

# NEWSLETTER

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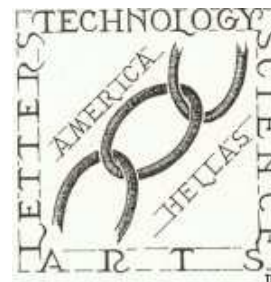
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No. 35, January-February 2001

## HELLENIC LINK Midwest

A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC  
LINK WITH GREECE



### *Upcoming Events*

#### **Lecture: Bias in the Media**

On Sunday February 25, 2001, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Phillip Spyropoulos in a lecture on *"Bias in the Media; Is the Media Covering Hellenic Issues Fairly and Accurately?"*; 3:00 PM, at Embassy Suites Hotel, 600 North State Street, Chicago.

Phillip Spyropoulos, Executive Director of the American Hellenic Media Project (AHMP), will discuss how Hellenic issues are portrayed by the Anglophone press. His lecture will focus on dozens of examples from mainstream U.S. and other English language press sources. Bias that AHMP has encountered can be classified into four categories: ethnic slurs and offensive stereotypes, false historical revisionism, misrepresentations of fact, and distortions of news coverage.

Some of the press coverage that will be addressed includes: the Armenian and Pontian Greek genocides, the Imia standoff, the S-300 missile crisis, the invasion of Cyprus, the killings of two Cypriot protesters in 1996 by Turkish occupation forces, the Kurdish issue, and the Ocalan incident. Press sources covered will include *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Forbes*, *The Baltimore Sun*, *Associated Press*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *New Republic*.

He will present a convincing pattern of selective, discriminatory or inaccurate reporting taking a number of forms including: the omission of relevant information; the one-sided and selective presentation of facts; the misstatement of historical events; the assertion of false or unsupported arguments; sloppy journalism; the marginalizing of both Greece and the Greek American community through negative ethnic stereotyping; and the misleading portrayal of current events.

Mr. Spyropoulos will also focus on the fact that when the media omits, distorts or covers up facts, our policymakers as well as our citizenry are prevented from intelligently assessing a situation, and enacting prudent and effective policies. When media disinformation remains unchecked,

all of our voices are marginalized, our trust in our press and media is eroded, and our fragile democracy is damaged. How the media portrays Hellenic issues has a profound

impact not only on the efficacy of our foreign policy and on our nation's own moral well-being, but also on the success and welfare of our children and communities on a more personal and immediate level.

*Phillip Spyropoulos* is founder and Executive Director of the American Hellenic Media Project, a non-profit think tank created to address inaccuracy and bias in the media, and to encourage independent, ethical and responsible journalism. Since its creation in 1995, AHMP has created a professional and authoritative working model for media advocacy to address issues that impact upon the integrity and efficacy of our information establishments.

Commentaries, letters and opinion-editorials by AHMP have been published in dozens of regional, national, and international media sources including *The Baltimore Sun*, *Billboard*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *The Detroit News*, *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, *Forbes Global*, *The Fresno Bee*, *The Globe and Mail*, *The Irish Times*, *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, *The Miami Herald*, *The National Review*, *New York Newsday*, *The New York Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Orlando Sentinel*, *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *The Plain Dealer*, *The South China Morning Post*, *The St. Petersburg Times (Fla.)*, *The Star Ledger (NJ)*, *The Tampa Tribune*, *The Toronto Sun*, *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Washington Times*, and *World Press Review*

AHMP has initiated numerous highly successful grass-roots campaigns, including a letter-writing campaign that succeeded in halting the production of a multi-million dollar Hollywood film hagiography of Kemal Ataturk; a film that would have featured false historical revisionism and genocide denial at the expense of Armenians, Greeks, practicing Muslims and other groups victimized by Ataturk's regime.

AHMP and its efforts have been covered in articles and broadcasts by numerous mainstream media sources, including Reuters Television coverage that was broadcast on CNN and other global outlets.

