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Science**

Greece's Path to EEC membership, 1974-1979:  
The View from Brussels.

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## Abstract

Greece's accession to the EEC represents a fascinating case-study of the history of enlargement, of European integration and finally of the Cold War in the late 1970s. This thesis is the first detailed archivally-based study of the second enlargement. It is based on an extensive multi-archival and multinational research, including records of the Greek, American, British, French and German governments, of the EEC institutions (Commission, Council of Ministers) and a collection of personal papers.

The conventional account of the second enlargement focuses solely on Greece and its policy towards the EEC. In contrast, this thesis casts new light on the way in which the Nine as a whole responded to the challenges posed by the Greek accession. Through this Community-based approach, this thesis challenges traditional views of the reasons that led Greece to apply for EEC membership, the rationale behind the Nine's acceptance of the Greek application, and generally casts new light on the way in which the Nine thought and finally acted regarding Greece's membership during the actual accession negotiations. Looking at these actors can tear down common misconceptions or, indeed, confirm existing beliefs about the *communautaire* behaviour of the Nine in the second enlargement. It also allows new conclusions to be drawn about the internal development of the Community in the 1970s, especially in relation to the perennial dilemma of widening versus deepening, while highlighting important aspects of the mechanics of the enlargement process. Last but not least, this thesis aims to place the details of the Greek negotiations within the context of regional and international considerations dominated by the realities of the Cold War, thus underlining the linkage between the two parallel developments of European integration and the Cold War.

This thesis provides a detailed analysis of a vital chapter not only in post-war Greek history but, most importantly, in the process of European integration and Cold War in the 1970s.

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

FRGAAPD	<i>Akten Zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland</i>
ACA	<i>Accession Compensatory Amounts</i>
AEI	<i>Archive of European Integration, Pittsburgh</i>
FRAG	<i>Archives Nationales, Valéry Giscard D'Estaing</i>
FRAMAE	<i>Archives du Ministère des Affaires étrangères</i>
ECBAC	<i>Historical Archives of the European Commission</i>
GRBTA	<i>Byron Theodoropoulos Archives</i>
UKCAB	<i>Cabinet Files, The National Archives, Kew</i>
CAP	<i>Common Agricultural Policy</i>
USCFPF	<i>Central Foreign Policy Files, State Department</i>
GRCKP	<i>Constantinos Karamanlis Papers</i>
ECCMA	<i>Council of Ministers Archives</i>
CNJA	<i>Centre National des Jeunes Agriculteurs</i>
COREPER	<i>Comité des Représentants Permanents</i>
USCPF	<i>Jimmy Carter Presidential Files</i>
UKCSF	<i>Christopher Soames Files</i>
CSCE	<i>Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe</i>
DG	<i>Directorate-General</i>
USDNSA	<i>Digital National Security Archives</i>
IRDOT	<i>Department of Taoiseach, Dublin</i>
ECSC	<i>European Coal and Steel Community</i>
EEC	<i>European Economic Community</i>
EIB	<i>European Investment Bank</i>
ECEN	<i>Emile Noël papers, Florence</i>
EP	<i>European Parliament</i>
EPC	<i>European Political Cooperation</i>
EUA	<i>European Unit of Account</i>
EURATOM	<i>The European Atomic Energy Community</i>
UKFCO	<i>Foreign and Commonwealth Office, The National Archives, Kew</i>
FEOGA	<i>Fonds Européen d'Orientation et de Garantie Agricole</i>
FGI	<i>Federation of Greek Industrialists</i>
FDP	<i>Freie Demokratische Partei</i>
FRG	<i>Federal Republic of Germany</i>
GRFMA	<i>Foreign Ministry Archives, Greece</i>
USFRUS	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i>
GRGKP	<i>George Kontogeorgis Papers</i>
GNP	<i>Gross National Product</i>
GRGPR	<i>Greek Parliamentary Records</i>
USGRF	<i>Gerald Ford Presidential Library</i>
ECBAC	<i>Historical Archives of the European Union</i>
GRHAGFM	<i>Historical Archives of the Greek Foreign Ministry</i>
MFA	<i>Multilateral Fibre Agreement</i>
ND	<i>New Democracy</i>
PASOK	<i>Panhellenic Socialist Party</i>
UKPREM	<i>Prime Minister Files, The National Archives, Kew</i>
PS	<i>Parti socialiste</i>
RPR	<i>Rassemblement pour la République</i>
FRSGCI	<i>Secrétariat Général du Comité Interministériel pour les Questions de Coopération Economique Européenne</i>
UKT	<i>Treasury, The National Archives, Kew</i>
UA	<i>Unit of account</i>
UDF	<i>Union pour la Démocratie française</i>



## Introduction

In 1975, before the European Economic Community (EEC) had even had the time to fully digest the effects of the first round of enlargement, with Britain, Denmark and Ireland joining in 1973, it was confronted with the prospect of further widening. Constantinos Karamanlis, Prime Minister of Greece, announced on 12 June 1975 his intention to seek full membership as a long-term strategy to secure his country's democratic institutions. Greece had been under the rule of the colonels since 1967, which only ended in 1974 with the Greek-sponsored coup d'état against the President of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios and the subsequent Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

The prospect of a Greek application for full membership caught the EEC almost unprepared even though Athens had been an associate member since 1961 and the Community had extensively used the lure of membership to strengthen the democratic tide during and in the immediate aftermath of the junta in Greece. However, the simultaneous fall of the three southern European dictatorships – Portugal and Spain had also begun their moves towards democracy in the mid-1970s – ushered in a period of great political upheaval, which took the EEC by surprise. Up until then, the Community's Mediterranean policy had been mainly economic, consisting of Association agreements and preferential ties with few political overtones. Therefore, the emergence of these three countries - and especially Greece, which applied first - as potential applicants presented an immense challenge to the Community. It suddenly discovered that it was a strong pole of attraction for its southern neighbours. Moreover, Greece's decision to withdraw from NATO's military command on 14 August 1974, in the wake of the second Turkish invasion of Cyprus, brought the issue of security in southern Europe into sharper relief. Considering the dominant anti-Americanism that permeated the Greek domestic scene, the Nine further felt the need to address the country's European aspirations. Indeed, under the circumstances the Community seemed suddenly to be assuming a very important stabilising role. The new democratic regime under Karamanlis counted on the Community's economic and political support.

However, the Greek application presented the Community with a host of economic, institutional and political problems. The addition of a new country, the poorest to apply so far with a relatively backward economy and administration at a time when the full impact of the preceding enlargement had not yet been absorbed, was likely to severely test the Community's institutions and the efficiency of its decision-making process. Enlargement to include Greece would, for a start, mean transfers of resources

so as to facilitate the necessary structural changes in Greece. Furthermore, it would also oblige the Community to proceed to a full-scale reform of the CAP in order to ease Italian and French concerns about Greek competition in the production of Mediterranean agricultural produce. To make matters worse, the application arrived at a time when deep economic crisis had hit the industrialised West. The 1973 oil crisis, with the concomitant recession trends, put the Community model under severe challenge.

Indeed, the deepening of the Community had suffered a series of major setbacks, making the member states uneasy at the prospect of a new widening.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the prospect of Greek membership raised the issue of handling the hostility between Greece and Turkey, another associate EEC member and a strategically pivotal state along NATO's southern flank. Admitting Greece would unavoidably entail the risk of getting the Community embroiled in the Greek-Turkish dispute and, as a result, disturbing the equal distance the Community sought to maintain between the two countries. Finally, and most importantly, by giving the green light to Greece's bid for EEC membership, the Nine would almost certainly have to face far-reaching changes in the nature of the Community. It would merely not be a question of accepting a small country with marginal effect on the economic and political balance within the Community; rather, a favourable response to the Greek application would most likely be followed by applications from other potential members. A 'yes' to Greece would make it much harder to say 'no' to other south European countries.

The aim of this thesis is to examine how the Community responded to these challenges from 1974, when Greece returned to democratic rule, until the successful completion of the accession talks in 1979. To ensure that the subject remains manageable, it will restrict its focus in two main ways. First, this account will exclusively concentrate on the Greek negotiations to enter the EEC rather than the parallel Association-related talks.<sup>2</sup> In doing so, this research mirrors the decision of the Nine to completely differentiate one process from the other. Although the Greek government sought to use the Association agreement as a bargaining chip during the membership process, the actual evolution of the Athens agreement during 1976-1979 did not exercise any influence on the conduct of the Greek talks for entry. In contrast, the status of the Athens agreement during the transitional year of 1974-1975 towards democracy was

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<sup>1</sup> Helen Wallace, 'Some Reflections of 50 years of Experience since the Signature of the Treaties of Rome', in Phinnemore, David & Warleigh-Lack, Alex (eds.), *Reflections on European Integration. 50 years of the Treaty of Rome* (London, 2009), 15.

<sup>2</sup> Athens Association agreement with the EEC was signed in 1961, had been 'frozen' during the dictatorship and was reactivated in 1974 with Greece's return to democracy.

important in Greece's early decision to apply for EEC membership and, thus, it will be examined in this framework.

Secondly, and most importantly, the thesis will concentrate on the behaviour and attitudes of the member states towards enlargement and on the deliberations that took place in Brussels, within the Community's institutions rather than on the debates within each individual member state and their public opinion. Naturally, domestic national interests will be investigated, but only when they affected the Nine's European policy towards Greece. It should be stressed that the dual objective of this thesis is to demonstrate how the Community's formal institutional framework as a whole experienced the Greek enlargement, and to reconstruct, for the first time, the record of the Greek negotiations, which has been the subject of very little, if any, research so far. Due to the magnitude of this task, the thesis will not look at transnational networks in the Greek enlargement process. Hopefully, this study could prove to be a launching pad for these interesting matters to be further investigated.

