

RAINBOW (VINOZHITO) – European Movement

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ANNOUNCEMENT

RAINBOW is participating in the Greek Municipal and Prefectural elections scheduled for 13 and 20 October 2002, with officials and members of its organization at both levels.

Where its officials and members are not among the candidates for the Municipal or Prefectural Councils, RAINBOW asks citizens to cast their votes for those candidates who clearly and publicly support the following issues:

1. The respect for the Macedonian, Vlach, and Arvanitis identity and, in general, for all local cultures in their authentic form, not as a means to promote nationalistic prejudices and rivalry but to stimulate friendly cultural competition among the citizens of local communities.

2. The right of unconditional repatriation for national Macedonian political refugees. Given the conditions for change currently being created as a result of reorganization at the local governmental level, many of these individuals will be able to make significant contributions to the communities in which they were born and must participate.

3. The respect, protection and advancement of local languages, such as Macedonian, Vlach, Arvanitis, and all languages comprising the cultural wealth of a place, not only through local governmental programs but also within the framework of a comprehensive educational system.

We ask all citizens to take an active role in the electoral process. RAINBOW believes that all citizens can contribute most effectively to society as a whole through

local government, but also at a broader level, when every person has an equal opportunity to express his or her individual cultural, linguistic and national character, whatever that may be.

We believe that under no condition should difference constitute an individual or collective disadvantage. Rather, it must be seen as a positive factor that distinguishes the citizens of a society.

Under these conditions, Local Government can be instrumental in both regional growth and the prosperity of its citizens, as well as in the Europeanization of Greek society.

THE POLITICAL SECRETARIAT

Scenes of infinite beauty unfolded in the premier of Kostas Hardavellas' new TV show, whose official topic was the “self-proclaimed” Macedonians in Greece. However, speaking on behalf of the Macedonians was Father Nikodimos Tsarknias, rather than a spokesperson from one of their political or cultural agencies (Rainbow, Home of Macedonian Culture, etc.). As a result, the program focused on Father Tsarknias, his life and the reasons why he was defrocked by the Greek Orthodox Church.

Those supposedly representing Greek society on the program were individuals such as the New Democracy deputy of Serres, Evgenios Haitidis (known from the Bletsas case) and the colorful Father Tsakalos. The major revelation was the secret collaboration between the “self-proclaimed” Macedonian minority and the likewise “self-proclaimed” Turkish minority, with the blessings, naturally, of foreign secret services that daily propagate plans for the destabilization of the fatherland, Immortal Greece.
G.N.P.

HARDAVELLAS AND COMPANY

By George N. Papadakis

“EXPRESS” p. 9, Wednesday 18.9.02
(Following is a review of Mr. Hardavellas’ program)

The recent premier of Kostas Hardavellas’ new TV show revealed, yet another time, the superficial – and hence dangerous – approach taken by virtually all television programs that have dealt in the past with the “nonexistent” Macedonian minority in Greece. This particular show clarified the reasons why a “leftist” television program would deal with such a sensitive issue. Its purpose, certainly, was not to present the real extent of problem, with respect for the particularities of both sides. This was visible to the naked eye from the composition of the panel summoned to “enlighten” the unsuspecting Greek viewer who, on the one hand, is not distinguished for his superior intellectual pursuits

and, on the other, is convinced that he lives in a country where everybody is just like him. Thus the host called upon the following personalities to support the Greek Orthodox viewpoint:

- The colorful renegade-priest, Papa-Tsakalos, who is an almost daily guest on TV talk shows and is an authority on everything.
- The extreme rightwing deputy, Evgenios Haitis, who has made a name for himself solely for dragging into court anyone who dares to claim that Greeks have not always been the exclusive inhabitants of Greece or that minority languages are spoken on Greek soil (the Bletsas case).
- The former director of the Nation Secret Service, Kostas Tsimas (no further comment).
- The Panteo University professor, Nikos Sarris, who unsuccessfully attempted to give a veneer of scientific validity to what the others were saying.

