

# SITUATION IN GREECE

## *Report By Amnesty International*

1. Amnesty International (which enjoys Consultative Status Category I with the Council of Europe) sent a Delegation to Greece on December 30, 1967, for the purpose of (a) investigating the extent and implementation of the amnesty for political prisoners announced on December 22, and (b) obtaining information concerning the economic and other conditions of dependents of political prisoners not released under the amnesty. Mr. Antony Marreco, a member of the English Bar, and Mr. James Becket, a member of the American Bar, remained in Greece until January 26, 1968.

2. The Delegation presented its Order of Mission to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and requested the following facilities:

- i) A list of the political prisoners detained with brief particulars of the charges to be preferred against them;
- ii) Permission to attend as observers and report upon the hearings of the Judicial Committees which, as announced by the Minister of Justice, are to review the cases of all political prisoners;
- iii) Permission to accompany the Representative of the International Red Cross to the prison establishments on the islands of Leros and Yaros;
- iv) Meetings with officials of the Ministries of Justice and Public Order as might be appropriate.

Meetings took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on January 2, 4, 10 and 24; while the officials were courteous, none of the above facilities have so far been granted.

3. The Delegation, however, spent four weeks taking statements from prisoners who had been released and from relatives of prisoners still in detention. As a result of the four-week investigation the Delegation reports as follows:

(a) The Ministry of Justice has announced that 284 prisoners have been released under Constitutional Act No. 16 of December 23, and Law No. 228 of December 26 (the Christmas Amnesty). Some of these were not in fact released, but simply transferred under Law No. 509 to the islands, and in any case the declared amnesty did not apply to those not yet charged with any crime. The approximate numbers of prisoners detained without trial by the Greek Government at the end of January are as follows:

LEROS	Laki	1,475	
	Partheni	500	
YAROS		802	(including 240 women)
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		2,777	

In addition there are numerous prisoners held without trial in prisons and police stations throughout Greece. It is believed that of those detained some 500 may have been active or potentially active communists. The remainder cannot be described as "communists" in any accepted European sense of the word, and large numbers of them are old and infirm, having been arrested on security files prepared in many cases twenty years ago. It seems a feature of the present regime that the Government treats such persons as expendable outcasts to be deprived of all political rights.

The Delegation has assembled the names, addresses and particulars of about eight hundred of those detained on Leros and Yaros; the prisoners come from all walks of life and include parliamentarians, professional people, intellectuals and artists. Many remain in prison only because they refuse to sign the Declaration of Loyalty (see Appendix A, which speaks for itself).



(b) The Delegation found that the relatives of prisoners have been subject to Government persecution. Children of the prisoners are excluded from entering University. Friends have been arrested for giving money to needy families. Relatives have lost their jobs. The police pay frequent harassing visits to the families of prisoners at all hours of the day and night.

4. The Delegation investigated allegations that the regime is practising the infliction of pain as an aid to interrogation. (For details of the nature and method of torture used, see Appendix B) Despite the atmosphere of fear, especially among those who have been released and who can report how they have been tortured, and despite the extreme difficulties and time necessary in making contact, 16 people testified to the Delegation that they had been tortured. The Delegation also obtained and checked the names of 32 other persons who are in prison and who are alleged to have been tortured. On the basis of first hand evidence and oral testimony, on the basis of scars on the bodies of those tortured, and on the basis of testimony of professional people and relatives, the Delegation can objectively state that torture is deliberately and officially used and was convinced that the use of torture is a widespread practice against Greek citizens suspected of active opposition to the Government. The Delegation in its month-long investigation was only able to investigate the situation in the Athens area. For a Greek outside the capital, contact with a foreigner is too dangerous to be risked. Though the Delegation heard reports of torture and other degrading treatment in the provinces, it was second-hand evidence and therefore nothing in this report is based on such allegations. However, there is no doubt that formal evidence can be taken on commission if the Greek Government will agree to a procedure to guarantee the future safety of witnesses.

January 27, 1968  
Turnagain Lane  
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#### *APPENDIX B – TORTURE*

The following account presents in summary form the evidence the Amnesty International Delegation took from the 16 people they saw who reported that they had been tortured, and from the 32 people still in prison about whose cases they received second-hand evidence which they found convincing because it was in many cases corroborated.

##### *Organisations, Places and Persons Engaged in Torture*

Torture as a deliberate practice is carried out by the Security Police (Asphalia) and the Military Police (Ethniki Stratiotiki Astinomia). The Delegation heard first-hand evidence that the army and the gendarmerie also carried out torture, but it was difficult to determine if these were isolated cases or standard procedure.

Those whose names are most frequently mentioned as directing and carrying out torture are: Inspector Lambrou, the Director of the Security Police Headquarters in Athens at Bouboulinas Street, and the following officers – Mallios, Babalis, Karapanayiotis, Kravaritis, Spanos, Yannicopoulos, all of the same office; Major Theophiloyaiannakos of the Military Police located at the Dionysos Camp outside Athens. Others mentioned frequently were Zagouras at Dionysos, Lt. Kapoglou, Director of Asphalia at Aigeleo, and Kouvas of the Asphalia in Pireus.