In order to provide a fully comprehensive account of the Greek enlargement, the focus will be on the three fora at which the negotiations unfolded, following the lines of the previous enlargement. Indeed, at this first forum, the negotiations with Greece were conducted using exactly the same format of the 1970-1972 enlargement, i.e. the Council of Foreign Ministers would be the negotiating body for the Community and the Presidency would act as the Community spokesman, except for cases where the Commission had specific competences when it would speak for the Community. The negotiations per se would be conducted on the basis of regular meetings between the Community and Greek delegation at two levels: Ministerial and Deputy. The ministerial meetings would be chaired by the Foreign Minister of the country assuming the EEC presidency while the Greek delegation would be headed by the Minister of Planning and Coordination, the Foreign Minister or the Minister responsible for relations with the EEC, a position created in 1977. The ministerial discussions would be preceded however by more frequent meetings at the Deputy level, where Greece would be represented by the President of the negotiating team and the Nine by the EEC Permanent Representative of the country assuming presidency. Here was where most of the preliminary discussion would take place and most technical problems would be resolved. Only important points of contention would be handled at ministerial level. But even the Deputies did not have the expertise to handle all the problems raised by the Greek membership. Alongside this bilateral formal negotiating framework, the Commission in

consultation with the Greek delegation systematically examined the Community's secondary legislation, providing detailed reports on all the negotiating dossiers and thus laying the groundwork for the for Deputy meetings. Overall, however, this first forum of formal bilateral negotiations between Greece and the EEC members was in fact too formal a setting for true bargaining to occur. The real negotiation took place on the other two fora

Often neglected in the history of enlargement, the second forum included the internal negotiations amongst the Nine in Brussels in their pursuit of a common position on the Greek issue. The Nine could not confront the Greeks without reaching first an agreed Community stance. This meant in practice that every meeting between Athens and the EEC, at both Deputy and Ministerial level, had to be preceded by an equivalent meeting among the Nine. And it was at these gatherings *à neuf* that most of the true bargaining occurred. The newly formed European Council was not designed to, and for the most part did not, deal with enlargement issues except in the cases where the possible Greek accession affected controversial dossiers such as the agricultural issue.

Finally, the thesis will also examine a third forum, that of informal contacts on the margins of the aforementioned meetings (COREPER, Deputy meeting, Council of Ministers, Ministerial meetings, Commission working groups etc). This last is important because the informal context was conducive to a more intimate exchange of views and the working out of compromises. As Christopher Audland, the Commission's joint-deputy secretary general admits, 'it was indeed in the privacy of the dining room that compromises were usually sought and found on sensitive issues. All present reported on the lunches with discretion. And this enabled those who were immobilised by over-rigid instructions to seek new ones'.<sup>3</sup> An analysis of all three fora thus will trace the evolution of the negotiations from the formulation of the two sides' initial positions to the gradual convergence towards a compromise, the role of the Presidency and of the Commission in enlargement, the evolving attitude of the member states towards the Greek case, as well as the Community's flexibility in the face of enlargement.

In this vein, the dissertation will scrutinise Greek policy towards the Community exclusively as conducted in the Belgian capital. Where relevant, there will be reports of the meetings of the member states away from Brussels as well as bilateral meetings among the leaders of the Nine and Greece. Karamanlis' European tours will also be covered. Overall, however, the focus will be on the Community, on what grounds and

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<sup>3</sup> Christopher Audland, *Right Place-Right Time* (Stanhope, 2004), 269.

with what methods the EEC and its institutions responded to the Greek requests, and how both parties came to an agreement on specific terms that finally allowed a new European expansion. Writing about a successful completion of negotiations presents a series of difficulties which this multi-archival and multi-polar analysis will try to tackle. The most important is to avoid drifting into what Mark Gilbert describes as teleological patterns.<sup>4</sup> In other words, in reconstructing the narrative on the Greek talks, it is imperative not to consider the result or timing of the entry negotiations as inevitable. Essentially, this thesis will challenge Iakovos Tsalicoglou's claim that once there had been 'political agreement to agree', the accession process developed as a 'ritual dance with EC entry as the eventual outcome'.<sup>5</sup> Admittedly, it was somewhat difficult to block the entry of a democratic state in favour of which a clear political decision had been taken. Once democracy was restored, membership ceased to be a question of principle and became a problem of detailed negotiations. However, the timing and final outcome were in no way predetermined, at least not with the predictability of a 'ritual dance'. As the much quoted saying goes 'the devil is in the details'.

### **Historiography**

This Community-centred approach distinguishes this study from much of the previous academic discussion not only of the Greek entry but of the history of enlargement in general. Fernando Guirao is right to suggest that research on the European Union's enlargement history itself, independent of the individual histories of its member states, would provide valuable insights into the European Community's goals, priorities and internal cohesion.<sup>6</sup> Ever since 1959, the Community has constantly handled accession and association negotiations, absorbing and eventually adapting to the internal and external effects of the enlargement process. In this light, the decision to enlarge has constituted a major moment of self-definition for the European entity, entailing much more than a new delimitation of territory.

Nonetheless, the bulk of the historical literature on the Community's enlargement has a clear introspective character, following the tendency of European integration

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<sup>4</sup> Mark Gilbert, 'Narrating the Process: Questioning the Progressive Story of European Integration', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 46:3 (2008), 641-662.

<sup>5</sup> Iakovos Tsalicoglou, *Negotiating for Entry: The Accession of Greece to the European Community* (Aldershot, 1995), 53.

<sup>6</sup> Fernando Guirao, 'Solving the Paradoxes of Enlargement: the Next Research Challenge in our Field', *Journal of European Integration History* 11:2 (2005), 5-9.

literature to be organised around national studies.<sup>7</sup> Most research has adopted a strictly national approach, examining the influence of domestic economic, political and social determinants. This approach certainly has its merits as it exposes the influence of domestic forces on the development of the applicant's European policy. Nonetheless, it fails to capture the transformative impact of enlargement on the EEC, the importance of the negotiations for the institutional structures and political cohesion of the Community and the latter's response to the pressures and demands of the applicant. In short, how the Community achieves a sensitive balance between the desire to enlarge and the widespread concern about the impending effects that a possible accession would have on its future development.

In the last decade, however, increasing efforts have been made for a multinational approach to the analysis of European integration in the fields of both history and political science, as exemplified by Kaiser's and Elvert's comparative study and the special issue of the *Journal of European Integration History* on enlargement.<sup>8</sup> Equally pioneering was Ludlow's monograph on the first British application in which documents from the British, French, German and Community archives were consulted to piece together as comprehensive an analysis as possible of the EEC's first encounter with the challenge of enlargement, as well as Lorena Ruano's thesis on Spain and the agricultural issue and Trouvé's work on Spain and Europe.<sup>9</sup>

Against this background, the present study on Greece offers a series of advantages that, if exploited thoroughly, will contribute significantly to the fast-growing field of EEC enlargement history, and more generally, European Community history as well as the history of the Cold War in the 1970s. Greece's negotiations to enter the EEC provide the sole example in the history of European integration to date of a single country enlargement. Therefore, this particular enlargement presents us with the unique opportunity to look at the experience of one individual country in an earlier phase of European integration quite different from the post-Cold war enlargements that have been the focus of the majority of recent studies.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, Greece's accession,

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<sup>7</sup> N. Piers Ludlow, 'History Aplenty: But Still Too Isolated' in Egan, Michele, Nugent, Neill & Paterson, William (eds.), *Research Agendas in EU Studies: Stalking the Elephant* (Basingstoke, 2009), 14-36.

<sup>8</sup> Wolfram Kaiser & Jürgen Elvert (eds.), *European Union Enlargement, A Comparative History* (London, 2004).

<sup>9</sup> N. Piers Ludlow, *Dealing with Britain. The Six and the First UK application to the EEC* (Cambridge, 1997); Lorena Ruano, 'Institutions, the Common Agricultural Policy and the European Community's enlargement to Spain, 1977-1986', Unpublished Ph. D. (Nuffield College, University of Oxford, 2001); Matthieu Trouvé, *L'Espagne et l'Europe. De la dictature de Franco à l'Union Européenne* (Brussels, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> For example, Marise Cremona (ed.), *The Enlargement of the European Union* (Oxford, 2003); Jan Zielonka, 'How New Enlarged Borders Will Reshape the European Union', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 39:3 (2001), 507-536.

between the first and third enlargement rounds, is extremely telling of the Community's evolution and can be used to test how much the Nine differentiated between different applicants or actually persisted with the same methods that were deployed in the enlargement towards Britain, Denmark and Ireland. Equally intriguing is to examine how in seeking solutions to the second enlargement issues, the EEC was constantly looking beyond Greece at the impending Spanish and Portuguese negotiations. Moreover, the years of negotiations with Greece coincide with the second half of the 1970s, a period that has divided historiography as to its interpretation. Hopefully, Greece's accession will lend support to the claim that this was a rather formative period in the history of the Community, preparing the ground for the developments of the 1980s<sup>11</sup> rather than a period of complete Eurosclerosis and utter stagnation.<sup>12</sup> Finally, the second enlargement deals with Greece, a frontline Cold War state which until 1974 had a rather dependent relationship with the United States. With the return to democratic rule, the simultaneous withdrawal from the military command of NATO and the anti-Americanism that dominated the Greek scene, this relationship would be put under strain and the Europeans would be called upon to act. The handling of the Greek issue, albeit peripheral in a Cold War context, would test transatlantic relations.

However, in spite of the importance that the Greek case presents for the history of European integration and of the Cold War, the subject has surprisingly received limited historical attention, especially in international academic circles outside Greece and in comparison to the extensive coverage of the British and Iberian applications. Even the memoirs of the European protagonists of the time devote little of their space to the Greek case.<sup>13</sup> Berstein's and Sirinelli's instructive book on Giscard which emphatically registers the President's personal commitment to the Greeks and to the consolidation of democracy does not dwell on the Greek application while the negotiations in general occupy only a peripheral role in the memoirs.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Desmond Dinan (ed.), *Origins and Evolution of the European Union* (Oxford, 2006); John Gillingham, *European Integration 1950-2003: Super state or New Market Economy?* (New York, 2003); Antonio Varsori & Guia Migani (eds.), *Europe in the International Arena during the 1970s. Entering a Different World* (Brussels, 2011).

<sup>12</sup> Pierre Gerbet, *La Construction de l'Europe* (Paris, 1994); Bino Olivi & Alessandro Giaccone, *L'Europe Difficile. Histoire politique de la construction européenne* (Paris, 2007).

<sup>13</sup> Roy Jenkins, *European Diary, 1977-81* (London, 1981); Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, *Le Pouvoir et la Vie* vol.3, (Paris, 1991); Jim Callaghan, *Time and Chance* (London, 1987); Harold Wilson, *Final Term. The Labour government 1974-1976* (London, 1979); Henri Froment-Meurice, *Vu du quai, 1945-1983* (Paris, 1998); Jean François-Poncet, *37, Quai d'Orsay. Mémoires pour aujourd'hui et pour demain* (Paris, 2008); Jonathan Carr, *Helmut Schmidt* (London, 1985).

<sup>14</sup> Serge Berstein & Jean-François Sirinelli, *Les années Giscard. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing et l'Europe, 1974-1981* (Paris, 2007).

