

The Greek Premier: A 'roman à clef'

We publish here Part III of a mysterious manuscript, discovered "somewhere near Qasr al Nil, in Cairo," during the Christmas season of 1982, according to the person who has passed it on to us. In Part II, we left Dane Crystal, the terrorist controller on the payroll of the Greek KYP intelligence service, emerging from interrogation by the Athens magistracy to confess before the assembled press corps his own role in numerous murders and conspiracies, under the direction of KYP Director Lt.-Col. John Dyslexakis.

Meanwhile, the adventure of the "Qasr al Nil manuscript," took a new turn. Phocion, our man deciphering the poorly preserved, hastily handwritten sheets of paper, has encountered certain, customary in such enterprises, obstacles making the deciphering difficult, which, unfortunately, obliges us to suspend indefinitely publication of future installments.

The first two installments of the series appeared in EIR Oct. 18 and Nov. 8, 1985.

Chapter Seven



The meeting

Two huge Military Police sergeants, with sparkling white shin guards, gloves, belts, shoulder cordons and helmets, slowly, ceremoniously, pulled open the enormous oak doors for Dyslexakis to enter the cavernous private office of the Minister of Defense. The Premier himself was also the Minister of Defense.

Everything was hushed in the discreetly lit, imposing office. Heavy, Prussian-blue drapes concealed the view of the enormous windows, on either side of the Minister's enormous, polished ebony desk. The dimly lit chandelier, hanging from the meander-decorated tall ceiling, was sending discreet rays of light to illuminate the huge oil painting hanging on the wall, 15 yards opposite the minister's desk. It depicted, in subdued, blue-dominated tones, a scene of martial gallantry from the naval battle of Salamis. Walking softly on the enormous, thick, Persian rug, Deputy Director of the

KYP Dyslexakis noticed that apart from the Premier, sitting quietly at his desk, there were four more persons in the oblong room, sitting in the deep, black-leather upholstered armchairs, arranged one in each corner of the rug. The intricately carved coffee tables next to each were lit by solid, classical-style bronze lamps. Dyslexakis, without waiting for the invitation, went and sat on the empty leather sofa beneath the oil painting, directly facing the Premier. The other four persons were Deputy Minister of Defense Gen. Anthony Johnny-Cool, Minister of Public Order Menelaus Koulos, Director of the KYP Gen. Gregg Pauletes, and the Premier's private secretary, Raphael Xyangas.

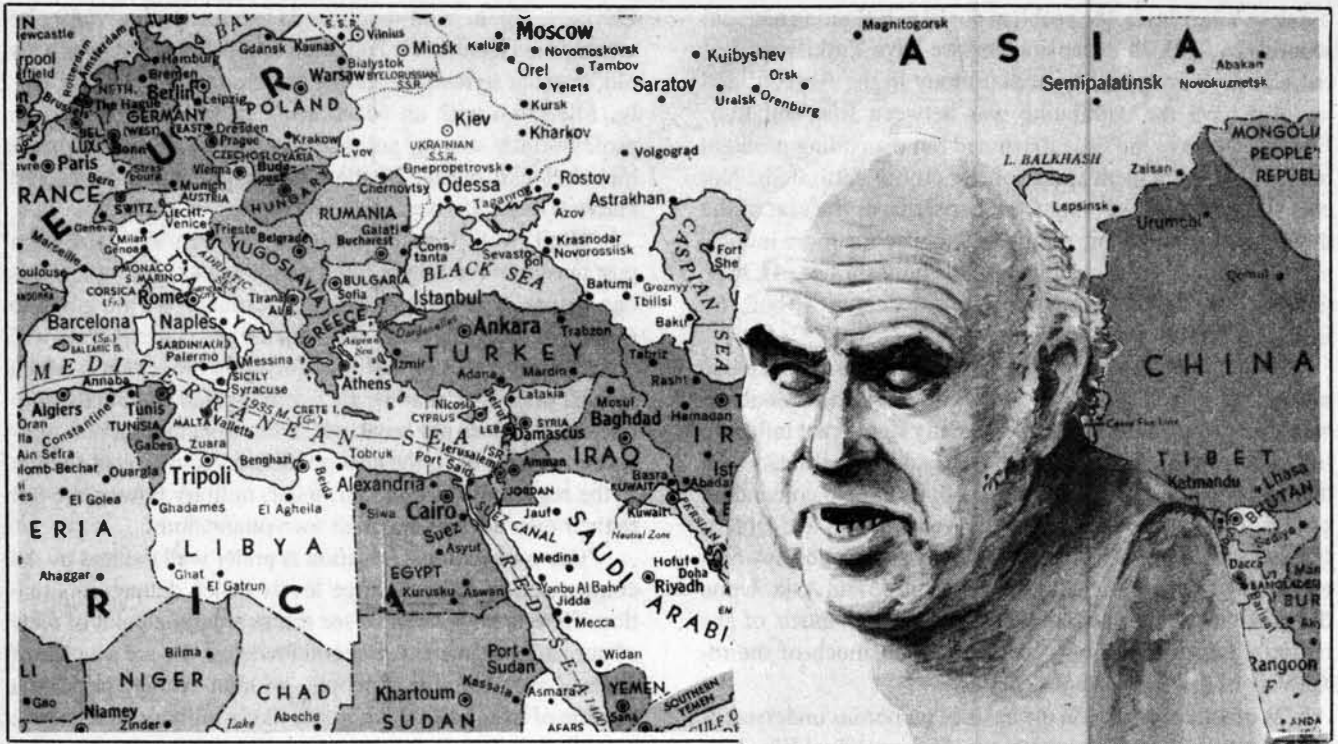
There was complete silence as the Premier took his time to light his pipe. Then he spoke:

"Gentlemen," he said, "I did not call this meeting to hear your reports, but rather to reiterate certain matters to you and to summarize the government's situation as of this evening's developments. I shall welcome your reactions to my statement and afterward I shall put certain questions before you."

