

# Report from Greece: Revolution postponed



The first thing which you notice about the Greeks is their kindness and consideration to visitors. From the moment we were met at the airport, Ellen and I were well looked after. We had the sort of tour of Athens which is not available to the tourist, accompanied by the sort of information which is disregarded by the mainstream media.

Ours was a modest sort of hotel, not far from Syntagma Square where the rally was to be held and it was literally between two worlds. The hotel was spick and span: on one side was a handsome square with the great Church of St Constantine-imposing without and glorious within- as well as other handsome private and public buildings and shops.

On the other side were filthy streets with people delving into dustbins for anything edible or of possible value. This was an area of high illegal immigration and, whilst it might be easy for a wealthy Western liberal to condemn the Greeks for a lack of official compassion, one has to remember how greatly the Greeks too have been pauperised by the EU.

Those who attended our 2017 CIB rally in London will remember Ambassador Chrysanthopoulos telling us that his pension had been cut from 3,500 euros per month to 1,200 – and he is one of the fortunate! A leading lawyer told me that his wife, a civil servant of 18 years' service with two doctorates, now receives a salary of around 800 euros a month – and she too, is fortunate. A senior insurance manager told me how he was unemployed for three years. State benefits and health service entitlement cease after one year. He now considers himself lucky to be working for the same salary which his secretary

had ten years ago. Below the senior careerists of the international set, these are people who recognise that they are fortunate in comparison with very, very many of their fellow countrymen and women.

So we did not quite know what to expect, as we made our way to Syntagma ( Constitution) Square in front of the parliament building for the demonstration.

There was a stage and loud recorded music of folk songs with which those assembling joined. In between, an impressively energetic lady moved around with a microphone, inviting impromptu speeches, all of which were heartfelt and some clearly born of deepest despair but tinged with stern defiance. Then there was a live folk group and a much-appreciated performance of Greek dance by agile young men.

The crowd was slow in assembling and not in the hoped-for numbers. Not only had a media blackout been imposed earlier but the mainstream media was warning people to stay away because of possible trouble with a rival anarchist rally nearby. There was a fairly low-key police presence but I noticed several police vehicles around the square about the size of a regular bus, which probably contained reinforcements if needed.

When it came to the platform speeches, I could not follow much – my Greek only being adequate to ask the way or order a meal. However, the priest who spoke before me commenced with “Christos anesti” (Christ is risen) to which the audience responded. Several times in his speech he referred to “Orthodoxia” (Orthodoxy) and the Gospel (Evangelion).

Then it was my turn with the ever-vivacious Georgia Bitakou as interpreter. She was magnificent and I enjoyed double applause for many of the points I made – firstly from the members of the audience who understood English and then from those who followed her translation. That was quite a bonus!

When I came to finish, using quotations from the poetry of Byron, as Jim Reynolds did a while ago, she put heart and soul into it. I could not help reflecting that she was just the sort of lady who inspired Byron and would defend any barricade to the last.

Then coincidence reached out with a long arm. Manu Bennett, a Maori from New Zealand, was inspired to make his speech by the seven hundred of his kinsmen who lie buried in Crete, attempting to defend that Greek Island against the aggression of fascism. He was joined on the platform by an impressive gentleman in traditional Cretan dress which would be recognised by anybody who watched the film of the capture of the German General Kreipe.

Our family business used to buy large quantities of New Zealand milk powder before that was forbidden by the European Common Agricultural Policy. That betrayal of our friends made me angry in 1972 as it still makes me angry now.

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Here are the words of the speech which was so well received:-

**IT IS A GREAT HONOUR to be invited to speak here to our Greek friends who are fighting the same battle as ourselves to recover self government and independence for our countries. IT IS A PLEASURE to meet the tough, undaunted people who so cheerfully continue the fight in the face of the appalling damage which the institutions of the EU and the International Monetary Fund have inflicted on the Greek people – including the deaths of hundreds of thousands whose lives have been sacrificed on the altar of austerity, dead from malnutrition, lack of heating in winter and the plundering of resources from their hospitals and health service.**

**This process of plunder, including the forced sale of public assets and utilities, is portrayed as somehow helping Greece out – each additional tranche of unrepayable debt as somehow**

helping the Greek people, when all it represents is a transfer of liabilities from banks to taxpayers – privatising any profits and socialising the losses.

