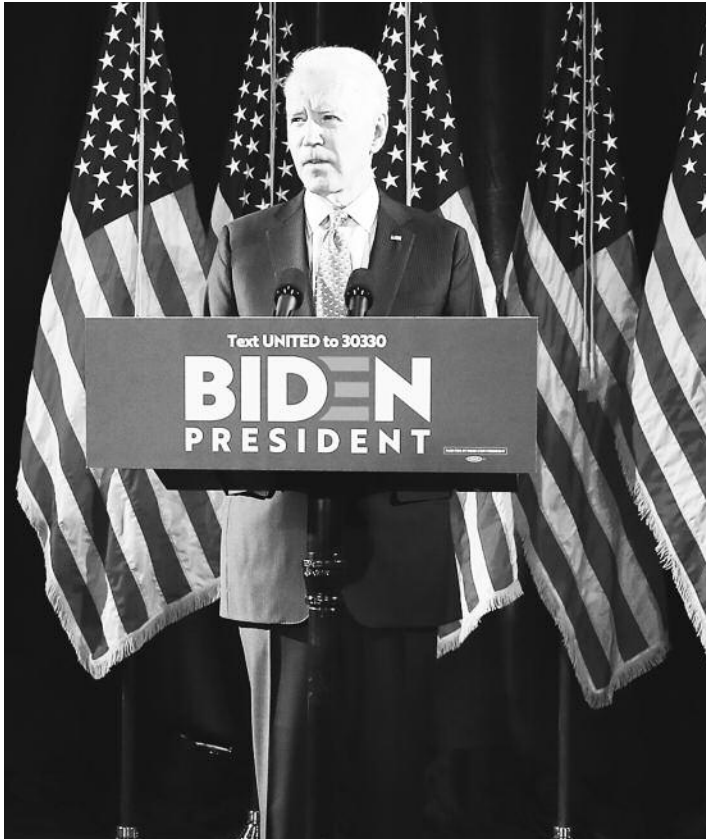
These concerns were shared with the Republic of Turkey in

several letters, and again yesterday evening with the representative of the Turkish Delegation to UNESCO. It is regrettable that the Turkish decision was made without any form of dialogue or prior notice. UNESCO calls upon the Turkish authorities to initiate dialogue without delay, in order to prevent any detrimental effect on the universal value of this exceptional heritage, the state of conservation of which will be examined by the World Heritage Committee at its next session.

More information is available online: www.unesco.org.



The Comnenos mosaics in Aghia Sophia. The Emperor John Comnenos was on the verge of reversing the Battle of Manzikert and reconquering Asia Minor when he was accidentally poisoned while hunting.



FILE- Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden speaks at an event in Wilmington, DE.

Vice President Joe Biden Statement on Aghia Sophia

TNH Staff

WASHINGTON, DC – On July 10, Vice President and Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden called on Turkish President Erdogan to reverse his decision to turn Hagia Sophia into a mosque.

The statement by Vice President Joe Biden on the status of the Hagia Sophia follows:

"The Hagia Sophia is an architectural marvel and a treasured holy site for people of many faiths. For the last 85 years, the Hagia Sophia has been a museum, allowing people from around the world to visit, admire, and pray in this holy space, which since 1985 has also had the status of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. I deeply regret the Turkish government's decision to convert the Hagia Sophia into a mosque and urge Turkish President Recep Erdogan to reverse his decision and instead keep this treasured place in its current status as a museum, ensuring equal access for all."

Rep. Chris Pappas Helped Stranded Couple Return Home

TNH Staff

NEW DURHAM, NH – A couple from New Durham, stranded overseas during the global coronavirus pandemic, was helped by Congressman Chris Pappas and shared their story in a letter published July 1 on Seacoastonline.com. The text of the letter from Elaine Laurie of New Durham, dated June 29, follows:

“The following is a recount of our efforts to return to the USA at the start of the COVID-19 crisis, and who helped most in that endeavor.

“My husband and I had planned an eagerly awaited adventure. We left our home in New Durham, NH in February. We’d heard news of a virus that was causing problems in China but had no idea how much that virus would eventually impact us. Or, how much help we would eventually need. We re-

ceived an email on March 12 that the rest of our expedition had been canceled. We were in the middle of the very south of the Atlantic Ocean near a tiny island called Tristan da Cunha at that time. We didn’t make it home until March 24th. Twelve days. Twelve days of a nightmare of stress, uncertainty, and fear. We needed help.

“Chris Pappas and his team met that need. They were communicative, empathetic, helpful, and a link with the U.S. Embassy. It is thanks to Chris Pappas that we eventually were issued seats (dreaded middle seats a few rows apart) on a 15-hour flight from Dubai to Boston. Those seats were on the last plane leaving an airport that was about to close. We were incredibly thankful for those seats. How it was managed, we will probably never know. But the email from the airline with our seat information, when it ar-



U.S. Congressman Chris Pappas (D-NH)

rived, was such a relief. I was sobbing. My husband was cheering. Until we had to face the people that had been sharing in the misery of nights spent sleeping in terminals on airport

benches, that hadn’t received such good news. They, like us, had been flown from one airport to another. Never allowed to leave the airport secure area. Never allowed entry to what-

ever country we’d been flown to, or to find a hotel.

“They, like us, had been phoning the U.S. Embassy hotline, their Congressman, and their Senator. We were the only ones getting any response. Chris Pappas’ staff was in touch with us every day: sending emails and phoning. Letting us know what they were doing to try to help get us home. I repeat we were the only ones that were hearing back from any government officials. Us. From tiny little NH. Chris Pappas cared. He listened. He got us home.

“Chris Pappas has my vote this November for his re-election. If you want someone who is a leader and will work for you, and will help you when you need it, then I would urge you to vote for him as well,” Mrs. Laurie concluded.

More information about Rep. Chris Pappas is available online: <https://www.chrispappas.org>.

SMALL TAKES

Community

A Taste of Manhattan’s Forthcoming Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library

New Yorkers began enjoying the first fruits of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation’s (SNF) landmark gift of \$55 million that supported the full renovation and transformation of the New York Public Library’s Mid-Manhattan Central Circulating Branch when its grab-n-go service was initiated on July 13.

The date of the much-anticipated grand opening of the library – which will be renamed The Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library (SNFL) – is expected to be announced soon.

The SNF grant also established an endowment for the library’s public programming. The President of the Library, Antony Marx, said “the gift would help give the city ‘the great central branch it has never had,’ while also providing a timely boost to the library’s broader democratic mission.”

The SNF will offer New Yorkers a modern, central branch, while contributing to the creation of a physical and digital campus that will incorporate the circulating and research services of the Mid-Manhattan Library.

Tom Hanks and Rita Wilson Arrive in Greece

Buoyed by the honorary Greek citizenship he received in 2019 in recognition for his love and support for Greece, Tom Hanks and his wife Rita Wilson were spotted arriving on their beloved little island of Antiparos last weekend.

Hanks, who just celebrated his 64th birthday, and his wife were socially responsible, donning their masks as they made their way to their home, a large stone villa between the villages of Glypha and Chora.

It is not known if they will stay long enough to be joined by other Hollywood friends once restrictions on Americans without Greek citizenship are lifted, but locals are looking forward to welcoming them – and leaving them to enjoy their peace.

Panegyri Greek festival Reinvented as COVID Drive Thru

On July 10 the 32nd annual Panegyri Greek festival of the Koimisis tis Theotokou Church of Erie, PA was held as a drive thru affair – the full festival was canceled due to Coronavirus.

The parish wanted to provide the homemade Greek foods to festival lovers this year during the pandemic and cars lined up to get their favorites, including gyros and baklava.

According to Erie News Now “the organizers were very happy with the turnout this weekend.

Michael Geanous, Co-chair of the festival, said on July 11, the festival’s second day, “it’s been a lot better today, yesterday was a bit of a learning experience, we have been able to keep it moving along today a bit better.

Katy Perry Picks Jennifer Aniston as Godmother

Katy Perry reportedly has made her decision about who will be her daughter’s godmother, and according to contactnews.com it will be Jennifer Aniston.

The 35-year-old star is currently preparing for the arrival of her first child with Orlando Bloom, and the pregnant singer has already asked Jennifer, 51, to fulfil the role in her daughter’s life,” contact news noted, and according to the Sunday Mirror newspaper, “Katy and Jen are very close. During lockdown, they went for socially distanced walks, and spent lots of time catching up ... She is pretty chuffed about it as well and cried when they asked her.”

Katy reportedly calls her unborn child ‘Kicky Perry’ – which may or may not have a basis in the future godmother’s Greek heritage.

Michael Kratsios’ New Post in DOD

TNH Staff

WASHINGTON, DC – In a U.S. Department of Defense news release, Secretary of Defense Dr. Mark T. Esper announced on July 13 that Greek-American Michael J.K. Kratsios had been designated to serve as Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, effective July 10, 2020.

“In seeking to fill this position we wanted someone with experience in identifying and developing new technologies and working closely with a wide range of industry partners,” said Secretary Esper. “We think Michael is the right person for this job and we are excited to have him on the team.”

Kratsios is the Chief Technology Officer of the United States and has led the development and execution of the Administration’s national technology policy agenda since 2017. Under his leadership, the White House has launched important

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National initiatives and strategic plans for artificial intelligence, quantum computing, autonomous vehicles, commercial drones, STEM education, and advanced manufacturing. He has been integral in the President’s efforts to expand 5G and broadband communications nationwide.

Kratsios is responsible for creating the American AI Initiative, setting up the National Quantum Coordination Office, and, most recently, launching of the COVID-19 High Performance Computing Consortium. Kratsios has represented the United States in multiple international fora, leading U.S. delegations at the G7, G20, and OECD.

In August 2019, the U.S. Senate unanimously confirmed Kratsios as the fourth Chief Technology Officer of the United States.

Kratsios graduated from Princeton University in 2008 with a degree in political science and a certificate in Hellenic Studies.

Dr. Mark Lewis will serve as the Acting Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering. He will also remain in his current role as Director of Defense Research and Engineering for Modernization.



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY KEEGAN BARBER

Michael Kratsios has been designated to serve as Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering.

Gr-Amer. Ret. Admiral James Stavridis on C-SPAN

TNH Staff

WASHINGTON, DC – Greek-American Retired Admiral James Stavridis talked about his naval career, global security, and leadership on C-SPAN’s In Depth on July 5. Admiral Stavridis, former Supreme Allied Commander at NATO, is the author of Command at Sea, The Accidental Admiral, and Sailing True North: Ten Admirals and the Voyage of Character, which was published last year. In the interview, Admiral Stavridis talks about his career and quotes from renowned Greek author Nikos Kazantzakis.

When asked why he referred to himself as “The Accidental Admiral,” Admiral Stavridis told C-SPAN host Peter Slen, “First of all because at a certain level all of our lives are accidents. You can choose to steer a particular course, but the sea will come, wind will come, you’ll move ultimately in a different direction. More prosaically, it comes from a period in my career when I was a four-star admiral [...] and I was very hopeful of going to the Pacific next as a commander



Admiral James G. Stavridis, the first Navy admiral to become NATO’s Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR).

of U.S. Pacific command, which is a very traditional position for a senior admiral. My boss, wonderful boss, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, called me up and said, ‘Stavridis, we’re going to

send you to NATO.’ I was the first and thus far the only admiral to be Supreme Allied Commander in NATO and just an accident of timing and fate and Secretary Gate’s decision. So from a NATO perspective I was kind of the accidental admiral who became the Supreme Allied Commander.”

Asked about the Navy being “an accident” as a career, Stavridis said, ‘somewhat ... I grew up in a Marine Corps family. My father, George Stavridis, proud colonel of Marines, fought in Korea and Vietnam. I grew up in that environment, and so went to Quantico High School, south of Washington, DC, went off to the Naval Academy thinking I would be a Marine Corps officer and here’s the accident. After my first year ... the Navy sends everybody out on a cruise and so you go out on a ship. I went out on a beautiful cruiser out of San Diego, and I walked up on the bridge of that ship in the evening, gotten away from the pier late in the day and I got up there and the sun was setting and I looked out on all that ocean and all that

light and I was like St. Paul on the road to Damascus – I just wanted to be a sailor at that point and be in ships. So I went home and told my dad and my mom, Shirley, and they were kind of hoping I would be a Marine, but they got over it. Years later when I put on my first star as an admiral my dad said, I think that came out okay for you, Jim.”

Later in the interview when asked what is on the back of his business card, Admiral Stavridis noted that “the back of my business card is blank and perhaps I should think about putting something clever back there.” He then mentioned Kazantzakis whom he called “the greatest of modern Greek writers” and the inscription on the famed Greek author’s tombstone, “I hope for nothing. I fear nothing. I am free.”

Admiral Stavridis pointed out that “I would want it there because I think we need to be fearless in our lives. We need to do what we think is right.”

The full interview is available online: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?472952-1/depth-admiral-james-stavridis>.

Senators Risch and Menendez on Aghia Sophia

TNH Staff

BOISE, ID – U.S. Senators Jim Risch (R-Idaho) and Bob Menendez (D-NJ), chairman and ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on July 10 issued the following statement in reaction to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s effort to convert the Hagia Sophia Museum in Constantinople from a world-famous cultural site into a mosque:

“Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey is a place of deep spiritual significance for people of diverse backgrounds from around the world. For more than three quarters of a century, Turkish policy maintained this revered building as a museum, but President Erdogan today signed a decree that removes



Hagia Sophia, a UNESCO World Heritage site, opened in 537 AD as a Christian cathedral, was converted into a mosque in 1453, and into a museum in 1935.

this museum status and converts it into a mosque.

“We strongly denounce President Erdogan’s decision to convert Hagia Sophia from a museum into a mosque. At points

in its history, Hagia Sophia served as a place of worship for Muslims and Christians, and for decades has been an extraordinary and welcoming center to people of all faiths. Erdogan’s

Simotas & Hoylman’s Bill for Bar Exam Re-Takers

TNH Staff

NEW YORK – New York State Assembly Member Aravella Simotas and NYS Senator Brad Holyman introduced legislation to create an exemption during the COVID-19 pandemic for law graduates representing indigent clients, and who have not yet passed the bar exam, to continue the practice of law. The exemption would also apply to graduates working for state or local governments.

Currently, law graduates can represent certain clients under the supervision of a licensed attorney only if they have failed the bar exam less than two times. However, limited testing accommodations due to the COVID-19 crisis have left repeat test-takers uncertain as to when they will be able to register for a seat for the next bar exam. The issue was first highlighted in an article by Law 360.

“New York needs to be mindful about who will be immediately affected by limiting the pool of experienced professionals who can assist indigent clients during the COVID-19 pandemic — seniors, tenants being evicted from their homes and immigrants,” said Assembly Member Simotas. “We have an obligation to mitigate the risks to New Yorkers during this health crisis, and ensuring that the indigent have informed legal



COURTESY OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER SIMOTAS’ OFFICE

New York State Assembly Member Aravella Simotas.

representation is an important way in meeting our duty,” she said.

Senator Hoylman said, “the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the demand for legal services for struggling New Yorkers, and we need all hands on deck to address this crisis. Given the extraordinary circumstances COVID-19 has imposed on the legal profession, law school graduates who are currently representing immigrants,

low-income tenants and seniors for legal aid organizations should be able to continue their hard work on behalf of these New Yorkers. I’m proud to be working with Assembly Member Simotas on this legislation which will temporarily allow more pre-admission law school graduates to provide legal assistance under the supervision of a legal aid organization.”

The pandemic has limited seating for the September New

York bar exam by prioritizing law graduates who are first-time test takers, leaving bar exam re-takers out in the cold. Now, law graduates who have not yet passed the bar exam fear salary cuts, unemployment, and removal from cases. More importantly, indigent clients will bear the heavy consequences of this limitation as new attorneys assigned to their cases will need to familiarize themselves with matters and start with a limited understanding of the facts that is only improved with experience. The current social climate suggests that there will be a significant increase in the number of indigent clients who will need lawyers to consider their cases.

Temporarily suspending the two-fail qualification so that law graduates who represent indigent clients may continue to do so under the supervision of a licensed attorney is a simple, common sense measure that will have a profound impact on indigent clients that rely on not-for-profit organizations to defend their rights. This bill will also protect government workers who are diligently serving the public during this crisis from losing their jobs because they are unable to sit for the bar exam. Under these extraordinary circumstances, New York must ensure that all residents have informed legal representation to advocate for their rights.

Minas Shoe Repair, Survived 9/11, Reopens after COVID Lockdown

TNH Staff

NEW YORK – The legendary shoemaker at the World Trade Center in New York City and later Wall Street, Minas Polychronakis, appeared in the pages of The National Herald and other media outlets as one of the survivors of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the Twin Towers. Though his Minas Shoe Repair shop was destroyed on that day, Polychronakis managed to re-open business with a great deal of sacrifice just a few blocks away, at 63 Wall Street.

Polychronakis passed away at the age of 76 in 2018, but his daughter Asimenia Polychronakis “was determined to reopen Minas Shoe Repair in June, the 50th anniversary of the business her late father founded,” the New York Post reported.

Minas Polychronakis was born in Heraklion, Crete, in 1941, and at the age of twelve, he learned the profession of shoemaker. In 1969, he heard that the U.S. was looking for craftsmen, including shoemakers, and managed to get a visa and came to New York City with just a few dollars in his pocket, believing that God would help him to achieve the American dream. Polychronakis first worked in a restaurant washing



Minas Polychronakis at his shoe repair shop with his wife, Maria, and daughter, Asimenia.

dishes and doing various tasks, eventually saving enough money to open his own shoe repair shop.

Minas Polychronakis was very involved with the community, and in the past decade he had also served as president of the Cretan Association “Omo-

nia”.

Prior to the global Coronavirus pandemic, his daughter had been planning a tribute to her father, hoping to “celebrate with some hoopla and special promotions, like a shoe shine for 75 cents, the cost in 1970, [but] instead, Polychronakis

quietly opened the doors on June 15 despite the Financial District’s empty streets and office towers,” the Post reported.

She told the Post that “there are no shoe shiners on duty yet, because ‘no one is dressed up’ and too few people are back in their offices,” adding that “see-

ing her old customers has been one of the brightest spots of her new day.”

Bianca Alexis, a patron for 10 years, had “first befriended Minas, with whom she discussed cooking and politics,” the Post reported.

“It’s awesome to see them open again,” Alexis told the Post, adding that she “brought in a pair of white shoes that needed to be repainted.”

A French doctor and customer for 15 years, brought in “14 pairs of shoes in the first days after the shop reopened,” the Post reported.

“In all the years she has been coming in, I have never seen her bring in the same pair of shoes twice,” Polychronakis told the Post.

In these difficult times, “revenue is down, she estimates, by 90 percent from a year ago, and summer is already the slow season for shoe repair,” the Post reported, noting that Polychronakis “has applied for a \$40,000 PPP loan to bring back her five employees for full-time work and to help with bills.”

The “six-day work weeks, some nights spent working until 3 AM” have been “rolled back to five days a week, 10 AM-5 PM, for now,” the Post reported, adding that “the toughest decision she has had to make was

closing a second shop, Omega Repair, located a block away, on June 30.”

She told the Post about “one upside to that,” noting that she “retired my mother, who is 65 [and managed Omega]. I want her to be able to chill out.”

More than 100 pairs of shoes are unclaimed at Minas Shoe Repair, and Polychronakis ponders “whether any of them belong to customers who have passed away from the virus or have lost their jobs ‘and are not thinking about their shoes and bags,’” the Post reported, adding that “during the three months the store was closed, just 10 customers called to pick up the shoes they’d left at the shop in March.”

Among the positive signs for the shop, Polychronakis noted that “some customers mailed in shoes for repairs during the lockdown, another brought in a small piece of leather furniture to be stitched up, and the locals who need her really need her,” the Post reported, adding that “she mentioned a lawyer whose office reopened nearby, and he stopped in to get his shoes resoled.”

“I’m still trying to be optimistic and patient. I can hear my father’s voice in my head telling me to keep faith,” Polychronakis told the Post.

Mount Sinai Queens Gets \$3M Allocation

TNH Staff

ASTORIA – Mount Sinai Queens will be able to purchase new MRI and CT scan machines, thanks to a \$3 million allocation secured by New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson and the City Council’s Queens delegation.

This builds upon a long-standing partnership between the City Council and the Astoria hospital, which has undergone unprecedented expansion. Such investments couldn’t come at a more crucial time, as the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the need to invest in hospital space and personnel.