Dyslexakis noted that each time the Premier resorted to this sort of formal, exact, tone, he did so in order to control his murderous rage. "The Premier must be frightened," Dyslexakis made a mental note and listened on.

"As you know, competent organs of the United States government informed us yesterday that GRU Col. Sergei Bokhan, formerly the first secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Athens and now the well-cared-for guest of the Central Intelligence Agency at Manassas, Virginia, had provided a list of 24 senior members and supporters of my government who are said to be in the service of the Soviet secret services. The American authorities saw fit to supply us with only 3 of these 24 names and to inform us that the remainder will be released to us 'in the future, as appropriate.'

"We were further informed that, as a result of these circumstances, the agreed purchase of our fleet of 50 F-16 jet aircraft will have to be postponed indefinitely, leaving our Air Force modernization in limbo. Within hours of this, by itself already calamitous situation, Generals Baskinakis and Batzanakis of the Security Police saw fit to arrest KYP agent Dane Crystal and induce him to a series of public statements, already broadcast throughout the nation, designed to insinuate that I, the constitutionally designated head of the KYP, am involved, by omission or commission, in protection of terrorist activities within Greece. In short, gentlemen, in the



span of one night, two devastating blows have been delivered against the nation: the first against our national defense, the second against the government and, therefore, against internal stability."

He stood up, walked to the side wall opposite the entrance door, and flicked a switch which began to slowly roll down a huge military map of the Near East.

"Let me now explain to you why I believe that no foreign power, no foreign enemy of the state is behind these two combined developments. I shall state the case that one, or perhaps two persons in this room, one or two of you, is personally responsible for this crisis. Therefore, be assured that, at the end of this session, one—or two—of you, will not walk out of that door free."

He paused, looked at them through the shadows and then picked up the map pointer. Nobody said a word.

"You are the only five persons, apart from my wife, in all the government and the party, who know what this administration is all about—and have known, more or less from the beginning. Many, many years ago, before we came into office, it had become evident that if world peace were to be preserved in the age of nuclear weapons, a dramatic reorganization of the world political map would be necessary. It was then codenamed 'the Change.' Those who first grasped this dramatic program during the old, heady days at Harvard, gentlemen, were at least as familiar with history as you are. They therefore knew that a redrawing of the world political map would have to be anchored on events occurring in this particular area of the world," he stressed as he drew, with his pointer, an imaginary circle from the Strait of Hormuz,

east to the Himalayas, up through the Caspian and Black Seas, over the Balkans into the tip of the Adriatic, through Venice, down the map, through Sicily, Malta, completing the circle to include Libya, Chad, Sudan, Egypt, the Red Sea, and the Arabian peninsula. The "Middle East."

"It was so in the time of Herodotus, and it is so today. We came into office four years ago, because we alone of all Greek politicians and political parties understood this one historical necessity."

Dyslexakis was unimpressed. "You came into office because you are a god-damned CIA agent, and you know it," he muttered to himself.

"Over 180 million people live in this crucible," the Premier went on. "They have their political, religious, and ethnic institutions and traditions. They live inside national borders which date from 1922 or 1923, even though these peoples have been around for millennia. For the Change to be carried out, for the great stability to finally settle in, institutions and borders will have to change. Festering problems will have to be settled. We have: the Palestinian problem; the Cyprus problem; the problem of legitimate Israeli national security; Lebanon's ethnic and religious disintegration; the matter of Syria's legitimate national aspirations; the legitimate national and political aspirations of minorities oppressed by Turkey, such as the Armenians and the Kurds; the matter of the national aspirations of ethnic Albanians and ethnic Bulgarians

living in Yugoslavia; the problem posed to Bulgarian national security by Turkish expansionism; we have Turkish territorial claims over our national patrimony in the Aegean, and we also have the continuing war between Iran and Iraq. Finally, we have the little discussed but overriding problem of the final permanent status of the city of Jerusalem. Not only the problems deriving from her status as the seat of the three great monotheistic religions, but also the more intractable problem of guardianship over the holy shrines of Christianity, over which claims are laid for centuries, both by Eastern and Western Christianity.

"Count them: 14 major international problems, each one of which, by itself, might trigger world war. Thermonuclear war! Our government is but one of many significant influencing factors in the region, but it has the added qualification of having been a bridge of communications among contending groups. Our good offices are employed by Arab and Israeli, Iranian and Iraqi, Albanian, Bulgarian and Yugoslav, East and West, Warsaw Pact and NATO, Europe and Asia. Upon the wisdom of our government will depend much of the region's future evolution—and upon that, much of the re-drawing of the world's political map.

