

OXI DAY
28 OCTOBER, 1940

ZHTW H DHMOKRATIA

LEST WE FORGET THE 28TH OF OCTOBER OF 1940!

THE FIRST ALLIED VICTORY IN WWII

The Epic Victory by Greece :
Its Significance Sixty-One Years Later Parallels Ancient Salamis for the Civilized World

Stated sadly and bitterly during the Nuremberg trials after WWII, by Hitler's dejected Chief of

Staff Field Marshall Keitel: "The unbelievable strong resistance of the Greeks delayed by two or more vital months the German attack against Russia ; if we did not have this long delay ,the outcome of the war would have been different in the eastern front and in the war in general, and others would have been accused and would be occupying this seat as defendants today."

By rendering the first victory to the allies in WWII, Greece proved that the Axis Powers of Hitler and Mussolini were not invincible. Until this point in time, ten powerful European countries had succumbed without any real resistance to the shiny bayonets of the Axis which had made the world tremble and most of Europe to bow. It remained for tiny Greece to remind

the
rest
of
the
Europeans
and
the
world
that
there
are
some
things
worth
dying
for.

The spirit of the 300 Spartans returned to guide its descendants. In fact, this unexpected Hellenic victory marked the beginning of the end of Hitler's and Mussolini's venture to control the world and culminated in their doomed failure and destruction some three and a half years

later.

There are two reasons for the delayed historical recognition due to Greece from what has

been

directly

known

by

the

Greeks

as

the

Greek

Epic

of

1940.

Unfortunately,

the

delay was

first

caused

by

the

devastating

civil

war

that

followed

WWII,

which

obscured

the national

priorities

for

the

critical period

of

1944

- 1949.

The

Greek

preoccupation

was survival

from

communism's

co

grip
and,
as
such,
the
Greeks
were neither able
to
concentrate on
the
issues, nor to
exert
the
diplomacy
required
for
the
post
war
period.
By
its
immense contribution to
the
defeat
of
the
Axis
Powers,
Greece
could
have
been
,
and,
indeed,
had a legitimate
right
to
participate
in
the
major
conferences
with
the

big
powers
that
decided the
fate
of
the
post
war
geography
in
Europe

.
The
second
reason
for
the
lack
of recognition
is
the
apparent
short
memory
and
the
ungratefulness
by
Greece
's
major allies,
especially
England

,
who
promised
a lot
to
the
Greeks
during
the
war
period
but conveniently

forgot
it
later.

The Greek contributions were of such magnitude that Greece should have been given not only the Dodecanese Islands but Northern Epirus and Cyprus as well. These lands, besides being promised in many indirect ways by the British and other allies, they were Greek-inhabited territories for 1000s of years, and the Greek inhabitants had fought many times for union with motherland

Greece

.

In
addition,
Greece
should
have
been
able
to
improve its
border
line
with
Bulgaria
(making
it
more
defensible
by
some
minor
border
line changes),
and
receive
additional
allied
guarantees for
its
Greek
nationals
in
Constantinople
and
the
islands
of Imvros
and
Tenedos
in
Turkey

.

Italy , Bulgaria and Turkey had been allied or cooperated with the Axis Powers, and had negotiated and received promises from Hitler to divide Greece for their benefit after the Nazis win the war. Numerous non-Greek documents (cited by Spyros Koutsobinas, former Consul of Greece in Washington, in his 1996 review of The Historic Oxi (No) Day, are revealing to this end, and Hitler's staff concerns about what

the
Greek
victory may
have
cost
the
Axis
Powers.

The essence of Greece 's contribution to the allied victory is:

Due to Mussolini's humiliating defeat by the Greeks in Albania , Hitler was compelled to capture the Balkans, mainly Yugoslavia and Greece , thusly, delaying his Barbarossa plan to invade and capture the Soviet Union before the winter of 1941. The Greek resistance, both in Albania and in the other famous battle in Crete altered, favorably for the allies, his Barbarossa time table by at least three months (and possibly six). Having at least half of his 9000 outstandingly-trained paratroopers destroyed in Crete was another fatal blow for Hitler; with a decision never to use the paratrooper approach again in the war ,for this element of surprise he had hoped to use in the USSR . These elite paratroopers were eliminated by the defending Cretan peasants, who showed no mercy on them during and after landing; to the point that the exasperated Führer said that it is illegal for civilians to fight our soldiers; only to receive the Cretan commentary of "Who says so? This is our country and we have no room for the savage Huns!"