The launch of the European Monetary System (EMS) and the holding of the first direct elections to the European Parliament (EP) tend to dominate the literature of European integration on the 1970s, ignoring the Greek accession talks.<sup>15</sup> But even when the Greek case has been examined, it is only in the context of a general approach to European enlargement. Frances Nicholson and Roger East's edited volume is a clear example of this tendency as are the respective works of Nugent and Preston.<sup>16</sup> Lyn Gorman and Marja-Liisa Kiljunen's *The Enlargement of the European Community: Case-Studies of Greece, Portugal and Spain* as well as Dudley Seers' work focus on the enlargement to Spain, Portugal and Greece as a single process, not emphasising enough, however, the different circumstances under which these three Southern European countries acceded to the Community.<sup>17</sup> In this category, the most notable contribution comes from Loukas Tsoukalis with his masterly monograph *The European Community and its Mediterranean Enlargement*.<sup>18</sup> Here, the author examines the second and third rounds of enlargement from the economic, political and institutional perspectives, and his work constitutes a first attempt to evaluate the Community's attitudes toward the negotiations. Although every chapter covers a rather long period of time with numerous important events, it does not lack the much-needed concrete analysis. Tsoukalis' study, however, long predates archival releases and is mainly based on contemporary press. Finally, as part of the southern crisis in the 1970s, Antonio Varsori has dealt with Greece's transition to democracy in 1967-1976, offering a first look at the Community's response to the Greek crisis but not delving further into the negotiations for membership.<sup>19</sup> By contrast, Greece is completely overlooked in the special issue of the *Journal of European Integration History* on crisis and stabilisation in Southern Europe.<sup>20</sup>

In Greek academic discussion, Greece's relations with the EEC have tended to fall into four categories. A great deal of the work published has focused on the period prior to the membership negotiations, mainly on the Association agreement and its impact on

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<sup>15</sup> Peter Ludlow, *The Making of the European Monetary System. A Case Study of the Politics of the European Community* (London, 1982); Michèle Weinachter, *Valéry Giscard d'Estaing et l'Allemagne* (L'Harmattan, 2004).

<sup>16</sup> Frances Nicholson & Roger East, *From the Six to the Twelve: the Enlargement of the European Communities* (Essex, 1987); Christopher Preston, *Enlargement and Integration in the European Union* (London, 1997); Neill Nugent (ed.), *European Union Enlargement* (Basingstoke, 2004).

<sup>17</sup> Lyn Gorman and Marja-Liisa Kiljunen (eds.), *The Enlargement of the European Community: Case-Studies of Greece, Portugal and Spain* (London, 1983), 57-69; Dudley Seers (ed.), *The Second Enlargement of the EEC: The Integration of Unequal Partners* (Basingstoke, 1986).

<sup>18</sup> Loukas Tsoukalis, *The European Community and its Mediterranean Enlargement* (London, 1981).

<sup>19</sup> Antonio Varsori, 'L'Occidente e la Grecia: dal colpo di stato militare alla transizione alla democrazia (1967-1976)', in Del Pero, Mario et al (eds.), *Democrazie. L'Europa meridionale e la fine delle dittature* (Milano, 2010), 5-80.

<sup>20</sup> *Journal of European Integration History*, 15:1 (2001).



Greece. George Yannopoulos' *Greece and the EEC: The First Decade of a Troubled Association* as well as Susannah Verney's adroit account of the Greek Association constitute the most prominent examples.<sup>21</sup> As far as the early 1960s actual Athens agreement negotiations are concerned and the reasons that led Greece to associate itself with the EEC, the most comprehensive and detailed account is provided by Konstantina Botsiou and Marietta Minotou respectively.<sup>22</sup>

The second group of scholars are those that have examined Greece's European policy within the context of Greece's wider foreign policy, with a special focus on the rationale underlying the membership bid.<sup>23</sup> Largely ignoring the technicalities discussed in Brussels, they have explored Greece's efforts to pursue an independent foreign policy. Rozakis and Couloumbis' studies fall into this category.<sup>24</sup> Kostas Yfantis in turn has focused on the security dimension while Giannis Valinakis has placed great emphasis upon defence matters.<sup>25</sup> Constantine Stephanou and Charalambos Tsardanides adopt a slightly different approach, discussing the Greek application and the negotiations in the strict context of the Greek-Turkish dispute, therefore shedding light on a rather interesting but isolated aspect of the negotiating process.<sup>26</sup> In the same manner, a study by Panagiotis Ioakimidis on US-EEC-Greek relations has focused, in one of its chapters, exclusively on the role of the United States in Greece's negotiations to enter the European Community.<sup>27</sup>

The third category comprises a good number of books dealing with the general question of Greece and European integration. The main weakness of the bulk of these studies was the fact that they were published during the accession negotiations or in the

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<sup>21</sup> George Giannopoulos, *Greece and the EEC: The First Decade of a Troubled Association* (London, 1975); Susannah Verney, 'The Greek Association with the European Community', in Costa Pinto, Antonio & Teixeira, Nuno (eds.), *Southern Europe and the Making of the European Union, 1945-80s* (Boulder, 2002), 109-56.

<sup>22</sup> Konstantina Botsiou, *Griechenlands Weg nach Europa: Von der Truman-Doktrin bis zur Assoziierung mit der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft, 1947-1961* (Frankfurt, 1998); Marietta Minotou, *Η ευρωπαϊκή επιλογή της κυβέρνησης Καραμανλή, 1957-1959* [Karamanlis' European Choice, 1957-1959] (Athens, 2002).

<sup>23</sup> See for example Constantinos Svolopoulos, *Η Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική, 1945-1981* [Greek Foreign Policy, 1945-1981], vol. 2 (Athens, 2002); Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge, 1995).

<sup>24</sup> Theodore Couloumbis & Sotiris Dalis, *Η Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική* [Greek Foreign Policy] (Athens, 1997); Christos Rozakis, *Τρία Χρόνια Ελληνικής Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής, 1974-77* [Three Years of Greek Foreign Policy, 1974-77] (Athens, 1978).

<sup>25</sup> Kostas Yfantis, 'State Interests, External Dependency Trajectories and Europe', in Kaiser, Wolfram and Elvert, Jürgen (eds.), *European Union Enlargement: A Comparative History* (London, 2004); Giannis Valinakis, *Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική, 1949-88* [Introduction in Greek Foreign Policy, 1949-88] (Athens, 2005).

<sup>26</sup> Constantine Stephanou & Charalambos Tsardanides, 'The EC Factor in the Greece-Turkey-Cyprus Triangle', in Dimitris Constanas (ed.), *The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s* (London, 1991), 207-230; Panos Tsakaloyannis, 'The European Community and the Greek-Turkish Dispute', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 19:1 (1980), 35-54.

<sup>27</sup> Panagiotis Ioakimidis, *Οι Σχέσεις Ελλάδος-ΕΟΚ-ΗΠΑ* [The Relationship of Greece-EEC-USA] (Athens, 1979).

immediate aftermath of entry, and therefore lacked insights provided from the essential EEC historical sources. Furthermore these studies, rather restrictively from the viewpoint of the thesis, tend to be primarily devoted to the formulation of Greek governmental policy toward the EEC. A classic account on Greece and the European Community is Spyros Haritos' seminal textbook, which provides a historical survey of Greek policy from the negotiations of the Association agreement up to Greece's accession to the EEC. As with most of these textbooks, he takes up the story from 1945 and adopts a chronological structure. Haritos devotes most of the text to the nature of the association, leaving next to no room for the EEC accession negotiations, therefore conveying the image of an incomplete account.<sup>28</sup>

Two other works that deserve a mention are those by Panos Kazakos and Nikos Mousses.<sup>29</sup> These along with Spyros Karpathiotis' edition and Tasos Fakiolas' *The European Community and Greece's Entry*, offer an overview of the evolution of Greece's relationship with the EEC since the latter's creation.<sup>30</sup> These monographs have to deal with an enormous amount of information. This prevents them from studying Greece's EEC application and negotiations efforts in great detail; additionally, they tend to privilege not only quantity over quality but also description over analysis and explanation. Moreover - and this element tends to dominate Greek literature on European integration - these works focus almost exclusively on the structures and functioning of the EEC itself and not so much on the intricacies of the negotiations.

Susannah Verney as well as Michael Pateras have closely examined the domestic political factors and therefore focused their studies to the debate within and between the political parties and the effect the EEC membership question had on the Greek domestic scene.<sup>31</sup> Both studies raise issues that were extensively discussed at the highest levels of government and offer an overview of the domestic scene in a manner that a multinational work cannot emulate. However, this strictly national approach leaves no room for an assessment of internal developments throughout the Community. Likewise, Tsalicoglou's authoritative study, which to date represents the only thorough account of

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<sup>28</sup> Spyros Haritos, *Ελλάδα- ΕΟΚ, 1959-79* [Greece - EEC, 1959-79], vol.1 (Athens, 1981).

<sup>29</sup> Panos Kazakos, *Ευρωπαϊκή Οικονομική Κοινότητα* [European Economic Community] (Athens, 1978); Nikos Mousses, *ΕΟΚ-Ανάλυση της Κοινοτικής Πολιτικής* [EEC-Analysis of Community Policy] (Athens, 1978).

<sup>30</sup> Spyros Karpathiotis et al, *Η Ένταξη μας στην ΕΟΚ* [Our Accession to the EEC] (Athens, 1978); Tasos Fakiolas, *Η Ευρωπαϊκή Κοινότητα και η Ένταξη της Ελλάδος* [The European Community and Greece's Entry] (Athens, 1979).

<sup>31</sup> Susannah Verney, 'Panacea or Plague: Greek Political Parties and Accession to the European Community 1974-79', Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis (King's College, London, 1994) and 'To Be or not to Be within the European Community', in Pridham, Geoffrey (ed.), *Securing Democracy: Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe* (London, 1990), 203-23; Michael Pateras, 'From Association to Accession: Changing attitudes of Greek Political Parties', Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis (LSE, London, 1984).

Greece's negotiations to enter the European Community, adopts a strictly national approach.<sup>32</sup> Its primary focus is on Greek governmental policy-making and the strategy of the negotiating team throughout the years 1974-79. The author's personal involvement in the negotiations enables him to go into detail over several interesting aspects, the most prominent being the agricultural sector. Once more, however, the focus is on Greek policy – on the national, rather than the Community perspective.

By the same token, nearly all of the research papers presented to the succession of conferences that took place in the 1980s on the Greek negotiations focus on Greece's view of the Community and Greece's approach to membership.<sup>33</sup> This was perpetuated even at the recent conference on Karamanlis and Europe.<sup>34</sup> A noticeable exception is Michael Leigh's introductory monograph to a series *The Mediterranean Challenge*, which focuses on the attitudes towards enlargement of the EEC Nine and constitutes a valuable multinational work.<sup>35</sup> Unfortunately, the bulk of this study was written in 1976-77 and therefore does not cover the whole period of the EEC negotiations with Greece. Similarly, a paper by Geoffrey Edwards and William Wallace comments on the Community's problem of bridging the gap between grand gestures and second thoughts in the case of the EEC Mediterranean enlargement.<sup>36</sup> In other words, it explores how the conviction of the EEC members that the political benefits could outweigh the practical difficulties and economic costs proved rather optimistic. In the same vein, Tsoukalis' *Greece and the European Community* is a follow up to a conference on Greece and the EEC where important scholars contributed by bringing out both sides and offering a comprehensive assessment of the process. However, with the exception of Wallace's account in this edition, most of the chapters are dedicated exclusively to Greek policy-making during the EEC negotiations.<sup>37</sup>

Finally, the fourth category involves literature on Greece's performance as a fully integrated EEC member, and is actually quite vast. On the economic problems facing

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<sup>32</sup> Iakovos Tsalicoglou, *Negotiating*.

