

Mikos Theodorakis: The Truth about Greece

The following is excerpted from “An Open Letter to International Public Opinion,” signed by composer Mikis Theodorakis, from Athens, on Feb. 12, 2012.

There is an international conspiracy whose target is the complete destruction of my country. They began in 1975 aiming at modern Greek civilization, continued with the distortion of our modern history and

our national identity, and they are now trying to eliminate us biologically as well, through unemployment, hunger, and impoverishment. If the Greek people don't rise as one in order to prevent them, the danger of Greece becoming extinct is evident. I place it within the next ten years. There will be nothing left of us but the memory of our civilization and our battles for freedom.

... In 2008 came the big financial crisis in Europe. It was therefore only logical that the Greek economy should be affected. However, our living standards, high enough for Greece to be ranked among the 30 richest countries in the world, remained unaffected. There was an increase, though, in public debt. But public debt doesn't necessarily lead to financial crisis. There are big countries, like the U.S. and Germany, with debts amounting to trillions of euros. The key is in economic growth and production. In that case, one can borrow from large banks with an interest rate of up to 5%, until the crisis ends.

That was exactly our position in 2009, when the government shift took place in November, and G. Papandreou took over as prime minister [October 2009-November 2011]....

Mr. Papandreou could have dealt with the financial crisis (which as I have said reflected the European one) by borrowing from foreign banks under the usual interest rate of under 5%. If he had done that, there wouldn't have been the slightest problem for our country. In fact, the opposite would have occurred; because we were on an economic growth path, our standard of living would certainly have risen.

However, Mr. Papandreou had already begun his conspiracy against the Greek people since the summer of 2009, when he secretly met with [IMF managing director Dominique] Strauss-Kahn, with the objective of driving Greece under the domination of the IMF. ...

In May 2010, a single



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“There is an international conspiracy whose target is the complete destruction of my country,” wrote anti-Nazi Resistance hero Mikis Theodorakis, in his appeal. But, he added, “Greeks will not only survive, they will be reborn....”

Minister signed the notorious Memorandum, our complete subservience to our lenders. Greek law stipulates, in such situations, that the adoption of such an important agreement must be decided by three fifths of the Parliament. Therefore, in essence, the Memorandum and the Troika that essentially govern us today, operate illegally not only under Greek, but also under European law.

By now, if the steps leading us to our death are twenty, we are already more than half way there. Imagine that with this Memorandum we concede to foreigners our National Independence and our National Property. That is, our harbours, airports, road networks, electricity, water supply, subterranean and underwater wealth, etc., etc. Add to that our historical monuments, like the Acropolis, Delphi, Olympia, Epidauros, and such sites, since we have waived all our legal defenses.

Production has come to a standstill, the unemployment rate has reached 18%, 80,000 shops have closed down, along with thousands of small businesses and hundreds of industries. In total, 432,000 enterprises have shut down. Tens of thousands of young scientists are abandoning the country, which is every day sinking into medieval darkness. Thousands of formerly wealthy citizens are scavenging on rubbish heaps and sleeping on the pavement.

In the meantime, we are supposed to be surviving thanks to the magnanimity of our lenders, the Europe of the Banks and the IMF. In reality, every package deal which charges Greece with tens of billions of euros is repaid in full, while we are burdened with new unbearable interest rates. And since it is necessary to maintain the State, the hospitals and the schools, the Troika is burdening the middle and lower economic strata of society with excessive taxes, leading directly to starvation. A famine took place at the beginning of the German occupation in 1941, with 300,000 people dead in a period of 6 months. Since then, the ghost of hunger is now returning to our defamed and unfortunate country.

If one considers that the German occupation cost us one million people dead and the total destruction of our country, how is it possible for us Greeks to accept Ms. [German Chancellor Angela] Merkel's threats and the Germans' intention to impose on us a new Gauleiter... This time wearing a tie...?

And to prove just how rich a country is Greece and how hard working and conscious the Greek people are (conscious of their debt to Freedom and love of their country), I cite as an example the time of the German occupation from 1941 until October of 1944.

When the SS and hunger killed one million citizens, and the Wehrmacht was systematically destroying the country, and stealing all its agricultural production and the gold from the banks, Greeks saved the people from hunger by creating the National Solidarity Movement and a partisan army of 100,000, which tied down 20 German divisions in our country.

At the same time not only did Greeks manage to survive thanks to their hard work, but there was also a large growth in modern Greek art—especially in literature and music—under the terrible conditions of the occupation. Greece chose the path of self-sacrifice for the sake of freedom and simultaneously of survival.

That is when we were unnecessarily punished, and we responded with Solidarity and Resistance and we survived. Now we are doing exactly the same thing, with the certainty that the Greek people will be the ultimate victors. This is the message I am sending to Ms. Merkel and Mr. [German Finance Minister Wolfgang] Schäuble, declaring that I remain always a friend to the German people and a fan of their great contribution to Science, Philosophy, Art, and especially Music!...

Today, Sunday, February 12, 2012, I am about to take part in the demonstrations, along with Manolis Glezos, the hero who, in the past, took the swastika down from the Acropolis, signaling the beginning of resistance against Hitler, not only in Greece but throughout Europe. Today, our streets and our squares will be flooded with hundreds of thousands of citizens who will demonstrate their rage against the government and against the Troika...

We have survived very difficult situations throughout the centuries, and it is certain that if they lead us to the brink of death by force, Greeks will not only survive, but they will be reborn...

I am totally dedicated, body and soul, to this cause (the unification of the people in one Front), and I believe that I will be proved right in the end. I have fought, gun in hand, against Hitler's occupation. I have experienced the Gestapo's dungeons. I have been sentenced to death by Germans and have miraculously survived. In 1967 I founded PAF (The Patriotic Anti-dictatorial Front), the first resistance organization against the military junta. I fought underground, was caught and imprisoned in the junta's slaughterhouse. Once again I survived.

I am today 87 years old, and it is very possible that I will not live to see the salvation of my beloved country. But I will die with a clear conscience, because I will continue doing my duty towards the ideals of Freedom and Justice until the end.