As the Greek gods would have it, winter came early in 1941 and in December the thermometer registered 63 degrees below zero near Moscow . At this temperature, the only weapon that seemed to still be operable, was hand grenades; but it did not make any difference since the Nazi soldiers were dying or incapacitated by the thousands due to freezing. Thus, the war tide had been permanently changed due to the delay of this critical time table, thanks to the heroic Greek victories/resistance and their countless sacrifices. They fought with determination , consistent with the dictates of their history- for God, Country and their Families, regardless of the odds.

When the war was over, there were 10% fewer Hellenes! The nearly million individual sacrifices have formed a new spiritual heaping Marathon Tomb for their nation and the world. The spirit of each victim has spoken again and again through the Nobel Prize Poet Elytis, asking him to tell the powerful of the earth that they must not forget their sacrifice and their country, for they had not died in vain .

The recent book, The Modern Greeks (an AHIF publication by Costas Stassinopoulos and forwarded by his daughter Ariana Huffington), expresses the Greek contribution as follows:

"In a shining moment on the world stage, the Greeks changed the course of history:

-The decisive contribution of the Greeks was recognized by the political and military leadership of the time, including [Franklin Roosevelt](#) and [Winston Churchill](#) .

-The fierce resistance of the Greeks in Macedonia and Crete delayed the invasion by Germany and overturned German plans to occupy Moscow before the onset of the heavy Russian winter.

-The Greek freedom fighters took the lives of many German troops and destroyed much German equipment. Hitler was forced to put 50 battalions in Greece , even though they were desperately needed on the Eastern front.

-The Greeks faithfully met their obligations to their allies-- [with heroism and self-sacrifice](#) . By contrast, Turkey broke its commitment to fight on the side of the allies, and bowed to the promises and pressure of Hitler. Turkey , in its neutrality aided Hitler and greatly weakened the war effort of the allies."

As a point of illustrating Greece 's determination and dedication to their country and the allies,
the
final
Greek
communiqué
to
the
withdrawing
allies
before
the
German invasion,
is
really
admirable
and
reads
as
follows:
"We
are
determined
to face
the
Axis by
whatever
means
and
sacrifices
may
be
necessary.
We
shall
do
our
duty
to
the
end
as devoted
and
loyal friends.
As
a faithful
ally,

*we
are
determined
to
go
on fighting,
even
if we
have
to
count only
on
our
own forces."*

{Note: As evidenced by declassified reports that came to light in 1998, Turkey , supplied Germany with desperately needed chromium and delayed allied victory by a number of months and cost countless extra lives. The book, The Evasive Neutral, by professor Frank Weber explains in dramatic detail the stand of Turkey in WWII, which was essentially to help Hitler win the war, who in turn would make Turkey larger and more important by allowing it to get possession of the Greek Aegean and the city of Salonica, and indeed become a power of hegemony in the Balkans. It is ironic that Turkey still craves to accomplish that goal via Greece 's long term ally, our country, the United States }.

Indeed, the passage of time reveals the real historic facts about the significance of October 28, 1940 , and the decisive contribution of Greece to the allies

in
WWII.
The Greek
victory
in
Albania

,
the battle at the Rupel defense line that the Germans were never able to penetrate, the
battle
of
Crete
and
the
following
underground
heroic resistance
is
collectively
reminiscent
of
the
significance
of
the
decisive
battle
of
Salamis
for
Western
Civilization
in
ancient
times.

We hope, even belatedly, that the Western powers will restore the credit that belongs to Greece.
More
importantly,
they
will reward
the
country
of

the
source
of our
Western Light
by
satisfying
its
legitimate
requests
for
human
rights
in
Cyprus
and
elsewhere,
and by
supporting
it
to
safeguard
its
internationally-
recognized
borders
from
the
bullies
of aggression
who
violate
both
US
and
international laws
and
misuse
NATO-supplied weapons
paid
by
us,
the
US
tax
payers.
Our

officials
in
Washington
seem
to
be
captives of
the
special
interests,
both
domestic
and
foreign,
and
a self-serving
campaign
funding process. As
such,
they
ignore
the
essence
of
civilization,
virtue
and
justice,
without which
freedom
can
only
be
short-lived.

Peter N. Yiannos, PhD, For The American Hellenic Institute of Delaware. 2002. Rev. 10-01-02