“Mount Sinai Queens saved my life and the lives of many western Queens residents because it puts the health of this community above everything else,” said Council Member Costa Constantinides, District 22. “This crisis shows we must expand and build more hospital space in the boroughs; today is a first step in making that happen. These MRI and CT scan machines will embolden medical professionals to save lives. I want to thank Speaker Corey Johnson, my colleagues in the Queens Delegation, led by Council Member Karen Koslowitz, and Mount Sinai Queens for their continued partnership.”

“Queens appreciates all of the work that Mt. Sinai has done and continues to do, especially in the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Council Member Karen Koslowitz, Chair of the Queens Delegation. “We are happy to allocate these funds to them.”

“We are incredibly grateful to Speaker Corey Johnson and Council Member Costa Constantinides, along with the entire Queens delegation, for supporting Mount Sinai Queen’s ability to provide comprehensive services to Queens residents,” said Caryn A. Schwab, Executive Director, Mount Sinai Queens. “The expansion of our Imaging services with an additional MRI and CT scanner will improve access to care and enhance the patient experience. This equipment is critical in the screening, diagnosis, and treatment of a broad range of diseases including cancer care.”

Mount Sinai Queens is just one of two health facilities that serves western Queens along with Elmhurst Hospital. It saw some of the worst of COVID-19’s impact on New York City, where Queens became the hardest-hit borough. Mount Sinai Queens worked with the City to meet the demands and treat as many patients as possible with care and dedication.

That’s thanks in part to the investments the City Council has made in conjunction with Mount Sinai. Last summer, hospital leadership and Constantinides opened the state-of-the-art Cerebrovascular Stroke Center, which received \$1.8 million from the City Council. More information is available online: <https://council.nyc.gov/costa-constantinides/2017/06/06/245/>.

For more information, visit council.nyc.gov/costa.

Dr. Haralambos Roussos Heals, Teaches, Builds

By Constantine S. Sirigos

ATHENS – ‘Paradigm’ is a word that comes up frequently in conversations with physician/scientist and noted pulmonologist Dr. Haralambos Roussos. For the world to move forward, there must be those who show the way and indicate what is possible. Dr. Roussos is himself paradigmatic of the Diaspora Hellenic who returns to help the homeland.

In the Coronavirus context, he told The National Herald that “Greece was a paradigm” for other countries, and he and his colleagues were paradigmatic in inspiring the politicians. “My colleague Dr. Haralambos Moutsopoulos and I made presentations at the Academy of Athens where we were the first to propose a lockdown – we closed the Academy and its labs and research centers on March 5 ... the political leadership followed the scientists’ leads and not the ideas of others and they should be congratulated.”

Dr. Roussos was not surprised at PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis actions. “He is a young man, with broad educational background who likes to listen to experts and wants to understand everything, and he is a decisive man,” apropos of his business background. Dr. Roussos opened a window on his own philosophy of action in the world: you need thinkers, listeners, and doers to transform institutions and countries.”

The COVID-19 ground zeroes are the world’s ICUs and Dr. Roussos was instrumental in building Greece’s when he arrived in the 1980s from North America, where he studied and trained at Johns Hopkins and McGill universities and in Boston.

An intellectual and a practical man – he has published more than 500 scientific papers and in 2011 he became a member of the Academy – he began the ICU project with a paint brush in hand after helping clear out obsolete machines. He also understood that in a country



Above: Left to right: Alexandra and Haralambos Roussos flank their children Konstantinos Roussos and Katerina Roussou. Right: Dr. Haralambos Roussos addresses participants and guests at ICU Unit grand opening at Evangelismos Hospital in Athens.

with limited resources, building great teams of dedicated and talented people was as important as bringing in the latest technology.

His journey home began in 1985 when Evangelismos Hospital announced its new ICU department and he was persuaded to devote his sabbatical year by the renowned professor of medicine Sotirios Raptis and the Minister of Health Giorgos Genimatas.

He implemented Canadian and European models in Greece, applying what he learned from participation in high level scientific bodies.

Modernization is a challenge anywhere, and “Greece is not an easy place to make changes, but if you have ‘pisma’ – stubbornness in the best sense – “with passion and a love for what you are doing, then you can succeed in Greece,” he said.

All bureaucracies are tough nuts to crack – few people, even patriots, willingly give up their authority and habits – but more so in Greece “which is a country where taking steps to move forward are not easy” – but he and

others prove it can be done.

Dr. Roussos says Greece is making progress, especially in the critical digital realm, in general and in medicine.

QUALITY HEALTHCARE IN GREECE MUST NOT BE A ROLL OF THE DICE

The ICU is the core of modern healthcare systems, and Greece had fallen far behind Dr. Roussos declared that “citizens’ gaining access to an ICU cannot be a matter of luck.” He helped expand their number in response to COVID-19, when “we determined to reach the average level in Europe, 12 beds per 1000 people – we are now at 5. With funding from the EU, the Greek state, and private bodies like the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, we will achieve much of that goal within six months.”

Dr. Roussos is grateful to the Greek industrialists, shipowners and others who responded to his fundraising campaigns through the years. And he knows that if Diaspora Greeks learn of a good plan being implemented by competent people, they will support it. They grasp the importance of redressing the damage the eco-

nomics crisis did to Greek healthcare – for the nation and themselves, as they visit and contemplate moving to Greece.

He founded Athens’ Thorax Foundation in 1993 which plays a major role in the ICU project and other medical initiatives, funding scholarships and visiting professors.

The system is still in financially critical condition but his students make him optimistic. Dr. Roussos has supervised over 50 PhD theses and he is one of those teachers who is thrilled when his students surpass him.

He is proud that the Thorax

Foundation helped Greek physicians and scientists receive the best training abroad and brought prominent teachers to Greece. “I am also pleased to note that Parliament is now working on legislation enabling the Niarchos Foundation to fund a 5-year program to develop ICU training and education ... this program is groundbreaking because it transfers vital knowledge and experience to Greece.”

Technically he is retired, but he is among the many Greeks who don’t know the meaning of the word, and sleep never claimed more than four hours of his nights.

“Philoxenia Prevails” – Greece is Open

Continued from page 1

ence; and 3) impressive citizen compliance – especially impressive for a country with limited resources, emerging from an economic crisis similar to the Great Depression.

With COVID cases remaining low, Greece began lifting restrictions in May, slowly reopening commercial services, shops, and archaeological sites and later removing travel restrictions to and from the Greek islands and across continental Greece. Bars, restaurants, and cafes soon resumed business. On June 15, museums, archaeological sites, amusement parks, and wellness buildings such as gyms welcomed back customers.

Reasonable restrictions continue through the Summer, with social distancing guidelines including limits to the number of customers in a given space and the mandatory use of masks in public transport and services. The plan for gradually lifting imposed restrictions includes monitoring and frequently reassessing using epidemiological data.

However, aside from public health measures, the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to cause an immense economic downturn that will surpass the 2008 crisis. Forecasts predict a 7.4 percent economic decline that will worsen if reopening triggers a second wave virus. Reopening Greece, and doing it in a responsible way is critical.

Tourism is a major contributor to the Greek economy, accounting for more than 20 percent of Greece’s GDP. In 2019, tourism revenue was 19 billion euros, with some 33 million visitors. The lockdown has come at a high cost, and Greece is eager to start welcoming the world again.

“We are restarting the Greek Summer, Greek tourism. We are once again putting the country’s most important production machine ahead,” announced Tourism Minister Harry Theoharis. Government and epidemiologists are working together to reinvent safe tourism amid a global pandemic.

As of July 1, flights resumed to all Greek airports, excluding

those severely affected by COVID-19, including the U.S., as per the European Union guidelines. The U.S. Embassy & Consulate in Greece has announced, “U.S. citizens residing in the United States are banned from entering Greece for nonessential

As of July 1, flights resumed to all Greek airports, excluding those severely affected by COVID-19, such as the U.S., as per the European Union guidelines.

travel, which includes tourism unless you have an E.U. passport.” American Airlines announced it would resume direct flights to Greece on August 5th.

For those permitted to enter Greece, travelers must complete the Passenger Locator Form 24 before entering the country, providing their contact details. Targeted or random testing will

take place. Passengers arriving from countries with high COVID-19 cases face more stringent screening procedures. All the passengers from a recent flight from Paris to Athens were screened for Covid at the airport and were issued a Q.R. code to be notified if they tested positive. They were asked to quarantine until receiving their results, and in the event of a positive test, a 14-day quarantine would be required.

Once in the country, tourists can expect ferries that travel at 50% capacity to follow social distancing guidelines, with everyone’s temperature taken before boarding. Masks must be worn in all public transportation and shops, and restaurants and cafes must maintain distance between tables. Shops have maximum capacities that always allow 1.5 meters between customers and employees.

One of the main attractions is beaches, and Greece has also devised regulations to keep beaches safe with a maximum of 40 people per 1,000 square meters of beach with a mini-

mum of 4 meters maintained between individual umbrellas. Beach bars may operate with take-away services.

Hotel rooms are thoroughly disinfected between stays. Hotels must either close the room for 24 or use a steamer for cleaning. Rental cars are thoroughly cleaned between customers.

“I am not interested in making Greece the number one destination in Europe. I am interested in making Greece the safest destination in Europe,” said Mitsotakis. The country hopes to keep its citizens and travelers safe through its guidelines while allowing the tourism sector to reopen.

For now, Greece appears to be the safest location for tourism. If they become too relaxed, easing restrictions may result in a resurgence of new cases. However, if Greece is successful, its science-based approach and guidelines may be replicated around the world to promote safe tourism. If Greece can do this, it will give an updated meaning to the word ‘Philoxenia’.

HISTORICAL FICTION

A Greek in New Jersey

By Stavros Stavridis

PART I

My name is Mihalis Vlachopoulos born in the village of Platanas, Laconia in Greece. I came from a poor family only completing second grade. I was barely literate in my own native Greek and I arrived in America on September 9, 1905, to make my fortune and return to Greece a rich man.

I cleared immigration at Ellis Island with a small craft taking us to New York harbor where my cousin Alexandros was waiting for me. When he saw me coming down the plank, he immediately rushed over to hug me. I was happy to see his welcoming face after experiencing a rough sea journey from Patras to New York. Thank God! We made it to America.

Alexandros lived in a small apartment in Manhattan working as a bootblack. I think he came to America around 1898 or 1899. I stayed with him for a few weeks before heading off to Newark, New Jersey. He originally arranged for my passage to America through a Greek labor agent named Ioannis Skliros. I said my goodbyes and caught the train to Newark. Meanwhile, Alexandros telegraphed Skliros telling him that I had just left New York.

I arrived a couple of hours later and was greeted by Skliros at Newark's central railway station. He drove us in his black Ford motorcar to Greek town with its restaurants, barber-shops, shoeshine parlors, florists and candy stores. I would start work the next morning at Stavros (Steve) Stavropoulos's shoeshine place at 7 AM. I would be sharing a room with three other males not far from the parlor. I wasn't very keen on the idea but had no choice. I needed a roof over my head in a strange city with no friends or relatives. My real journey was about to begin in America.

The next morning, I arrived at the shoeshine parlor to start my first day of work. Stavropoulos owned a two-story building on High Street with business conducted on the ground floor and upstairs was his private residence. He welcomed me, explained my duties which meant starting at 7 AM and finishing at 8 PM. I was paid the princely wage of two dollars a week. Ini-



Ellis Island in 1905.

tially, that seemed a lot of money for me.

I queried my first paycheck why I had been paid \$1.50 instead of \$2. He told me that Skliros received a percentage of my wages for getting me the job. I thought that was strange and would ask Skliros to explain this discrepancy. Skliros came to the parlor and told me he was entitled to take his commission. I thought Alexandros had paid my passage but to my surprise, it was Skliros who did. I was angry with my cousin for failing to tell me that Skliros was a parasite leeching off his compatriots.

I worked very hard over the next five years paying off my debt to this horrible man. I saved money as I didn't want to be a bootblack for the remainder of my life. At every opportunity, I wired some money to my family in Laconia to help them out. My folks were grateful for my financial assistance. One of my brothers, Ioannis, wanted to come to America. I wrote to him to be patient until I could buy my place.

Working as a bootblack was not easy though it had its good moments as well. As I said, the working hours were very long with few breaks. Throughout the day, we had a steady stream of customers who wanted their shoes or boots cleaned and pol-

ished. Some Americans didn't like us Greeks and spoke to us as if we were nothing. Others treated us with courtesy and respect. The good ones tipped us for doing a good job. I became good friends with a couple of them and called them by their first names. Some customers shared their personal stories with me and we also discussed the state of American politics.

It was October 1912, the American newspapers reported that war had broken out in the Balkans. The Greek Consul in New York called upon all Greeks to enlist in the Greek army to fight against the Turks. I rushed to New York to enlist only to be told by the examining doctor that my enlistment had been rejected due to flat feet. I wanted to defend my homeland but rejection would prove a blessing in disguise.

As war raged in the Balkans, I got my first real break since coming to America. Stavropoulos came up and asked me "do you want to buy my business?" Initially, I didn't know what to say. I was shocked, surprised, and uncertain whether I could run a business. Steve told me he had great faith in my ability and always thought that my friendly disposition with the customers had greatly helped his business. "Why do you want to sell your business," I asked. "

I am tired of Newark, I want to move to California where the weather is warmer and sunnier," Steve replied.

I told him to give me two days to think over his offer and he consented to my request. I accepted his offer to buy his business. The only obstacle stopping me from buying his business was financial. "Don't worry Vasili, I will lend you the money. I know you will succeed and you will pay me back," Stavropoulos said. His response gave me a lot of confidence and the will to succeed.

I will say Steve was a stern boss but treated all of us like family. Yes, he worked us very hard but always complimented us for doing a good job. I met fellow Greek bootblacks who worked in other shoeshine establishments where the owners treated them like trash. Some Greek owners used to beat them for no apparent reason.

I will never forget Steve for allowing me to anchor myself in America. I was about to become my own boss. What I thought would be a short stay in America turned out to be a permanent one. I will continue my story.

Stavros T. Stavridis is a historical author, history professor, and historical consultant.

University of Sydney Highlights Ancient Greek Travel Guides

TNH Staff

SYDNEY – The University of Sydney in Australia highlighted ancient Greek travel guides in an article dated July 15 which featured alumnus Daniel Hanigan.

As the article noted, “it was the Greeks who first began taking maps seriously as factual documents (some earlier cartographers depicted religious ideas as actual places), and “the Greeks (and later, the Romans) also had another way of guiding people through the world, called a periploous, which translates as ‘sailing around.”

A periploous was “a chronological document, like an itinerary, indicating landmarks to guide your journey,” the University of Sydney News reported, adding that “many of them talk of places we might still visit today, but also of places and civilizations that now exist only on those pages.”

Daniel Hanigan studies periplography, according to the News and noted that “learning Greek was the most remarkable experience of my life. It's very technical and a new way of thinking, but parts of the language are lost, so there's this fantastic, almost detective work in piecing it all together. The payoff is that you get to read some of the most remarkable poetry and literature ever written.”

Hanigan was “raised on a dairy farm in northern New South Wales, and later in the western suburbs of Sydney, neither parent had academic leanings and Hanigan himself admits he wasn't a dedicated student,” the article noted, adding that he was nevertheless drawn to classics.

He told the News, “I was pretty unfocussed, but I was good at ancient history, so while I studied mathematics during my first year at uni, I had electives in ancient history, archaeology, and anthropology – all of which I loved.”

Hanigan eventually won the University Medal in 2016, and now is working on his PhD in classics at Cambridge University where “he is grappling with the question of whether the many periploi written over 800 years



The University of Sydney, Main Quadrangle.

were specifically created as travel guides,” the News reported, adding that “some academics are unwilling to bring them together under one classification because their styles vary so markedly, but Hanigan sees that as an inevitable product of who wrote them.”

“There's the periploous of Arrian, an administrative general for the Roman emperor, Hadrian,” Hanigan told the

News. “His periploous was sort of a military report. The earliest one was Hanno's Periploous of the African Coast. Hanno might have been a Carthaginian King who went to colonies in Africa. At one point, his periploous seems to describe sailing past an erupting volcano.”

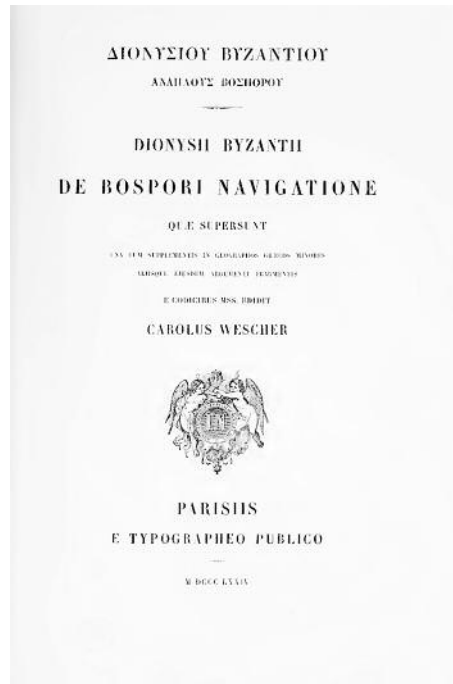
“... Large torrents of fire emptied into the sea, and the land was inaccessible because of the heat. Quickly and in fear,

we sailed away from that place. Sailing on for four days, we saw the coast by night full of flames. In the middle was a big flame, taller than the others ... By day, this turned out to be a very high mountain, which was called Chariot of the Gods,” from Periploous of the African Coast (4th century BCE) by Hanno the Navigator, as quoted in the article.

“Our best guess here is that Hanno is referring to Mount Cameroon, largely because it is known locally as Seat of the Gods, so, Chariot of the Gods, is likely an adaptation of that local name,” Hanigan told the News.

There was some controversy in ancient times about what should and should not be included in a periploous, according to the article, which cited as an example, “Markianos of Heraklea championed the removal of anything other than pure navigational information,” and noted that for Hanigan though, the insights and perceptions beyond navigation are where the real value is.”

He told the News, “this is the Greeks coming into contact with cultures that are fundamentally not like their own. As our world is changed by forces like migration and tourism, that's one of the challenges of today.”



The 1874 Latin edition title page of a Greek periploous written by Dionysius of Byzantium in the 2nd century AD.

This Week in History:

July 17th to 23rd

JULY 20TH:

On this day in 1934, Aliki Stamatina Vougiouklaki, one of Greece's leading movie stars and its national sweetheart, was born in Athens. Vougiouklaki studied at the National Theatre of Greece and she secured her first lead role in the 1953 production of The Little Mouse. After her movie debut, Vougiouklaki very quickly became Greece's most popular star. She created her personal stage group and starred in many films, comedies, and melodramas (in many of them she co-starred with Dimitris Papamichael, her husband and theatre partner between 1965 and 1974). By the end of her career, she had performed in 42 movies, most of which were musicals. It was reported that her salary for each film was 1 million drachmas and a share of future profits of her films – when the basic salary in Greece per month was between 2,000 and 5,000 drachmas. According to her biography on IMDB, Vougiouklaki's film Lieutenant Natassa (1970) has been the biggest moneymaker in the history of Greek cinema. Vougiouklaki died three days after her birthday (on July 23rd) in 1996 at the age of 62 after battling pancreatic cancer.

JULY 22ND:

On this day in 1969, Despina Vandi (née Despina Malea), the Greek singer, was born in Germany. Her family returned to Kavala, Greece when she was sox years old. Even though Vandi always knew that she wanted to become a performer, she also knew that she should have a background in something else as well. She eventually enrolled at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki to study psychology, philosophy, and education, but later dropped out to start her musical career. She moved to Athens where she started using the stage name 'Elli Mara' before adopting the last name 'Vandi' in an effort to hide that she had begun singing from her parents. Vandi's career took off as she became one of Greece's modern laika-pop superstars. She has sold more than one million records in Greece alone and several of her albums have become multi-platinum. In 2003, she married Demis Nikolaidis (former professional Greek soccer player and former president of AEK Athens FC). The couple has two children: Melina and Giorgos.