On the other hand, the “nonexistent” Macedonian side was intentionally represented in a way that facilitated the disorientation of the discussion. Because, although no one doubts Father Tsarknias’ efforts to gain recognition for the national Macedonian minority in Greece, everyone is familiar with the cleric’s personal adventures with the Greek Orthodox Church and its (para)governmental mechanisms.

The result was a “discussion” – amidst shouting and incredible nationalistic debate – that sensationalized and inevitably revolved around Father Tsarknias’ own story, based also on the recent article in “Sunday’s Eleftherotypia” newspaper that pointedly referred to his intelligence activities. The icing on the cake was the appearance of a police car dispatched by the Athens Archbishopric to arrest Father Tsarknias on charges of usurping authority.

Naturally, after all this, there was very little talk about the real matter at hand. And when that did occur, the host and his guest panel disclosed the real reason for the program. These sleuths proceeded to the momentous discovery that members of the Macedonian minority maintain personal relations and collaborate with members of the Turkish minority in Thrace, while hidden behind the whole scene are the CIA, MIT, the FBI, Mossad and other secret services whose only objective is the destabilization of Greece. These connections were also the topic of a small portion of the program that was given over to a videotape of the views of present and former spokespersons for the movement for Macedonian national and cultural identity. At this point, rather than posing any serious questions about the present situation and the aims and prospects of these people, the only thing Mr. Hardavellas in essence presented was that the “nonexistent” Macedonians respect the right of self-definition and call “Turks” those whom the official Greek state insists on calling “Greek Muslims.”

Unfortunately, this program is not a unique example. A few months earlier, another program on state TV NET attempted to deal with the issue of linguistic minorities. While

it did present some of the other languages spoken by small or mid-sized population groups, the discussion naturally centered on the Macedonian language. Once again the program was devoid of any meaningful dialogue (despite initial assurances to the contrary) and the topic was desperately squeezed into a brief amount of time. Consequently, the viewer came away with the conclusion that there is no such language except for a Bulgarian dialect. As for those who speak it, they are simply part of the folklore of Northern Greece.

While there are many such examples on television, there are, unfortunately, very few programs that attempt to present the topic in its proper light. Still, many people maintain that even these distorted or staged programs are preferable to a complete silence on the issue. This may be true, but there is something else at stake here. What journalist can feel okay with his conscience when he knows that he has not upheld even fundamental ethical guidelines and, consequently, has consciously led the public to an erroneous conclusion?

The Political Position of the European Free Alliance (EFA) on the Cyprus Issue

European Free Alliance (EFA) of the European Parliament

For many centuries, two distinctly different Communities in Cyprus, the majority Greek Cypriote Community and the minority Turkish Cypriote Community, have shared the same fate. The events of 1963 transformed their peaceful coexistence into one of uncertainty.

The anticipated entry of Cyprus into the European Union must provide the certainty of a peaceful and permanent settlement to the present conflict. The EU cannot allow the seed of an unresolved conflict to be introduced into its midst, which has unforeseeable future consequences. The participation of Cyprus in the EU and finding a political solution to the conflict are one and the same process.

EFA believes that a Cypriot Federation is a viable solution as long as it provides constitutional guarantees to the Turkish Minority. These guarantees must include, at least, the following provisions:

- A) The principle of a dual majority, which would provide security for both Communities.
- B) Cultural autonomy.
- C) An armed security force for each Community.

Brno, 27 June 2002

Comments on the decision taken at the EFA General Assembly of the European Parliament in Brno, Czech Republic, 27 June 2002.

By Dr. G. Nakratzas

Participants in the EFA General Assembly, which took place on 27 June 2002 in Brno (Czech Republic), included EFA European parliamentarians as well as delegates from the EU Minority parties that are EFA members. Vinozhito (Rainbow), the political party of the national Macedonians of Greece, was one of the attending members. At the Assembly, a discussion was held concerning the accession of Cyprus to the EU and the position of the island's Turkish Minority.

