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RESPONSE TO ANDREW APOSTOLOU: THE SHAME OF MODERN GREECE

Regarding Andrew Apostolou's "The Shame of Modern Greece" (op ed Jan 20): Greece does not suffer from "lack of moral leadership for denouncing the embarrassment of anti-Semitism". Prime Minister Papandreou and his Government and his predecessors, Messrs, Karamanlis and Simitis worked diligently against any discrimination in Greece, including the despised anti-Semitism. In addition, the about 5,000- member Greek-Jewish Community is very prosperous indeed and some of its members occupy high level positions within a country of 11 million. On the other hand, the history of the Holocaust is taught in Greek Schools and there is a good number of Holocaust monuments in Greece. The arson against the Synagogue in the Island of Crete does not prove a curse of anti-Semitism in Greece. Instead, this criminal act generated an avalanche of condemnations from several organizations in the City of Chania and elsewhere. Even Patriarch Bartholomew, the head of 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide, has sent a letter to the President of the Greek-Jewish community Mr. Moses Konstantini, sharply condemning the arson against the Synagogue. Fortunately, the Police has now arrested three of the perpetrators of this crime and will bring them to justice. However, the identity of the perpetrators of this arson, utterly destroys the credibility and veracity of Andrew Apostolou. Due to his palpable prejudice and hate against the Greek people, he jumped into conclusions, attributing guilt to the people of Chania and has now been proven dead wrong, with the arrest of the perpetrators, mainly two British citizens and one Greek, and with two additional Americans still at large. Apparently, the fire of January 5th was set by an American, who has been urgently sought. Subsequently, on January 10, a British citizen started the fire at the Synagogue producing extensive damage. Waiting for him outside the Synagogue, according to the Police, were the other British man and his Greek accomplice.

Thus, "The Shame of Modern Greece" demonstrates an overwhelming clinical obsession of Andrew Apostolou, as manifested by his flaming description of

rampant anti-Semitism in Greece, which is definitely an enormous exaggeration.

Furthermore, he also appears to play fast and loose with faulty terminology such as "Holocaust in Greece". For instance he says, that "he is writing a history of collaboration during the Holocaust in Greece". This is plainly untrue.

I was there and witnessed the German occupation first hand, as a sharp-eyed Medical Student in Athens. I observed everything with my own eyes , whereas Andrew Apostolou did not. I witnessed no Holocaust in Greece whatsoever. Unfortunately and suddenly, our Greek-Jewish brothers were rounded up and transferred to Germany and Poland. It was there that the Holocaust occur and not in Greece itself.

Moreover, in Thessaloniki the total list of names of our Jewish brothers was given to the German occupiers by the Chief Rabi himself. In sharp contrast, in the Island of Zakynthos, the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan when asked to provide the list of names of our Jewish brothers, he refused outright and instead, provided a list with his own name and that of the Mayor of the city. Thus,, "The Shame of Modern Greece", is an unfair and malicious insult against the Greek people, that has now been proven to be totally unjust, by the revealed true identity of the perpetrators of the sordid crime against the Synagogue in the city of Chania, in the island of Crete.

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