JULY 23RD:

On this day in 1974, the Greek military dictatorship collapsed. The military junta ruled Greece following the 1967 Greek coup d'etat led by a group of colonels. The dictatorship ended in July of 1974 under the pressure of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. The period after the fall of the junta is the Metapolitefsi (regime change), and marked the establishment of the current Third Hellenic Republic. Upon the collapse of the dictatorship, the former Prime Minister of Greece, Constantine Karamanlis, was invited to return to his country. Huge crowds gathered to greet him at the Athens airport and many celebrated in the streets of the capital to mark the beginning of a return to democracy. Karamanlis had been Prime Minister of Greece for an unprecedented eight years until the center-left won power in the country's last democratic election in 1963. He had been in self-imposed exile in Paris since his loss. Karamanlis was sworn into office at 4 AM on July 24 as the flag bearer for his newly formed New Democracy party. Karamanlis succeeded in making the switch in governance easier but he also skillfully used all his intelligence and political guile to avert conflict with neighboring Turkey over the Cyprus question. Karamanlis demanded that the military be placed under civilian authority, amended the Constitution to be more inclusive, and liberated all political prisoners.

Also on this day in 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne, the peace treaty that officially settled the conflict that had originally existed between the Ottoman Empire and the French Republic, British Empire, Empire of Japan, the Kingdoms of Italy, Greece and Romania since the onset of World War I, was signed. The Treaty delimited the boundaries of Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey. A major issue of the war reparations, demanded from Greece by Turkey, was abandoned after Greece agreed to grant Karaagac to Turkey. As a result of the Treaty, Turkey ceded all claims on the Dodecanese Islands (recognized as an Italian possession) as well as on Cyprus (recognized as a British possession). Article 14 of the Treaty also granted the islands of Imbros and Tenedos autonomy – a right that was revoked by the Turkish government two years after the Treaty was signed.

Dear Stavroula:

My Ex-Wife Is Belligerent towards Me in Front of Our Children

Dear Stavroula,

I have been divorced for three years and I have a son who is 11 years old and a daughter who is eight years old. My wife wanted the divorce and she has since remarried and is expecting a baby. Ever since we broke up I have been extremely consistent in my responsibilities with the children. Because my ex-wife and I stay close, I take them almost every afternoon when I am not working. I am involved in their extracurricular activities and although I am a freelancer with all the difficulties that this may mean, I am very consistent in my schedule. Nevertheless, my ex-wife's behavior towards me is aggressive, and I can't understand the reason why. She never misses an opportunity to insult me, to humiliate me, to make me feel inadequate as a father, and, unfortunately, often in front of the children. I try to avoid any conflict with her, I deal with her calmly, but I do not know if it is right for my children to hear only one side and see a father who does not react to their mother's insults. Should I finally treat her the same way in order to stop her?

Manos

Dear Manos,

No divorce is easy, especially when there are young children. In fact, if one of the two rebuilds his life, the other partner feels negative emotions and the problems may come to the surface again.

The strange thing in your case is that your ex-wife is still angry and aggressive with you, despite the fact that she has remarried and is expecting the arrival of a baby, which is usually a happy period.

This may mean that the differences between you have never been resolved. But it can also indicate other issues. Many times, the guilt one feels about breaking up a marriage can take the form of hatred and verbal violence, because it is easier for her to blame the other person than to admit her own mistakes.

Other times it may indicate problems with oneself and a lack of self-awareness. That is why in these cases the role of the expert is important.

What those who mistreat their ex in front of the children, as your ex does, may not understand is that they do not harm their ex but instead harm their own children.

In your case, your children not only have to deal with the painful situation of their parents' separation, a new person in their mother's life, and the arrival of a baby, but also their parents' conflicts. These all can be too much for an adult let alone two young children. Ideally, you and your ex-wife should have found a channel of communication to help your children adjust to the new situations in their lives.

That is why I think it is very important to talk to your ex-spouse with a specialist, not to help you rebuild your relationship but to stop hurting your children.

Of course, under no circumstance would I suggest you behave in the same way. On the one hand, there is a possibility that the conflicts will become even more intense. On the other hand, think about how your children will feel when they see both their parents yelling and swearing and accusing each other. At the very least, let the children know there is a different way of resolving conflicts, which can help them later in life.

After all, dealing with your ex-wife's verbal attacks with calmness and stability does not mean that you are weak, but the opposite. It takes a lot of strength to keep your cool and behave civilly, when you receive insults and unfair behavior from your ex in front of your children.

SMALL TAKES

Greece & Cyprus

Pension Court Ruling Could Rock Budget

ATHENS, Greece (AP) – A high court in Greece ruled Tuesday in favor of retirees who brought a class action case to demand the reimbursement of money cut from their income during international bailouts.

The case was being closely watched in Greece, which is reeling from the economic impact of the pandemic and is expected to slide back into a severe recession after a decade-long effort to recover from financial crisis.

The Council of State administrative court ruled that pension cuts imposed during 2015-16 occurred without the proper legislative procedure and the money should be returned.

The court only ruled in favor of retirees whose associations were directly involved in the complaint. But the ruling could pave the way for broader claims that would have a greater fiscal impact on the country's troubled public finances.

The government said it would comply with the decision.

Greek media have reported that the government could apply the ruling to all affected retirees, even those who weren't directly involved in the complaint.

Tax Filing Extension Eyed

The government is considering another extension of the deadline for the submission of income tax declarations. An extension of 10 to 15 days is needed as “more than 2.3 million statements have not yet been submitted and the revised deadline expires in 15 days’ time,” Kathimerini reported.

The Independent Authority for Public Revenue has revealed that 4,083,803 declarations of 2019 incomes have been uploaded so far. Kathimerini notes that “for the process to be completed without a new extension more than 150,000 statements will need to be submitted every day until July 29.”



Cyprus’ first Hyatt hotel, the Grand Hyatt Limassol, a 300-room luxury resort, is expected to open in 2025.

Cyprus’ First Hyatt Hotel in Works

CHICAGO (BUSINESS WIRE) – Hyatt Hotels Corporation announced this week that a Hyatt affiliate has entered into a management agreement with Anolia Holdings Limited for the first Hyatt hotel on the island of Cyprus, Grand Hyatt Limassol. The 300-room luxury resort is expected to open in 2025 and signifies Hyatt’s continued growth into Europe’s leading travel destinations.

The new-build beachfront resort will be situated at a Blue Flag beach east of Limassol, one of the island’s most cosmopolitan cities.

With a prime beachfront location on the southern coast of the island and 300 bold, light-filled rooms offering sea views, Grand Hyatt Limassol will feature a stunning 43,000-square-foot beach club.

The resort will additionally offer five elevated food and beverage concepts as well as 15,000 square feet of event space and it will be a key element of Zaria Resort, a mixed-use luxury development, comprised of residential apartments and private villas totaling more than 861,100 square feet.

Summer Camp Evacuated in Wildfire Precaution

ATHENS, Greece (AP) – A children’s summer camp and a retirement home have been evacuated near Athens after a wildfire approached homes in a coastal area.

Authorities said the evacuations involving several hundred people were ordered as a precaution after the fire broke out early Friday near the coastal town of Vari, some 30 kilometers (18.5 miles) south of the capital.

The Fire Service said the blaze had been contained with the help of water-dropping helicopters and several dozen firefighters.

Turkish Cypriots Urge Migrant Boat Gunshots Probe

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) – Turkish Cypriot human rights groups on Friday called for an investigation after police reportedly fired their weapons at a boat that had ferried 30 Syrian refugees to ethnically split Cyprus’ breakaway north.

The groups, including the refugee rights group MHD, said in a joint statement that an investigation should be carried out to determine if police were justified in shooting at the boat since those onboard may not have understood their orders.

The refugees, who landed in the early hours Thursday near the town of Guzelyurt, or Morphou in Greek, included three women and seven minors. They have been taken to a reception center for health checks including coronavirus testing.

It’s unclear from where the boat set sail.

A Turkish Cypriot court ordered three people who face human trafficking charges to remain in police detention for three days.

The legitimate Cyprus government has accused Turkey of channeling migrants from the north into the internationally recognized south.

Violence at Athens Rally Vs New Rally Law

ATHENS, Greece (AP) – Violence broke out in Athens July 8 during a mass demonstration against a new law to curb public protests, leaving six police officers injured. A group of protesters hurled gasoline bombs at riot police outside parliament, while police responded with tear gas and flash grenades.

Police said they arrested nine people and detained 15 others were for questioning. Demonstrations held in Athens and dozens of other Greek cities and towns to oppose the plans by the center-right government. Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis’ year-old conservative government said it is determined to stop small protest gatherings from disrupting traffic and commercial activity.

“The right to hold peaceful gatherings must be protected ... but it must be done in a way that will not interrupt the activity of an entire city,” Mitsotakis said.

Critics ... argued that plans to prosecute protesters attending unsanctioned rallies and to hold protest organizers responsible for damage caused if rallies turn violent are legally troublesome. The government said it added several clarifications to the bill to address those concerns.

Opposition leader Alexis Tsipras accused the government of introducing the measures to allow heavy-handed policing. He predicted the pandemic-driven recession would trigger large labor protests in the fall.

By Derek Gatopoulos (AP)

2020 AD – A Time for Social Responsibility

By TNH Staff

ATHENS – Economic development projects around the world require Environmental Impact Statements, or their equivalents, and that includes the \$9 billion project at the long-abandoned Hellenikon airport near Athens – but while it is safety first for the demolition team, the animals that have called it home for more than a decade are in danger, and are the concern of citizens and activists like Julie Kelly and Magda Panoutsopoulou.

Kelley is an entrepreneur who devotes much of her time to animal welfare in Greece and globally and is the Founder of the NGO Let’s Be S.M.A.R.T. (Successfully Managing Animal Rights Today). Panoutsopoulou, in addition to being a full time mom, is also a Freelance Journalist and an animal activist. She is a member of the animal welfare committee of Kifissia and is a Volunteer with Nine Lives Greece since 2006.

Kelly said her efforts focus is on solutions which she believes stems from education and collaborating with communities for an overall joint effort. “

As a business person, Kelly appreciates that Hellenikon “is a great economical addition,” but she believes it is important “to also consider the ecosystem that settled itself during these vacated times, including 300+ stray cats, dogs, foxes, hedgehogs and more species existing off this land.”

Panoutsopoulou adds that “the development is underway, demolition and clearing of the property beginning but are the living beings of this ecosystem being managed, relocated, protected, and safe? Typically, the responsibility would be in the hands of the Demos – the municipality – for the area. But can they alone manage this great task? We reached out to Lamda Development” who own the project, she said, “but were unable to obtain comments after asking them about their plan to help contribute to the social responsibility it should have as it is taking possession of this great property.”

The concept of corporate social responsibility has been gaining traction in Greece, however. Panoutsopoulou said, “in these difficult times, we must make a shift from the old ways of business and incorporate preservation for the inhabitants of this property ... We look to Lamda Development as a sophisticated company that we hope will work closely with the Demos and local organizations to manage this great task and to contribute toward a progressive global mindset. There should be funds required to be ear



Where once millions of tourists gained their first glimpses of Greece, cats and other small animals lounge amidst modern ruins,

marked for such a task and a well-organized joint collaboration to set out and successfully save these stray animals dependent on this land.”

Kelly told The National Herald “since 2018 when the land was sold to become a luxurious resort site, both municipalities, Alimos and Hellenikon, had been informed multiple times by the local Volunteers feeding the strays in order to find a solution. No serious action was taken and only a few organizations such as the Greek Animal Rescue budgeted funds to help trap and neuter some of the animals.”

Panoutsopoulou said “this action was just a temporary solution and a way to help the population not grow, but ultimately these animals needed a real and humane plan for their rescue and safety, none of which currently exists. The responsibility became a finger pointing game and in the end, the animals are the ones to suffer for the inabilities of the humans. As more publicity has been created regarding this situation, the municipalities took some minor action to show an interest,” however.

“There was a meeting on June 10 this year,” Kelley said, “between the President of the Pan Hellenic Animal Welfare & Environmental Federation (PFPO), the Vice Mayor of the Municipality of Elliniko-Argiropoli and the President of the Pan-Hellenic team against animal abuse. Unfortunately, we are not seeing the results that should be managed on be-



half of our innocent strays. A fence that was installed around the property which now impedes access for feeding many of these animals and even traps the animals.”

There continues to be scattered efforts to remove some of the animals, get them sterilized, chipped and relocated, but the efforts are nowhere near what is needed to successfully ensure these animals will be safe and protected according to Panoutsopoulou.

Kelley informs that “there is now a Facebook Page tracking the issue and it was reported that twelve more cats were recently trapped, will be chipped, and be relocated.”

Panoutsopoulou continued, “we hope more involvement will lead to a better organized effort to once and for all take a high-level responsibility for this issue. As Greece has just become one of the global champions in managing the COVID-19, we would

like to see Greece one of the champions for managing its animal welfare, which most know is quite a sore issue here, with a lot of struggles on a regular basis. We are in 2020 AD and we look for an intelligent, organized and responsible team management including all parties i.e. the central government, municipalities, the developer, the communities, and local organizations as an integrated and amicable effort and solution for this Hellenikon project and throughout Greece as a whole. Let’s set an example for the EU and show we are on a higher ethical and moral level of awareness and are considerate of all living beings, a complete and balanced system for our great future. In our Democratic system, let our animals be considered part of our equality base. We believe a positive solution to this issue will lead to a more successful and positive project completion.”

Greece Faces Turkey, COVID Challenges, Economy

By TNH Staff

ATHENS – There will be no summer respite on any front for Greece this year as the pressure continues to rise in Athens on the Turkey, COVID-19, and economic fronts.

A surprise positive development in relations with Turkey turned suddenly sour when Ankara leaked news of a secret meeting between Greek, Turkish and German officials. The meeting was called after Turkey’s decision to convert Aghia Sophia into a mosque amid Ankara’s increasing aggressiveness in the East Mediterranean.

According to Kathimerini, “Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis on Wednesday spoke by telephone with German Chancellor Angela Merkel ahead of a European Union summit scheduled to begin tomorrow in Brussels and they reportedly discussed Greek-Turkish relations.”

“Greece wants its European Union partners to prepare ‘crippling’ economic sanctions for use against neighboring Turkey if it goes ahead with planned offshore gas and oil exploration off Greek islands, Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias said Tuesday,” according to AP.

Ratcheting the tension higher, on the anniversary of the July 15, 2016 attempted coup, Burak Ozugergin, Turkey’s ambassador in Athens, repeated Ankara’s demand eight Turkish servicemen who fled to Greece during the failed coup in Turkey in 2016 be returned.

COVID-19 PLAN B IN WORKS?

Concerns about an increase in COVID-19 cases due to tourism arrivals and an easing of public compliance has led the Greek government to impose a ban on village festivals – panigiria – and is prompting discussions about a possible “Plan B” according to Greek Travel Pages (GTP), which reported that the national public health organization (EODY) “confirmed 58 new



AP PHOTO/PETROS GIANNAKOURIS, FILE

Pensioners outside the National Bank of Greece in Athens. A high court ruled on July 14 in favor of retirees demanding reimbursement of cuts from their income during the bailouts.

Covid-19 infections – 28 of which were found in incoming visitors.”

Kathimerini reports that “the issue was discussed at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis on Wednesday,” and noted that “stricter health checks have gone into effect at Greece’s border with Bulgaria following an increase in tourism-related COVID-19 cases. Starting Wednesday, all incoming travelers crossing the border are required to carry negative test results, issued in the previous 72 hours and translated into English.”

The Promachonas-Kulata border with Bulgaria is the only crossing open for non-essential travel after the easing of lockdown measures.

The village festivals “will likely be suspended until the end of the summer, Deputy Development Minister Nikos Papathanasis said on Thursday,” Kathimerini reported. “My assessment is that the ban on village festivals will be extended until the end of August ... What must be done, is to find those who flout the rules,” he told

Greek broadcaster ANT1.

“Health experts advising the government want tougher enforcement of health safety rules, warning that public compliance is low after months of strict lockdown,” Kathimerini reported. In related news, “dozens of health care workers staged a protest outside the prime minister’s office to demand better staffing at public hospitals due to the pandemic, according to AP.

In another development that must be closely monitored, British visitors began arriving July 16 after the lifting of the ban on that country. The economic considerations are strong as the UK is the second biggest tourism market for Greece after Germany. UK visitors spent 2.56 billion euros in Greece last year.

In response to reports that people in the UK are having difficulties finding flights, Tourism Minister Haris Theocharis said, “We are monitoring the numbers and the procedures we are applying, and we are happy with the results so far.”

Health Minister Vassilis Kikiliyas said that health experts expected a spike in infections

when Greece opened its borders. “On the other hand, everyone realizes – prioritizing public health, health protocols, and respect to human life – that the economy and tourism must also survive,” he said.

The minister stressed the importance of individual responsibility, “reiterating health experts’ recommendations for mask-wearing, social distancing, and hygiene,” GTP reported.

Responding to ominous foreign press reports about a renewed national lockdown, the GTP article noted that Greek Tourism Minister Harry Theoharis told Sky News on Wednesday that it was “nonsense,” not being considered, and that it was “far from the truth.”

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ECONOMIC NEWS

Additional economic rumbles were generated on Tuesday when “a high court in Greece ruled in favor of retirees who brought a class action case to demand the reimbursement of money cut from their income during international bailouts,” the AP reported, noting that while “the court only ruled in favor of retirees whose associations were directly involved in the complaint ... the ruling could pave the way for broader claims that would have a greater fiscal impact on the country’s troubled public finances.”

There was some long-term good news, however as Kathimerini reports “interest for investing in Greece remains strong despite the interventions still needed in crucial sectors for the investment climate to improve further. The majority of investors surveyed by Ernst & Young Greece, i.e. 62%, acknowledge that the country is pursuing a policy on investments that is making it attractive, with the efficient management of the COVID-19 health crisis also contributing in the improvement of Greece’s international image.”

World Condemns Aghia Sophia’s Conversion to Mosque

Continued from page 1

search will now be impeded. “Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu hit back and rejected international intervention concerning its decision to convert Hagia Sophia back into a mosque,” Kathimerini reported, quoting him saying that “Hagia Sophia was left as a legacy as a mosque and must be used as a mosque ... We strongly reject comments that amount to an intervention in Turkey’s sovereign rights.”

The decision sparked criticism in the United States, Greece, and other Western countries as well as from Orthodox Christian leaders. Pope Francis expressed sadness over the move, a statement criticized by Orthodox Christian officials and observers as unacceptably weak and late.

EU foreign ministers, holding their first face-to-face meeting in months on July 13, declared that they “condemned” the decision. EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell said there was “broad support to call on the Turkish authorities to urgently consider and reverse this decision.”

Cavusoglu replied, “we reject the word ‘condemnation ... This is a matter that concerns Turkey’s sovereign rights.”

Erdogan, also, defended his action, describing the 1934 decision by the Turkish Republic’s secular, founding leaders that converted Aghia Sophia from a mosque into a museum as a mistake. “We are rectifying a mistake. It’s as simple as that,” Erdogan said.

On Tuesday, Greece continued its expressions of dismay at Turkey’s decision.

“This decision is certainly painful to us as Greek Orthodox Christians but it also hurts us as citizens of the world,” said Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. “This is not a Greek-Turkish issue, it is not even a Euro-Turkish issue, it is global. It is a uni-



AP PHOTO/MATTHEW GUREL

versal issue ... With this setback, Turkey is choosing to sever ties with the Western world and its values. It abandons a cultural direction of many centuries, preferring introversion.”

Meanwhile, officials from Turkey’s religious affairs authority, said the landmark structure can remain open to visitors outside of prayer hours, according to the state-run Anadolu Agency.

“The Christian depictions inside are no obstacle to Muslim prayers, said the officials who are preparing the site for Muslim worship. They added however, that the figures would need to be covered with curtains or through other means during the prayers, in line with Islamic traditions that prohibit such representations,” the AP reported.

Reports that the measures might include some kind of obscuring of the views of the images by turning lasers on them sparked further outrage.

HOPE FOR REVERSAL FADING FAST

Orthodox and non-Orthodox Christians alike expressed hope that the decision would be reversed in response to pressure from Western leaders like U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin, but their actions to date do not justify optimism.

Vladimir Putin, in a telephone call to Erdogan pointed out “the significant social impact caused in Russia regarding the decision to change the status of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople,” however, his Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Vershinin said that “Turkey’s decision to convert Hagia Sophia into a mosque has sparked public outcry in Russia and beyond, but is an internal Turkish affair in which no one should intervene.”

Trump on the other hand, reportedly did not even mention Aghia Sophia during a conversa-

People walk towards the now closed Aghia Sophia, one of Istanbul’s main tourist attractions in the historic Sultanahmet district, July 11. Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan formally reconverted the UNESCO World Heritage Site into a mosque hours after a high court annulled a 1934 decision that had made the religious landmark a museum. The decision sparked deep dismay among Orthodox Christians.

tion with Erdogan, evoking criticism by senior U.S. Diplomat and Biden presidential campaign foreign policy advisor Nicholas Burns, who served as U.S. Ambassador to Greece from 1997-2001.