The places where the most serious torture was reported in the Athens area are the Bouboulinas Asphalia, Military Hospital 401, and the Dionysos camp.



## *Techniques of Torture*

### *A. Physical Torture*

1. The standard initial torture reported from every Asphalia station is the so-called *falanga*. The prisoner is tied to a bench and the soles of his feet are beaten with a stick or pipe. Between beatings the prisoner is usually made to run around the bench under a heavy rain of blows. We examined the feet of a person who suffered this treatment four months before and his sole was covered with thick scar tissue. One prisoner now in Averoff prison had his foot broken under this torture. As he went without medical attention, the bones have not set properly and he is crippled. The next step in this method is to strike the prisoner on the sternum. Prisoners vomiting blood from the lungs have generally undergone this treatment. *Falanga* is almost always accompanied by other inflictions of pain on the prisoner. In general five or six men are engaged in the torture of one prisoner. Common methods accompanying *falanga* are: pouring water down the mouth and nose while the prisoner is screaming from pain; putting "Tide" soap in the eyes, mouth and nose; banging the head on a bench or on the floor; beating on other parts of the body, etc.
2. Numerous incidents of sexually-oriented torture were reported. In the case of women, the torturers shove as many fingers as possible, or an object, into the vagina and twist and tear brutally. This is also done with the anus. A tube is inserted into the anus and water is driven into the prisoner under very high pressure. In the case of men, beatings on the genitals with long, thin sandbags have frequently reported. One trade unionist was beaten so much that a testicle was driven up into his body.
3. Techniques of gagging are frequently reported. The throat is grasped in such a way that the windpipe is cut off, or a filthy rag (often soaked in urine) is shoved down the throat. Suffocation is prevented only at the last moment.
4. Beating on the head with sandbags or beating the head against the wall or floor are standard procedure. Many cases of concussion have been reported.
5. Beating naked flesh with wires knotted together into a whip.
6. Prisoners have been hung up for long periods of time. Usually the wrists are tied behind the back and the prisoner is suspended from the wrists.
7. Jumping on the stomach.
8. Tearing out the hair from the head and from the pubic region.
9. Rubbing pepper on sensitive areas of the body, such as the genitals, underarms, eyes, nose, etc.
10. Pulling-out toe-nails and finger-nails.
11. Different methods of inflicting burns, including putting-out cigarettes on parts of the body.
12. Use of electric shock. This is done at Military Hospital 401 and unconfirmed reports state that it is done at the Asphalia Station at Bouboulinas.

Physical beatings by the army and police as a method of intimidation and interrogation are general. Physical beating can be classified as torture if it is done in a systematic way. One man of over sixty contacted by the Delegation was beaten at regular intervals for more than 12 hours. He suffered broken ribs but reported that young people were beaten steadily for periods of up to five days. Generally from four to six men beat a prisoner with their fists and kick with their booted feet, or use instruments such as planks, pipes, canes, etc. At the Dionysos camp, which houses Greece's elite soldiers, prisoners are made to run a gauntlet. A reliable second-hand report from this camp is that a man literally had his eye knocked out of his head. The Amnesty International Delegation spoke with others who had broken ribs, noses, ear-drums, etc.



## B. *Non-Physical Torture*

Many informants who have undergone torture consider that the non-physical methods were more difficult to bear.

1. Certain prisoners are intentionally moved to cells within ear-shot of other prisoners who are being violently interrogated. This has caused a number of nervous break-downs. One informant said that listening to the cries of the others was worse than undergoing the torture, one wanted to run in and be beaten rather than listen to the sufferings of another. It is reported that Mikis Theodorakis, the composer, who was never physically tortured, suffered a nervous collapse under this method.

2. Conditions of detention in some places are particularly bad. One technique is to leave the prisoner in a tiny, dark, cell, without food, water or blankets, for some days. The cells at Dionysos, which are cut into the side of Mount Pendelli, have 10 centimetres of water in them all the time. There is an iron bench in the cell. As prisoners held here are not allowed to go out of the cells, the water is filled with their own excrement. The cells in the basement of Bouboulinas used for solitary confinement are full of vermin.

3. Threats to kill, maim and rape. People who had been tortured were often told that it would be repeated at a certain hour in the night, and were kept in constant terror by threats that they would have to undergo again what they had just experienced.

4. Stripping prisoners naked is particularly effective in Greece, where the association of nakedness with shame is very strong in the culture.

6. Mock executions were frequently reported. The prisoner faces a firing-squad, is blind-folded and the rifles are fired. Some prisoners experienced this more than once. It is often done at Kesaryni, in the place where war-time executions took place.

7. Signing Declarations is considered by many to be the most inhuman technique of the regime. Compulsion to sign a paper denouncing parents, wife or political beliefs particularly affects a person of highly developed conscience and ideals. This is used in a deliberate way to break down the spirit of the prisoner. The expert in these matters is Mr. Tournas, promoted to be Director of Greek Prisons under the regime. He begins by getting the prisoner to sign something innocuous, then tears up the paper, and makes the prisoner renounce more and more that he holds sacred. The Delegation interviewed people who had signed under this pressure, and all were in some sense broken. One particularly moving case was that of a man who signed in order to be free to see his daughter who was dying of cancer. She died before he was released and he has had a nervous breakdown.