"We came to power on the basis of numerous understandings based on these essential facts of international life. You know and I know that a permanent resolution of these festering conflicts will not be possible while the region remains the arena of superpower rivalry. For this rivalry to end, the region must, eventually, settle under the influence of that superpower, which, by reasons of geography, has more legitimate cause to be interested in the region's permanent stability, the Soviet Union. This is a matter which has been well understood and appreciated by the more responsible, senior, leaders of the American foreign policy establishment, as well as by the British, of course. We have received, from these circles, the understanding and support needed to carry out our tasks. West German, Austrian, Swiss, French, and Italian foreign policy leaders are likewise aligned with our perspective."

General Pauletes, the senile titular director of the KYP, stirred politely in his armchair and interrupted, innocently: "These are foreign matters, Mr. President. Fascinating, no doubt, but foreign. Your father, my lad, God rest his soul, in the old days, when I used to work for him, always used to explain things to us according to the interests of the nation. For an old man such as myself, this was a sound way then, Mr. President, and it is a sound way now: This way, also, old-fashioned folk, like me, can follow you, if you please, God bless you, sir."

Now the Premier, even in his moments of rage, was not without a wicked sense of compassion. Many a time in the past, not only had he not been offended, but, instead, felt a kind of pity for the old buffoon, whom circumstances and convenience had placed at the head of the KYP. He paused with the interruption, looked at the old man, and whispered to himself, "My poor, demented Elpenor," quoting from the

Odyssey. Then, with a softened, condescending voice, he resumed his lecture. He had often found that slipping into his old, familiar style of a lecturing professor, always, unfailingly, filled him with an added sense of security. To lecture professorially among political associates, he found, made him feel like master of the situation. It was like the old Harvard days, all over again.

"Well, well, General Pauletes," he went on, "you are a past master of reading military maps. Let us now look at this one before us and ask it several questions. We are going to assume, for argument's sake, that the two superpowers will not get themselves militarily involved in the region—which means, of course, that we are assuming that general thermonuclear war does not break out, a fair assumption; our question now, is: What is the next possible level of violent conflict in the region, if the regional, local, military powers are left to their own devices and their own momentum?"

"Our own national situation is pretty well defined by the comparison of military force levels which define our situation. Here is how we must see things from the point of view of our national interest, General Pauletes: We are a nation of slightly over 10 million people, with an average per capita income of over \$4,000. Our only likely military adversary is neighboring Turkey, with a population of 49 million and per capita income of about \$1,000. Though we are economically marginally stronger, Turkey has five times our population, six times our surface area, three times our land army, twice our Air Force, and a slightly larger Navy."

The map on the wall was marked with indications and military symbols:

Turkey: *Army*, 14 infantry division, 3 armored divisions, 4 mechanized divisions; 1 paratroop brigade, 1 commando brigade, 11 infantry brigades, 3,500 tanks.

Greece: *Army*, 11 infantry divisions, 3 armored divisions, 1 mechanized division, 1 paratroop/commando division, 4 armored reconnaissance brigades, 2,200 tanks.

Turkey: *Air Force*, 458 combat aircraft.

Greece: *Air Force*, 303 combat aircraft.

Turkey: *Navy*, 16 subs, 29 major surface combatants.

Greece: *Navy*, 10 subs, 29 major surface combatants.

"Our problems are two, if ever the situation deteriorates into a military conflict between us and Turkey alone, without any other participants. First, none of our large Aegean islands, all located a swim's distance from the Turkish coast, is defensible from Turkish landing assault. Lemnos, Samos, Chios, Lesbos, Rhodes, and so forth—all go. Second problem: Land combat between us and them can only take place in Thrace, around the Maritsa River valley. This, as you know, is prime tank warfare territory, which enables Turkey to fully deploy her armored superiority in a location closer

to Turkish air support facilities than to ours. All this is known." He paused.

"Continuing to exclude from our assumptions any superpower or other power intervention, these military facts impose only one possible foreign policy for us: my foreign policy. This country must work closely with Turkey's other neighbors, Bulgaria, Syria, Iran, and the Soviet Union, for the purpose of permanently maintaining such pressures and potential threats around the entire Turkish perimeter, which will perpetually oblige Turkey to keep its military forces dispersed to the four points of the compass. Our cooperation with Bulgaria, Syria, and Iran, regardless of political and ideological implications, must continue to prohibit Turkey from establishing a local numerical superiority over us in Thrace and the Aegean. This diplomatic combination adds to our advantage 16 Syrian divisions and 10 Bulgarian divisions and similar naval and air strengths."



"It is necessary," said the Premier, "for us to weaken and terminate our alliance commitments and those of every one else in this part of the world. My foreign policy is anchored in cooperation with those in the United States who want to end U.S. commitments in Europe, and control their nation's intelligence services."

Colonel Dyslexakis was thoroughly unimpressed with the charade and was getting impatient.

"Mr. President," he interrupted, "first of all, you do not have 16 Syrian divisions because they are nicely pinned down by the Israelis. Secondly, I fail to see the relationship of all this neat theorizing to the crisis at hand. I would strongly recommend you turn on the television, in case Dane Crystal, or the Ministry of Interior for that matter, has any new surprises for us."