<sup>33</sup> George Kontogeorgis, 'The Greek View of the Community and Greece's approach to Membership', College d'Europe, Bruges, 16-18.03.1978; Mark Dragoumis, 'Greek case for Joining the EEC', Edinburgh Conference, University of Edinburgh, 6.05.1978.

<sup>34</sup> Christos Kariadidis (ed.), *Ο Κωνσταντίνος Καραμανλής και η Ευρωπαϊκή Πορεία της Ελλάδος* [Constantinos Karamanlis and Greece's European Path] (Athens, 2000).

<sup>35</sup> Michael Leigh, 'Nine EEC Attitudes to Enlargement', *The Mediterranean Challenge*, Sussex European Paper (Sussex, 1978), 5-58.

<sup>36</sup> Geoffrey Edwards & William Wallace, *A Wider European Community? Issues and Problems of Further Enlargement*, A Federal Trust Paper (London, 1976).

<sup>37</sup> Loukas Tsoukalis(ed.), *Greece and the European Community* (Farnborough,1979).

Greece upon accession to the EEC, the work of Achilleas Mitsos is pioneering.<sup>38</sup> Panayiotis Roumeliotis' edited volume, *European Integration and the role of Europe*, deals with the Greek position within the process of European integration and sectoral arrangements.<sup>39</sup> On the same issue, Kazakos and Stefanou's edition constitutes a really useful report on the prospects and impact of Greek membership on several economic sectors, especially on industry and trade.<sup>40</sup>

Apart from the secondary literature on Greece and the EEC, the sources available for the 1974-9 period have mainly been Greek political diaries and autobiographies like George Kontogeorgis' report on the negotiations for Greek entry into the EEC.<sup>41</sup> These memoirs, especially from governmental officials of the time, provide an interesting insight and useful anecdotes on how the Greek government felt, thought and operated. However, as all memoirs, they must be treated with caution due to a certain partiality. For instance, Kontogeorgis' and Rallis' accounts of the negotiations tend to overemphasise the role of Karamanlis in a hagiographic fashion.<sup>42</sup> Although the personal contribution of Karamanlis as Prime Minister and his influential role in the successful outcome of the negotiations is undeniable, the focus on personal leadership alone diminishes the credibility of these accounts as historical evidence. There is no single memoir on the negotiations that does not end with Giscard's quote, namely, 'It was not Greece that entered Europe, but Karamanlis'. Albeit valuable, these memoirs fail to identify the broader context in which the Greek Premier operated.

To sum up, a review of the literature on the second enlargement highlights four main gaps. First of all, a significant amount of research adopts a strictly national approach, examining the policies and motives of Greece, rather than attempting to collectively assess the nine member states' attitudes towards enlargement, which is this thesis' intention. Secondly, an examination of the importance of the Community's institutions such as the Commission and the Council of Ministers in dealing with the

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<sup>38</sup> Achilleas Mitsos (ed.), *Η Προσχώρηση στις Ευρωπαϊκές Κοινότητες* [Accession to the European Communities] (Athens, 1981).

<sup>39</sup> Panayiotis Roumeliotis (ed.), *Η Ολοκλήρωση της Ευρωπαϊκής Κοινότητας και ο Ρόλος της Ελλάδος, Ουτοπία και Πραγματικότητα* [European Integration and Role of Greece: Utopia and Reality] (Athens, 1985).

<sup>40</sup> Panos Kazakos and Constantinos Stefanou, *Η Ελλάδα στην Ευρωπαϊκή Κοινότητα, Η Πρώτη Πενταετία, Τάσεις, Προβλήματα, Προοπτικές* [Greece in the European Community, the First Decade, Tendencies, Problems and Perspectives] (Athens, 1987); Panos Kazakos & Panayiotis Ioakimidis (eds.), *Greece and the EC Membership Evaluated* (London, 1994).

<sup>41</sup> George Kontogeorgis, *Η Ελλάδα στην Ευρώπη: Η Πορεία προς την Ένωση και η Πολιτική του Καραμανλή* [Greece in Europe. The Road towards Union and Karamanlis' policy] (Athens, 1985).

<sup>42</sup> George Rallis, *Η Ελλάδα στην ΕΟΚ* [Greece in the EEC] (Athens, 1979); Dimitris Mpritsios, *Πέρα από τα Σύνορα, 1974-77* [Beyond Borders, 1974-77] (Athens, 1983); Anastasis Papaligouras, *Η Ευρώπη των Δέκα* [The Europe of Ten] (Athens, 1979); Aggelos Zaxaropoulos, *Η Οδύσσεια της Ευρωπαϊκής Πορείας* [The Odyssey of the European path] (Athens, 2011).

challenge of the second round of enlargement, has so far been missing. Therefore, the existing literature provides little to no analysis of the Community dimension. This is quite surprising considering that each enlargement constitutes a key defining moment in the history of European integration, during which the Community reflects on its purposes and its modus operandi. Thirdly, there have been hardly any steps towards incorporating in the Greek EEC story the overriding Cold War environment of the 1970s despite the fact that Greece was a strategically vital Cold War frontline state in political turmoil and such geopolitical considerations did loom large in the Nine's minds in treating Greece's application. The role of the United States, Turkey or the security of NATO's southern flank are frequently examined in Greece's post-war history but never as part of Greece's road to EEC membership. This absence lends support to Piers Ludlow's claim that there is a wrongful tendency for a clear-cut separation of Cold War history and European integration history.<sup>43</sup> Finally, the bulk of the existing studies were published in the 1970s and 1980s. It is now high time for a 'second draft' of history based on archival sources.

### **Methodology**

Today, the principal archival documents of the European Community and of the most important European national member states, as well as the Greek and American records are publicly available. This new information will help to shed fresh light on the Community's internal workings during Greece's negotiations. Moreover, examining the Nine as a whole and how the deliberation within the Community developed reveals a great deal about their attitudes to each other and towards the process of European integration. Finally, the multi-archival and multi-layer approach will provide a more balanced record of the negotiations. In terms of archival sources, this thesis draws primarily on four different kinds of collections: the supranational records, the national documents of the most important member states, the Greek files and finally the American archives. All of them will help establish how collective European decisions were taken, what were the initial positions of the principal member states and of Greece, in particular, and how much they changed during the negotiations, as well as the extent and impact of the US role. The first includes the historical archives of the Commission (held in Brussels), those of the EEC's Council of Ministers, the personal papers of Christopher Soames, Commissioner for External Relations during the first years covered

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<sup>43</sup> N.Piers Ludlow, 'European Integration and the Cold War', in Leffler, Melvyn & Westad, Odd Arne (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Crises and Detente*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 2010), 179-197.

by the thesis and the papers of Emile Noël, the long-standing Secretary General of the Commission which are preserved in Florence. These records are revealing for the development of the Community's enlargement policy and the Commission's role in the negotiations. In particular, the Commission's reports on ministerial meetings between Greece and the EEC and of all the deputy-level gatherings can compensate for the brevity of records drawn up by the Council minute-takers from the mid-1970s.

The national archives of the most important individual member states constitute the second major source. Although this thesis adopts a Community approach as a whole, it would be unwise to disregard the importance of the national interests in a hybrid system such as the European Economic Community. In an ideal world, a historian of European integration in the 1970s should consult all the individual member states. Unfortunately this has been impossible. The records of Italy and Belgium proved inaccessible, whereas the German papers on Greek accession were consulted only with the generous help of a German colleague who translated the recently published volumes of *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik des Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1974 - 1979*.

This thesis hence is mainly based on the French, British and Irish archives which proved indispensable. The research focused on the recently released Quai d'Orsay archives, the archives of the *Secrétariat général du Comité interministériel pour les questions de coopération économique européenne (SGCI)* and last but not least on the Giscard Papers. Apart from the insights they provide into the workings of the negotiations, these archives are revealing of the evolving French policy towards the Greek membership. Again, in searching for what happened in parallel to the multinational discussions within the EEC, the National Archives at the British Public Record Office proved vital for the research, thus confirming the reputation that the British are the best collectors and recorders of diplomatic gossip in Europe. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Cabinet, the Treasury and the Prime Minister's papers, besides exposing British policy in the negotiations, are of great value as they encompass countless reports from Brussels and the various capitals of the Nine. These holdings demonstrate the mood and general sentiment of the member states with regard to Greece. Moreover, the Irish archives provide an insight from the angle of a smaller member state which shared a lot of similarities with Greece. The collation of multiple member states accounts along with the Commission and Noël papers were crucial in painting a more complete picture of the Council debates. This is important considering that from the mid-1970s the minutes of the Council of Ministers meetings were no

longer produced. Only a two page *relevé des conclusions* was issued, instead of the usual *procès-verbaux*.

As expected, a significant portion of the research was based on the Greek record of the negotiations. The Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not declassified its documents from the 1970s yet, but I was allowed access to the telegrams sent from all the Greek embassies situated in the nine EEC capitals, which were extremely helpful in understanding the relationship of the Greeks with the Nine. Moreover, the scarcity in the records of the Foreign Ministry was compensated by the Constantinos Karamanlis Foundation, which holds an invaluable collection of the Prime Minister's Papers, personal notes and correspondence with European leaders as well as a comprehensive account of the negotiations. Also the personal papers of the main members of the Greek negotiating team offered an invaluable insight into how the Greeks perceived the enlargement process and how the Nine interacted in their bilateral meetings with the Greeks. The Minister responsible for European Affairs, George Kontogeorgis kept an unprecedented record of all the deliberations that took place in Brussels. This recently released collection along with the papers of Byron Theodoropoulos, the Secretary General of the Greek Foreign Ministry at that time and Stephanos Stathatos, the Greek ambassador to the EEC, provide a fresh look to the Greek accession talks which had been missing from the literature.