“It is very disappointing that President Trump apparently did not even raise the issue with President Erdogan in their recent phone call. That is a major missed opportunity,” he told Kathimerini.

Democratic presidential candidate and former Vice President Joe Biden said, “I deeply regret the Turkish government’s decision to convert the Hagia Sophia into a mosque and urge Turkish President Recep Erdogan to reverse his decision.”

People outside Turkey people pinning their hopes on external pressure that will cause Erdogan to reverse his decision – or modify it, perhaps limiting mosque status to Fridays – are ignoring evidence of how invested the Turkish leader and his followers are in his long-anticipated action.

The conversion into a mosque of Aghia Sophia of Constantinople was foreshadowed by other ‘Agia Sophias’ recently being turned into mosques in cities like Trapezounta and Prousa, as well as the beloved Church of the Chora in Constantinople. Reviled by some as a desecration, given the need to cover up icons – such

criticisms fall on deaf ears in Turkey.

Indeed, the lamentations by renowned Byzantinologist Helene Glykatzis-Ahrweiler calling the conversion, “the second fall of Constantinople” are eerily validated inside Turkey.

As far away as India the Economic Times noted “there was jubilation outside the terracotta-hued structure with its cascading domes and four minarets. Dozens of people awaited the court’s ruling chanting ‘Allah is great!’ when the news broke. A large crowd later prayed outside it.”

Selim Koru, a noted Turkish political analyst and writer explained the powerful hold of Erdogan’s act on Turkish imagination in an op-ed piece for the New York Times. He noted, “the most articulate expression of this view was delivered by Necip Fazil Kısakurek, Turkey’s most prominent Islamist poet and polemicist

of the time, on Dec. 29, 1965” who said the decision to convert the structure into a museum was to “put the Turks’ essential spirit inside a museum.”

That sentiment inspired the life mission of Ismail Kandemir, the 75-year-old founder of the Turkish Association for the Protection of Historical Monuments and the Environment who filed the legal case that led to last week’s decisions.

Countless articles documented Turkey’s provocations in recent years, and many editorials warned that Ankara eats appeasement for breakfast and only makes Turks hungry for more, but now that the long-feared conversion of Aghia Sophia into a mosque is a reality, a harsh defeat for Hellenism and Orthodoxy on the cultural and diplomatic front, some observers say the provocative act presages more dangerous moves by Erdogan.

Turkey, Greece, EU Clash; Meetings Called

KATHIMERINI

ATHENS – The conversion of Aghia Sophia into a mosque constituting the latest ratcheting up of tension in the East Mediterranean, Greece, Turkey and Germany participated in an “undisclosed trilateral meeting” held before this week’s EU Foreign Affairs Council according to Kathimerini, which also reported that Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu revealed that the meeting had taken place in an interview with Turkey’s Hurriyet newspaper, upsetting Greece.

The date of the meeting was not confirmed and the there was no commentary on the surprising apparent absence of a United States role as “according to the same sources, the meeting was brokered by Berlin. The move is seen as an attempt to preserve the channels of communication between Athens and Ankara,” Kathimerini also reported.

The Associated Press reported that “Turkey and the European Union clashed on Monday over Ankara’s decision to change the status of Hagia Sophia from a museum to a mosque and its continued energy exploration in disputed Mediterranean waters.”

It was the first face-to-face meeting in months of the 27 EU foreign ministers, who “condemned the Turkish decision to convert such an emblematic monument as the Hagia Sophia,” EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell said.

“This decision will inevitably fuel the mistrust, promote renewed division between religious communities and undermine our efforts at dialog and cooperation,” Borrell added after the meeting of EU foreign ministers.

He said there was “broad support to call on the Turkish authorities to urgently consider and reverse this decision.”

Greek government spokesman Stelios Petsas said Monday that the EU was “faced with a challenge and insult” meted out by Erdogan, but Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu hit back and rejected international intervention concerning its decision to convert Hagia Sophia back into a mosque.

TURKEY’S TERRITORIAL PROVOCATIONS ALSO DISTURB RU

“Borrell was in Turkey last week where he also discussed Ankara’s disputes with Greece and Cyprus over energy exploration in the eastern Mediterranean region. Turkey has dispatched warship-escorted vessels to drill for gas in an area where Cyprus insists it has exclusive rights. The Turkish government has said it’s acting to protect its interests in the area’s natural resources and those of Turkish Cypriots,” according to AP.

Petsas said that Turkish drilling was blatantly contrary to international obligations and international law and said that Greece would be looking to prepare a list for possible “political, diplomatic and financial” sanctions.

Again, Cavusoglu stood firm, AP reported.

“If Greece were to turn away from its maximalist ways and agree to a fair sharing (of rights), and if it were to convince Cyprus to a fair sharing of revenues (from the exploration of natural resources), then 80% of our problems would solved,” Cavusoglu said.

Borrell said there were no immediate decisions at Monday’s meeting but that the ministers would revisit the issue at their next meeting in Berlin in

August. “Even as the rift between both sides was deepening,” the AP article continued, “the 27 EU ministers couldn’t get that close among themselves either. It was their first in-person meeting since the coronavirus lockdown set in, but because of social distancing rules, there was only room for lots of elbow bumping for a greeting and little reading of lips, since ministers were wearing masks around the meeting table.”

Following the EU meetings, Turkey further stirred the pot by issuing a new Navigational Telex (Navtex), reserving a maritime area within Cyprus’ exclusive economic zone (EEZ) for drilling activities, Skai reported on Wednesday.

“The new Navtex concerns the activities of the Turkish drillship Yavuz, and will come into force as of July 18. The new drilling is expected to last through August 20,” according to Kathimerini.

GREECE SEEKS TO BLOCK TURKEY MOVES VIA SANCTION THREAT

Greece’s response to the new and ongoing provocations from Turkey is to ask its European Union partners “to prepare ‘crippling’ economic sanctions for use against neighboring Turkey if it goes ahead with planned

Greek government spokesman Stelios Petsas said Monday that the EU was “faced with a challenge and insult” meted out by Erdogan, but Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu hit back and rejected international intervention concerning its decision.

offshore gas and oil exploration off Greek islands, Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias said Tuesday ... Dendias has told his EU colleagues that if Ankara goes ahead with plans to drill off the islands of Crete, Rhodes and Karpathos, the bloc must respond with a pre-drafted list of severe sanctions,” Kathimerini reported.

Greece says international law provides her with exclusive rights in the areas coveted by Turkey. The spots south of Crete where Ankara says it intends to drive are far from the Turkish coast. The Turks claim their recent deal with Libya, whose coastline is due south of the area, grants them hydrocarbon exploration rights and they have already sent ships guarded by warships vessels to drill for gas EU member Cyprus’s EEZ.

“The European Union is Turkey’s biggest trading partner,” Dendias told Star TV. “If it wants, it can create a huge problem for the Turkish economy. That’s not my wish ... but we must be clear.”

And Dendias was clear that the context of both sides’ actions is a potential military conflict. Kathimerini reported Dendias made it clear that “if Greece comes under armed attack from its neighbor, it will invoke a section of the 2009 Treaty on European Union that obliges member states to provide aid and assistance to another EU country facing armed aggression,” and noted “Greece and Turkey have come to the brink of war three times since 1974.”

Suzan Fraser in Ankara, Turkey, and Derek Gatopoulos in Athens, Greece, contributed to this report.

Cyprus President Anastasiades Visits Athens

The Athens visit of Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades on July 14 occurred in the wake of the shocking conversion of Aghia Sophia into a mosque by Turkey’s president Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the latest sign that the limits and barriers of the past are fast falling to the assaults of the Turkish president’s ambitions and desperate efforts to shore up his power in the face of COVID-19 and economic setbacks.

Anastasiades and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis discussed “bilateral relations, conclusions from Monday’s EU Foreign Affairs Council in Brussels, developments in the Eastern Mediterranean and EU-Turkey relations,” Kathimerini reported.

The president of Cyprus was also scheduled to meet Greece’s President Katerina Sakellaropoulou and the leader of the main opposition, Alexis Tsipras.

“The private meetings will be followed by talks between the respective delegations,” said Kathimerini, which also noted “the two leaders will also discuss the forthcoming European Council, which will take place on July 17 and 18, in Brussels.

AP reported that “talks were aimed at ensuring that the two allies are on the same page ahead of an extraordinary European Union summit on July 17-18 aimed at resolving a stalemate among EU leaders over the bloc’s long-term budget and COVID-



AP PHOTO/PETROS GIANNAKOURIS

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, left, welcomes Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades during their meeting in Athens, on Tuesday, July 14, 2020.

19 recovery package. Both leaders criticized Turkey’s increasingly aggressive attitude in the Eastern Mediterranean, while condemning a recent decision to convert Istanbul’s Hagia Sophia into a mosque.”

CYPRUS AND US GETTING CLOSER AS CHINA AND RUSSIANS OBSERVE

As tensions rise in the Eastern

Mediterranean, Cyprus is moving ahead with initiatives begun in recent years to forge stronger ties with the United States. After the announcement last week that the United States has offered International Military Education and Training (IMET) funds and participation to the Republic of Cyprus, there were concerns, however, that the welcome de-

velopment could upset relations with Russia and China.

According to the AP, “Cyprus’ government said Friday that a U.S. decision to provide education and training to the island nation’s armed forces won’t hamper relations with either Russia or China.

Cypriot Defense Minister Charalambos Petrides said ‘there’s no question’ of disrupting the country’s ties with Russia and that inclusion in the U.S. training program doesn’t mean ‘that we cut relations with other countries.’”

Anastasiades hailed the United States’ decision but noted that Cyprus’ relations with Russia and China “will never be perturbed.”

He declared that “a small country like Cyprus strives to build the best possible relations with all permanent Security Council member states,” at a gas terminal groundbreaking ceremony July 9.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the initiative, “is part of our efforts to enhance relationships with key regional partners to promote stability in the Eastern Mediterranean.”

The announcement prompted criticism from the Turkish Foreign Ministry, whose spokesman Hamit Aksoy said the move would neither help efforts to reunify ethnically split Cyprus nor “ensure peace and stability in the eastern Mediterranean.”

Turkey cut diplomatic ties with Cyprus after the island nation was cleaved along ethnic lines in 1974 when Turkey invaded in the wake of a coup aiming at union with Greece. Only Turkey recognizes a Turkish Cypriot declaration of independence and deploys more than 35,000 troops in the breakaway north.

Cyprus is striving to bolster relations with the U.S., but not at the expense of its ties to Moscow or Beijing on whose support it often counts in the United Nations.

The centerpiece of improved Cyprus-U.S. ties is the Eastern Mediterranean Energy and Security Partnership Act that U.S. lawmakers approved last year.

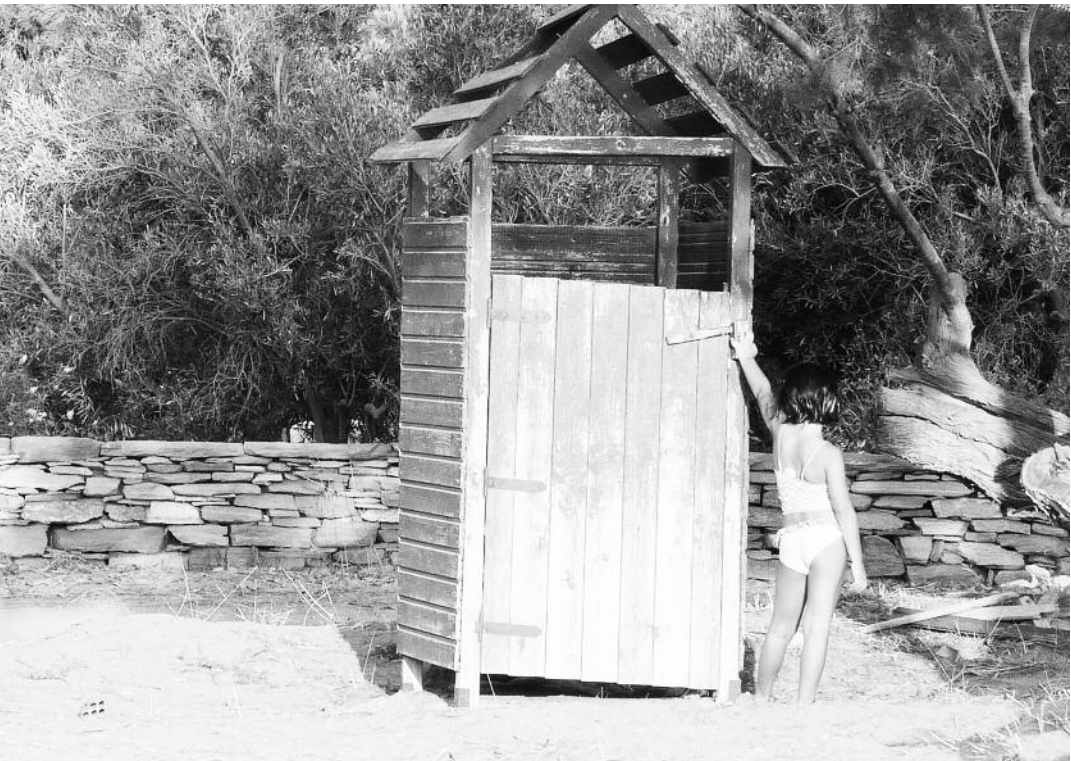
Military training funding for Cyprus was included in the legislation which underscores U.S. support for a partnership between Greece, Cyprus and Israel based on recently discovered offshore gas deposits in the region.

The act would also lift a 33-year-old arms embargo on Cyprus on the condition that the island nation denies Russian warships access to its ports for “refueling and servicing,” according to the U.S. State Department.

This article includes material from the Associated Press (AP).

HIDDEN GREECE

Andy Dabilis’ camera captures the texture of life in today’s Greece, in all its colorful variations.



TNH/ANDY DABILIS

The Tzia Cabana, Fading to Green

It seems everything is rustic on the island of Tzia, adding to the quiet charm of an island skipped by many tourists to their loss. The old wooden cabana on Poisses Beach offers a spot to change.

Gianniotis and European Swimming Elite at Authentic Marathon Swim

TNH Staff

ATHENS – The countdown has begun for The Authentic Marathon Swim at Artemision – 2,500 years later – in honor of the first long-distance swimmers to be recorded. Following the example of Skylias and Hydna, the first ever-recorded long-distance swimmers, according to ancient Greek historian Herodotus, participants will have the opportunity to enjoy the authentic marathon swimming route, on September 4-6.

The noteworthy event will be honored by the presence of Greek Olympic silver medalist, World Champion in open water swimming, and member of the International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame Spyros Gianniotis. Prominent personalities of international swimming will also take part at The Authentic Swimming Marathon. Among them, the Hungarian ultra-marathon swimmer, Oceans Seven title holder, and member of the International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame, Attila Manyoki, European champion George Arniakos, Greek champions Dimitris Negrís, Andreas Georgakopoulos, Stellina Aplanti, Ilektra Lebl, the swimming champion George Skotadis who competes wearing the colors of the Dutch national team, English Channel marathon swimmer Giannis Kotsiopoulos, and swimming champion Nikolaos Simantiras.

Gianniotis said of the event, “marathon swimming is once again at the forefront with a historic race. Through our presence we honor history by reviving the legendary achievements of Skylias and Hydna at the straits of Artemision. I call on all swimmers, regardless of their level and ability, to embrace this effort and experience the legend, while safely enjoying the blue-green waters of Northern Evia.”

Manyoki said of his participation in the race, “open water is my passion. I must fight against nature and also my inner fears and limits. The sea is open for everybody. The only thing that is important is how much you want it. It’s an ancient sport with 2,500 years of history that revives in this event. I will jump



ATTILA MANYOKI



ELIAS LEFAS

Hungarian ultra-marathon swimmer and Oceans Seven title holder Attila Manyoki. Right: Olympic silver medalist and World Champion in open water.

in the sea and follow its tradition and great history.”

On Saturday, September 5, the action will begin with the 3km and 1.5km open water swimming races. On Sunday, September 6, the event will culminate with the revival of the authentic 10km marathon swimming route, while at the same time the 800m children’s race will be taking place. All swimming routes will be executed with absolute safety at Pefki, Evia, of the Municipality of Istiaia-Edipsos. The Authentic Marathon Swim will be held with the approval of the Hellenic Swimming Federation, according to FINA regulations.

Registration for the event is underway and interested parties can participate by completing the available form through the following link: <https://www.myrace.gr/en/event/2407/registrations.html>.

The event, always prioritizing the participants themselves, offers a refund of their registration costs until July 31.

ACCOMODATION PACKAGES
The Authentic Swimming Marathon collaborates with hotels in the region, with the aim of revitalizing the sports tourism industry of Northern Evia and



MUNICIPALITY OF ISTIAIA-EDIPSOS

Impressive drone footage from Pefki, Evia, Greece.

strengthening the Greek tourism product. Up to this point, this year’s event is supported with special offers and prices starting from 40 euros, by the following hospitality sponsors: Maria Louiza Apartments, Hotel 40 Platania, Altamar Hotel, Ellaeon Throesma, Galini Hotel Edipsos,

Ilios Studios, Villa Anastasia, Aenaon Studios, Aktaion Hotel, Alex Spa Hotel, Arethousa Hotel, Artemis Rooms Pefki, Evia Dream, Galini Hotel Pefki, Irene Studios, Island, Kochili Apartments, Lito Hotel, and Papadioti Apartments.

More information about ac-

commodation packages and special offers for the participants is available online: <https://www.authentic-marathonswim.com/accommodation/>.

The Authentic Marathon Swim remains in contact with state bodies, its main priority be-

ing ensuring public health. Organizers work for the event’s smooth and safe operation.

The event will be co-organized by the Municipality of Istiaia-Edipsos and Active Media Group.

The Authentic Marathon Swim has joined the Greek actions of the #BeactiveHellas 2020 program of the European Commission and is held under the auspices of the General Secretariat of Sports.

The event has joined the swimming community Global Swim Series (GSS).

Enjoy the event’s promo video through the following link: <https://youtu.be/UDz2JXellyo>.

Hashtag: #authentic-marathonswim

Website: www.authentic-marathonswim.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AuthenticMarathonSwim>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/authentic-marathonswim>

T w i t t e r : <https://twitter.com/the-marathonswim>

YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYxMgl-j5wgosL10lyRay5Q>.



The Ladies Union of Drama at the launch of the Food Bank Program in Drama.



COURTESY OF THE HELLENIC INITIATIVE

The Ladies Union of Drama further developed the Mobile School Program for children.

The Hellenic Initiative Supports Food Bank Program in Greece

TNH Staff

ATHENS – The Ladies Union of Drama – Open Hospitality House is a small-scale non-profit philanthropic agency with a big heart that makes a big impact helping families in Northeast Greece.

Established in the city of Drama to look after widows and orphans in 1904 by the revered Metropolitan Chrysostomos, who later served and was martyred in Smyrna, the agency consists of dynamic women, full-time staffers, and volunteers.

In 2019, a Food Bank was added to its wide-ranging social services – one of four branches outside Athens of Food Bank Greece – that serves the needs of 1700 family members.

In 2020, The Hellenic Initiative (THI) funded a full-time food bank position for an entire year with a 15,000 euro grant.

The timing of both actions could not have been better and the women have already risen to the COVID-19 challenge – for example, they stepped in to help feed families throughout the Prefecture of Drama when the soup kitchens of the Church had to shut down.

“When the lockdown began we did not cease our operations. We adjusted, bringing food to people’s homes with our van,” said Program Director Xrisa Kelaidi. They also rapidly made their office operations compatible with the COVID-19 measures and also learned how to more effectively use the internet both for operations and fundraising.

The Ladies Union also further developed its Mobile School program for children of underprivileged communities – including often invisible and forgotten groups in society like the Roma – applying COVID-19 best practices for such programs learned from other parts of Europe.

The Ladies Union is also one of Greece’s many volunteerism success stories. “We invite people who have doubts about volunteerism in Greece to visit Drama and meet our President,

Aliki Tsiamoura, and see how we operate. Seventy percent of our work is performed by volunteers. We have nine employees and 20 volunteers.”