AHMP has also developed a cyberpresence with the bulk of its grass-roots initiatives being conducted over the Internet (<http://www.ahmp.org>). The Project is currently producing a program, entitled *"Media Watch"*, which will

explore press and media coverage of current events, and will be broadcast in public access channels across the US.

Phillip Spyropoulos worked as a city prosecutor of child abuse cases in the Bronx Family Court. He assisted in the litigation of a federal lawsuit brought against the Turkish government for its 1974 invasion and seizure of Cypriot property. He received his B.A. from Boston University, and graduated from the New York Law School in 1992. He was awarded a N.Y. State Bar Association Legal Ethics Award, and an American Jurisprudence Award in Constitutional Law, and was a Moot Court Association member. Mr. Spyropoulos was awarded second prize in the American Bar Association's national writing competition in international law.

## *In Brief*

### **Greece Entering Course of Surplus Budgets**

On December 19, 2000, during the debate on the 2001 state budget, National Economy and Finance minister Yiannos Papantoniou said that if the aim of fiscal policy in the past was to cover deficits, from now on "budgets will distribute surpluses. We have a budget which, for the first time in recent history, does not impose any new tax but, on the contrary, is distributing through tax reductions and social expenditures to low and medium incomes a surplus of 450 billion drachmas".

He also said that due to the decrease in the public debt and the decrease in interest rates, low and medium incomes would also benefit from the release of additional funds amounting to 1.7 trillion drachmas in this year's budget. "Over the past four years development rates in Greece were substantially higher than the average of our partners in the EU, while the productivity of labor and salaries also increased considerably. The average income of the Greek citizen also increased from 62 percent of the average income of the European citizen in 1993 to 70 percent in 2000".

### **First Greek to become Australian state governor.**

The first Greek to become governor of an Australian state was sworn in on November 28, 2000 by Australia's Governor-General Sir William Deane. Ioannis Aniktomatis, who has become governor of the Northern Territory, was born in Greece in 1955 and immigrated to Australia at the age of nine. Since 1991, he has been Greece's honorary consul in Darwin.

### **Funding of New Technology and Innovation**

The Greek government earmarked 145.8 billion drachmas to subsidize the use of new technology and innovation in business. It is expected that this investment will boost competitiveness and help the creation of new jobs. The private sector will support this effort with 161 billion drachmas. Eligible for funding are proposals for the creation of high-tech companies whose objective is the commercialization of research findings. Investment proposals may be submitted from January 2001. The government expects around 500 new firms to be set up leading to the creation of about 3,000 jobs. This program will also support existing very small, small and medium size companies that are seeking to improve their production methods.

### **Karamanlis Chair at Tufts**

In November 2000, in memory of late Greek president Konstantinos Karamanlis, the Karamanlis Foundation and Tufts University established the Karamanlis Chair in Hellenic and Southeastern European Studies at the university's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Athens University Professor Thanos Veremis was chosen to be the first Karamanlis-Chair professor. The post will rotate to allow for several scholars to teach and perform research on related subjects. This professorship is the first component of a future center for Hellenic and Southeastern European Studies at Tufts.

US Ambassador to Greece Nicholas Burns, attending a reception given by President Stephanopoulos on November 23, 2000, on this occasion, said: "This a brilliant example of cooperation on the scholarly level between our two countries. By endowing this chair, the Karamanlis Foundation and its many Greek and American contributors have demonstrated their commitment to the serious study of regional politics."

## *From Our History*

### **The Influence of Hellenism on the American Constitution**

*Excerpts from a paper of Professor Demetrios J. Constantelos on "Thomas Jefferson and his Philhellenism".*

The defeat of the British in 1781 at Yorktown ended the military phase of the American War of Independence, and the Treaty of Paris of 1783 officially gave birth to a new nation. But one or thirteen nations? Even before the Declaration of Independence, leaders of the thirteen colonies realized the necessity for a common constitution and an effective administration which would unite the thirteen states into one.