At the beginning, many people in Britain and Greece believed that the EU was a benign project, dedicated to peace and economic development – but it always was about power – power to in the hands of very few untouchable people. As early as 1947, A British politician, Peter Thorneycroft, wrote in *Design for Europe* “No government dependent on a democratic vote could possibly agree in advance to the sacrifice any adequate plan must involve. The British people must be led slowly and unconsciously into the abandonment of their traditional economic defences”. Thorneycroft later became Chancellor of the Exchequer (Finance Minister) and Chairman of the Conservative party. What an arrogant insult to a people who had just fought a world war to defend their democratic self-government – to lead them deceitfully into a new form of definitely undemocratic government, of which they were to be kept in ignorance.

In 1962 the leader of the Labour party, Hugh Gaitskell, warned that joining the European Economic Community would be for us “The end of a thousand years of history” – the time over which our constitution and self-government evolved. Greek democracy has a longer history but the modern independence, achieved in 1821, is, for the time being, extinguished. But not forever! If I judge your fighting spirit right, the fire of freedom will blaze again and not be long in coming!

General De Gaulle saw the reality of the European project. In 1965 he said “As for the Commission, it deserves to disappear. I want no more of Hallstein (the President)...I want no more to do with them...I want no more that the French government should have to do business with these types.... They are all enemies. They have been put there by our enemies”.

In 1990, Mrs Thatcher put it this way. “Mr Delors (President

of the Commission) said ...that he wanted the European Parliament to be the democratic body...He wanted the Commission to be the Executive and the Council of Ministers to be the Senate ... No! No! No!" which reminds me of the response of the Greek people to Mussolini which was also "No" and you celebrate the event to this day as a national holiday.

Today's Mussolinis are less flamboyant and more subtle – people like Giuliano Amato, one-time Italian Prime Minister and Vice president of the European Constitutional Convention. He was interviewed by Barbara Spinelli who reported in La Stampa of 13 July 2000 "He said that sovereignty lost on a national level does not pass to any new individual. It is entrusted to a faceless entity... eventually the EU. The EU is the vanguard of this changing world... The new entity is faceless and those in command can neither be identified nor elected. As a matter of fact the metamorphosis is already here. All we need are a few corrections here and there along with a great deal of cunning".

There is nothing much we can do to the successors of Jacques Delors and Giuliano Amato. They are largely faceless and immune. But they and those like them could never have the least power over us, if it had not first been surrendered by our own countrymen, politicians in positions of trust, bound by the most sacred commitment to uphold the integrity and sovereignty of the state. Those are the people who are to blame – regardless of party. Mark them well and make sure they never, ever hold office again!

We are seeing them now in Britain, trying to overturn the verdict of the people in the referendum because they have given their first loyalty to a foreign power, the European Union. Yet they look and speak like our fellow countrymen. One of the most odious things about this is that many of them claim to be acting out of concern for the powers and tradition of our parliament – something which never troubled them in the least when they were handing massive power to the EU.

General De Gaulle and Mrs. Thatcher were both betrayed by their own colleagues. Two of the strongest political personalities in Europe slowed down the European project for a while but could not stop it. Yet I am sure that our united peoples can do it, if we keep our wits about us. That and a sense of trust, of duty to our respective countries, inherited from one generation and handed down to the next in a lively tradition. We can learn from each other's experiences.

So we also support the Greek people in their battle to secure the territorial integrity of their state in its rich regional diversity and cultural Hellenic unity. We look with concern on the political instability of this region, adversely affected by Western operations which have succeeded only in driving the movement of millions of migrants with unassimilable, unappeasable alien ideology through Greece and into Europe. This process of mass migration is deliberately supported and approved by the EU as a means of breaking up and destroying cohesive peoples and nations.

Our Secretary Jim Reynolds visited here a few years ago, initiating and strengthening our friendship and co-operation. I can do no better than he, in ending with some verses of Lord Byron:-

The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!

Where burning Sappho loved and sung.

Where grew the arts of war and peace,

Where Delos rose and Phoebus sprung!

Eternal summer gilds them yet,

But all, except their sun, is set.

The mountains look on Marathon –

And Marathon looks on the sea,  
And musing there an hour alone,  
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;  
For standing on the Persians' grave,  
I could not deem myself a slave.