The position funded by THI has been filled and is responsible for general control of the food bank, which is part of the Food Bank Greece network established in 1995 with the dual goal of combating hunger and waste. It cooperates with particular food companies and with the Federation of Hellenic Food Industries (SEVT), and is a



Left: The Hellenic Initiative Director of Programming Michael Printzos and Ladies Union of Drama President Aliki Tsiamoura. Above: Ladies Union of Drama President Aliki Tsiamoura receiving an award from former President of the Hellenic Republic Prokopis Pavlopoulos.

member of the European Food Banks Federation (FEBA).

The teams ensure that food which cannot be absorbed by the market is offered free of charge to individuals and institutions.

While Athens is far away, Kelaidi said citizens and officials there are on the lookout for ways to help with social services in the provinces, but they need

to be persuaded of the effectiveness of the groups seeking assistance – something the Ladies Union has worked hard to achieve.

“As we were able to obtain some EU funds and gain experience, our reputation began to rise among the major Greek Foundations,” Kelaidi said.

Their success breeds in the workers and volunteers not a

desire for recognition but a sense of obligation to contribute even more to society.

Kelaidi, whose roots are on the island of Thasos, said, “We told the Athenians we are here, and can create corresponding agencies in Athens and the rest of Greece.”

After thanking THI, saying “your assistance helped hire a specialist who enables our Food Bank to serve Eastern Macedonia and Thrace,” Tsiamoura shared her personal and organizational philosophy: “When we support our fellow man, we support ourselves, and when we help others, we find personal inner peace.”

THI Board Member Jeremy Downward said, “For over 100 years, the Ladies Union of Drama is providing the essentials and much needed support to the people of Drama. With our gift we are helping them achieve even more. THI will help their story to be heard outside of Greece.”

THI’s Program Director Michael Printzos said, “Securing food aid for people in need has proven to be of even greater importance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our gift will allow the Ladies Union of Drama to donate over 5,500 kg of food, otherwise wasted, to over 1,700 families living in the wider Drama region.”

More information is available online: <http://www.TheHellenicInitiative.org/> and <http://onegreece.org>.

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/thehellenicinitiative> Twitter: #OneGreece.



Saint Sophia’s Seraphim

Seraphic in your august place upholding heaven’s dome on wings sublime.

A Byzantine space contrived by two Greek minds --Anthemiuss of Tralles --Isidorus of Miletus unmatched in mathematical precision a monument ingeniously designed.

Pensive pendentive contemplating wisdom divine --Haghia Sophia-- in beatific stasis dematerialized by light and color an abstract form suspended over marble meadows, golden fields Justinian’s shrine out-dreaming Solomon.

Far below, mortal supplicants grimaces distorted by foolishness and madness.

Whose wisdom bade you hide your grave iconic face? Glittering tesserae set by master mosaists more miracle than handiwork --as Yeats once wrote with Byzantine abandon-- a gaze concealed for centuries.

Your liberated image both awful and angelic conjures forth that flaming presence barring paradise (many-eyed, six-winged, sword-girted) incorporeal paradox rebuking our mortality.

Unveiled amidst great fanfare now isolated like a winged pawn your aura bound by crass iconoclasts crude brinksmanship and cynical grandstanding (your fellow seraphim remain face-capped) a politics demonic.

Like Gabriel we meet your gaze with wonder and amazement sacred beauty revealed angelic accommodation for this fallen human state aesthetic reminder of celestial glories a hovering reproach to folly that ever seeks yet seldom finds its cure.

Peter Jeffreys ©2020

Open Letter from A. Diamataris to President Trump

Dear Mr. President,

In the significant, historic and critical issues of our day, the first being COVID-19, on July 10, one more was added, without provocation.

It is a problem that threatens to blow up relations between Christianity and other religions and Muslims for many years.

I am referring to the historically backward, politically opportunistic and explosive decision – expressing contempt to the international community, and especially to America – of Turkish President Erdogan to turn the great Church and global symbol of Christianity, the Aghia Sophia, into a mosque - after 86 years.

This decision must not and cannot stand. This decision is shameful; it is an insult, an affront to humanity and to you personally, as the leader of the free World. It must be overturned.

Mr. President, As you know, on Wednesday, July 1, your Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, speaking on your behalf, issued a statement

saying:

"The United States views a change in the status of the Hagia Sophia as diminishing the legacy of this remarkable building and its unsurpassed ability—so rare in the modern world—to serve humanity as a much-needed bridge between those of differing faith traditions and cultures."

This bridge, Mr. President, was blown up by Erdogan. And this was done for short-term political gain.

Mr. President, We do not question Erdogan's right to manage his internal affairs and the issues of his sovereignty – even though he also challenges the sovereignty of Greece and Cyprus on a daily basis – as he thinks is best. However, the fact that he has the right to turn Aghia Sophia into a mosque does not mean that he should do so. Just because we have the power to do something, does not mean we should exercise that power - i.e., just because we have nuclear weapons, does not mean we should use them.

Turkey and Constantinople

have thousands of mosques, some of which are magnificent - such as the Blue Mosque. They do not need another mosque.

So he shouldn't ignore or gaslight the global public opinion and specifically the opinion of the United States for something that has nothing to do with the national security of his country.

Mr. President, I address you as an American citizen, because you are the only one who can, if you so choose, intervene and persuade him to overturn this decision. Even if you persuade Erdogan to put this decision 'on ice' to be addressed again some time later in the future, it would be a big step in the right direction...

You are the only one who can do this, because you are the President of the United States and because you have a very good personal relationship with him.

You have done him many – even personal – favors, such as helping the Turkish state-

Second Open Letter to President Trump

Dear Mr. President,

In an effort to respect your time, it was not my intention to send you a second open letter, after yesterday's first, in which I presented to you the essence of the matter regarding Aghia Sophia.

But the facts force me to do so in the hope that in this way I will contribute to the protection of American interests, as well as the interests of Orthodox Christians, including Greeks, and all Christians more generally

As you certainly know much better than I do, in every age - and especially in the present - propaganda is as important as reality. He who loses the battle of painting the picture of reality against propagandists, loses the war on the vital front of public opinion.

And Russia, under former KGB agent Vladimir Putin, has specialized in propaganda to secure public support for issues of interest to his country.

Yesterday, your advisers likely informed you that Putin had called on Erdogan to "pay attention to the importance of the public outcry in Russia over the decision to change the status of the Aghia Sophia."

Mr. President, Putin doesn't care about the Aghia Sophia. Nor does he care about the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The opposite is the case. The Russians are doing everything they can, as your advisers certainly know, to weaken the Patriarchate. I remind you of the recent events in Ukraine and the

war Moscow waged against the Ecumenical Patriarchate, because of its brave, pro-Western position.

Why is Putin "interested" in the Aghia Sophia?

It is clear that the Russian President wants to declare himself the protector of the Orthodox Church.

And at no actual cost. Note that he did not do or say anything before Erdogan's decision to convert the Aghia Sophia

The truth is that Russia has never done anything as substantial for Greece as America has done. A Marshall Plan, a Truman Plan, something. And yet, with such propaganda actions, he manages to win the gratitude of many Greeks.

into a working mosque, unlike you, who took a stand through Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's statement.

However, he appears after the fact and calls Erdogan in an effort to maintain and amplify the myth that Russia is the force protecting Orthodoxy and the Greeks, as many believe

The truth is that Russia has never done anything as substantial for Greece as America has done. A Marshall Plan, a Truman Plan, something.

And yet, with such propaganda actions, he manages to win the gratitude of many Greeks.

Today, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, Mr. President, Putin's speech will be discussed in the churches, in the debates

among Greek citizens, and in some media.

You must not allow Putin's propaganda to stand.

It is unjust that America did what was right before the events that lead to the conversion of the Aghia Sophia took place - when it actually counted - but then came under attack by Turkey's government for acting preemptively. In the meantime, Russia has stolen America's fruits of labor while concurrently manipu-

lating the public perception of the world's Orthodox Faithful.

Mr. President, Only you can pick up the phone and ask Erdogan to reverse his decision to turn Aghia Sophia into a mosque.

Only you can liberate Aghia Sophia from Erdogan's grip, as you did with Pastor Andrew Branson.

Only you can counter Russia's propaganda moves.

Do not let the Orthodox, including the Greeks, get the wrong impression that Russia is their protector.

Because it is unjust, and we will be dealing with the negative consequences for many years to come.

Sincerely, Antonis H. Diamataris

After the Turkish Court Ruling

By Theodore G. Karakostas

Turkey's highest court ruled that Aghia Sophia may become a Mosque. During the weeks leading up to the present court ruling governments, churches, and cultural organizations expressed opposition to Turkish President Erdogan's plans for Aghia Sophia. Finally, a long overdue uproar in response to Turkish aggression. Greece took the initial steps in opposing Turkey's plans for Aghia Sophia. The American Government expressed its opposition as have the Russians and other European governments.

UNESCO finally went on the record by writing letters to Turkish officials expressing opposition to the conversion of Aghia Sophia. Better late than never, but it would have been nice if UNESCO had opposed Turkish plans years earlier when protests might have made a difference. Ankara's aggressive designs on Aghia Sophia began in 2013 when Turkey converted the Church-Museum of Aghia Sophia in Trebizond into a Mosque. They later converted the Church-Museums (also named Aghia Sophia) of Nicea (Iznik) and Adrianople (Edirne) into Mosques. Having met no opposition there, the Turks proceeded to the conversion of THE Aghia Sophia.

It should not be at all surprising that the Turks have reacted with complete and utter contempt for world opinion. In 2011, Turkey nearly started a war with Israel when it sent a flotilla of leftist protesters from the occupied territory of Cyprus (whose sovereignty this group was violating) to Gaza to break the Israeli blockade. In 2015, President Erdogan ordered the shooting down of a Russian plane over Syria and might have triggered a third world war. In the late stages of the fight against Islamic State in Syria Turkey threatened to invade the areas where American forces were assisting the Syrian Kurds. If the Turks were prepared to instigate potential wars against Israel, Russia, and America they were certainly not going to restrain themselves over the matter of Aghia Sophia.

Prominent media outlets normally silent on affairs pertaining to Turkey have come alive with coverage and analysis of Aghia Sophia. Some have speculated that President Erdogan is doing this for partisan political purposes because of the Coronavirus and the problems of the Turkish economy. This is absolutely wrong. President Erdogan is a very successful revolutionary who has overcome two major obstacles to ensure the success of his revolution. First, he managed to survive the attempted coup of 2004 (known as the Ergenekon affair). His government successfully purged the military of hundreds of prominent Kemalist army officers. Kemalism refers to the cult that was dedicated by the Turkish military to the personality of the final perpetrator of the Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek genocides Mustafa Kemal. The Kemalists put up a successful front for eighty years making Turkey appear to ignorant sources as a moderate democracy, although the reality was quite different.

Having purged the military of Kemalists, the Erdogan government installed Islamic army

leaste.

And you did it to satisfy your great electoral base, the Evangelical Christians. And you did well to do so.

Mr. President, The subject of Aghia Sophia is infinitely more important than any individual. And it will have infinitely greater political impact.

Raise your flag. Ask Erdogan to reverse his decision.

Demand it. There are still 11 days left before the first Muslim prayer service will be held in Aghia Sophia. Urge Erdogan to find an excuse to delay it, to put it on ice.

He cannot be allowed to show such contempt for Christianity, America, and you personally.

You will earn the gratitude of countless Christians in the United States and internationally. And you will have done both what is right and what is just

And also, for God's sake, tell him not to dare disturb the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Hellenes of the City.

officers known as 'Gulenists' named after their leader who is living in exile in the United States. Over time, a rift developed between Erdogan's Islamists and the Gulenists and it was apparently the latter who were responsible for the attempted coup of July 15, 2016. The conversion of Aghia Sophia is both a matter of ideology (Turkish nationalism) and a source of deep religious commitment by the Turkish President. The move against Aghia Sophia did not come from nowhere. Not only were these designs preceded by the conversions of the aforementioned Church-Museums they were preceded by the triumphalist displays of May 29, 2020 in which the conquest of Constantinople was celebrated.

President Erdogan has responded by insisting the conversion of Aghia Sophia is a matter of Turkish sovereignty. The appeals of governments, churches, and cultural institutions are not seen by the Turkish leadership for what they are. They are simply appeals based on the fact that Aghia Sophia is a holy site for Christians and a cultural monument for secular groups and academic institutions. The Turkish leadership sees this in

Ankara's aggressive designs on Aghia Sophia began in 2013 when Turkey converted the Church-Museum of Aghia Sophia in Trebizond into a Mosque. They later converted other Church-Museums.

its traditionally paranoid way, interpreting diplomatic and good natured appeals with actual threats. The most interesting aspect of this entire affair is the strong Russian opposition to the Turkish designs on Aghia Sophia.

The Russian Orthodox Church has reminded the world that the envoys of Prince Vladimir who travelled to Constantinople in the late tenth century attended the Divine Liturgy in the Great Church and were so enthralled that Saint Vladimir was moved to accept Byzantine Christianity. The Russian Church has been joined by the Russian Foreign Ministry and the Russian Duma in formulating appeals to Turkey not to change the status of Aghia Sophia. As of this writing, the Orthodox Churches of Jerusalem, Rumania, and Georgia have now expressed opposition to the conversion of Aghia Sophia.

The Turkish conversion of Aghia Sophia may come to symbolize the Erdogan revolution in Turkey. Much like the Iranian revolution was symbolized by the seizure of the American embassy in Tehran, and much like the world saw an early preview of Nazi horror with the burning of books in May 1933, the disturbance of the hallowed ground of Aghia Sophia is a warning that Turkey is a pariah and is becoming a jihadist state. The civilized world has ignored so many Turkish horrors and crimes against humanity in the past. May the Angels and the Saints of Aghia Sophia and the Triune God whom they serve awaken the world from its indifference to evil.

Aghia Sophia: Denying Erdogan a Cheap Victory

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has never lost his laser-like focus on staying in power while claiming electoral democratic legitimacy. His decision to end Aghia Sofia's status as a museum and reopen it as a mosque serves as a cheap demagogic victory to keep his ethno-religious political base energized. Capturing the iconic cathedral – the “Great Church” of Christianity until the fall of Constantinople in 1453 – symbolized the Ottoman Empire's arrival on the world scene as the heir to the power of the Roman Empire. Mehmet II, the Conqueror of Constantinople, like any great leader, understood the power of symbolism. So did Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the modern Turkish state. His decision to close the Mosque of Aya-sofya (in the Turkish vernacular) in 1931 and reopen it as a museum in 1935 coincided with his determination to tie Turkey closer to Europe and to build an alliance with the Ottoman Empire's bitterest enemies, the Orthodox Christian states that had won independence from the Ottoman Empire. Ataturk found a willing partner in the greatest modern Greek political leader, Eleftherios Venizelos. Ataturk closed Aghia Sofia as a mosque in 1930 during a tense period in Venizelos' last stint in power (1928 – 1932). At that time Greek politicians had attacked Venizelos for “giving away too much” trying to reconcile with Turkey. Ataturk then reopened the Great Church in 1935 with fanfare as a museum when Venizelos appeared set on a political comeback. Do not regard this as just coincidences. Leaders like Ataturk don't do coincidences.

Nor can we divorce convert-

ing Aghia Sophia back into a mosque from Erdogan's political strategy. Erdogan has never hidden his ambitions to achieve in the 21st century what Ataturk accomplished in the 20th. He obsesses at building his legacy as the Leader who will have restored Turkey's position as a world power and leader of the Islamic world. He got off to a good start growing Turkey's economy dramatically after coming to power in 2003. Then the Great Recession struck in 2008 and his many subsequent missteps tarnished his reputation as an economic leader. As the luster wore off, others including the old Kemalist military and intellectual establishment and his erstwhile ally, the Islamist educator Fethullah Gülen, challenged his authority. In 2013, he turned on Gülen, whose supporters dominated the police and judiciary at the time. In 2016, Erdogan crushed a coup by the remnants of Kemalism in the military in 2016 that he has since turned to prosecution of Gülen's followers.

Erdogan linked Kemalists to the coup and initiated a systematic campaign to erase the legacy of Kemal Ataturk. He denies any ambition to become an Ottoman Sultan (despite building an 1,100 room palace), but contrasts his embrace of Islam and Turkey's Ottoman history with Ataturk's ferocious campaign to impose secularism on the new Turkish Republic. Erdogan accuses Ataturk of destroy-

ing the proud history of the Ottoman Empire and surrendering Turkish territory in the Lausanne Treaty of 1923. He rants about Aegean islands “so close I can shout to them,” that were “given away” to the Greeks by the “alcoholic” former hero now recast a traitor.

Reestablishing Aghia Sofia as a mosque accomplishes several objectives. It not only appeals to his religious base but also resonates with more secular nationalists who saw Ataturk's converting Istanbul's greatest mosque into a museum as a concession to the hated Greeks. Foreign criticism allows Erdogan to conjure up more enemies. He tars Turkish intelligentsia, who do criticize the action, as infected with the Kemalist legacy. His base thrives on criticism from Christian countries. Erdogan is confident they will do no more than wag their fingers. Constrained by the close personal relationship between President Trump and Turkey's leader, Secretary of State Pompeo's can only express America's “disappointment.” Does anyone seriously believe that the U.S. Government will impose sanctions on Erdogan for this action? It may gratify Orthodox Christians to hear the world protest but Erdogan delights in the empty rhetoric that adds to his domestic appeal.

However, there may be a better way of responding. Erdogan has stated that he will keep



Special to The National Herald

Aghia Sofia open to tourists and will limit prayers in the edifice to certain important dates. (It is, after all, the most visited tourist site in Turkey.) Take him at his word. The Ecumenical Patriarchate should demand that Erdogan also open the Great Church to Christians and let him conduct services. If Erdogan keeps the edifice as a place of worship to the God sacred to Christians and Muslims alike, he would gain no little international support. If Patriarch Bartholomew and other Orthodox leaders can persuade Putin – who professes a great attachment to the Orthodox faith – to lend his voice it would place Erdogan in a difficult place. He needs Moscow as he stumbles from one foreign policy crisis to another.

I have no illusions. As in the United States and elsewhere, domestic politics always 'trump' international concerns in Turkey. Erdogan will not go along but such an enlightened and emotional appeal from the Christian world would certainly contribute to the political isolation of Turkey, especially if American evangelicals can be persuaded to support the cause. President Trump might then reconsider his bromance with Erdogan in light of his parochial interests in maintaining his evangelical political base. And that would resonate in Erdogan's 1,100-room palace.

Patrick Theros served in the U.S. foreign service for 36 years. He was U.S. Ambassador to Qatar and also directed the State Department's Counterterrorism Office. He currently represents the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the United States.

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What is Wrong with You People!

The National Herald June 27-July 3rd edition had on its front page an illegal immigrant (called refuge) protesting for more illegal immigrants to Greece. Your newspaper underneath his picture wrote: “A lone protester with a sign speaks as loudly as a throng in support of refuge rights” Wow!!! Wow!!! What is wrong with you people? How about Greek people’s rights? Does your newspaper ac-

TO OUR READERS

The National Herald welcomes letters from its readers intended for publication. They should include the writer’s name, address, and telephone number and be addressed to: The Editor, The National Herald, 37-10 30th Street, Long Island City, NY 11101. Letters can also be faxed to (718) 472-0510 or e-mailed to eleni.sakellis@ekirikas.com. We reserve the right to edit letters for publication and regret that we are unable to acknowledge or return those left unpublished.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

knowledge and or do anything about the fact that due to the bad management by the Greek government since 1981 Greece is in a crisis not dissimilar during the Turkish occupation? Does, your newspaper fight for Greek’s rights? Do you people know that: A) A lot of Greeks are going hungry, while the government is giving money to illegal immigrants? B) Due to heavy regulations you cannot make any money in Greece no matter your business? And if you make any money, the government will take it via exces-

sive taxes. Ask any businessman there. C) Able Greeks who can, leave the country by droves and only the less able remain. What kind of country will be left? Your newspaper was instrumental in helping all these socialistic governments in Greece over the last 40 years and look at the results. Greek-American organizations are in disarray. None of them

are effective in anything since they have no voting members. Most of them are ‘Mitsos clubs’. It is as if a suicidal curse has come over us and we decided to give up on our heritage and our Patrida, Greece. I do not know what else to say.

Dr. Alexander Alemis
New York, NY



ANALYSIS

Erdogan’s Malefaction and Our Loneliness

By Theodore Kalmoukos

Turkey’s President Tayip Erdogan announced and executed his malefaction, or crime if you prefer: the conversion of Aghia Sophia – the Great Church of Orthodoxy and our Genos – into a mosque. As if Constantinople doesn’t have enough mosques. What was revealed, however, one more time, is our loneliness... our isolation.