The polite equivalent of "all hell" started breaking out in the stately room. "Exactly what do you mean 'the Interior Ministry,'" shouted the Minister of Public Order, Menelaus Koulos, who was supervising Interior; the Deputy Minister of Defense was seen jumping up from his armchair and waving his right index finger, repeating "about the 16 divisions . . . about the 16 divisions . . . let me explain about the 16 Syrian divisions. . . ." Raphael Xyangas engaged in repeated, discreet coughs. The Premier, red in the face,

shouted "Quiet!" a couple of times, but both Koulos and Johnny-Cool continued their agitated talk about the Interior Ministry and "about the 16 Syrian divisions." Xyangas' "discreet coughing" threatened to infect General Paulettes as well.

"OK, Colonel Dyslexakis, you asked for it!" the Premier shouted, dropped his map pointer and, abandoning his lecture, returned to his impressive desk.

"Asked for what, Mr. President?" asked Dyslexakis provocatively. Silence fell in the room.

"If you are so clever as to know how the Israelis are pinning down the Syrian divisions, Mr. Deputy Director," the Premier said sarcastically, "then maybe you will understand the necessity for us of proceeding to weaken and eventually terminate our alliance commitments and to terminate everybody else's alliance commitments in this part of the world. And if you are clever enough to understand this, then it will not escape your attention that my foreign policy is, perforce, anchored on close cooperation with those gentlemen in the United States who are sufficiently intelligent to wish to terminate their country's defense commitments in Europe and powerful enough to control their nation's intelligence services."

"And the F-15s?" asked the Deputy Defense Minister in horror.

"Be quiet, Anthony!" barked the Premier and continued addressing Dyslexakis; ". . . which brings me to the point, Mr. Dyslexakis, that whereas this day my government is faced with the prospect of destabilization, it is neither in the interest of those who set American policy nor in the interests of Moscow, to set me back and to set my policies back. Therefore, neither the Americans nor the Russians are behind this destabilization. And I ask you, Mr. Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Service, who on earth, then, is behind the effort to wreak havoc in my government? It is within your purview to know. It is you who assured me two hours ago that all was under control. It is you who suggested that Dane Crystal engage in what you call the 'G. Goat Vossis Ploy.' And you, finally, who gave assurances that Crystal would not admit his employment at KYP. Is it too much for the Premier to ask if he has not been deliberately deceived by the nation's chief of counterintelligence? I will not only ask, Colonel. By god, I shall have your head!"

"You shall have nothing of the sort!" retorted Dyslexakis, already set in a grim, vengeful pose. He continued to feel master of the situation. "Instead of having my head," he went on, "you are going to extract some explanations from my friend, the Minister of Public Order, here." He thrust his index finger in the direction of Menelaus Koulos. "You shall ask him why he authorized Generals Baskinakis and Batzanakis to arrest my agent. And you shall ask him why he authorized his deputy, the Minister of Interior, to issue to the national press a release announcing that Dane Crystal had admitted to the interrogating magistrate that he is an employee of the KYP. And you shall also ask him

why this information was given to the public before it was given to you, or to Xyangas here, or to the service." He paused for one second and surveyed the silence in the room. "And after you have received answers to these questions, I shall have a few things to say about the 'G. Goat Vossis Ploy,'"

The Premier's face was changing from scarlet to stone-wall gray. Old-fashioned General Pauletes was becoming animated seeing the insolence in the face of his chief of counterintelligence. Xyangas was deliberately dropping his worry-beads one by one. The Deputy Defense Minister was holding his breath in fear. And a determined, hateful spark was shining in the eyes of the Minister of Public Order. Finally, the Premier spoke.

"I believe some answers are in order, Menelaus," he addressed the Minister of Public Order.

"Mr. President," Menelaus Koulos responded, "this entire matter has been out of my hands entirely. Generals Baskinakis and Batzanakis acted above and beyond any authority they were given by me, and contrary to my admonitions!"

"Is the Minister submitting his resignation?" Dyslexakis pressed on.

"The Minister is prepared to submit his resignation immediately, Mr. President," Koulos said stiffly.

"I will accept no resignation before I get to the bottom of this matter," the Premier responded, "but I must ask you to explain, on the ground of what backing and what force, did these two police generals feel they would act with impunity to override your authority and reduce you to impotence."

Koulos felt whipped by the word "impotence."

"They simply and directly threatened to break ranks and to give to the press all the documentary materials pertaining to certain irregularities in last June's elections," Koulos replied simply.

"So that everyone is aware of what is involved," he went on, "let me review the bill of particulars. My ministry is the sole possessor of the magnetic tapes containing the names of all the registered voters in the country, against which lists the electoral returns from every voting precinct of the country had to be matched by the election judges. One of these tapes contains the names and addresses of 350,000 fictitious voters. They can be proven to be fictitious because, if one were to inquire at the indicated addresses, one would not be able to find any persons bearing the names contained in the tapes. These fictitious persons voted for us during the June election. Moreover, there is a second magnetic tape, containing the names—about 200,000—of actual, existing, registered voters which were excised from certain precincts in which we knew the opposition would register overwhelming majorities. When the election judges counted votes from these precincts, they gave the opposition smaller margins of plurality than had, in reality, been cast, because our local party

organization had successfully caused the disappearance of a certain amount of ballots and registration sheets. Without access to the full, computerized lists, the judges had no way of discovering the irregularity. As you know, after this, hmm . . . fixing, we won that election by a difference of 100,000 votes, approximately. You may now be told that Generals Baskinakis and Batzanakis are in possession of these computerized lists and also of the magnetic tapes containing the programming instructions to the computer, which effected these modifications. They threatened to take this material to the domestic and foreign press and to the Supreme Court."

