

Attic Chronicle by Phocion

Jimmy Carter in Athens

It smells like a Democratic Party/State Department alliance against NATO partner Turkey.

Between July 2 and July 16, Athenian public opinion was focused on the public statements of numerous prominent visiting Americans, Senators Larry Pressler and Paul Sarbanes and ex-President Jimmy Carter being the most prominent among the visitors. Their message to the Greek Socialist government was twofold: not to pay any attention to the Reagan administration's protests over Papandreou's outrageous pro-Soviet behavior; and to continue exacerbating the, already explosive, Greek-Turkish tensions.

Sarbanes' anti-Reagan statements to the Athenian daily press read like instigations to further anti-Americanism and bordered on treason. Pressler's meddling into the interminable Greek-Turkish conflict over Cyprus, assisted by parallel activities of the State Department's Richard Haass, also in Athens at the time, was closer to pouring oil over flames.

But most interesting was Jimmy Carter's theological inquiries into the mysteries of the Eastern Orthodox faith. Following is an account of Jimmy Carter's meeting with Papandreou's Foreign Minister John Charalambopoulos on July 15, as reported by the leading pro-government Athenian daily *To Vima*:

"The next major subject in the conversations between Messrs. Carter and Charalambopoulos was (strange as it might appear), church-state relations and ecclesiastical property in Greece. Mr. Carter specifically requested information on whether there

is division between church and state in Greece and whether the Oecumenical Patriarch has the same administrative and political power as the Catholic Pope.

"Mr. Charalambopoulos, who was particularly well informed on ecclesiastical matters, explained that the Patriarch is considered head of the Orthodox church, but he reminded him that many churches are independent, that there are other patriarchs, and that the Oecumenical Patriarch does not have the political and administrative powers of the Pope.

"Mr. Carter repeated his question about ecclesiastical and monastic properties and requested specific items of information regarding church real estate property, whether it is subject to taxation and how the church helps the poor. . . ."

"Subsequently, Mr. Carter asked for further information about the Oecumenical Patriarchate and specifically asked whether Patriarch Demetrios was encountering serious obstacles in the execution of his duties. Mr. Charalambopoulos was thus given the opportunity to explain to Mr. Carter the problems which the Greek Orthodox Church is facing in Constantinople [*To Vima* editor's note: Mr. Carter also referred to Istanbul as "Constantinople"], especially with the recent demolition (by the Turkish government) of the church of Makrochorion, under the pretext of opening a new road."

"Mr. Carter, having listened attentively, and admitted that this was his first precise briefing on the subject,

said that Mr. Charalambopoulos' briefing will help him in his conversations both with the Holy Synod (in Turkey) and with the Turkish political leadership."

Subsequently, Carter was asked the following:

"Q: Are you planning to visit Constantinople?"

"A: Correct."

"Q: Will you be a mediator on the problem of the church of Saint George [at Makrochorion]?"

"A: Not a mediator. I have no such mandate. I am a simple citizen. But I am well disposed toward religion and toward Christian dogma and I will be meeting with the Turkish President, prime minister, and foreign minister. I might be able to say a few good words about the exercise of religion."

The gameplan: The Carter and Brzezinski wing of the Democratic Party's foreign policy mafia is in cahoots with the Papandreou government as well as with Syria and Bulgaria, in orchestrating a pressure campaign against Turkey aimed at forcing Turkey to distance herself from the United States and its military policies.

A joint Greek-Bulgarian-Syrian military blackmail against Turkey, if supported by a significant United States power group, such as, for example, a Democratic Party and State Department alliance on the matter, would virtually guarantee a collapse of Turkey's commitments to NATO by not later than the autumn of this year.

In approximately the same timeframe, the new phase of the Cyprus crisis is expected to erupt, thus providing the trigger for this scenario.

Also noteworthy is that, as soon as Jimmy Carter ended his talks with the Greek government, Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov arrived in Athens for talks with the same officials.