Of course now, after the fact, we are running around endlessly. Statements upon statements, announcements upon announcements, banging of drums, so many tears and sighs. Even the self-proclaimed leaders Tsipras of SYRIZA and Koutsoumbas of the hard core Communist party made crying statements about Aghia Sophia. For God’s sake!

My aristocratic and extremely wealthy grandmother from Smyrna who became a refugee in 1922 in Lesbos told me often that “the Turks don’t undo what they do.” With my grandfather she lived the Turkish atrocities in Smyrna, in Tsesme, and Aivalick. They were prominent in their homelands and then they became refugees in Lesbos.

Yes, it is very true what my grandmother Vasiliki was often telling me. This is the bitter reality if we dare to remember the closing of the historic and eminent Theological School of Halki 49 years ago or the invasion of Cyprus more than 45 years ago. Through all these years countless resolutions have been issued, and there have been many interventions, pressure on Ankara from everywhere, but the Turks con-

tinue their agenda of ‘hava’ as they say in their tongue, because the captivity of Cyprus continues and the Theological School of Halki remains closed, which means that the Turks don’t really care no matter who talks to them.

No, in the enslaved Aghia Sophia from July 24 and on, those fanatic mobs will pray to Allah and to Mohammed beneath the gaze of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, John the Chrysostom, and other Saints of our Orthodox Church. What a profanation of the holies and sacred articles of our Faith!

Someone would have to be consciously ingenious to believe for a moment that Erdogan will reconsider his decisions because of the protests of Mistotakis, Dendias, or Voriadis from the Greek Government or Velopoulos from the Greek Solution Party who promotes and sells those ‘miraculous’ ointments and vaselines from Mount Athos. The one who hasn’t been heard from yet is the globalist Varoufakis to rap one of his usual anecdotes.

Truly, where is Europe? What Europe, you would ask and very rightly so. Where is UNESCO? Ah ill-starred Greece how do you tolerate such isolation?

I don’t believe that Erdogan will take seriously the presidential candidate Biden’s statement. Certainly Erdogan will disregard the resolutions and statements of patriarchs, archbishops, hierarchs and other ecclesiastical officials from Greece and the Diaspora.

But Erdogan took seriously the submissive positions, the concessions of the Armenian Patriarch and also the Roman Catholic

Bishops of Turkey who gave him the green light to go ahead claiming that it is “an internal issue.” How shameful!

After much pressure and behind the scenes expressions of disappointment Pope Francis appeared on Sunday and said that he is “deeply pained” by it all. That was it.

Let me say it out loud that it is now obvious that all the compliments paid by popes from time to time to the “free captive martyr” Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, all those embraces and brotherly kisses and the rest are simply the well-known hypocritical behaviors of the Vatican.

After all, the history and the tactics of the Roman Catholics in the difficult times experienced by Orthodoxy and Hellenism are known well know – they either they drift away when we need them or they undertake insidious actions. I would dare to state here that they did more harm to Constantinople and to the sacred sites, churches, and symbols of Orthodoxy with their crusades – especially the fourth one – than the Turks did.

Let me say it loud and clear that the Turks understand only one language: power. If for example the President Donald Trump picks up the phone and tells Erdogan keep your hands off Aghia Sophia or I will break them in three (trisect them) – do you think that Erdogan would dare to do what he did on Friday July 10? President Trump can still do it if he wants to write history. The question is, is there anybody to make such a recommendation to him?

Now the question is, what is Erdogan’s next target? Of course automatically and obviously our mind goes to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. After all he has proved that he can attempt to do anything. Without wanting to exclude any possibility, I must say, however, that I am of the opinion that he is not going to touch the Patriarchate for the following reasons: First the Ecumenical Patriarchate is not a threat, but on the contrary Erdogan uses it to brag that the See of the Orthodox Church is in Turkey and thus he sells the myth that there is religious freedom in his country. Second, the Ecumenical Patriarchate is a source of income for Turkey.

Since Erdogan faces serious deadlocks on many fronts and also an unstoppable economic decline, his next move will be the islands of Northeastern Aegean with my birthplace Lesbos the first in line.

And one more thing: We shouldn’t forget that Erdogan has the Russian S400 missiles – and there are fears he is secretly developing nuclear weapons.

One does not need to have oracular abilities to understand what this all means and where things are heading. In other words, a monster has grown up among the leaders of the nations of the civilized world who in order to keep the mob bigoted and devoted to him will not hesitate to do anything in his attempts to be in power for life. And we will be running around aimlessly as we usually do and continue to do even now as the Aghia Sophia tragedy unfolds because we live the drama of our isolation.

PRESS CLIPPING

Attempt to Discredit Fauci

With many effective strategies available for protecting Americans from the coronavirus, President Donald Trump is employing one guaranteed to make things worse: Attacking the scientist whose knowledge and advice are trusted most by Americans.

Trump and White House officials are attempting to discredit Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation’s foremost infectious disease expert who, not coincidentally, has been speaking out more forcefully about America’s surging COVID-19 cases. Fauci is right to be concerned, Trump is wrong to denigrate him. But should Trump succeed in muzzling or sidelining Fauci, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo should be ready to hire the Brooklyn native in a New York minute.

The attacks on Fauci are not surprising. Trump’s administration routinely discredits and ignores science on environmental and climate change issues. This week it ordered hospitals to send COVID-19 patient data directly to the Department of Health and Human Services, bypassing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and increasing the chances the data will be politicized by the White House.

The disinformation campaign against Fauci is meant to undermine his credibility, his strongest asset in this war. One White House aide posted a cartoon mocking Fauci on social media. Trump ludicrously retweeted a baseless claim by TV game show host Chuck Woolery that “every-one” is lying about the coronavirus, naming the CDC and doctors. That appears to include Fauci, who long ago was banned from televised coronavirus task force briefings, his fact-based accounts at odds with Trump’s fantasies. Last weekend, White

House officials, without attaching their names, released a list of bullet points — like opposition research done on a political foe — showing when Fauci’s guidance shifted over time.

But the list did not include the many times, even now, when Trump and other officials have uttered outright falsehoods about the coronavirus and the administration’s failure to control it. And, advice is bound to change when experts confront a new disease about which nothing is known and with which no one has experience. Fauci at least had the wisdom to change his guidance as new evidence emerged.

The same is true of the World Health Organization, which Trump wants to exit, partly because he says it was soft on China in the early days of the crisis. But so was Trump, who praised China’s hard work and transparency in battling COVID-19, and he downplayed the severity of the virus long after the WHO declared it a global emergency. The WHO has problems. Created by its member nations, it is too beholden to them, has been slow-footed at times, and lacks funding. But its struggles are a reason to strengthen it, not abandon it. The WHO has done excellent work like eradicating smallpox and nearly eradicating polio. If the coronavirus has taught us anything, it’s that we’re all in this together and must cooperate — like on a vaccine — to defeat it.

Trump should heed that lesson. Sensible steps derived from science by experts steeped in knowledge have a better chance of delivering us from the virus than fact-challenged tweets and proclamations.

This editorial was originally published in Newsday on July 15.

COMMENTARY

2020 Election is between Donald Trump and Karl Marx

I am not one to exaggerate. I have never called any election “the most important one of our lifetime.” In 1980, when Ronald Reagan was elected president, I think America was significantly upgraded. The incumbent he defeated that year, Jimmy Carter, is a national treasure: at 95, he’s the longest-living president of all time. May God bless him to live to be 120! But he’s one of the most ineffective presidents of all time. If Reagan is in the top ten, Carter is clearly in the ten bottom. Even so, 1980 does not qualify as the most important election ever; after all, the sky didn’t fall during Carter’s first term, and so I think we would’ve survived a second. If Carter’s vice president, Walter Mondale, had beaten Reagan in 1984, it would’ve been a shame, but not a danger. The 1988 election, between the elder George Bush and Michael Dukakis, exaggerated the candidates’ ideological differences: Bush was not nearly as conservative and Dukakis not quite as liberal as they were made out to be. The 1992, 1996, and 2000 elections, Bush vs. Bill Clinton, Clinton vs. Bob Dole, and the younger George Bush vs. Al Gore, respectively, were essentially a cavalcade of centrists, the choice being more about personality than political philosophy. In 2004, Democrat John Kerry unsuccessfully challenged Bush for reelection, and in 2008 and 2012, Democrat Barack Obama defeated centrist Republicans John McCain and then Mitt Romney. Obama was at the left edge of centrism, and Kerry a little to Obama’s left. Eight years under Obama was not nearly the catastrophe right wingers would want you to believe, and even a Kerry presidency would not have destroyed our nation. And

in 2016, I was more excited than I had been about any election since Reagan-Carter: I was intensely rooting for Donald Trump to win so that he could strike a lethal blow against the major party establishment duopoly, and I had tremendous disdain for Hillary Clinton as a human being. Yet, if Hillary had won and was president right now, while I don’t think she’d be nearly as good as Trump, she too would not have ruined America.

This time around, however, I am finally going to say: this is the most important election of my lifetime. Considering no one reading this column was yet born in 1860 (when Abraham Lincoln won), it is the most important election of your lifetime too! You see, this election is, essentially, a choice between Donald Trump and Karl Marx. That’s not to suggest that Trump’s likely main opponent, Joe Biden, is Marx. Rather, that the rapidly declining Biden, if elected, would be controlled by modern-day Marxists, who have hijacked the Democratic Party and are truly seeking to destroy America’s institutions, such as the government itself. Biden may have the will to stop them, but not the stamina.

While writing this column, I learned that vandals in Elmhurst, NY defaced a statue of the Virgin Mary — you know, that white supremacist slaveholder. If the Mother of God doesn’t escape these anarchists’ wrath, how can a mere mortal like Lincoln do so (he didn’t;



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plenty of his statues have been vandalized as well)? Never mind that he courageously stepped up and brought slavery in the United States to an end. In 2017, amid protests to remove Confederate statues from public places, President Trump wondered whether they would tear down statues of Presidents Washington and Jefferson too, because they owned slaves. That is no longer a rhetorical question; it’s already happened.

Not only have Aunt Jemima and Uncle Ben been removed from supermarket shelves (because it’s racist to associate black persons with food?), but so has the Eskimo Pie — let me guess, because so many Inuits and Aleutian Islanders have been brutalized by police? Gone with the Wind, one of the greatest films of all time, was almost completely censored by HBO because it didn’t categorically denounce slavery; it was later retained but with a mandate to include a slavery denunciation qualifier. Well, while we’re at it, shall we ban the Bible as well, because it contains several passages describing slavery as an acceptable fact of life?

These radical anarchists are obsessively anti-authority, recognizing full well that most law enforcement officers do not use excessive force. Their police brutality ‘wokeness’ is a false premise they utilize to further their objective of dismantling all institutions of law and order. It is no wonder, then, that so many of these same Marxists also ad-

vocate for open borders. If they get their way, Sanctuary Cities — safe havens where PHIs (Persons Here Illegally) don’t have to worry about being turned in to the authorities — will be a moot concept, because soon enough, there won’t be any place to turn them in.

How did things get so out of control? Contrary to popular belief among some rightwing circles, it wasn’t Obama’s doing. The problem actually worsened when Obama left office, because so much of the media, hell-bent on destroying Trump, used every opportunity to portray him as a monster. The same media outlets who called Trump’s recent Mt. Rushmore speech “dark and divisive” used those same adjectives to describe his inaugural address on January 20, 2017. I attended the event live, along with a TNH colleague of mine who’s not a Trump supporter but who liked that speech and didn’t agree with the “dark and divisive” depiction. Think about this carefully: who is the great divider, is it the real Donald Trump, or the media, because they created the illusionary Trump boogeyman?

More important than how we got here is where we’re heading. If this were merely a choice between Trump and Biden, I’d still vote Trump, but I’d think Biden would be relatively harmless. Instead, it’s a choice between Trump and a bunch of rebellious, anarchistic, Marxist thugs who, if Biden wins will take over the Oval Office and tell him: “ok Grandpa, you go fix yourself a nice cup of tea. We’ll take it from here.”

Constantinos E. Scaros’ latest book, Stop Calling Them “Immigrants,” is available in print and Kindle formats on amazon.com.

Words Are Not Enough. Do Your Duty for Aghia Sophia!

By Antonis H. Diamataris

The issue of the conversion of Aghia Sophia into a mosque is an issue that almost everyone, Christians and non-Christians alike, can understand and agree on.

We just need to give them some information and help them understand how much we care.

The following text serves this purpose. As a sample letter, e-mail, etc., it is a tool to inform and to show your great interest to the politicians of your region, but also to the political leadership of the country, including the President and the presidential candidate of the Democratic Party.

I hereby appeal to everyone to help through their mass participation. Politicians attach great importance to the interests expressed by their constituents.

Do it now. Let not a single day be lost.
Thank you.

Dear Senator/Representative Last Name,

I am writing to you to express my great concern regarding Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's decision to convert the Hagia Sophia into a working mosque and to urge you to denounce his actions.

Background:
After 86 years, Turkey's Council of State annulled the 1935 decision to convert Hagia Sophia into a museum, and President Erdogan signed a decree converting it into a working mosque. The first Islamic prayers are said to be held there starting on July 24 2020.

Built almost 1,500 years ago, the location was originally a Christian Cathedral before being converted into a mosque in 1453 following the Ottoman conquest of the city. In 1935, the Hagia Sophia became a museum under former Turkish President Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, and later a UNESCO World Heritage site. It has since been considered a bridge between the two faiths and a strong symbol of coexistence.

On July 1, Secretary Pompeo issued a statement urging the Turkish government to maintain the status of Hagia Sophia as a museum. He stated, "It is critical that this site remain accessible to people of all faiths and that its history is preserved. I urge the Government of Turkey to support Hagia Sophia's preservation in a manner that respects religious pluralism and its rich history."

Analysis:
President Erdogan's decision to undo Hagia Sophia's status as a museum is unconscionable and demonstrates his indifference to the many faiths and backgrounds of millions of individuals around the world. It has planted a seed to further sow division in an already tense region. His decision brutally in-

sults the historical memory of a world cultural symbol.

Conclusion:
While the Hagia Sophia may be on Turkish soil, it belongs to the world as a place of deep spiritual significance for people of diverse backgrounds. The conversion of its status is unnecessarily divisive – especially now as our shared world currently faces an unprecedented global health crisis. This is the time for people of all faiths to be unified; this is the time to build bridges between Islam and Christianity.

I, along with Christians and non-Christians alike, believe that the Hagia Sophia should remain a UNESCO World Heritage site representing a peaceful coexistence and respect among religions. It is a gift to humankind and its value is universal. The Hagia Sophia's status as a religiously neutral museum for people of all faiths and cultures to visit must be preserved.

I urge you to use your voice and to join the worldwide chorus of those who are outraged at this significant religious and cultural loss, not just for Orthodox Christians, but for humankind.

Respectfully submitted,

First Name Last Name

As welcome a respite as it was during the time of COVID-19, British comic actors Steve Coogan and Rob Brydon, today's counterparts to Bob Hope and Bing Crosby's The Road movies, managed somehow to miss seeing Greece in their film The Trip to Greece.

You can't get to know anyplace if you stay in Five-Star hotels and eat at their restaurants or, as they did, skip genuine tavernas offering incomparably fresh horiatiki Greek salads and sea food for well under 50 euros for two people, including beer and wine.

Instead, between quips and insults that in their first three movies The Trip, The Trip to Italy and the Trip to Spain, were wickedly funny and endearing, they traipsed their way through Greece, eating a 307-euro (\$350) lunch of mussels at a fancy restaurant that could be had for 10 times less at places offering real Greek food.

They even managed to make Greece a cameo as their itinerary was designed to follow that of Odysseus, who – at least according to Homer – didn't stay at the Grande Bretagne in Athens on the way to Ithaca.

The hotel, by the way, is near a little hill called the Acropolis that has a decent attraction on top called The Parthenon, which is worth visiting even if you have to rub elbows with the hoi polloi who wouldn't know a barb from a riposte.

Maybe it's because we watched this while on Tzia, also known as Kea, one of the quietest

Greek islands, having just finished a meal at Kristoforos, a seaside restaurant nestled under trees on Poisses Beach, feeling a soft breeze blow off the water.

That was accompanied by the biggest – and best – grilled squid you'll see on any plate this side of 20,000 Leagues Beneath the Sea – and grilled octopus that created new taste buds, a crunching horiatiki made with tomatoes and peppers and onions produced right there, and two Greek beers. The tab? It was just 35 euros (\$40).

Don't get me wrong. These guys are flat-out funny as they spar for the title of the Fastest Wit and their slings seem designed to sting, if not injure, as they battle for one-upsmanship but the Aristotle and bits of Greek history thrown into the script seemed affected, unlike their dueling impersonations of Robert DeNiro and Mick Jagger.

The movies are like My Dinner With Andre as take-out, and at times are genuinely moving when they switch from comedy to pathos, and the depths of the soul are plumbed past jokes, including Coogan's dream of Hades and his father's death, which happened two years before the movie showing fictional representations of themselves.

That was after their venture



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Brydon let slip an unfortunate bad joke about the Greek island of Lesbos that's overrun with refugees being so close that refugees could swim there, perhaps not knowing scores have drowned when dinghies cap-sized.

Undoubtedly thinking it would be too touristy and lacking the cerebral cachet to lift the movie into philosophy (Coogan, an atheist, admitted to believing more in Greek philosophers than religion) the pair didn't go to the usual places, but in so doing missed the quaint little places that make a trip unforgettable.

They ate at the pricey Varoulko, a Michelin-starred seaside place in Piraeus in the little Mikrolimano marina, a restaurant said to be worth its stars.

But for our money if you take a trip to Greece you're better served sitting almost in the water at Delfinia, The Dolphins, down a hill on the back side of San-

torini, where the fish jump into your plate and the setting is more serene, the food succulent and much cheaper.

As Varoulko noted, the Nobel Prize winning poet Odysseus Elytis wrote, "If you deconstruct Greece, you will see at the end that what is left is an olive tree, a vineyard and a fishing boat," most of which they missed.

Director Michael Winterbottom said he wanted to make the anti-tourist trip and told Conde Nast's Traveler that, "one of the things we try and do is find places where Rob and Steve's conversations can start with something vaguely connected to the place like Greek drama or Greek democracy, and then wander off into their usual inanities."

It wasn't a bad idea to go the other way except they went way the other way, not just to places less visited despite their allure – the island of Hydra where singer Leonard Cohen lived off and on, the magical Cape Sounion and the ancient, glorious theater of Epidaurus, which Winterbottom thought was in Macedonia, not the Peloponnese.

To his great credit, he told the magazine that, "basically Greece is all mountains and olive groves falling down into the most amazing sea everywhere. It's hard to pick a bad spot to shoot," even if he did miss some. But at least he came and in the end, despite the misses, it was still a hit that made Greece the anti-COVID-19 Utopia from afar.

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COVID-19's Negative Economic Impact Accelerating

The initial international economic response to the COVID-19 pandemic involved nationally enforced lock downs, travel bans, quarantines, and similar measures designed to contain the pandemic. By June, where those policies were followed, infection rates had fallen so dramatically that nations were able to reopen their economies and resume normal activity.

The United States is not one of those nations. Our national government assigned the task of containing the virus to state governments. This scatter-shot approach has resulted in our achieving the disgraceful distinction of having the world's highest death rate due to COVID-19. Even more troubling, we are now experiencing historic new highs in our infection and hospitalization rate while most other nations are achieving new lows. The economic consequences of this reality are bleak.

At the onset of the epidemic, to aid unemployed and laid-off workers through the crisis Congress added \$600 a week to state unemployment checks and legislation that offered tax breaks to companies that kept workers on their payroll even if they were not working. Both of those measures expire by the end of July. Congress also

passed a rent abatement program that ends mid-September. Absent extensions of these measures, an increase in unemployment and evictions seems inevitable.

Billions in federal aid were legislated to sustain 'small businesses' during the pandemic. Due to poor management, most of the funds were garnered by not-so-small corporations with elite legal advisors. The net result is that many genuine small businesses received no aid. Many will not survive the summer.

A similar situation developed regarding family-owned farms. Agribusiness conglomerates rather than family-owned farms got most of the federal aid. Small farmers face a double whammy of having lost business due to closures of hotels, schools, and restaurants while having to deal with lower prices. Especially hard hit have been dairy farmers and farmers dependent on sales of grains and beef.