Dyslexakis was startled.

The Premier was now shuffling with his pipe, his hands trembling. "But . . . but . . ." he muttered, "Menelaus, I had no idea. I most certainly had no idea that such things went on during the election."

"Mr. President," Koulos responded, "you will recall that you had asked me to do 'whatever is necessary to ensure victory.' And you had told me this when I was already in charge of the ministry, and when the ministry was already assigned to supervise the election. Am I now to be blamed for this?"

"There will be no recriminations for this," the Premier hastened, seeing through Koulos' veiled threat.

"If I may, Mr. President," Dyslexakis intervened, "recriminations have nothing to do with anything. What the minister is describing is that the two top generals of the security police are carrying out a cold, legal coup d'état as we are sitting here and talking. They employed the blackmail pertaining to the election lists for the purpose of arresting a KYP agent, a uniquely situated KYP agent, I might add, for the purpose of establishing a public, juridical, case against you, the constitutional head of the KYP, on charges that the KYP itself perpetrates and encourages to be perpetrated, acts of political terrorism in the country. It seems to me that Batzanakis and Baskinakis are giving you—us, I might hasten to add, in this instance—one of two choices: Either abandon the government and go to jail for electoral fraud, or abandon the government and go to jail on charges of terrorism. Am I correct in reducing the matter to these bare essentials?"

Silence filled the stately room.

Finally, the Premier said, "I believe you are correct, Colonel, though in reality, I think there are certain things which can be done to prevent this whole thing from arriving to these 'bare essentials,' as you call them."

"But what we can do, Mr. President? Very much depends on certain things we do not know. Let me elaborate: We are all agreed that Baskinakis and Batzanakis are now in the process of carrying out a legal coup d'état. A well-considered one, I might add. It is based on impressive sources of information. Even so, given that they are engaged in nothing less than toppling this government, we are right to

ask—on whose behalf? Whom are they preparing to put in our place? You, Mr. President, said a while ago, that neither the American, nor the Russian side is interested in disrupting what we are doing here. I certainly agree with that and I would hasten to add the British to the list. The question then is, on whose account are the generals working? Even more puzzling is the fact that no leader or personality of the domestic opposition is anywhere close to these generals. We know the situation in Parliament in detail. The generals' legal coup does not seem to have worked out a solution to the succession question. After us, who? Without answering this, we shall not know in which direction to strike, Mr. President."

Then, for the first time, the Premier's private secretary, Raphael Xyangas, spoke: "I do not believe the generals are going for a change of government, sir," he said. "I believe Baskinakis and Batzanakis are trying to knock out two persons, Dyslexakis, here, and myself. Let us not overdramatize things, John," he said turning to Dyslexakis. "Things are bad enough as they are. These two gentlemen have, for some time now, been incensed over the government's anti-terror program, principally, I believe, because they have been excluded from it."

"I can vouch for that," Minister Koulos interjected. "Both generals, in point of fact, have repeatedly emphasized to me, that they believe terrorists are sanctioned and protected by the KYP. Baskinakis believes that if Dane Crystal is squeezed in the right way, he might provide information to prove the case against the KYP. As you know, they have been under pressure to produce results from American base security officers at Nea Makri and Hellenicon. Professional frustration and a certain degree of professional rivalry, may be at work here."

"If you are suggesting that American pressure is behind this," the Premier responded, "the implication might be that something unusually and terribly wrong is going on in Washington. We are supposed to be covered over there."

"We were not covered on the matter of the Bokhan revelations," the Deputy Defense Minister finally found his voice to say something.

"True enough," the Premier remarked, "but so long as the Bokhan revelations appeared to be in isolation, before the Dane Crystal affair intervened, I was inclined to believe that it was a minor matter. I still believe, in fact, that the so-called Bokhan revelations may be the result of inter-service pressures, the kind of normal Washington bureaucratic needs to 'show results,' having nothing to do with Greek politics per se. You know very well that throughout this year, the CIA has suffered from so many spy scandals, defections, and so forth, that they desperately needed something positive to show up on their report card. Making revelations about Soviet penetration into Greece would produce such result without causing any serious damage to anyone—provided we here could exercise normal damage-

control. It is the Dane Crystal affair which threatens to deprive us of that ability. If the Bokhan case is in fact, in some way, through the Americans, connected to the Crystal case, then we *do* have an alarming problem in Washington which is not supposed to be there. We must at all costs ascertain whether we are dealing with two isolated cases or with a single operation with these two prongs . . . and, if there are two prongs, there may be more coming," he added with hesitation.