To provide a useful outsider's viewpoint, a number of American archives have also been employed. The Ford and Carter papers regarding Greece and EEC enlargement, the FRUS volume on Greece, Turkey and Cyprus as well as the Central Foreign Policy files(1973-1976) proved deeply important for a better understanding of the topic for three main reasons. First and as argued above, Greece's enlargement had a Cold War dimension in which the United States played a crucial role and should therefore not be disregarded. Secondly, some Europeans, such as the Germans and the British, tended to be more forthcoming in their views to their transatlantic allies than their European counterparts. Thirdly, it is remarkable how detailed the reports of the US mission in Brussels were regarding Community business, a source that should be further consulted by anyone interested in writing on European integration. Apart from official papers, research was supplemented by memoirs of the main European protagonists, ranging from Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and James Callaghan to Helmut Schmidt as well as by a comprehensive reading of the Greek and international press, such as: *The Economist*, *Le Monde*, *The Financial Times*, *The World Today*, *The New York Times*, *Europa*, *Kathimerini*, *Vima*

in order to get a better feeling of the ambiance of the time of the accession talks. Finally, the European navigator website holds an excellent oral history project that has been extensively consulted, while interviews were conducted with two main Greek protagonists at that time, namely Theodoropoulos and Molyviatis.

This study will be organised in a strict chronological order. Such an arrangement allows the reader to have an overall picture of the negotiations and to appreciate the importance of momentum for the successful outcome of the Community talks. Applying a chronological approach also highlights the variations in mood, atmosphere and expectations that dominated the process of negotiations. However, within the chapters, several problems will be analysed thematically in order to explain the main points of dispute between the Community and Greece. In particular, chapter one looks at the motives behind the Greek decision to apply for membership. Although the thesis will mainly focus on the Community's policy towards Greece, it is vital to understand the Greek strategy and how this in turn influenced the Nine. Despite evident geostrategic and economic motivations, this chapter will stress the centrality of the political dimension. Karamanlis' government greatly capitalised on the EEC prospect as part of its transition strategy to safeguard democracy. Indeed, the European option was vital in Karamanlis' strategy from the very beginning, but the chapter will also show that the actual timing of the decision to apply so early was influenced by Karamanlis' contacts with the European leaders and by the impasse that dominated the negotiations of the Greek Association agreement. Chapter two will investigate the reasons that led the Nine to accept Greece's application and respond positively to Karamanlis' linking of democratic consolidation with possible accession. Despite the influence of the Community's deeply felt commitment to embrace a fledgling democracy which was indisputably European and with a strong desire to join, this chapter seeks to understand the effect of Cold War politics as well as of the emergence of the Community's political identity as promoter of democracy in the decision to say 'yes'.

Chapter three looks at the period from the Nine's acceptance of Greece's application up to the start of formal negotiations. The first part of this chapter will concentrate on the relations between Turkey and the EEC and how their improvement affected the opening of the talks with Greece. The second part will focus on the Nine's discussion on how to conduct the negotiations with the applicant. This examination will introduce at an early stage a recurrent theme of the thesis, namely the extent to which the experience of the first enlargement affected the second round and how in dealing



with Greece, the Nine always anticipated the prospective Portuguese and Spanish applications. It will also stress the Nine's determination to protect the internal unity of the Community.

The complete stagnation of the negotiations talks constitutes the main story of chapter four. Almost two years had passed since Greece announced its application, and very little progress appeared to have been made. Meanwhile, the Iberian applications were officially lodged and the Community toyed with the idea of jointly evaluating all three applications. This came in complete contrast to Greece's strategy for a speedy conclusion of its negotiations on the basis of its own intrinsic merits. The Community was torn between its political instincts to offer Karamanlis a foreign policy success that would stabilise the country's regime and in turn ensure Greece's Western orientation, and the implications of a new enlargement that would not only include the isolated case of Greece but also Spain and Portugal. The most contested issue was Mediterranean agriculture, which is the focus of most of the second part of the fourth chapter. The chapter ends with Karamanlis' decision to call early elections and with how the stagnation in the talks with the EEC affected the Greek Premier's decision.

Chapter five will concentrate on the circumstances that finally led the Nine to begin substantive negotiations with the Greeks alone, separating their application from the Iberian ones. Taking as a starting point Karamanlis' European tour following the Greek elections, the chapter will explain the breaking of the impasse in the accession talks against the backdrop of five developments that took place within the Community and which, coupled with Karamanlis' successful tour and the Greek team's preparedness in providing all the necessary data, positively influenced Greece's case. Chapter six focuses on the significance of the German Presidency of the EEC when a sustained attempt was made to break the back of the negotiations. The first part will highlight the technical problems of the most controversial issues, namely agriculture, social affairs and the duration of the transition period, while the second part focuses primarily on the vital ninth and tenth ministerial meetings that took place in December 1978. The progress made in these highly charged meetings will be described as well as the behind-the-scenes bargaining that finally led to a successful compromise.

The thesis will conclude with chapter seven, which focuses on the first months of 1979 i.e. the final months of the negotiations. At this stage, the budgetary issue was still in question as well as several other aspects of the social dossier. The question of the

budget was extremely important for the final agreement. This final chapter therefore will explain how during these months, the success of the Greek application was cemented.

# Chapter 1: Greece's decision to apply for full EEC membership (July 1974-June 1975)

## 1.1. Introduction

Early in the morning of 12 June 1975, just a few days after the ratification of the new Greek constitution, the government of Constantinos Karamanlis submitted a formal application to enter the EEC as a full-fledged member. Greece's ambassador to the EEC Stephanos Stathatos sent the formal request to the President of the Council of Ministers, Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs Gareth Fitzgerald. On the same day, Karamanlis informed the ambassadors of the nine member states of the EEC that 'Greece belongs and desires to belong in Europe, with which it has been connected for a long time in many ways - politically, economically and historically. Today's initiative constitutes a natural continuity of the policy I inaugurated fifteen years ago... Greece does not desire full membership solely on economic grounds. The reasons are mainly political and refer to the consolidation of democracy and the future of the nation'.<sup>1</sup>

The accepted narrative in Greek political history has tended to describe Greece's decision to seek full EEC membership as a gradual process that has its origins in the late 1950s and especially in the 1961 Athens Association Agreement, during which time, the European option evolved to become almost a panacea which would cure all the country's problems from economic modernisation to external security.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, Kostas Yfantis has focused mainly on the security dimension pointing out 'that membership was perceived as a means to balance US influence and power, while cementing Greece's Western orientation and commitment'.<sup>3</sup> Jose M. Magone recently agreed with this argument, stating that 'Karamanlis presented the EEC as an alternative to the rejected patronage of the United States'.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Giannis Valinakis claims that 'it was only natural to consider the European option as the only way to strengthen Greece's bargaining power and defence capabilities vis-à-vis Turkey'.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, Panos Kazakos as well as George Yannopoulos focus on the highly beneficial economic effects

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<sup>1</sup> Announcement to the nine ambassadors of the EEC member states, 12 June 1975, Constantinos Svolopoulos (gen. ed.), *Κωνσταντίνος Καραμανλής: Αρχείο, Γεγονότα, Κείμενα* [Constantinos Karamanlis: Archives, Events and Texts] (henceforth *Karamanlis*), vol. 8 (Athens, 2005), 446-7.

<sup>2</sup> See for example Svolopoulos, *Greek Foreign Policy*; Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> Yfantis, 'State Interests, External Dependency Trajectories and Europe', 79.

<sup>4</sup> Jose M. Magone, 'The Role of the EEC in the Spanish and Portuguese and Greek transitions' in Alonso, Gregorio & Muro, Diego (eds.), *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition. The Spanish Model* (New York, 2011), 223.

<sup>5</sup> Valinakis, *Introduction in Greek Foreign Policy*, 276.

of a possible entry into the EEC.<sup>6</sup> And Loukas Tsoukalis highlights the prominence of the economic motive as ‘the importance of Community markets for Greek exports, coupled with the obligations emanating from the Association agreement... and the expected gains from its incorporation into the CAP seemed to leave post 1974 Greece with no real option but to apply for membership’.<sup>7</sup>

And yet amid all the voluminous writings on the security and economic dimensions of Greece’s application to the European Communities, there has been relatively limited analysis of an important political dimension of the issue, namely the linkage between European integration and the democratisation process. This is important since the ‘submission of Greece’s formal application for full membership triggered a debate on the whole question of the regime, including the macro-level choice of a liberal democratic model’.<sup>8</sup> Although the economic and security considerations were important, it must be noted that a strong link developed between the European option and the democratisation process in Greece, to the point that the two became closely interrelated, especially in the minds of the country’s ruling political elite.

A growing number of political analysts have thoroughly examined how external influences may have helped to affect the course of democratisation in different ways.<sup>9</sup> For instance, Geoffrey Pridham has documented the close relationship between European integration and democratic consolidation, focusing on the transition period of democratization of Spain, Portugal and Greece as a whole. He has not however emphasised enough, the different circumstances under which democratisation occurred in these three Southern European countries respectively.<sup>10</sup> A more detailed analysis of the interaction between European integration and the Greek transition to democracy in the mid-1970s is provided in the work of Paulos Tsakaloyannis and Susannah Verney as well as in the writings of Van Coufoudakis, who focus mainly on the pre-transition period of 1973-4.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, they can inevitably only chart a portion of the democratic transition

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<sup>6</sup> Panos Kazakos, *Ανάμεσα σε Κράτος και Αγορά: Οικονομία και Οικονομική Πολιτική στη Μεταπολεμική Ελλάδα, 1922-2000* [Between State and Market] (Athens, 2006), 294-6; George Yannopoulos, *Greece and the European Communities*.

<sup>7</sup> Loukas Tsoukalis, *The European Community*, 49.

<sup>8</sup> Susannah Verney, ‘To Be or not to Be within the EC’, in Pridham, Geoffrey, *Securing Democracy: Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe* (London, 1990), 206.

<sup>9</sup> Laurence Whitehead, *The International Dimensions of Democratization* (Oxford, 2005); Jon Pevehouse, ‘With a Little Help from my Friends? Regional Organizations and the Consolidation of Democracy’, *American Journal of Political Science*, 46:3 (2002), 611-626.

<sup>10</sup> Geoffrey Pridham, *Encouraging Democracy: The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (Leicester, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> Paulos Tsakaloyannis and Susannah Verney, ‘Linkage Politics: The Role of the European Community in Greek Politics in 1973’, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 10 (1986), 179-94; Susannah Verney, ‘The European Community as Exporter of Democracy: Lessons from the Greek Case’, paper presented at the

and consolidation period. This also applies in the case of Basilios Tsingos, who analyses mainly the impact of the EEC in the aftermath of Greece's formal accession.<sup>12</sup>

The overriding importance of the democratisation factor in Karamanlis' quest for Europe will be advanced based upon three key arguments. First, this chapter will present a detailed chronological analysis of the transition period, beginning with the formation of the civilian government on 24 July 1974 and ending with Greece's application to the EEC. The aim is to demonstrate the prominence of the European option/liberal democracy linkage that developed during the eleven month Greek transition and became Karamanlis' central long-term aim. To further understand the link between European integration and democratisation, the analysis will then concentrate on the traditionally strong link between Greece's external orientation and its domestic political and economic system. This historical link is important for understanding why Karamanlis found it vital, in the aftermath of the fall of the junta and of the Cyprus tragedy, to make a radical break with the pre-junta domestic politics in the name of genuine democratisation. Democracy would be best guaranteed if the Greek regime was committed to the Community's definition of democracy. The positive influence of the EEC on the fall of the dictatorship and the identification of the organisation with liberal democratic values was crucial in further facilitating Karamanlis' strategy of linking eventual EEC entry with strengthening democracy.