Millions of Americans work in the service sector which in-



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cludes enterprises such as hotels, sports arenas, theme parks, cinemas, restaurants, and airlines. Numerous cities are economically dependent on trade shows, state fairs, conventions, and other one-time events. This hard-hit sector continues to suffer from the totally reasonable reluctance of most of the public to risk its health in unregulated venues.

Millions of workers also are employed, directly and indirectly, by public schools and universities. The economic backbone of many college towns are institutions of higher learning. Local merchants are often dependent on students for their survival. The desire to reopen schools is universal, but it is not self-evident how to do so safely.

Remote learning is useful, but quality education from grade school to graduate school requires in-person instruction. Nonetheless, careless handling of self-distancing and other standard health measures could spike the infection rate in the

same manner seen in states that opened bars and beaches without effective pre-planning. President Trump worsens the situation by vigorously demanding all public schools reopen this fall whatever the local conditions or planning. Another troubling factor is the irresponsible behavior of some college students.

The crisis also has underscored the inadequacies of our present health care system. Hospitals are under-equipped and understaffed. Some patients already are being turned away by beleaguered hospitals in cities where infections are soaring. Currently, the Trump administration is in court trying to wipe out the Affordable Care Act. If successful, this will leave millions of Americans newly uninsured and end the current protection of those with pre-existing conditions from being denied insurance.

Due to the funding needed to fight the pandemic, state budgets have gone into the red. Without federal assistance, state deficits will result in layoffs of state workers, reduced services, and higher taxes. City workers depending on some state funding also will be affected.

The formula for dealing with the virus has been established

by the EU and states such as New York. As our medical experts have been saying from the onset of the crisis, containment of the virus involves face masks, social distancing, contact testing, and when needed, regional, local, and even national lock downs. Reopenings are safe only when done gradually in carefully regulated phases.

President Trump personifies what not to do by refusing to wear a mask, ignoring the need for contact tracing, and staging indoor rallies with no social distancing. He is in de facto denial of the crisis when he states the pandemic is ebbing and will somehow eventually just "disappear."

The reality is that skyrocketing infection rates have led a number of states to reverse reopening measures and even speak of possible new lockdowns. Most other states have suspended further opening of their economies. Perhaps, the accelerating crisis will spark more sensible federal actions and serve as a wakeup call to irresponsible governors. If not, the worst is yet to come.

Prof. Georgakas is Director of the Greek American Studies Project at Queens College – CUNY and Consulting Editor of CINEASTE magazine.

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ΕΘΝΙΚΟΙ ΚΗΡΥΞΕΙΣ

The Church is Marching On...But to Where?

The Protestant hymn as I sat down to write this message came to mind. Our Greek Orthodox Church is forever striding along, a bump, a rocky plain, a mountain, all in the passing of a century or two, and once in a while we have a synod. Those in charge feel they are spiritually competent in all facets of our Holy Faith and have it in tack and under the usual constraints. Not so!

There are yet committed, faithful and vociferous calls for redress and reconciliation urgently needed to encourage others in these specific areas.

A. The simmering reality of the Alma Realty Androitis debacle must be addressed and resolved. For too long these entities have funneled contributions they have received to themselves who decide how to spend and conduct school and church operations at St. Demetrios of Astoria.

B. Dear esteemed AB, do the contributions to you by the Androitis family early in your assignment preclude you from acting? If so, please appoint an outside committee to truly and honestly investigate the matter, make a decision and make it final. Why does our leadership delay and procrastinate in deciding on verifying situations at the local level when even the priest is complicit? The St. Demetrios community have suffered plenty while the school children have become pawns and their tuition and funds siphoned away for some 30 years.

Now that a lawsuit has entered this church and parish damaging scene, it's not too late for hierarchal action to end these pernicious and damaging control of Alma Realty Androitis and free up the St. Demetrios community.

But fellow readers you know the drill as our esteemed AB will do nothing to alleviate or cure this vexing sore as it goes against the European style of action.

C. I am surprised that our fine Greek writers, Mr. Scaros and others have not exposed the antics of Alma Realty/Androitis.

Why have we allowed these and other malfeasances to continue? Is it because it is a "Greek hot wire"?

D. In the pantheon of our bishops is there anyone, including the clergy who could or would stand up at the risk of his position, comforts, awards and emoluments to call out that Greek Orthodoxy in the 21st century has become a rudderless, leaderless faith at a time when proper, sturdy qualities of HR and sheer business acumen are sorely needed. Have the often-used words of "transparency and responsibility" by the Hierarchy become obsolete?

I shudder as our leader, the esteemed AB points a crooked finger at the direction we Greek Orthodox are going. Now that he has been among us for a year and showered with praise, dinners, awards and honors what do we have to show for his administration of our Church? Ok his appointment of Mr. George Cantonis to President of HCHC. Other than a recent short puff piece in the back pages of TNH, we have heard nothing about what really was happening at the schools. No stats on students, professors or courses. Yet Mr. George Cantonis in his comprehensive plea for contributions for HCHC did find enough funds to place an ad extolling our esteemed AB. Such funds could have been better placed urging our young Orthodox to visit both schools and apply for admission.

Sorry to digress as this subject can be covered and explored in a future article.

Dear readers, I peacefully hope you are still here. We few writers who comment, criticize and offer common sense solutions to wrongs, failings and misdirection of our Greek Orthodox leaders do so only to bring balance, dignity, love and peace to our faith.

Sure, the issues we write about sometimes bring anger to our thoughts and writings, mostly caused by the clergy's and hierarchy's lack of any response or refusal to make corrective

changes.

We are not a bunch of stumble bums. We are or were, a collection of people from many aspects of entrepreneurial businesses, government, military, restaurant, medical and manufacturing during which our careers, have encountered and solved a multitude of problems concerning the public, financial and the welfare of our employees.

I believe we have standing to pray, observe and call out on societal and financial matters which affect our church. That's us, the guys in the pews.

E. It is wrong that while other Orthodox jurisdictions and their respective Patriarchal offices have taken steps to officially welcome women to the status of Deaconess? As you may know Deaconess are responsible for as many as 13 named duties including pastoral cares to women, ministry to the sick and elderly, supervision at liturgy, administration of properties. The other duties include sheltering of guests, teaching, taking the Eucharist to the home bound, even those and more. In this day most of these needs are necessary and spiritually useful and welcomed.

In our Greek Orthodox Faith women outnumber men. Think of it, women have carried the church on their backs for hundreds of years. They certainly have earned the right and duty to have the order of the Deaconate re-established.

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him (James 1:12 NIV).

Nick Karakas
Karakasn@yahoo.com
Naples, FL

California Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis Featured on Vital Interest Podcast

TNH Staff

SACRAMENTO, CA – June 24, 2020 California Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis discussed immigration, trade policy, women in politics and her hopes for the future with host Karen Greenberg, Director of the Center on National Security at Fordham Law School, on the Vital Interests Podcast.

From the Center on National Security, Vital Interests Podcast was designed to help listeners think about security in its many dimensions, from pandemic to climate change, from terrorism to population migration, from war to peace – all with an eye towards the rule of law, the protection of human rights, and the respect for civil liberties.

The podcast opened with Greenberg noting that Kounalakis is the 50th and first woman to be California's Lieutenant Governor and then asked about the duties of the office.

Kounalakis noted that “if the governor for any reason is out of state or unable to fulfill his or her duties, you have someone who can step in, but over the years the role of lieutenant gov-

ernor has changed in California and it's really been shaped largely by the dynamics between the LG and the Governor and then also just the interests and expertise of the person holding the position. I should start by saying that I was elected separately from the Governor. We are an incredibly large and diverse state. I campaigned in all 58 counties, I'd never run for public office before though I had served in government office as an Ambassador and it was this extraordinary election of 2016 when women emboldened by the loss of Hillary Clinton and who heard her call that women should stand up and run for office, I heard that call and before I knew it I was running and built a coalition and have been in office for about a year and a half bringing with me the priorities of the people who I represent and so many of whom I had a chance to meet out on the campaign trail.”

Concerning California and international relations, trade, immigration, and climate change, Kounalakis said, “because I'm a former U.S. Ambassador, and I've had all of this experience in trade, that is the



COURTESY OF LT. GOV. ELENI KOUNALAKIS
California Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis.

main reason why the office of the lieutenant governor is at this moment very engaged and I have a terrific working relationship with the Governor that goes back many, many years,

and he asked me right after I was elected if I would work with him and represent him as his representative on international affairs and trade which, of course, I'm delighted to do. So it is an unusual thing that I would be engaged at this level and it has to do with those things I just said. It also has to do with the fact that California is a nation-state, in most states you wouldn't really have the level of international engagement that we do in California and it's really more important than ever, because so many of our values in those areas you described, on trade, on immigration, on climate, we have a very different view on these things than the current administration in Washington, so that has given us the opportunity. We already had the platform but we're also very driven because we take these issues very seriously. The work that we do on climate change is very important. The importance to our economy of international trade is enormous, and we are without question impacted disproportionately to the rest of the country when it comes to the

tariffs disputes or USMCA ... then in the area of immigration, like the other two, we don't have sovereign authority here, but we are 27 percent foreign born in California and it is estimated that 8-10 percent of our workforce is undocumented, so these policies are critical for us and we would argue that they are critical for the whole country because the contribution of California to the U.S. economy is so enormous, so that's what gives us the platform.”

On the podcast, Kounalakis said, referring to her post as Ambassador to Hungary under the Obama administration, “my grandmother in Greece, who never learned to read, never learned to write, let her son come to the United States alone to work as a farm worker and in one generation her granddaughter was sent back to Europe by the President of the United States,” as an ambassador.

The complete podcast is available online: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/leadership-hope-view-from-california-lt-gov-eleni-kounalakis/id1513338397?i=1000484888133>.



AP PHOTO/ EVAN VUCCI
President Donald Trump holds up a newspaper with the headline that reads "Acquitted" at the 68th annual National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, Feb. 6, 2020.

Donald Trump and the Rule of Law

By William Cooper

On July 9, the Supreme Court ruled that a New York prosecutor may seek President Trump's personal financial documents. The decision was a resounding affirmation that this president – like all presidents before him – is not above the law. But this president, in particular, has a uniquely dysfunctional relationship with the rule of law.

Let's start with his lack of understanding. When it comes to the rule of law, Trump simply does not know the rules. Take his assertion that his “authority” over state governments to address the coronavirus “is total.” This, of course, turns the most basic rule of federalism – that states have central authority over their citizens’ health and safety” – on its head.

That's not to say he's unfamiliar with the legal system. To the contrary, his companies have been the subject of extensive litigation; he has been divorced twice; and he has gone bankrupt numerous times. When it comes to how the executive branch fits into the rest of our constitutional system, however, Trump was essentially starting from scratch the day he was inaugurated.

And it showed.

One of his first acts as president was to issue the blatantly unconstitutional Executive Order 13769 (the ‘travel ban’), seeking to prevent millions of Muslims from entering the country. After public outrage and internal protest at the Department of Justice – culminating in Trump firing Acting Atty. Gen. Sally Yates – Trump abruptly replaced the travel ban with a revised version.

It was downhill from there. The Trump team has since been mired in one piece of legal trouble after another, including the Mueller investigation, numerous indictments, the convictions of Trump's personal lawyer (Michael Cohen), campaign chairman (Paul Manafort), and longtime political advisor (Roger Stone) – to name a few – and ultimately Trump's own impeachment.

Trump has, moreover, cast aside basic norms governing presidential communications about legal matters. For example, he has used Twitter to belittle his own attorney general, weigh in on ongoing federal court cases, make baseless accusations of criminal behavior, advocate for prosecutions of his political rivals, criticize the

DOJ's line prosecutors and intimidate witnesses in active matters.

This bellicosity has given rise to the narrative that Trump is not just lawless, but a dictator who has hijacked our constitutional system. As Rep. Jerry Nadler put it: “he is a dictator” and “only his will goes.”

According to Kurt Bardella, a USA Today Opinion columnist, Trump has turned “the presidency into a dictatorship” and “stripped away the levers of independent oversight until there's nothing left.”

Even Nobel Laureate Paul Krugman recently warned that “authoritarian rule may be just around the corner.”

While rooted in legitimate concern, this narrative is confused. Trump is no dictator. For a president to seize power in our zero-sum constitutional system he must outwit those who currently have it – namely, the other two branches of the federal government and the states. The opposite occurs with Trump: Federal judges repeatedly rule against him; John McCain destroyed his healthcare ambitions; Nancy Pelosi blocked his legislative agenda; Adam Schiff had him impeached. Even Trump's own executive branch subjected him to the multi-year Mueller investigation.

State and local governments likewise do not bend to Trump's will. He quickly rescinded his claim of total authority over the states regarding the coronavirus – after strong public pushback from numerous governors – and retreated back to offering states advisory guidelines. Even local mayors routinely defy his executive orders regarding sanctuary cities.

These things don't happen to dictators. Real dictators consolidate power and effectively craft and utilize the rule of law to advance considered aims. In striking contrast, Donald Trump's goals consistently get blocked by virtually every instrumentally of his own government. Yesterday's Supreme Court opinion is just the latest example.

Donald Trump is not a real dictator transforming our government to his advantage. He is a real estate developer who – while the world watches – fails to understand how it works.

William Cooper is an attorney and syndicated columnist who opines on American politics and has written for The Wall Street Journal and dozens of other newspapers.

TNH Staff

NEW YORK – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris called on New York's Chief Judge Janet DiFiore to seek alternatives for this year's bar exam, including moving the test online and offering diploma privileges to graduates of New York law schools – powers within the executive discretion of the Court of Appeals. Senator Gianaris sent Judge DiFiore a letter dated July 13 outlining his proposal.

Senator Gianaris’ full letter appears below:

“July 13, 2020
Hon. Janet DiFiore, Chief Judge
The New York Court of Appeals
20 Eagle Street
Albany, New York 12207
Dear Chief Judge DiFiore,

I write today in response to the Court of Appeals’ announcement that an in-person New York State Bar Exam will be held September 9-10, 2020. Though the Court of Appeals rightly decided to suspend the July examination out of concern for public safety in light of the coronavirus pandemic, just delaying an in-person exam to September poses a number of risks to test-takers. Preparing for the bar exam is itself a stressful venture, made more intense by the threat of a global pandemic. This further necessitates that test-taking conditions be as comfortable and safe as possible. For the following reasons, I urge the Court of Appeals to consider alternatives to an in-person exam in light of the current pandemic, and to take a more transparent approach with any future decisions regarding changes to the bar exam.

There is a real possibility, ac-

knowledgeed by the New York Board of Law Examiners in an email to candidates on June 30th, that the September exam may again need to be postponed. With cases already spiking in multiple states across the country, we must be prepared for this eventuality. To again postpone the bar exam would be financially damaging for candidates who already have legal jobs paying a lower rate until bar exam passage. Others may not be able to attain employment to begin with until they have taken and passed the exam. Because there is so little information about the potential for the continued spread of COVID-19, another postponement of the July exam would push the test back a second time and be devastating for those waiting to take the exam.

Even if the spread of COVID-19 cases in New York remains manageable enough to make an in-person exam possible for September, there remains an immense public health risk to test-takers. Those taking the exam will have to sit in an indoor environment with numerous others. In the past, the July New York bar exam has attracted upwards of 10,000 people. Given that New York State is still hesitant to open large indoor spaces such as malls and gyms, any form of the test that requires test-takers to remain in one large indoor space is potentially hazardous. Further, those traveling to New York State from elsewhere, which typically consist of 30% of out-of-state law school graduates, not only pose a health risk to others, but also may first face an impractical mandatory quarantine for 14 days under Executive Order No.



SEN. MICHAEL GIANARIS
New York State Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris.

205 before taking the exam in person. These considerations, paired with the fact that applicants choosing to withdraw from the exam must do so by July 15th to receive a fee credit and are not entitled to refunds, will force candidates to take unnecessary risks at a perilous time.

Other states have substituted other measures for an in-person exam. At least five states (Massachusetts, Michigan, Indiana, Louisiana, and Nevada) and Washington, D.C. will be offering online exams while Utah, Washington, and Oregon have agreed to grant “emergency diplomas”

to certain law school graduates. Though the Task Force on the New York Bar Examination expressed reservations about these alternative methods, the risks associated with a further postponement or the holding an in-person exam in September 2020 are too great to be ignored.

I urge you to consider practical alternatives to holding an in-person September 2020 bar exam, and that you demonstrate transparency in subsequent decision-making regarding changes to the bar examination.

Sincerely,
Senator Michael Gianaris
Deputy Majority Leader”

Lynn Afendoulis Running for Congress in MI

TNH Staff

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – Greek-American Lynn Afendoulis is a candidate for what promises to be one of the most contested Congressional seats in the nation: Michigan's Third District.

She announced on July 15 that she raised nearly \$400,000 in the second quarter of 2020. To date, she has raised more than \$850,000 from over 16,300 total donations, with an average donation of \$36, a campaign news release noted, adding that no other candidate running to replace Justin Amash has anywhere near the type of grassroots support that Afendoulis has built over the past year.

“As the granddaughter of hard-working immigrants, I am truly humbled by the people who have contributed \$5, \$10, or \$25 to our campaign over the past year. Every day I go to work to campaign for them; they are the people who motivate me – the people who deserve to be heard and represented by an engaged congresswoman. We deserve better than Justin Amash and I look forward to giving West Michigan the conservative voice it deserves in Congress,” said Afendoulis.

Amash left the Republican Party last year and currently is running as an independent (although he has not ruled out running for president as a Libertarian).

“West Michigan is the land of Gerald Ford and thoughtful conservative leaders who were statesmen and who knew how to make a positive difference

for their district and the country. I intend to be a legislator who follows in those footsteps,” Afendoulis said. “I will protect conservative values that safeguard and strengthen our rights, our families and our freedoms.”

Afendoulis is a first-term Michigan state legislator who is the first freshman to chair the state's Committee on Tax Policy and has spearheaded large-scale

tax fairness issues in the legislature. She has a record of standing firm on conservative principles and working across the aisle to get things done.

All her grandparents immigrated to America. Her maternal grandmother was from the Peloponnese village of Achladokombos and her maternal grandfather from Halkidiki. Her paternal grandparents were from the Pon-



KYLE KALM
Lynn Afendoulis is running for Congress in Michigan.

tian village of Ordu and suffered in the exodus from Turkey, losing three children to the violence.

“I believe in the America that was the beacon of hope for my grandparents: a place of refuge for those who need it and of opportunity for all; a place where self-determination and the dignity of individual accomplishment were paramount,” Afendoulis said. “I intend to use the values they and my parents instilled in me, along with hard work and an ethos of ‘philotimo’ to win my election and to represent the people of Michigan with integrity.”

Afendoulis faces her stiffest competition from the young son of a billionaire who “will outspend me but won't out-work or out-smart me,” she said.

“I am honored and humbled to be in the race, and at the prospect of being a Greek-American in the United States Congress,” Afendoulis added.

Afendoulis began her career as a newspaper reporter and, in the late 1980s, worked for The Tampa (FL) Tribune where she reported on Tarpon Springs. She then went into business and for 26 years worked for the Universal Forest Products, Inc. (now UFP Industries). Afendoulis was born and raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she lives with her two young-adult children. She is a member and past parish council member of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Grand Rapids.

More information is available online: www.lynnafendoulis.com.



NEVER FORGET

AHEPA Supreme President George G. Horiates,
on behalf of the entire AHEPA Family, supports
the efforts of the Diaspora in fighting for the
Freedom of Cyprus.

AHEPA works daily in support of Sanctioning Turkey
and removing all occupying forces on the island.
We continue to commemorate the many lives
lost, those still missing, and those
displaced by the invasion 46 years ago.
We continue to Defend Hellenism.



www.ahepa.org

Cyprus’ Uneasy First 50 Years; What Comes Now?

By Dr. Dimitrios G. Kousoulas

The late and revered Professor Dimitrios G. Kousoulas marked the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus with this thoughtful historical overview which retains its value and we reprint it today.

Certain dates have a mysterious impact on the life of nations. Such is the date of August 16 for Cyprus. On August 16, 1960, the treaties that ended the British rule on the island were signed, creating the Republic of Cyprus. On August 16, 1974, the Turkish Armies took over by force one-third of the Island. Each year, for the past 36 years, we have been condemning the forcible partition of the island.



