

Athens, 27th April 1968.

Your forthright declaration on Greece published in "Le Monde" of April 26th gave me great comfort. And I take the opportunity of Mr. Van der Stoep's presence in Greece to express to you my deep appreciation and gratitude.

The Greek people in their hour of trial find great consolation in ascertaining that the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has a complete grasp of the situation in their country.

The Greeks find great comfort indeed in their struggle against dictatorship by the manifold manifestations of the peoples of Western Europe. They are, however, aggrieved by the attitude taken by most governments.

And they hope and expect that the Parliamentary Representatives of free Europe assembled in Strasbourg will take a definite stand against the new rise of totalitarianism in Europe so as to force the hand of their Governments to act according to their ideals.

Many Governments are trying to justify their lukewarm attitude towards dictatorship in Greece by referring to the assurances given by the leaders of the Junta stating that they really mean to bring Greece back to constitutional order in a reasonable length of time.

Surely the Colonels want to give to Greece a Constitution and a Parliament; but the question is, what kind of constitution and what parliament? The kind they have in fascist regimes?

The problem we are faced with is to prevent this travesty of democracy. And we cannot rely on the good faith of the Junta or the word of honor given by the colonels. They have promised to bring under public discussion the project of the constitution which is to be ratified by a plebiscite later in the year.

And what have they done?

They have published the project of constitution of the Mitrelias committee, which they have already repudiated and they carry the so-called free discussion under a state of siege (martial law). This is what a "free discussion" means to the colonels.

Sir Geoffrey de Freitas,
President,
Consultative Assembly of the
Council of Europe,
Strasbourg.

Apparently the same will be applied to the "free plebiscite" they have promised.

Last January they appointed two committees which were to draw a code for the press, to be ready by April so that the press censorship may be lifted. We are still waiting for them. In consolation, the Under-Secretary for the Press declared a few days ago that the work of the committees will be ready by the end of May.

The Junta never mentions when their own project of constitution will be put into effect and, of course, no date for free elections is ever referred to. Mr. Papadopoulos gives his word of honor to the British MPs, his guests, that Greece will be brought back to democratic order "in due time". and Mr. Pattakos, the vice-President, states at the same moment that Greece will come back to parliamentary rule when the aims of the revolution will be fulfilled

Mr. Pipinelis, on the other hand, speaking yesterday at a dinner given by the Association of Foreign Correspondents, stated that the Government has never assured the Council of Europe that the elections will be carried out by May 1969.

Under these conditions to talk about the good faith of the Junta is, at least, an unexcusable naiveté.

I hope that in forthcoming sessions of the Consultative Assembly the various countries' Representatives will take into consideration all the above mentioned facts and reach the appropriate resolutions.

The Junta is very sensitive to the criticisms of the Assembly and of the European Parliament. And if, as a result, the Governments of Western Europe were to act appropriately, there is no doubt that the Junta will have to end up in a much shorter time than that expected.

The Greek people are looking now at the Council of Europe as their only source of hope from official Europe.

I am convinced that under your guidance they will not be disappointed in their expectations from the Forum of Democracy in Europe.

- H.B. I take this opportunity to submit herewith three papers, namely:
1. on the project constitution;
 2. " " violation of the Convention of Rome on "Human Rights";
 3. On the state of parliamentarism in Greece.

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