Secondly, examining this period will bring to the surface the intricacies surrounding the Greek decision to apply for full membership. It is true that the European option was vital in Karamanlis' strategy from the very beginning, but what will be shown here is that the first contacts with the Europeans, and the impasse in the most critical dossiers of the Association agreement, increased the sense of emergency in his decision to opt for full membership so quickly, just eleven months after he came to power. Finally, this chapter will show why the security option did not feature as prominently as it has thus far been suggested in the Greek literature. This chapter completely supports Coufoudakis' thesis that in the aftermath of the Cyprus debacle, there was a quest for multilateral foreign policy on the part of Karamanlis in the post-junta period.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, Botsiou is right to argue that the rapprochement with the EEC 'enhanced Greece's profile among its allies

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European Community Studies Association Conference, George Mason University, 22-4 May 1991; Van Coufoudakis, 'The European Economic Community and the Freezing of the Greek Association, 1967-74', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 16:2 (1977-8), 114-31.

<sup>12</sup> Basilios Tsingos, 'Underwriting Democracy: The European Community and Greece', in Whitehead, Laurence, *The International Dimensions of Democratization* (Oxford, 2005), 315-55.

<sup>13</sup> Van Coufoudakis, 'Greek Foreign Policy since 1974: Quest for Independence', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 6:1 (1988), 55-57.

at a time when relations with its major strategic partner, the USA, were suffering greatly'.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, no one can deny that Karamanlis and his government were deeply bitter about the indifferent stance taken by the Americans over the second invasion of Cyprus by Turkey in particular. However, while all the above is true, in the end the EEC was hardly considered an alternative to the USA and NATO in the minds of the ruling political elite. Admittedly, the domestic constraints linked to the growing anti-American sentiment that reached its peak on 1974 left little room for manoeuvre in that area and they completely explain the country's withdrawal from the military command of NATO. Yet, Karamanlis remained deeply aware of the political and security realities of the wider East-West international context. Through his contacts with the Nine and the USA, Karamanlis understood and secretly, at first, espoused the irreversible connection between EEC membership and NATO alliance.

## **1.2. The Greek regime change in 1974-5: 116 crucial days of transition**

On 24 July 1974, Constantinos Karamanlis was recalled from his self-imposed exile in Paris to restore democracy in the aftermath of the collapse of the military regime in Greece, prompted by Turkey's invasion of Cyprus.<sup>15</sup> Karamanlis returned as a *deus ex machina* to carry out the transformation of the political system and the consolidation of democracy. He was the most suitable person to facilitate the transition from dictatorship to democracy. His anti-communist record and his conservative credentials in the 1950s and early 1960s, coupled with his critical attitude towards the junta, made him acceptable to the military, the anti-monarchist right and the political centre respectively.<sup>16</sup>

However, the task confronting him was daunting. In seven years of military dictatorship, Greece had been marked by repression, mismanagement, corruption and ultimately betrayal in Cyprus. In a televised speech on 25 July 1974, Karamanlis declared that during 'the life of all nations there are moments which impose moral and national exaltation. It is during these moments that a people, disappointed by the recent and distant past, seek with agony their way. It is these moments that our country is

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<sup>14</sup> Konstantina E. Botsiou, 'The Origins of Greece's European Policy', in Arvanitopoulos, Constantine & Botsiou, Konstantina, *The Constantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy Yearbook 2010* (Athens, 2010), 94; Konstantina E. Botsiou, 'Αναζητώντας το χαμένο χρόνο. Η Ευρωπαϊκή τροχιά της μεταπολιτεύσεως' [Looking for lost time. European aspects of metapolitefsi], in Arvanitopoulos, Constantine & Korra, Marilena (eds.), *30 Χρόνια Ελληνικής Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής* [Third Years of Greek Foreign Policy], 99-121.

<sup>15</sup> C. M. Woodhouse, *Karamanlis: The Restorer of Democracy* (London, 1982).

<sup>16</sup> Nikiforos Diamandouros, 'Regime Change and the Prospects for Democracy in Greece: 1974-1983', in O'Donnell, Guillermo et al (eds.), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* (Baltimore, 1986), 154.

experiencing today'.<sup>17</sup> The transition from dictatorship to democracy was carried out in a climate of acute ambivalence. On the one hand, the advent of democracy was linked to national humiliation over the Cyprus tragedy and possible war with Turkey. On the other, the imposition of the military dictatorship was viewed as having resulted from the discredited pre-coup political system. This conviction led a significant portion of public opinion and political forces to demand a truly new beginning and a break with the post war period.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, a genuine pluralist democracy presupposed and demanded the reduction and control of foreign interference in Greek domestic affairs.

This strong foreign influence, which went all the way back to the establishment of the Greek state in 1830, meant that the Greeks took for granted an explicit connection between the political regime and its external links.<sup>19</sup> Given its small size, economic underdevelopment, internal political divisions and vulnerable strategic location in the Balkans and the Mediterranean, Greece had a tradition of participation in numerous alliances throughout its modern history.<sup>20</sup> Participation in these alliances enabled Greece to strengthen national security and economic development. In most cases, however, this resulted in handicapped democratic institutions and subjected Greece's national domestic politics to foreign influence, if not outright interference. As Couloumbis mentions 'in the area of Greek-Great Power relations, political scientists classified Greece among those states with penetrated (dependent) political systems'.<sup>21</sup>

With the settlement following the Second World War, Greece experienced a traumatic civil war. The Communists' defeat was only achieved with direct help from the British first, and from the Americans in the later phase of the war. As a consequence, a divisive political environment with weak domestic institutions emerged, and paved the way for the government's dependence on external patronage for its military and political survival.<sup>22</sup> Since the declaration of the Truman Doctrine in 1947, the USA had expended nearly \$4 billion in economic and military assistance to the Greek government and had thereby succeeded in minimising Soviet influence in the region and granting NATO and

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<sup>17</sup> GRKaramanlis, vol 9, 14.

<sup>18</sup> Petros Molyviatis, 'Στρατηγικοί Στόχοι και Εξουδετέρωση των Αντιδράσεων' [Strategic Goals and Neutralization of Opposition], in Kariedidis, Christos (ed.) *Ο Κωνσταντίνος Καραμανλής και η Ευρωπαϊκή Πορεία της Ελλάδος* [Constantinos Karamanlis and Greece's European Path] (Athens, 2000), 72-3.

<sup>19</sup> Verney, 'To Be or not to Be', 203-223.

<sup>20</sup> Theodore Couloumbis, *Greek Political Reaction to American and NATO Influences* (New Haven, 1966), 2-32.

<sup>21</sup> Theodore Couloumbis et al (eds.), *Greece in the Twentieth Century* (London, 2003), 33. For further reading see Thanos Veremis, *The Military in Greek Politics: From Independence to Democracy* (London, 1997).

<sup>22</sup> Clogg, *A Concise History*, 146-7.

the USA a paramount position throughout the Mediterranean.<sup>23</sup> But it was also the Greek ruling elites' receptiveness to foreign interference that made the USA's involvement in Greece's domestic affairs so intense.<sup>24</sup> Due to financial weaknesses and the country's geopolitical vulnerability, the political elite saw the intervention of foreign powers in Greek politics as the only viable vehicle to attain domestic stability and security, therefore conveying an image of a country willingly open to penetration and external manipulation.<sup>25</sup> Greece thus adopted a posture of nearly total economic and military dependence on the USA.

The issue of Greece's dependency on the USA is rather important in explaining the wave of vehement anti-Americanism that dominated the Greek domestic scene during, and especially in the aftermath of, the military dictatorship and the Cyprus tragedy. Although recent research has debunked the myth that the junta was the most explicit expression of US interference and tutelage, the majority of the Greeks remained wedded to this idea prompting even the right-wing newspaper *Acropolis* to run a headline on 'How the Americans cheated Greece'.<sup>26</sup> As reported in a Memorandum to the Secretary of State Henry Kissinger: 'The visits to Greece of high-ranking US military officers during this period[junta], the official visit of Vice-President Spyro Agnew, the agreement of home porting and the absence of any strong criticism of the military regime by the USA' exacerbated the feeling of anti-Americanism among Greeks.<sup>27</sup>

In this context, the transition towards democracy began with a major decision in foreign policy. Confronted with the grave consequences of the recent double Turkish invasion in Cyprus, the new leadership in Athens was under pressure to act. The Prime Minister concluded that the option of war against Turkey was highly dangerous, as the seven years of the junta had left the country's frontiers unprotected and the army in a ruinous state of disorder. Instead of war, Karamanlis chose diplomacy by withdrawing from the military command of NATO on 14 August 1974 and requested formal negotiations on the future of US bases and facilities on Greek soil.<sup>28</sup> In the following years he justified his decision saying that 'The withdrawal from NATO was not only

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<sup>23</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States (henceforth USFRUS), 1969-1976, Volume XXX, Memorandum by A. Denis Clift, Washington, 21 March 1975.

<sup>24</sup> James Edward Miller, *The United States and the Making of Modern Greece. History & Power, 1950-1974* (North Carolina, 2009).

<sup>25</sup> Coufoudakis, 'Greek Foreign Policy since 1974', 55-57.

<sup>26</sup> Konstantina Maragkou, 'Favouritism in NATO's south-eastern flank: the case of the Greek Colonels, 1967-1974', *Cold War History*, 9:3 (2009), 312-345; *Acropolis*, 8 August 1974.

<sup>27</sup> Digital National Security Archives (USDNSA), 01283, Memorandum on US Security Policy toward Greece, 8 February 1975.