This time, on the 50th anniversary of the birth of the Republic of Cyprus, it may be fitting to look back on the highlights of those 50 years. Enosis, the union of Cyprus with Greece, remained the fervent hope of the Greek-Cypriots ever since Greece became a free country in the 19th Century. When Britain gained control of the island from the Ottoman Empire in 1878, the Greek-Cypriots rejoiced, but the date for deliverance was far into future. After the end of WWII, and following the dismantling of Colonialism, the hopes for Enosis flared up. With India, the crown jewel of the British Empire gaining independence, Cyprus could not remain in bondage for long. But the Greek-Cypriots, under the leadership of Archbishop Makarios, were impatient and launched, under Gen. Grivas, an armed campaign (EOKA). This alienated the British who, in 1955, brought Turkey into the picture, claiming a strong interest for the Turk-Cypriot minority

on the island. By 1959, after several verbal conformations in the United Nations, a compromise was struck among Britain, Greece and Turkey. It took the form of a complex set of treaties and constitutional provisions. The demand for Enosis with Greece was discarded, Makarios accepted the agreements under pressure, and the island became the Republic of Cyprus with Makarios as President.

THE 13 POINTS

It was not long before vexing political disagreements broke out between the Greek-Cypriots and the Turk-Cypriots. On November 13, 1963, Makarios took a bold step and called for several revisions of the Constitution. In retrospect one may argue that Makarios had acted unwisely. He did not prepare the



AP PHOTO/PETROS KARADJIAS

At the Tymvos Macedonitissas military cemetery in the divided capital of Nicosia, a woman cries by the graves of soldiers killed in the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

solve the Cypriot Issue (including a proposal by Dean Acheson, calling for Enosis of the island with Greece in exchange of a military base in the north-east peninsula of Karpasia). A solution however could not be found since both sides equally intransigent.

THE CRISIS OF 1967

The efforts to solve the impasse were overtaken in 1967 by the outbreak of intercommunal violence. In the summer, Turk-Cypriot irregulars tried to block the Nicosia-Limassol highway near the villages of Ayios Theodoros and Kophinou. With the intervention of the UN peacekeeping force (UNFICYP), the conflict temporarily subsided. In October, the UNFICYP set a timetable to run Greek patrols in the two

mixed-population villages under UN supervision. But in November 15, due to faulty coordination, Turk irregulars fired upon Greek patrols, whereupon General Grivas ordered an all-out attack of the National Guard. It became later known that Grivas had planned the operation to provoke a full-scale war between Greece and Turkey. Grivas, a life-long champion of Enosis, was convinced that Makarios had abandoned the old dream of Enosis in favor of an independent Cyprus. With Turkish aircraft again flying over Cyprus and an invasion force at Mersin preparing to invade the island, the United Nations and the American government stepped-in and eventually Turkey and Greece came to the negotiating table. In the end, Turkey called off the threat to go to war while Greece agreed to withdraw its “unauthorized” troops from Cyprus. Makarios was far from unhappy to see the troops go. When these troops came to Cyprus, their primary function was to protect the Greek-Cypriots from the threat of a Turkish invasion and also to avert intercommunal strife. But now that Greece was ruled by a military junta, their presence was potentially dangerous for Makarios, who was pursuing a non-aligned policy in the context of the Cold War. Grivas was removed as Commander of the National Guard but the force remained; ironically, it was the same force that, seven years later, engineered the fateful coup against Makarios.

SEARCHING FOR A SOLUTION

In the aftermath of the 1967 crisis, the two sides made efforts to resolve their differences with the help of the United Nations.

In February 1968, Makarios was re-elected as President, and in March he proposed steps for normalizing relation between the two communities. Direct talks were held in June and continued on and off for the next two years. Although there were some agreements on minor matters, the underlining problem was the perception each community had for itself and the political power each should hold. The Turk-Cypriots argued that the two communities had “won” their independence together and they were equal partners. The Greek-Cypriot position was that Greeks and Turks would have the same political rights, and that through constitutional arrangements they would enjoy autonomy on matters of education, culture, and religion, but that the Turkish community, comprising only 18% of the peo-

ple, should respect the democratic majority principle. While the talks continued on the surface, other, ominous developments were threatening the future of the island. Grivas had returned secretly to the island and had begun rebuilding a guerrilla organization, EOKA B, (in imitation of the resistance campaign of the 1950’s.) In March 1970, an attempt to assassinate Makarios by attacking his helicopter failed, but the agitation continued. In February 1972, a crisis broke out between the military government in Athens and Makarios because of his decision to import from Czechoslovakia weapons for the Cypriot security forces. (These, of course, were the Cold War

years.) Makarios had to surrender control of the weapons to the UN peace force but by then relations between Athens and Nicosia (never friendly) had entered a fateful stage. Upon the death of Grivas in January 1974, Brigadier General D. Ioannidis, one of the least visible members of the Greek junta, had taken control of EOKA B. Since the 1967 confrontation, Colonel G. Papadopoulos, the leader of the junta, had been cautious in his relations with Turkey. But in November 1973, Papadopoulos was overthrown and the secretive Ioannidis emerged as the real boss of the new regime. In the spring of 1974, he conceived a plan to eliminate Makarios by force, unite Cyprus to Greece, and then move to direct negotiations with Turkey. Since Ioannidis apparently did not clear matters with Turkey in advance,

THE INVASION

On July 20, Turkish troops landed on the north coast of Cyprus. Within two days, both the puppet regime in Cyprus as well as the dictatorial government in Athens collapsed. The United Nations passed resolutions calling for a ceasefire while a conference in Geneva tried to reach a solution with the participation of Britain, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, and a delegation of Turk-Cypriots. At the conference, Turkey pressed for a geographical division the Greek-Cypriot delegation (Makarios) was not prepared to accept. This gave Turkey the excuse to launch a second major offensive seizing one-third of island. The date was August 16, 1974. Before Makarios died of a heart attack on August 3,1977, he had accepted the idea of a federation in talks with Rauf Denktash, the leader of the Turk-Cypriots. But since then, the occupied area was turned into a “state” (recognized only by Turkey, so far), while thousands of mainland Turks came to north-Cyprus as settlers. In the meantime, many Greek-Cypriots have begun to have reservations about the idea of federation. In 2004, a U. N. plan (Annan) was rejected by two-thirds of the Greek-Cypriots. In 2008, direct talks about a federation started and continue to this day.

But as long a strong majority remains negative, we should be prepared to face the alternative of two states, preferably on the model of the Republic of



AP PHOTO/PETROS KARADJIAS

Cypriot soldiers ride on tanks during a military parade in the divided capital of Nicosia marking the 59th anniversary of Cyprus’ independence, last year.

ple, should respect the democratic majority principle. While the talks continued on the surface, other, ominous developments were threatening the future of the island. Grivas had returned secretly to the island and had begun rebuilding a guerrilla organization, EOKA B, (in imitation of the resistance campaign of the 1950’s.) In March 1970, an attempt to assassinate Makarios by attacking his helicopter failed, but the agitation continued. In February 1972, a crisis broke out between the military government in Athens and Makarios because of his decision to import from Czechoslovakia weapons for the Cypriot security forces. (These, of course, were the Cold War

the plan was idiotic but also deadly.

In May and June, rumors were rampant about the imminent overthrow of the Cyprus government. Faced with this situation, Makarios on July 2 sent an audacious letter to the government in Athens, demanding the withdrawal of the Greek officers serving in the Cypriot National Guard. It was a risky move. On July 15, troops and tanks stormed the Presidential palace. Makarios escaped and sought refuge abroad. A puppet government was set put but it received no recognition. The following day, then U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger, worried about the cohesion of NATO, sent Joseph Sisco to both Athens

Czech/Slovakia, with the two successor states as members of the European Union, and, of course, with appropriate territorial and other adjustments. In the past 50 years, we have witnessed a recurrent theme: solutions we rejected before, we embrace with nostalgia later, but it is too late.

Dr. Kousoulas was Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Howard University in Washington, DC. He was the author of several books, notably *The Life and Times of Constantine the Great* (1999), and numerous scholarly articles. He passed away in 2012. This article originally appeared in *The National Herald* in 2010.

Cyprus... And Yet We Still Wait, 46 Years Later

By Gus Constantine

It has been forty-six years since the 1974 illegal invasion of Cyprus. 1,587 men, women, and children disappeared without a trace in 1974. Although mass-graves have recently been discovered, what happened to the people? How did they end up in mass-graves? Is the world satisfied with finding mass-graves? The world might be satisfied, but not me. For forty-six years the world, including the United States, has turned their back on Cyprus, although they have made many promises.

Slavery has been abolished for over one hundred and seventy years. The descendants of slaves are still demanding reparations. I have two words for that: “Rightfully so.”

The Holocaust happened over seventy years ago. The surviving victims and their descendants are still demanding reparations. I have two words for that: “Rightfully so.”

The Native Americans have also been fighting for reparations for several hundred years. I have the same two words for them: “Rightfully so.”

I have taken the liberty to list and memorialize all 1,587 men, women, and children who disappeared without a trace during the 1974 illegal invasion of Cyprus.

Cyprus demands reparations. And yes; “Rightfully so.”

There have been countless movies and documentaries on these three subjects. Where are our movies? Where are our documentaries? How many Greek and Cypriot, actors, actresses, directors, and producers are out there? Why aren’t they getting together to let the world know what happened in Cyprus?

I have taken the liberty to list and memorialize all 1,587, men, women, and children that have disappeared without a trace during the 1974 illegal invasion of Cyprus. They are listed in the back of both of my Cyprus books. It is the least I can do.

In 1974 I was 19-years old living in The Bronx with my parents. I remember my parents being glued to the Greek TV Channel and the Greek Radio Station. The uncertainty over my parents’ little island caused them countless sleepless nights. I remember driving with my parents and sisters to Washington, DC for the demonstrations. I was amazed at the amount of cars on the road flying Greek and Cypriot flags. Even the charter busses had flags on their windows. I’ll never forget that at one point a bus broke down and all the cars on their way to the demonstration pulled over to pile as many of the stranded protesters into their cars as possible. ‘No Greeks or Cypriots left behind.’ When we got to Washington, DC I could not believe the amount of people marching with pictures of their missing loved ones. I can still here the chants; “Turks out of Cyprus. Killer, Kissinger. Turks out of Cyprus. Killer, Kissinger.”

As months passed the demonstrations continued. One time I marched from St. Demetrios Church in Astoria to the United Nations in Manhattan. And yet we still wait...

I think the most upsetting thing is when I hear our very own politicians and religious leaders tell us that they have been to the Oval Office and spoke to the President of the United States about the Cyprus issues. But when I ask them what the President of the United States tells them, they begin to stutter. Or even worse: “its privileged information.”

Online Event Commemorating Turkish Invasion of Cyprus

TNH Staff

NEW YORK – On Monday, July 20, 1 PM EDT, the International Coordinating Committee Justice for Cyprus (PSEKA) hosts an online event via Zoom commemorating the grim 46th anniversary of the illegal Turkish invasion of Cyprus and the occupation which continues today.

Speakers include Cyprus Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikos Christodoulides, U.S. Senator Robert Menendez – the ranking Democrat in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, U.S. Congressman and House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Eliot Engel, Congressman and House Middle East Subcommittee Chairman Ted Deutch, and American Jewish Committee CEO David Harris. The discussion will be moderated by PSEKA President Philip Christopher and Andy Manatos, CEO of Manatos & Manatos. Special remarks will also be made by the leadership of AHEPA, the Federation of Cypriot American Organizations, and the Hellenic American Leadership Council.

More information is available online: <https://pseka.org/>.



AP PHOTO/PETROS KARADJIAS

FILE - Soldiers walk by the graves of soldiers killed in the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus in the Tymvos Macedonitissas military cemetery during the grim anniversary in the divided capital of Nicosia, Cyprus.

AHEPA also released the following statement concerning the grim anniversary:

The Supreme President of the Order of AHEPA, George G. Horriates, on behalf of the entire AHEPA family, stands in solidarity with our Cypriot brothers in recognizing the 46th year of

Turkish Occupation of Cyprus.

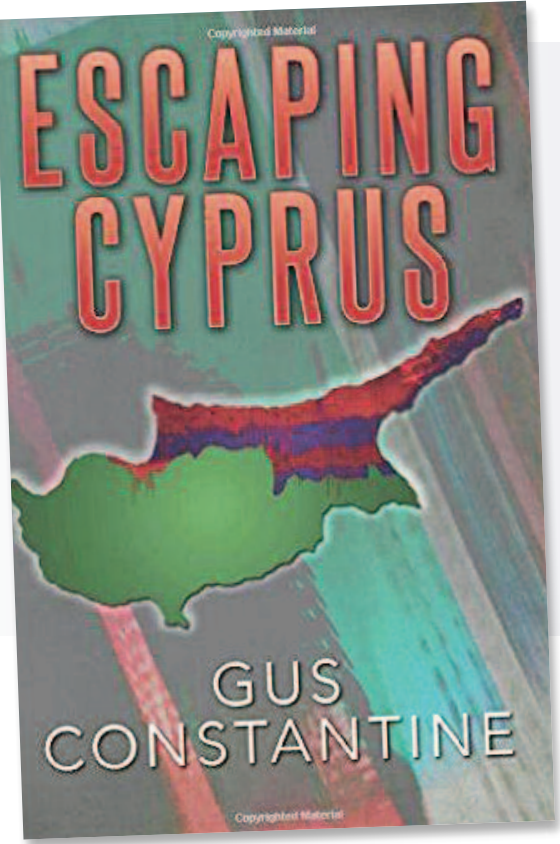
In 1974, this illegal invasion occurred and despite millions of dollars, hundreds of thousands of man hours and constant pressure, we have been unable to resolve this tragedy.

Hopefully, the world will see the truth in Turkey’s actions since

they have once again violated and trampled on the West by announcing the creation of a mosque in Agia Sophia. Even Kemal Atatürk knew not to ruin this world heritage site. This tyranny will not be forgotten or go unanswered.

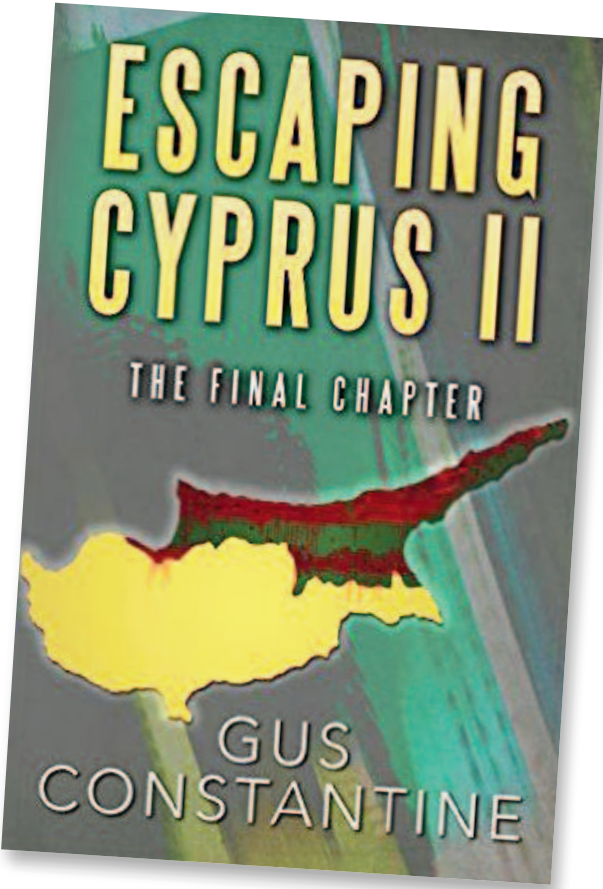
We will never forget!

TURKS OUT OF CYPRUS. IT HAS BEEN 46 YEARS



"Escaping Cyprus"

When Turkish soldiers invade his Cypriot village in 1974, twelve-year old Haji witnesses brutal atrocities, including the torturous murders of his father and sister while his pregnant mother was repeatedly being raped. With the help of his beautiful school teacher Rebecca, (dishonored many times by Turkish soldiers) they flee their village only to face constant life-threatening danger wherever they went; as the barbaric Turkish soldiers continue to pursue them. Their struggle to survive the Turkish soldiers and then to erase their horrible memories that haunt them lead to the dramatic ending.



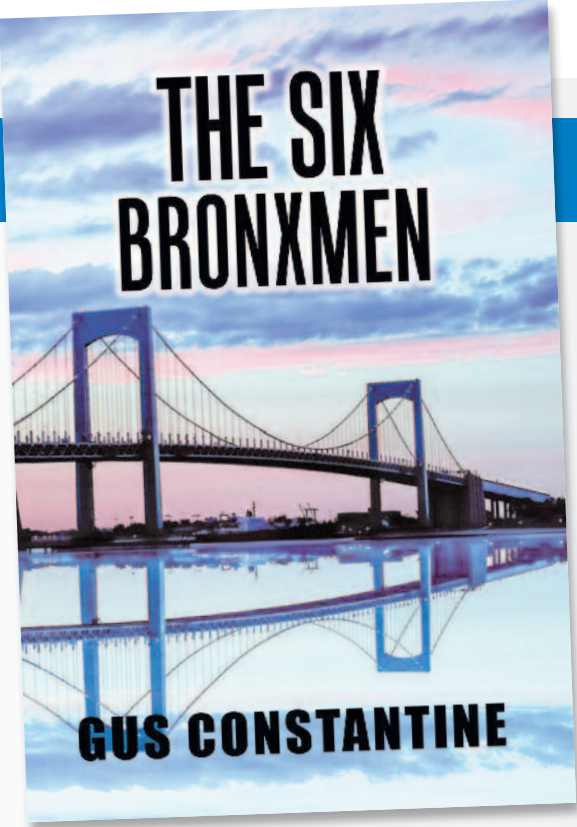
"Escaping Cyprus II: The Final Chapter"

Escaping Cyprus II: The Final Chapter continues forty-two years after Escaping Cyprus. Be prepared to be on the edge of your seat as you continue to live with Rebecca and Haji. Although it's forty-two years later the atrocities they had inflicted on them never left. As the saga continues with the next generation as the twists and turns will keep you from putting the book down.

Gus's newest book

"The Six Bronxmen"

Nikos (a Cypriot) moves from the small town of Glastonbury, Connecticut to The Bronx to start his senior year of high school. On his very first day he was challenged by three thugs in homeroom class. But the 6'-3" 210-pound Nikos didn't back down. But as it turned out the three thugs were extremely connected. After making friends with Irving Feldman and four of Nikos' Glastonbury friends that relocate from Glastonbury to The Bronx they formed their own group called "The Six Bronxmen." But it wasn't enough. Nikos flies to Greece to recruit his two friends; Tommy and Steve. And along with Steve's cousin Ronnie from Maryland they form a coalition to take on the most organized crime families in America.



Gus Constantine is retired from United Parcel Service who has fulfilled his passion for writing. What started off as a simple retirement project has turned him into an international seller. His two published books; "Escaping Cyprus" and "Escaping Cyprus II The Final Chapter" is continuing to sell worldwide. "Escaping Cyprus" is a book of the year award winner. "Escaping Cyprus" also has a movie in development. Gus' newest book; "The Six Bronxmen" has already become an international seller. During Gus' adult life he has been involved in several charitable and continues to do so. Gus has served on his Church Board of St. Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church in Greenlawn, New York, holding several officer positions, including President. Today, Gus is the 11-12 Sunday school teacher and one of the youth advisors at St. Paraskevi. While serving St. Paraskevi, Gus wrote in the monthly Church Magazine. Gus is also the author of several short stories. Gus lives on Long Island with his wife, Georgia of forty-one years. They have three grown children and nine-grandchildren.



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AVAILABLE ON AMAZON

WE REMEMBER

The Turkish Invasion of Cyprus

July 20, 1974

Almost half a century has passed since
the illegal and brutal invasion
and continued Turkish occupation of Cyprus

Where is the justice for Cyprus?

The Republic of Cyprus, a member of the European Union
and staunch ally of the United States,
has been illegally occupied since 1974.

Turkish troops with American-made arms paid with our taxes,
keep 200,000 Greek-Cypriots away from their Ancestral Homes.

Turkey should follow the Rule of Law, abide by the countless
United Nations resolutions and remove its troops
and Illegal settlers from the island.

**46 years of occupation
and violation of Human Rights.**

WE WILL NEVER FORGET

**As American Citizens we continue to be outraged
and disappointed with the lack of pressure
on Turkey, an Unreliable Ally.**



The International
Coordinating Committee
Justice for Cyprus
ΠΣΕΚΑ