Dyslexakis noticed that Xyangas was maintaining an uncharacteristic silence and distance from the proceedings. He wondered if Xyangas knew something that the others did not know. What the Premier was saying, was true enough, Dyslexakis admitted, but all too abstract and theoretical. The point is that heads are about to fall and we must determine whose heads they will be.

"Action must be taken before we can develop answers to these questions, Mr. President," he said. "Someone must take the rap. The way I see it, either Dane Crystal will remain in custody and the case will proceed, in which case, it will be your head, Mr. President, or Dane Crystal will be released, error will be admitted, and it will be the Public Order Minister's head along with those of Baskinakis and Batzanakis. I can assure you that, in any event, it will not be my head."

Shocked, both the Premier and Minister Koulos looked at each other. The two men had been together for over 30 years. Koulos had been the Premier's personal attorney forever, it seemed, since before either of them had entered public life; Koulos was the family's confidant and godfather of the children. Now, Dyslexakis appeared to be driving a wedge between them. As the two men exchanged glances, they shared the thought: "Could it be that Dyslexakis himself was orchestrating this crisis?" Then the Minister decided to speak. In a tense, harsh, and deliberate voice he said:

"No heads will fall yet, Colonel; not mine and not the Premier's. Not until you divulge what this 'G. Goat Vossis Ploy' is all about."

"Forget Menelaus, you don't want to know," interrupted the Premier.

"How do we know, sir, that Baskinakis and Batzanakis are not right? How do we know that Colonel Dyslexakis and the KYP's counterintelligence directorate do not control terrorism?"

"You don't want to know," the Premier repeated.

"He will know, by god!" Dyslexakis raised his voice. "He shall know the truth, and the truth shall make him free,' as the Premier's American friends say." Dyslexakis quoted the CIA's motto. "But before I tell him, I want the Premier to take notice that the Minister of Public Order is on the record defending the assumptions and presumptions of his mutinous subordinates, Generals Baskinakis and Batzanakis."

With this, the Premier looked sharply at both the speaker

and Koulos. He wondered if his old bonds of affinity with the Minister of Public Order were snapping.

"With this," barked Dyslexakis, "let me give you the lowdown on the 'G. Goat Vossis Ploy.' Pay attention and do not interrupt. You shall learn something. Way back when, in the summer of 1974, there was a change of regime in this country. The 'despised junta,' as the saying goes, was toppled as the Turkish Army was invading Cyprus, and all of you civilians, our cherished 'democratic forces,' headed back home from exile to take over. And after you did, some wholesome, high-level killing started around here. I enumerate: first was the Christmas 1975. . . ."

"Shut up!" the Premier barked.

"No way, sir. And I will have you know, that I have in my possession receipts, dated and signed by Xyangas, and numbered according to your personal protocol files, signed receipts of no fewer than six, fully detailed reports on these matters. These receipts will prove in any court of law that what I am about to say has been known to you. Now, let me have your attention, once again, gentlemen."

The Premier lowered his eyes, broken and tamed. Xyangas, in the other end of the room, shook his head with a grave, knowing nod. He was confirming the matter of the signed receipts.

"OK, now," Dyslexakis continued brutally, "two nights before Christmas eve 1975, the CIA station chief in Athens, Richard Welch, was assassinated by masked gunmen in the middle of the street, one block away from the American ambassador's residence. The KYP went and collected from the pavement his splattered brains with absorbent cotton, and this is when our country entered the modern era of 'international terrorism,' as the game is called. A couple of years later, that particular American ambassador, Henry Tasca, you will recall, was assassinated in Rome, where he was then living, crushed by two trucks. Some months later, Welch and Tasca's three top Greek associates were also executed: Police Inspector Petros Babalis, Police Commissioner Mallios, and Deputy Chief of Police Sotiris Kouvas. The remaining members of Welch and Tasca's 'American team,' who used to run the country's affairs during the years of 'the junta,' were all in the relative safety of the Korydallos prison, serving life sentences. Other terrorist killings came later, but that's different. The essential killings were the systematic exterminations of that 'joint Greek American committee' which administered the country during the years of the dictatorship."

The Premier was again shuffling with his pipe. Xyangas was intently screening the faces of everyone in the room while the narrative was going on. Poor old General Pauletes was dozing off in his chair. The Deputy Minister of Defense, to Xyangas' amusement, was taking notes. And Menelaus Koulos, with eyes bulging, jaws clenched, and lower lip protruding, was trying to fight off rage and shame, unable to take his eyes off Dyslexakis. The colonel continued, in

the same harsh, brutal tone of voice.

"Now tell me, whoever heard of any other instance of a CIA station chief executed in broad daylight, in any other country of the world? And whoever heard of the perpetrators going scot-free? I asked the Russians—they never heard of such a thing—before or after. So how did this happen, you'll ask. Well, you heard today, authoritatively, how our Premier's rise to power is associated with certain powerful policymaking circles in Washington. How did he characterize them, a while back there? Oh, yes, he called them 'sufficiently intelligent to wish to terminate their country's defense commitments in Europe, and powerful enough to control their nation's intelligence services.' I do not know if these 'sufficiently intelligent' and 'powerful enough' friends of the Premier actually killed Welch, or Tasca, or any of the others. I do however know—the Premier himself told me this—that these 'sufficiently intelligent' and 'powerful enough' gentlemen in Washington made a request, at the highest level of our government, to please be discreet and not press too hard in the investigations of these still unresolved murders. It was I who received the orders to arrange for a coverup. Now, you all have heard of this notorious, terrible, anti-imperialist terrorist organization, the 'N-17' or 'November 17' organization."