In 1963, the Cypriot government headed by Archbishop Makarios used armed force with the intent of imposing on Turkish Cypriots the amendment of 13 articles of the Constitution revoking the Minority's privileges. This military coup by the Greek Cypriot government provoked casualties on both sides and ended the peaceful coexistence of the two Communities. For the next 11 years, Turkish Cypriots lived confined in ghettos under the military surveillance of the Greek Cypriot government.

With the sad past of the Turkish Cypriot Minority in mind, the General Assembly of EFA Minority parties expressed serious concerns about Cyprus joining the EU before a permanent solution to its political problem has been reached. All Minority party delegates and European parliamentarians agreed to approve the aforementioned political position, which will be forwarded to the Council of Europe.

Rotterdam, 5 July 2002

Notes on Ideas

By Thanassis Yialketsis

“Sunday's Eleftherotypia”

& 7 THE ART OF LIFE No 43 – 8/9/2002

Infallible Ideologues or Fanatics

An analysis of ideological fanaticism and national prejudices by the prominent political philosopher, Isaiah Berlin.

Isaiah Berlin was born in Riga, Latvia, in 1909 and died in England in 1997. When he was six years old, his family immigrated to Russia. In St. Petersburg, in 1917, young Isaiah experienced first hand the stirring events of the October Revolution. His family moved to in England in 1921, and Berlin attended Oxford University. He went on to teach social and political theory at various colleges in Oxford and served as president of the British Academy. A leading political philosopher and historian of ideas, Berlin earned international recognition through his teaching and writing. Books of his that have been translated into Greek include “Karl Marx: His Life and Environment”, “The Roots of Romanticism”, “Four Essays on Liberty” (Scripta Press) and “Three Critics of the Enlightenment. Vico, Hamann, Herder” (Kritiki Press).

Berlin was particularly concerned with the issue of the conflict of values. He stressed the point that we must avoid the serious error committed by those who assume that all goods, all virtues, all values, all ideals are absolutely compatible and, therefore, that everything people desire can be unified within a harmonious whole without any losses. A deeper awareness of the conflict of values leads us to recognize the importance of the pluralism of values. In other words, this awareness enables us to understand that variety is preferable to uniformity, that liberty must safeguard difference rather than be a leveling force.

The following is a paraphrase of a text written by Berlin and published in the “New York Review of Books”.

Few things have caused more damage than the conviction of individuals or groups (or races or states or nations or churches) that they are the sole possessors of truth – mainly about how one should live, what one should be and do, and that whoever thinks otherwise is not only wrong but is also evil or crazy and needs to either be imprisoned or annihilated. It is terribly and dangerously arrogant to believe that we are the only ones who are right, that we possess a magic eye that sees the truth, and that others, simply because they disagree, cannot be right.

This arrogance provides us with the certainty that there is one and only purpose for our nation or our church or for the fulfillment of humanity and that any hardship (especially when others are doing the suffering) is justified as a means to that end.

Robespierre said, “From an ocean of blood to a kingdom of love” (or something to that effect). Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, as well as the leaders of religious wars of Christians against Muslims or Catholics against Protestants surely cherished that same certainty. Conviction about the main problems that have tormented humanity, which we possess (or our leader does), is responsible for the oceans of blood from which no kingdom of love has ever been born. Nor could any be. There are many ways for one to live, believe and behave, and the simple knowledge we’ve gleaned from history, anthropology, literature, art, and justice makes it clear that differences in culture and character are equally as profound (to what makes people human) as similarities, and that a rich variety in no way makes us poorer. The knowledge of this variety opens the windows of the mind (and the soul) and makes human beings wiser, more attractive and more civilized, while the lack of this knowledge produces irrational prejudice, hatred, the terrible extermination of heretics and those who are different. If two World Wars plus Hitler’s genocides have not taught us this, then we are hopeless.

The most valuable thing (or one of the most valuable) in British tradition is a relative freedom from fanaticism and from political, racial or religious monomania.