But what kind of a constitution? What form of government? An Athenian type of direct democracy, or Roman republicanism? Carthaginian aristocracy, or Spartan mixed democracy? What happens if in adopting an Athenian type of democracy it breaks down and leads to a civil war, as happened in the Golden Age of Athens? And what kind of guarantees are there to safeguard Roman republicanism from breaking down into military dictatorships and imperialism as it did in the Roman republic during the first century before Christ?

These and other similar questions were raised before and after the Constitutional Convention of 1787 in Philadelphia. On the basis of a common core of classical learning, the Founding Fathers in their debates appealed to classical antiquity for lessons and guidance. The Federalist Papers reveal that the Founding Fathers were well read in the classics and some of them knew Greek and Latin. Plato and Aristotle, Herodotus and Thucydides, Polybios and Plutarch, Sallust and Livy, Cicero and Tacitus served as sources for the drawing of parallels and lessons.

Greek and Latin were systematically taught in the nine Colonial Colleges, from Harvard, Dartmouth, Brown and Yale in the North, to King's College (Columbia), Queen's College (Rutgers), College of New Jersey (Princeton) and Pennsylvania in the center, to William and Mary in the South. For some thirty years in particular, between 1760 and 1790, the Greek and Latin classics enjoyed a great popularity in the thirteen states. Writing in 1765, the Bostonian John Adams advised: "Let us study ... the history of the ancient ages; contemplate the great examples of Greece and Rome..." For Adams "the republics of Greece and Rome were the seats of liberty." In a letter to Lafayette, he adds: "Two republican powers, Athens and Rome, have done more honor to our species (humanity) than all the rest of it. A new country can be planted only by such government."

Though Adams admired both Athens and Rome, he judged Sparta's constitution to be a model for the new nation. Sparta for him was a model of freedom and order, a stable, long-lived commonwealth, its people distinguished by virtue, simple life-style, patriotism, vigor." For others such as John Dickinson, James Otis, James Madison ancient Greece presented better examples for the young American republic. For Dickinson, Sparta produced "as brave and as free a people as ever existed" And Otis articulating the prevailing opinion in the colonies said: "Greece was a

better mother of colonies than Rome which dominated hers overbearingly and brutally."

The constitutional thought and legal practices of Solon of Athens and Lycurgos of Sparta, as well as the experiences of Carthage and Rome were studied and served as the background to the mixed constitution which was ultimately adopted by the Founding Fathers. The debates on federalism too, paid much attention to the strengths and weaknesses of Greek Leagues such as the Aetolian, the Achaean, the Lycian and the Amphictyonic council. For James Wilson, the Amphictyonic Council was "the Congress of the United States of Greece," a proper model for the American Congress.'

Overwhelming evidence confirms that there were many philhellenes in the colonial, revolutionary, and the early national period of the United States. Hellenism became popular because of the values it had emphasized, because of the constitutions it had made. Solon's teachings about isonomia, equality under the law; Kleisthenes' concept of democratia, as power that resides with the demos, the people; Socrates' emphasis on the importance of logos, thinking right and speaking logically; Plato's belief in dialogue, the principle that it is better to find ways to talk with each other than be left talking about or against each other; Aristotle's verdict that ptocheia, poverty is the greatest defect of democracy and the cause of civil wars and social conflicts; Saint Paul's teaching that pistis (faith) is trust, conviction and persuasion, were ancient Greek ideals and principles which became very dear to the Founding Fathers of the young American nation.

Christian Hellenism, Byzantion too, made its contributions to the ideology of the American republic. For example, Patriarch Photios' teaching that the basis of lawful government is the consent and the goodwill of the subjects had found fertile ground in Western European political philosophy and by way of England it had reached the American colonies. The Greek classical concept of statesmanship had been revived by Saint Photios in the ninth century and subsequently it exerted a profound influence on the development of political thought from the age of the Renaissance to the age of the Enlightenment in Western European states and in the United States. Saint Photios' views are echoed in Thomas Jefferson's Proclamation of Independence that "governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed"

## *From The Riches Of Our Cultural Heritage*

### *LAST STOP*

by George Seferis

Few are the moonlit nights that I've cared for:  
the alphabet of the stars--which you spell out  
as much as your fatigue at the day's end allows  
and from which you gather other meanings and other  
hopes—

you can then read more clearly.