<sup>28</sup> Svolopoulos, *Greek Foreign Policy*.



justified but necessary. The fury of the Greek and Cypriot people was so great at that time that the only alternative would have been war'.<sup>29</sup> Equally, Karamanlis' close associate and the then Foreign Minister Dimitris Bitsios revealed in his memoirs that 'Karamanlis had to choose. Either to declare war on Turkey or to leave NATO. Between the two he chose the lesser evil'.<sup>30</sup>

This decision, made at the height of the Cyprus crisis, reflected Greek frustration at the failure of the USA and its NATO allies to forestall the Turkish action. The French Ambassador to Athens, Roland de Margerie said that 'if Karamanlis, who could not be a greater NATO advocate, took the decision to withdraw Greek forces from the integrated NATO military operation, the Greeks must really be bitter at the Alliance in general and the USA, in particular'.<sup>31</sup> Karamanlis' decision met with enthusiastic support from the Greek press. One newspaper, reflecting the general feeling of the population, described the decision as 'boldly, manly and called for by the circumstances and met with nationwide approval'.<sup>32</sup> It had become a universal conviction among the Greek public and the political elite that reducing and controlling foreign interference would be one of the primary preconditions for building a strong pluralist democracy. In other words, and as Karamanlis himself wrote in a private letter to a close friend, 'the establishment of a democratic regime required a fundamental change in Greece's relationship with the USA'.<sup>33</sup>

The fact that during this very period Karamanlis turned to Europe has been widely interpreted as a search for US substitute.<sup>34</sup> However, records clearly show that in pursuing a European path and withdrawing from NATO, Karamanlis did not denounce the country's relationship with the USA. Instead, he opted for a multilateral Greek foreign policy, signalling its disengagement from the monolithic approaches of the past. Multilateralism did not mean the end of the close relationship between Greece and the USA. Greece was still very much a frontline Cold War state in need of US security protection and Karamanlis was nothing but pragmatic, keenly aware of the political realities and the limitations attached to the EEC's security capabilities.

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<sup>29</sup> Karamanlis's interview in *New York Times*, 27 May 1978.

<sup>30</sup> Bitsios, *Beyond the frontiers*, 204.

<sup>31</sup> Central Foreign Policy Files (henceforth USCFFP), Electronic Telegrams, Department of State (1973-1976), Telegram by H. Stone, Paris, 14 August 1974.

<sup>32</sup> *Acropolis*, 14 August 1974.

<sup>33</sup> Constantinos Tsatsos, *Λογοδοσία μιας Ζωής* [Memoirs of a Lifetime], vol. 2 (Athens, 2001), 428-9.

<sup>34</sup> Antonis Klapsis, 'From Dictatorship to Democracy: US-Greek relations at a Critical Turning Point, 1974-1975', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 22:1(2011), 61-73.

Without denying that there was a potential security dimension to Greece's integration within Western Europe, especially in regards to the need to advance Greece's international credibility and avert the eventuality of further Turkish aggression, a close analysis of archival sources shows that other political considerations were much more predominant. In a society so sensitive to the effects of foreign influence on internal affairs, especially American, and in a country occupying such a vulnerable geopolitical position and with such feeble domestic institutions, Karamanlis was firm in his belief that alongside the creation of a legitimate governmental climate and economic modernisation, the Greeks needed inclusion in the EEC to help build a solid democracy.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the main purpose behind Greece's European choice was to use it as a political instrument to strengthen the domestic democratisation process and thus reduce the risks of returning to military regimes. Karamanlis was convinced that association and eventual membership with the EEC would facilitate the strengthening of democratic institutions, hasten the introduction of political and social reforms and, most importantly, it would render the establishment of a liberal democratic model irreversible.<sup>36</sup> Against this backdrop, foreign policy commitment to the EEC became enmeshed in the politics of transition from the very beginning.<sup>37</sup>

On 22 August 1974, just a few days after the Karamanlis' government took office, the Greeks formally requested the reactivation of the Athens Association agreement of 1961, which had been frozen in April 1967 following the Colonels' coup. The suspension of the Association Agreement to the status of 'current administration' after the coup, coupled with the forced withdrawal from the Council of Europe in 1969, had contributed to the erosion of domestic approval for the junta and frustrated the attempts of the dictators to establish and cultivate support from important European political elites.<sup>38</sup> During the junta years, the EEC's firm stance on democratic conditionality, partly attributable to the constant pressure from the European Parliament<sup>39</sup>, prompted Greek figures, notably John Pasmazoglou, the chief negotiator of the Association Agreement and Xenophon Zolotas, the former Governor of the Bank of Greece, to publicly call for

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<sup>35</sup> Theodore Couloumbis et al, *Foreign Interference in Greek Politics: A Historical Perspective* (New York, 1976), 146.

<sup>36</sup> Geoffrey Pridham, 'European Integration and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe', in Pinto, Antonio and Teixeira, Nuno (eds.), *Southern Europe and the Making of the European Union* (New York, 2002), 196.

<sup>37</sup> Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, *Ελληνικός Φιλελευθερισμός. Το ριζοσπαστικό φρόνιμα, 1932-1979* [Greek Liberalism] (Athens, 2010), 516.

<sup>38</sup> For a more detailed account, see C. M. Woodhouse, *The Rise and Fall of the Greek Colonels* (London, 1985), 98-130.

<sup>39</sup> Emma de Angelis, 'The Political Discourse of the European Parliament, enlargement, and the construction of a European identity, 1962-2004', Unpublished PhD Thesis (LSE, London, 2011).

the restoration of democracy as a means to facilitate Greek accession to the EEC.<sup>40</sup> Even Karamanlis, who at the time was in self-imposed exile in Paris, warned the Greek people in 1967 that ‘unless Greece enters the EC, the destiny of this country will never change’.<sup>41</sup> The financial consequences of the suspension of the Association agreement were similarly harmful to the Greek economy. Even the dictators themselves were seriously troubled by the EEC’s decision and strove to lift the freeze, threatening the European Commission with legal action and trying to distort any public perception of diplomatic isolation. However, the European Community refused to reconsider the agreement’s suspension thereby demonstrating that lack of democracy was and would be the principal hurdle to any further integration.<sup>42</sup>

Therefore, in marked contrast to the perceived American stance of indifference and even tolerance towards the Colonels’ rule, the EEC’s use of diplomatic and economic weight helped undermine the legitimacy of the military dictatorship and thus catalyse the democratisation process. This was a clear indication to Karamanlis of the possible positive effect that the EEC link could have on the Greek political system. However, this is not to imply that the EEC played a key role in the breakdown of the authoritarian rule, which was in fact mainly precipitated by events external to the EEC.<sup>43</sup> In addition to the oil embargo of 1973 and the recession that deprived the dictatorship of its economic momentum, it was the Turkish invasion in the northern part of Cyprus in July and August 1974, following a Greek-sponsored coup d’état against the President of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios, that prompted the collapse of the Greek military regime. The EEC’s role was however most crucial in denying the regime legitimacy, and therefore isolating Greece from the Western family of democracies.

The EEC’s position differed from NATO’s, which did not insist formally on democratic preconditions.<sup>44</sup> The EEC became therefore associated with liberal democratic values in the eyes of the Greek public opinion and its political elite. It was precisely this identification that contributed to the emergence of the Community as an actor enjoying significant goodwill among Greece’s new democratic leadership, especially during the first year of transition 1974 and 1975. Hence, from the very first day of

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<sup>40</sup> Tsakaloyannis and Verney, ‘Linkage Politics’, 189.

<sup>41</sup> Cited in George Rallis, *Πολιτικές Εμπνευστικές, 1950-89* [Political Confiding, 1950-89] (Athens, 1990), 177.

<sup>42</sup> Coufoudakis, ‘The European Economic Community’, 130.

<sup>43</sup> Nikos Poulatzas, *Η Κρίση των Διτατοριών. Πορτογαλία-Ελλάδα-Ισπανία* [The crisis of the dictatorships. Portugal-Greece-Spain] (Athens, 1975), 27.

<sup>44</sup> Although the NATO’s preamble contains references to democracy, one of its founding members was under dictatorship, namely Portugal and military coups never resulted in pressures to end their authoritarian rule (Turkey, Greece).

transition from dictatorship to democracy, Karamanlis emphasized West European support for democratisation. This provided external legitimacy for his government, as Western Europe appeared to regard his civilian cabinet in a very different light from its military predecessors. It was thus hardly surprising that Greece's memorandum to the European Economic Community on 22 August 1974 focused on the influence of the EEC on the collapse of the junta and the identification of the Community with liberal democratic values.

In this respect, the Athens government was confident that the immediate restoration of the association would constitute for the Greeks a vote of confidence on the part of the Nine. Clearly, Karamanlis' aim was, from the very beginning, to bring into play the EEC's prestige as a defender of democracy and its association with democratic values. Moreover, the 'unfreezing' of the association with the EEC would also bring economic benefits that were vital to Greece's democratisation efforts. The emphasis was on the need to move forward with the harmonisation of Greek agricultural policy with the CAP, the deposit of the remaining \$55.7 million of the first financial protocol of the agreement and the inclusion of the new EEC members, namely Britain, Denmark and Ireland into the Association agreement.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, one of the most pressing issues for the emerging Greek democracy was the revitalisation of the economy. In autumn of 1974, growth stalled, the resurgence of the inflation (30%), which plagued the economy from the last quarter of 1972 into the first quarter of 1974, had to be prevented and the perennial trade deficit which, exacerbated by soaring oil prices and plummeting tourism earnings and emigrant remittances, had risen to a staggering \$400 million, had to be minimised.<sup>46</sup>

Against this backdrop, besides the request for reactivation of the Athens agreement, on 27 August 1974 the Greek government sent an aide-memoire to the French in their capacity as President of the EEC Council of Ministers, requesting emergency financial aid of \$800 million. Greek ambassador to the UK, Stavros Roussos said that the '\$56 million under protocol 19 [of the Athens agreement] would be most welcome but it was to be used to finance concrete projects through the EIB, whereas the

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<sup>45</sup> Photini, Tomai (ed.), *Η Συμμετοχή της Ελλάδος στην Πορεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ολοκλήρωσης* [Greece's Participation in the Course towards European Integration] (henceforth GRFMA), vol. 2 (Athens, 2006), Greek Government to the Council of Ministers, Athens, 22 August 1974, 197.

<sup>46</sup> Telegram by J. Kubisch, Athens, 27 November 1974, USCFFP(1973-1976). See also Kazakos, *Between State and Market*, 267-304.