"Of course," interjected General Pauletes, suddenly waking up. "They are the ones who assassinated Welch, Mallios, and the others."

"Exactly my point," Dyslexakis continued politely, "exactly my point and the widely respected columnist G. Goat Vossis shares General Pauletes' evaluation. The 'N-17' is responsible for terrorist assassinations in this country. Now has any one anywhere seen any member of this 'N-17'? Has any member of 'N-17' ever been arrested or even positively identified for prosecution? Of course not. You will notice that this organization exists only in the form of mysterious press releases and limited circulation leaflets. You will further notice that every major daily newspaper faithfully reprints the statements by means of which the 'N-17' 'assumes responsibility' for any given terrorist act. It is done with mirrors, gentlemen. G. Goat Vossis, for his own reasons, fervently believes that there is more to the 'N-17' than the leaflets and press releases. He argues, and argues persuasively in his columns, that there exists an impressive, tightly knit, professional, potent, secret, anti-imperialist organization. The counterintelligence directorate of the KYP, myself, knows better, because we received instructions to provide the wherewithal for the coverup, and we did. We wrote and supplied the 'N-17' press statements, and we induced the newspapers to give them wide publicity. I don't know who it was actually, and who it is today, who proceeds with these executions which appear to be terrorist episodes. More to the point, I do not wish to know, and I will refuse to be told. I know only who of my superiors instructs me to provide coverups. I do not know why my superiors wish coverups,

nor who suggests to my superiors that coverups are advisable. And I do not wish to know. Moreover, according to service regulations, I have not been at liberty to divulge this actual secret of so-called international terrorism in our country, neither to my immediate superior, General Pauletes; nor to the relevant Minister of Public Order, nor, of course, to poor General Baskinakis and General Batzanakis, who are at their wits' end trying to figure out this mysterious, all-powerful terrorist capability. Besides myself, only the Premier knows, because he issued the orders for the coverup. And perhaps the quiet Mr. Xyangas knows certain aspects, since some of the orders were conveyed through him."

He stopped and the tension in the room was unbearable. The only noise was the Deputy Defense Minister's pencil scratching over his notepad.

"And this is the reason why it shall not be my head," concluded Colonel Dyslexakis.

The Premier, his lustre gone, managed to lift his eyes from his pipe and look outward toward the others. He was weary. Hearing Dyslexakis speak had made the professorial self-confidence disappear. Gone also was the enraged crispness with which he had opened the meeting. Tired, flabby, with black circles around his eyes and his jaw half opened, he slowly let his eyes wander around the room, as though he were begging for help from somewhere. No help was forthcoming. General Pauletes was dozing off again. Xyangas remained expressionless. Looking at him, the Premier murmured quietly, "You damn coward." Menelaus Koulos had his elbows on his knees and his face covered with his hands, which made the Premier wonder if his old friend was still capable of weeping. He dismissed the thought with a faint, weary, cynical smile that lasted for half a second. The Deputy Defense Minister had finished taking notes and was now, meticulously, looking over his notepad.

"There will be none of this, Anthony," the Premier said quietly. "There will be no notes coming out of this room. Everything is off the record."

"Mr. President," the Deputy Defense Minister started with comical pomposity, "I must, for the record, state my absolute, unqualified revulsion at . . ."

"Shut up, you jackass, and listen to me," the Premier interrupted with a weary but determined voice, "and listen very carefully. You shall get up from that armchair, walk over to the paper-shredder opposite that big door, and you shall shove your notepad in it. If you do not do this right now, I or the Colonel or Xyangas will put a bullet through your head, here and now. The Colonel shall compose another 'N-17' press release claiming the credit."

Anthony Johnny-Cool resisted an impulse to talk back, got up from his chair and did exactly as he had been told. Dyslexakis watched with satisfaction. Neither he, however, nor anyone else, was in the mood to say anything. Xyangas' worry-beads were clanging against one another. Johnny-Cool returned to his seat. The Premier let out a deep, guttural

sigh. He fixed his eyes past Dyslexakis, standing straight in front of him, and let his vision wander over the painting on the wall behind. Everybody now waited.

"OK, let's take a coffee break, everybody is tired," suggested Colonel Dyslexakis. He knew the Premier had enough sense left in him to assert control over Johnny-Cool, but not enough to see through the mess they were in, and come up with some sort of solution. "If I get the bastard out of this mess, he'll owe me for life," he thought to himself. Someone got up and turned on the television set. The Premier ordered refreshments through the intercom. Xyangas walked over to the window and pulled the drapes to look at the disappearing red-orange sunset. The Premier walked over to his crestfallen friend Koulos, and started chatting. The telephone buzzed, Xyangas picked it up and began taking notes. He kept taking notes when the sandwiches arrived and everyone settled back to their places chatting quietly.

