

A SUPERIOR PERSON FOR GREECE

By **MARCUS A. TEMPLAR**

The name dispute between Greece and the FYROM is more than 15 years old and yet there is no solution in site. Both parties try to convince the international community of their constructive demeanor in the matter and both parties agree that they will continue their efforts to bring an end to the dispute. However, THE question is: which party lives and believes in this illusion? The Slavs of the FYROM repeatedly have said that they will not change their Constitutional name and they will not give in into Greece's pressure and blackmail. Greece on the other hand, as out of habit, while she feeds her illusion, at the same time nourishes the irredentist character of the Slavs with more concessions.

It took three years since the Prime Minister of Greece took office to finally declare in an International Forum that he is "a Macedonian along with 2.5 million Greeks;" slow starter or deep thinker? That is something his constituency will have to think about when they go to the polls. Not that the opposition manager's stance is different. Even though the two big political entities oppose each other in everything else, in the name issue of the neighboring State however, they do present a united front! Still after the PM declared his Macedonian ancestry his response to Mitreva's statement that the name for the "Macedonians" is a vital issue and should have been: "since you became "Macedonians" through legislation more than 60 years ago, it is time now to un-become "Macedonians" through legislation or you do not see EU/NATO."

The position the Greek government compromised and accepted the name "Republika Makedonija – Skopje" un-translated and under the prototype of Congo-Kinshasha and Congo-Brazzaville, proposed by Nimetz in March 2005 is faulty at best. In fact, it was the government of Greece, which proposed this name to Dimitrov and Nimetz, based on a faulty assumption. The Congo prototype worked because the two countries had the same name; but there were two countries under the same name. In the case of "Republika Makedonija – Skopje" the name has no equivalent on the other side. There is no "Republika Makedonija – Solun" (although it is Skopje's dream). There is no name to counter the proposed solution.

What exactly is the Greek government accomplishing when it presents the name proposal for the neighboring State as a success of Greek diplomacy? They are throwing ashes in the eyes of the Greeks, mocking their fellow citizens, and insulting their intelligence. Nevertheless, leading a flock that votes for one party or another no matter which one, it is not something that a PM should look forward to. He should be proud to lead well-informed and sophisticated people. Nevertheless, the Greek people are not accustomed to have leaders and "leadership" is missing from the country's political realm, for leadership is a perpetual decision-making process.

If the Greek government believes the delusion that the Slavs would not translate the country's name ever, they are very naïve at best, foolish at worst. Not one person in the "Republika Makedonija – Skopje" will refrain from translating the name, especially their Slavic diaspora; moreover, the government of the FYROM will encourage such actions, as they do now with the flag of Sun of Verghina and they will use only the term Macedonia, abandoning the full name Republic of Macedonia - Skopje. Or does the Greek government expect that all governments worldwide will call them by that name? The reality is that IT

WILL be a double name in disguise. The world will call that country Macedonia and Greece will call them Skopje.

Signing an agreement is very easy, but special efforts should be made by the interested parties to enforce terms of any treaty according to reasonable remedies. In the case of the name dispute low tones are being kept, projecting that some day an ex-machina deus will impose the solution, beneficial to Greece. It is the ostrich syndrome. A good example is the Interim Agreement article 7 which the FYROM violates daily, but the Greek government knows nothing about it. Probably the Greek ChargÈ d'Affaires, in Skopje does not see the Sun of Verghina mosaics on the sidewalks of Skopje; or the "prohibited flags" that are hoisted at places of various businesses. Perhaps she does not see the newspaper and TV Station "Makedonsko Sonce" [Macedonian Sun] that brands the ancient Macedonian symbol. Perhaps the government of the FYROM does not know that the officially registered political Party "Makedonsko Sonce" has as its emblem the Sun of Verghina. Are there so many blind people on both sides of the border?

The Slavs keep violating another article, article 11 of the Interim Accord and since the FYROM uses the noun Macedonia in bilateral relations and not the term The FYROM, that country is constant blatant violation of the Interim Agreement. Their diplomatic missions and their Ministry of Foreign Affairs not only lied bluntly to the governments of other countries that that the name dispute was solved in favor of the "Republic of Macedonia." Furthermore, the aforementioned missions routinely returned all official correspondence addressed to "The FYROM" as littera non-grata or unacceptable document until the name was finally addressed to the "Republic of Macedonia."

A few years ago, the name Upper-Macedonia came up, because some Greek politicians felt they would have an agreement on it. A number of educated Slavs think the the above name is the right one for their country. The Greek government habitually ignores the consequences of it. Upper Macedonia in the ancient times included the areas of Florina, Kastoria, Kozani, Grevena and Pella. However, in what way do the areas of Stip, Valandovo, Tetovo, Skopje, Kumanovo, and Veles belong to Upper Macedonia? One might wonder how well versed the Greek politicians are in their own country's history.

Since the Greek government has decided to give away the name Macedonia, the only name it should push for is Severmakedonija [North Macedonia] – one word, no translations, no dashes – under the prototype of Yugoslavia. The reason is that under the circumstances it applies to the FYROM and had NO equivalent name in ancient Macedonia. At the same time, it maintains its geographic status of the FYROM. Thus, The FYROM is downgraded from the sole country of Macedonia to a country within geographical perimeters so that there is no confusion about the location and the name.

But no matter what the name of the country will be, the ethnicity and language perhaps are more important; they CANNOT be Macedonian, because then no matter what anyone will call the FYROM, the whole Macedonian heritage and language of the true Macedonians will be lost forever. History has taught us that the betrayal at Thermopylai was Ephialtes' fault, not Darius' one. Nobody could blame Darius for taking care of his country's interests. Modern Greeks have to remember that fact. That alone should make their politicians considering the National Security of Greece than Darius' global interests.

Being raconteurs of grandiloquent speeches about future electoral victories boosts Greek politicians' morale, but a national humiliation and loss of the Macedonian heritage will definitely make them run away from the voters' wrath with their tails between their legs. Greece must find a sharp long-term visionary, a superior person, a modest speaker, but a strong doer.