Now that I sit here, idle, and think about it,  
few are the moons that remain in my memory:  
islands, color of grieving Madonna, late in the waning  
or moonlight in northern cities sometimes casting  
over turbulent streets, rivers, and limbs of men  
a heavy torpor.

Yet here last evening, in this our final port  
where we wait for the hour of our return home to dawn  
like an old debt: money that lay for years  
in a miser's safe, and at last  
the time for payment comes  
and you hear the coins falling onto the table;  
in this Etruscan village, behind the sea of Salerno  
behind the harbors of our return, on the edge  
of an autumn squall, the moon  
outstripped the clouds, and houses  
on the slope opposite became enamel:  
*Amica silentia lunae.*

This is a train of thought, a way  
to begin to speak of things you confess  
uneasily, at times when you can't hold back, to a friend  
who escaped secretly and who brings  
word from home and from the companions,  
and you hurry to open your heart  
before this exile forestalls you and alters him.  
We come from Arabia, Egypt, Palestine, Syria;  
the little state  
of Kommagene, which flickered out like a small lamp,  
often comes to mind,  
and great cities that lived for thousands of years  
and then became pasture land for cattle,  
fields for sugar-cane and corn.  
We come from the sand of the desert, from the seas of  
Proteus,  
souls shriveled by public sins,  
each holding office like a bird in its cage.  
The rainy autumn in this gorge  
infects the wound of each of us  
or what you might term differently: nemesis, fate,  
or simply bad habits, fraud and deceit,  
or even the selfish urge to reap reward from the blood of  
others.

Man frays easily in wars;  
man is soft, a sheaf of grass,  
lips and fingers that hunger for a white breast  
eyes that half-close in the radiance of day

and feet that would run, no matter how tired,  
at the slightest call of profit.  
Man is soft and thirsty like grass,  
insatiable like grass, his nerves roots that spread;  
when the harvest comes  
he would rather have the scythes whistle in some other field;  
when the harvest comes  
some call out to exorcise the demon  
some become entangled in their riches, others deliver  
speeches .

But what good are exorcisms, riches, speeches  
when the living are far away?

Is man ever anything else!

Isn't it this that confers life?

A time for planting, a time for harvesting.

"The same thing over and over again," you'll tell me, friend.

But the thinking of a refugee, the thinking of a prisoner,  
the thinking

of a person when he too has become a commodity—  
try to change it; you can't.

Maybe he would have liked to stay king of the cannibals  
wasting strength that nobody buys,

to promenade in fields of agapanthi

to hear the drums with bamboo overhead,  
as courtiers dance with prodigious masks.

But the country they're chopping up and burning like a pine-  
tree—you see it

either in the dark train, without water, the windows broken,  
night after night

or in the burning ship that according to the statistics is  
bound to sink—

this has taken root in the mind and doesn't change

this has planted images like those trees

that cast their branches in virgin forests

so that they take root in the earth and sprout again;

they cast their branches that sprout again, striding mile  
after mile;

our mind's a virgin forest of murdered friends.

And if I talk to you in fables and parables

it's because it's more gentle for you that way; and horror

really can't be talked about because it's alive,

because it's mute and goes on growing:

memory-wounding pain drips by day drips in sleep.

To speak of heroes to speak of heroes: Michael

who left the hospital with his wounds still open,

maybe he was speaking of heroes—the night

he dragged his foot through the darkened city—

when he howled, groping over our pain: "We advance  
in the dark,

we move forward in the dark ..."

The heroes move forward in the dark.

Few are the moonlit nights that I've cared for.