"I believe we're all in this together, and we've got to start figuring on some kind of fancy damage control," Dyslexakis said tentatively, looking with mock sadness at his bitten sandwich. He tried to look relaxed for the sake of the others. The Premier picked up on the hint and raised his glass of lemonade. "I'll drink to that," he tried to make light of the situation. He wondered what kind of "damage control" Dyslexakis might have in mind—and he welcomed the prospect of Dyslexakis interesting himself in collective "damage control" rather than further recriminations and blackmail.

"Before you go on with what you may have in mind, John," the Premier, trying to be friendly, addressed Dyslexakis again, "let me say a couple of things I have in mind. Whatever damage control you may propose for our local situation here, what you just outlined, just before, over the Welch and the others' deaths, does give us a handle on the situation, you know. If, just in case, the worse of what I suspect happens to be the case, if, that is, the Bokhan revelations and what Baskinakis and Batzanakis did do in fact happen to be somehow coordinated somewhere back in Washington, we can play hardball with the guys back there. You may not know, but I do, who in Washington, wished the coverup of those killings. I shall appropriately let it be known that their identities will be revealed, unless the pressure on us is dropped. This might give us the breathing spell to take measures back here."

Dyslexakis weighed the idea in his mind while swallowing the last bite of his sandwich with bent head, his ear in the Premier's direction. "Naw," he said casually, "I don't think it'll work, sir," reverting to his routine, amiable, collaborative demeanor toward the Premier. "The way I figure this is, if in fact there is a serious American influence, turning the squeeze on us both with Bokhan and with this Crystal thing, then it can't possibly be coming from your friends over there. Now, the way I figure, it must have been your friends who were interested in hushing up the assassinations, right? These friends of yours are different people from those

who, say, are putting the squeeze on us now. If you go around and tell your friends that you are going to spill unless the pressure is taken off, I don't think they'll be able to help us. You see, the people who are putting the squeeze on us must want to screw your friends back in Washington. If you spill from here, your friends will be finished there, and no constraint will be left in Washington which might call off this operation against us, right? So, your threat to your friends won't be credible."

"We can signal, though, that if we are let down, we'll take the whole shebang down with us," the Premier suggested.

"Well, I don't think our options are exhausted yet, sir," Dyslexakis responded. "Let's see. I presume that, after all that was said here, tonight, Minister Koulos now shares the same concerns as we do, isn't that right?" Koulos nodded his head. "Fine then, this is already beginning to weaken Baskinakis' and Batzanakis' case. Our problem is getting the voter registration tapes back. For this we need time. So we play for time. For the next 48 hours, we come out of this room with one, unified approach. We say, 'Yes, Crystal was an employee of the KYP. But, the service was suspicious of him. Unreliable, a pathological liar.' We shall insist on branding all of his statements and testimonies as lies. Now, whoever is running this operation—Baskinakis, some American, whoever—will evaluate our defense to be very weak, right? So they'll continue feeling they are on top of the situation. Fine, that's what we want. The more they are confident, the safer the secret of the voter registration tapes is. They won't spill the beans, and we'll gain the time we need to get back the tapes. Their strategy will be to go for full-scale investigations, subpoenas, testimonies, the whole legal route. It's time-consuming—months, maybe years. All they have is Dane Crystal. People don't live forever."

"Its an idea," the Premier said.

"Now, the denials from our side must come down firm and heavy. Minister Koulos must speak out. I will speak out. Xyangas must handle the press. You, sir, stay out of it. No public statements. You must crack the whip on the judiciary. I'll send you a dossier with all I have on the interrogating magistrate, the district judge on the case, every relevant person. Lay down the law all the way up and down the echelons, from the Supreme Court on down. Say you want the most proper, clean, unassailable investigation ever in history. Say Dane Crystal will get the most thorough and correct trial ever. Say that, even though he is a terrorist, he will get the most legally unassailable trial ever, because we want to prove we are a land of laws. That's good, because perfect trials take a very, very long time. Meanwhile, the KYP will produce evidence that Dane Crystal was a terrorist all along, pretending to be an informant of the service in order to infiltrate us."

Raphael Xyangas, having finished taking notes over the telephone, had approached and quietly joined the group,

listening with fascination to the Deputy Director's gameplan. He did not interrupt, until Dyslexakis had finished. Then, in hushed voice, "We just had a phone call from Pablo, from Paris," he said. The Premier sharply turned toward Xyangas. He suddenly remembered his nightmare of early this morning, when he saw an eerie vision of his dead father suddenly become transformed into a grotesque figure of "Pablo." He wondered if he should start believing in dreams. "So, what did Pablo have to say?" he asked.

"Pablo says that he has been informed of all that has been going on here since last night. He says he believes he understands what is really going on, and that a certain person will be arriving at the Athens airport tomorrow evening, from New York, carrying certain messages and suggestions for resolving the crisis. The messenger is Father Basil, serving in the New York Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. You may know him, sir. I think, Pablo thinks that you actually met him once. Father Basil is the chairman of the board in Mr. John Matsis' shipping company. He is also vice-president of the Greek American Chamber of Commerce and a member of the board of directors of the New York branch of the Israel Discount Bank. He certainly goes places, for a clergyman. He will be coming here tomorrow with suggestions for resolving the crisis. Pablo says he already knows of these suggestions and that he strongly recommends we give them serious consideration."

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