The Security Police and the Military Police are unrestricted today in Greece. Since, in Mr. Pattakos's words, "the laws sleep," the police may arrest anyone, in any place, at any time, with no obligation to charge him or inform anyone of his arrest. Believing that their own position is threatened by opposition to the Government, they have reacted brutally to those engaged in opposition. Those who have particularly suffered at the hands of the security forces are the young people, those who are not known abroad, and those believed to be of the left.

27 January, 1968

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**Report of Amnesty International (continued)**

**APPENDIX A Text of "DECLARATION OF LOYALTY"**

KINGDOM OF GREECE

Ministry .....

Address, etc. ....

SECRET

PERSONAL RECORD

Having the force of a responsible declaration

Names .....

(Surname in capitals)

1. Name of father ..... Age.....

Name of mother .....

Name of grandfather .....

Name of grandmother .....

Name of wife ..... Née .....

Date of birth ..... Place of birth .....

District ..... Province .....

Permanent abode:

town or neighbourhood ..... District .....

Province ..... Street ..... No. ....

Police area ..... Identity details or No. ....

Date of issue ..... Police office of issue .....

2. Profession or occupation .....

3. Children a) Name..... Age ..... Profession .....

Married to whom; or unmarried .....

b) Name ..... Age ..... Profession .....

Married to whom; or unmarried .....

c) Name ..... Age ..... Profession .....

Married to whom; or unmarried .....



4. *Brothers/Sisters*

a) Name..... Age..... Profession.....

Abode ..... Street ..... No.....

b) Name..... Age..... Profession.....

Abode ..... Street ..... No.....

5. *Service record* .....

*Education – qualifications* .....

Foreign languages: a) language..... speaking..... writing.....

b) language..... speaking..... writing.....

c) language..... speaking..... writing.....

(Signify: moderate – well – very well)

*Military Service:* (give units in which you served and specialist trades acquired) .....

1. To what organisation, association or society do you belong or have you belonged, and since when? .....

Do you continue to be a member, or when did you cease? .....

2. Have you ever up to the present been a member of a communist or other organisation constituting an instrument of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE – Kommounistikon Komma Ellados) or serving directly or indirectly its aims and aspirations, especially the National Liberation Front (EAM), the National Solidarity Movement, ELAS, EPON, the United Democratic Left (EDA), the Youth Movement of EDA, the Democratic Movement of G. Lambrakis, the Pan-Hellenic Women's Union (PEG), the Greek Committee for International Relaxation and Peace, the Bertrand Russell Committee for Disarmament and Peace, the Democratic Syndicalist Movement (DSK), the Committee for free service and activity of the parties and the legalisation of the KKE, the Committee of Young Workers of Greece (SEENE), the Committee of Working Women, the Pan-Hellenic Struggle for the Defence of Democracy and Constitution, the National Student Union of Greece (EFEE), the Committee of Pupils in Intermediate Education (SEMME)? .....

3. On behalf of which of the above organisations and for what periods of time have you ever directly or indirectly taken part in the collection of funds either on behalf of their adherents or the aim which the organisations pursue, either at the instruction of the organisations or on your own initiative, or have you contributed to such collections? .....



4. Have you cooperated or do you cooperate directly or indirectly with any such organisation, without being officially a member of it? Which organisation and at what time? .....
5. Without being a member of any of the above organisations have you ever made direct or indirect propaganda on behalf of any of them or on behalf of their proclamations or aims? .....
6. Have you ever had contact or an understanding with members of the communist party, with whom and when? .....
7. Have you ever taken part in 'peace marches' or in prohibited public open-air assembly, in which communist or anti-national slogans were displayed and when? .....
8. Have you ever been arrested and when and for what reason by the Police or Military Authorities? .....
9. Have you taken part in public assembly during which public order was disturbed and when? .....
10. Does any member of your family belong to any of the above communist organisations, or reside in countries which have a communist regime? .....
11. Do you acknowledge that the KKE, with its variously named organisations, has through its activities and actions betrayed the national interest and has sought by every means the destruction of the social order, the seizure of power, the mutilation and enslavement of the country to the Slavo-Communist camp and the removal of the Greek People from Helleno-Christian ideals, causing monstrous catastrophes to the country and unheard-of crimes at the expense of the people? .....
12. Do you condemn the KKE and its variously-named above organisations? .....
13. Are you disposed to serve our native land honourably and faithfully? .....



14. Do you promise that you will do nothing contrary to national obligations and your duties as they are defined by the laws? .....

15. Do you promise that you will not betray secrets or other information coming to your knowledge as a result of your work, and you will not oppose in any way the work of the Government? .....

Having studied carefully and in absolute coolness the above questionnaire, I declare in knowledge of the penal sanctions laid down under Article 4 of A.N. 516/48 and Article 4 of 1967 Constitutional Act in the case of false declaration, that my answers, made of my own free and uninfluenced will, correspond fully to the truth, and that I have hidden nothing in relation to the questions put to me.

.....  
(Date)

.....  
(Signature)