To reach a compromise with persons we don’t like or totally understand is necessary for any decent society, since nothing is more destructive than the joyful conviction that we are infallible (or that our nation is). This conviction leads us to destroy others with the

clear conscience of one who is carrying out the work of God (i.e. the Spanish Inquisition or the Ayatollahs) or of a superior race (i.e. Hitler) or of history (i.e. Lenin-Stalin).

The cure for this is the understanding that different societies live (in our space or time) and that people may live differently from us and yet be fully human and deserving of love, respect or at least curiosity. Jesus, Socrates, the Bohemian Jan Hus, the great chemist Lavoisier, the socialists and the liberals (as well as the conservatives) in Russia, and the Jews in Germany were all killed by the hand of “infallible” ideologues.

Easy certainty is no substitute for diligent, substantiated, empirical knowledge that is based on observation and experiment and on the free exchange of ideas. The first people who are silenced or annihilated by those who support totalitarianism are the intellectuals and free spirits.

Another avoidable source of conflict is stereotypes. One tribe hates the neighboring tribe, by which it feels threatened, and consequently sublimates its fears by portraying the other tribe as evil or inferior or somehow strange or contemptible. But these stereotypes can quickly change. Take the 19th century, for example.

Around 1840, the French were seen as flamboyant, braggarts, immoral and bellicose, men with handlebar moustaches who were a danger to women and liable to invade England in revenge for Waterloo. The Germans, on the other hand, were beer-drinking, somewhat comical peasants with a penchant for music and supernatural fantasies, who were harmless and rather odd. Nevertheless, in 1871, the Germans became the Uhlans who invaded France, incited by Bismarck and the ferocious Prussian militarists, drunk on national pride, and so forth. France was a hapless, civilized country, humiliated and requiring the protection of every respectable person to preserve its art and literature from being squashed under the heel of these terrible invasions. In the 19th century, the Russian were oppressed serfs, religious Slav mystics who had constant dark thoughts and wrote profound novels, a vast horde of Cossacks, faithful to the Czars, who sang wonderfully. All that has changed radically during our times. There are still oppressed populations, but there is also technology, military weapons, godless materialism, the crusade against capitalism, etc. Etc. As for the English, they initially were ruthless imperialists who tyrannized people of color, and snobs who looked down their noses on the rest of the world. But then they became people who are impoverished, who have liberal convictions, who live on welfare and need allies. And so forth.

All these stereotypes are substitutes for genuine knowledge, which is nowhere near as simple or immutable as a fixed, generalized image of a foreign people. Not only that, but these stereotypes reinforce national complacency and the contempt for others. They are the mainstays of nationalism.

Nationalism – which everyone in the 19th century thought was on the wane – is now the greatest, most dangerous force in the world.

It is usually the product of an injury by one nation to the pride or land of another. If Louis XIV (the Sun King who dictated the law to everyone in politics, the military, the arts, philosophy, and science) had not attacked and destroyed the Germans, humiliating them for years, perhaps the Germans would not have become so aggressive. If, say, the Russians in the early 19th century hadn't been treated like a horde of barbarians by the West, or if the Chinese had not been so humiliated by the Opium Wars or by universal exploitation, neither would have been so easily wooed by a theory that promised them that they would inherit the earth as soon as they destroyed – with the help of historical forces that no one could check – all the faithless capitalists. If the American Indians hadn't been treated paternalistically, etc. etc.

But conquests, the enslavement of peoples and imperialism have not been nurtured solely by greed or a desire for glory. Their perpetrators have to justify them with some central idea: French culture as the only true culture. The superiority of white people, or communism. The stereotype of the other as inferior or evil. Only knowledge, which has been acquired by effort and is accurate, can dispel all this. Even this knowledge cannot on its own abolish people's aggression and their aversion to anyone who is different (in skin color, culture, or religion). Still, the frequent study of history, anthropology, justice (especially if this study is "comparative" and not confined to one's own country as is usually the case) helps.