\$800 million was needed to face external monetary problems'.<sup>47</sup> This aid should be granted in the form of 20-year 'soft' loans which could be used in two instalments, up until the end of 1975. 'It constitutes the minimum, needed to support the efforts of the new democratic government in such difficult conditions'.<sup>48</sup>

Karamanlis' insistence on the country's integration into the European family as the most appropriate solution for its political as well as economic problems, was further strengthened by Western Europe's expression of solidarity with Greece's nascent democracy. On 19 August 1974, the President of the European Parliament Cornelis Berkhouwer visited Athens to assert the organisation's support for the Greek endeavours towards democracy.<sup>49</sup> This proved extremely important to the Greeks in their search for political acceptance and legitimacy, as the EP had been the most vociferous among the Community's bodies in its criticism of the Colonels since 1967.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, on 30 August 1974 the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Max Van der Stoel, who had personally participated in anti-dictatorship activity, assured Karamanlis of Europe's desire to see a democratised Greece return to the Council of Europe and the EEC.<sup>51</sup> The leaders of Germany, France and Italy too sent encouraging messages praising the newly formed government of Constantinos Karamanlis<sup>52</sup> while mainstream newspapers such as *Newsweek* and the *New York Times* ran covers with a picture of Karamanlis with headlines respectively 'Return to Democracy' and 'Democracy is with You'.<sup>53</sup>

A close associate of Karamanlis, Petros Molyviatis has affirmed to me in an interview that the strategic choice of the EEC dominated the Prime Minister's mind: 'all the decisions taken in the first crucial months of the transition constituted an integral part of the government's central European policy and ambitions'.<sup>54</sup> Likewise, in early August 1974 Greek Minister of Economics, Ioannis Pasmazoglou, in a meeting with the British embassy in Athens, explained that 'it was vital to the government that their relations with the EEC should not only be normalised but be seen to be normalised, and that this in itself would make a great contribution to the new team's stability and to the

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<sup>47</sup> Public Record Office, The National Archives, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (henceforth, UKFCO) 9/2016, WSG 6/598/1, 58, Record of Meeting between Roussos and Brimelow, London, 24 September 1974.

<sup>48</sup> Aide-memoire, Athens, 27 August 1974, WSG6/598/1, UKFCO 9/2016.

<sup>49</sup> Note by A. Stefanou, Athens, 28 August 1974, GRFMA, vol. 2, 200.

<sup>50</sup> Telegram by J. Greenwald, Brussels, 28 August 1974, USCFPF (1973-1976).

<sup>51</sup> Meeting between Karamanlis and van der Stoel, 30 August 1974, GRKaramanlis, vol. 8, 133.

<sup>52</sup> *To Vima*, 25 July 1974.

<sup>53</sup> GRKaramanlis, vol. 8, 18.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Petros Molyviatis, 3 July 2006, Athens.

cause of democracy itself in Greece'.<sup>55</sup> Indicative of the emerging strong link between Greece's European integration and its democratisation process, was the parallel course that the government followed in domestic affairs and the policies concerning the EEC. At all stages, as will be shown, the Greek government made sure that one process complemented the other during the transition period.

More precisely, on 23 September 1974 the government published Statute no. 59 on the freedom of formation and reestablishment of political parties and abolished law 509, under which the Communist party had been banned. This institutional arrangement paved the way for the legalisation of the Greek Communist Party (KKE) that had been outlawed from 1947 due to the civil war. Karamanlis' decision was only a validation of his declared goal in July 1974 to pursue a policy of national reconciliation which would put an end to the divisions of the civil war, perpetuated in the post-war exclusivist political system.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, holding elections open to candidates from across the ideological and party-political spectrum completely conformed to the EEC's call for a genuine pluralist democracy. In an interview with Roger Massip, a well-known French journalist, Karamanlis confessed that 'the legalisation of KKE was a necessary measure in order to equate ourselves [Greeks] with the democratic countries of the West. If I hadn't done it, we would not have been able to convince our European partners of the sincerity of our efforts to restore democracy in Greece'.<sup>57</sup> Therefore the European option permeated Karamanlis' transition strategy, albeit it was not publicly declared at the outset. Karamanlis was always keen to seek EEC full membership, but he was cautious initially to proceed pending the necessary internal reforms and that is the reason he initially focused on the association.

This hesitant stance was further necessitated as Karamanlis had not yet legitimised his power, which so far he had exercised by the grace and favour of a section of the army. The summer of 1974 had certainly seen an impressive series of events contributing to the restoration of a democratic political system. Firstly, Karamanlis formed a government of National Unity, sworn in on 24-26 July 1974, in which he included mainly cadres from the conservative opponents of the dictatorship but also politicians from the centre. In the first Cabinet meeting, delicate political choices were made to achieve the swift restoration of democratic liberties. Panayiotis Lambrias, a close associate of Karamanlis, well-known opponent of the dictatorship and government spokesman in the

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<sup>55</sup> Note by T.J. Everard, Athens, 9 August 1974, WE19/8, UKFCO 9/2016.

<sup>56</sup> *Kathimerini*, 23 September 1974.

<sup>57</sup> Cited in Roger Massip, *Ο Έλληνας που Ξεχώρισε* [The Distinguished Greek] (Athens, 1995), 120.

transitional government, announced the decisions to abolish the concentration camp in Yaros, set free the political prisoners and issue passports to those important political figures that had been exiled by the junta.<sup>58</sup>

Moreover, with the constitutional act of 1 August 1974, Greece abolished the constitution promulgated by the military dictatorship and reactivated the 1952 constitution while excluding the clauses related to the head of the state, namely the issue of the monarchy.<sup>59</sup> This reactivation of the 1952 constitution allowed the Prime Minister to re-assert civilian control over the military. Above all, Karamanlis was able to restore individual and political liberties, most notably the freedom of speech and the press. The latter was essential for the new government in conveying a message of a genuine democratic transformation that would eventually permit Greece to resume its place in democratic Europe, and particularly in the Council of Europe.<sup>60</sup> However, this was not enough to guarantee the steady progress of democratisation and to ensure the eventual link with the European Community. In a speech in Thessaloniki in August 1974, Karamanlis stressed the importance of holding free and fair elections since ‘the collapse of the junta alone did not signify the advent of a genuine democratic polity’.<sup>61</sup>

### **1.3. The first European Tour**

Even if Karamanlis initially took relatively cautious steps he did not hesitate for his cabinet Ministers to undertake a series of official visits to Western Europe’s capitals at the beginning of September in order to drum up support for an early normalisation of Greece’s relations with the EEC. The Greek Foreign Minister George Mauros’ visit to Paris in early September 1974 went a long way towards meeting the latter goal. The French had already exhibited strong support in favour of the Greek case but this support was made all the more valuable and attractive by the coincidence of France holding the rotating Presidency of the EEC. There were several reasons behind this clear pro-Greek French attitude; most historians have focused on the good relationship between the leaders of the two countries. Indeed, there has been voluminous writing on the personal rapport between President Valéry Giscard d’Estaing and Karamanlis and how this translated into a French unconditional support for Greece’s major foreign policy aims,

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<sup>58</sup> Address to the Press, *GRKaramanlis*, vol. 8, 17.

<sup>59</sup> *To Vima*, 1 August 1974.

<sup>60</sup> Record of a Call from Roussos to Secretary of State, London, 18 September 1974, WSG 6/598/1, 45 UKFCO 9/2016.

<sup>61</sup> Speech in Thessaloniki, 31 August 1974, *GRKaramanlis*, vol. 8, 139.

especially the European option.<sup>62</sup> However, most accounts overlook the fact that both the threat to Western security stemming from Greece's withdrawal from NATO and the country's unstable domestic political situation in the aftermath of the Cyprus debacle loomed large in the French minds.

In fact, Greece was not an isolated case on the European scene: a few months earlier the Portuguese Salazar dictatorship had been wiped out by the so-called "Carnation Revolution" and power was initially held by a group of radical pro-Communist young Army officers while in Spain Franco's dictatorship seemed to be nearing the end. Last but not least, Italy's internal situation was also a source of concern for Western leaders. The country was beset by social turmoil, economic crisis and political instability, and it looked likely that the Italian Communist Party would come to power via elections. Overall, by the mid-1970s Western interests in the southern part of Europe appeared to be increasingly threatened.<sup>63</sup> Giscard, soon followed by the rest of the European leaders, was the first to realise that Karamanlis' overwhelming predominance in Greek political life masked the underlying weakness of his country's political system. Stability in Greece was undoubtedly tied to Karamanlis' personal governance and his political sensitivity and restraint. But the Cyprus dispute and the Aegean entanglement with Turkey contained the seeds for a potential political downfall of Karamanlis.<sup>64</sup> European success, however would contribute to his endeavours in rebuilding the nascent democracy and keeping Greece within the Western fold.

Fortunately for Karamanlis, the Germans were also quick to respond to Greek requests. Mauros visited Bonn on 9 September 1974 to ask for support in reactivating the Association agreement, as well as for a loan to Greece. As French diplomats in Bonn reported: 'la Grèce comptait principalement sur la RFA et la France pour lui venir en aide, toute forme multilatérale de prêt, paraissait trop compliquée. Elle impliquerait de longs délais alors qu'on avait besoin à Athènes d'une intervention immédiate'.<sup>65</sup> Xenophon Zolotas, the then Minister of Coordination and Planning, admitted that the

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<sup>62</sup> Lorenz Plassmann, 'Les relations franco-grecques, 1944-1981', Unpublished PhD Thesis (Université Paris – Sorbonne, 2007); Maurice Vaisse & Chantal Morelle, 'De Gaulle, Giscard d'Estaing, Karamanlis et la question de l'entrée dans la Communauté Economique Européenne', in Svolopoulos, Konstantinos, Botsiou, Konstantina & Hatzivassiliou, Evanthis (eds.), *Konstantinos Karamanlis in the Twentieth Century* (Athens, 2007), 191-211; Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, *Le Pouvoir et la Vie*, vol.3, 251-252.

<sup>63</sup> Antonio Varsori, 'The EEC and Greece's transition to democracy through enlargement', *From Crisis to New Dynamics. The European Community 1973-1983*, Liaison Committee Conference on the History of European Integration (Aarhus, 11-12 February 2010).

<sup>64</sup> Gerald Ford Presidential Library (henceforth USGRF), NSA, box: A3, folder Europe Briefing Book-NATO background, 6 March 1975.

<sup>65</sup> Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (henceforth FRAMAE), direction politique (d/p), 3312, Note by J. Morizet, Bonn, 11 September 1974.



Greek government was deeply concerned by the unfolding economic situation and warned that if the crisis continued, chaos could spread. Adding to this, Greece was also forced to devote \$100 million towards the refugees that had resulted from the Cyprus debacle, an expenditure that brought the Greek government to the brink of collapse.<sup>66</sup> German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher understood the importance of economic stability for the democratic development of a country, and it was out of this political consideration that the FRG was to grant \$22.5 million in financial assistance in 1974 and similar sums in 1975 and 1976 towards the Greek government.<sup>67</sup> Similarly, on 20-21 February 1975 the French signed a bilateral financial protocol, offering the Greek side 125 million francs.<sup>68</sup>

However, the Germans did not miss the opportunity to express concern over Greece's military withdrawal from NATO and the consequences this move may have on the alliance's efficiency. Both the German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and Genscher put a special emphasis on the close interdependence between the EEC and NATO; 'There is no alternative position to this interdependence and hopefully in due time Greece will return to the military fold of the alliance'.<sup>69</sup> Schmidt went a step further, warning Mauros that 'the Germans have no ships or aircrafts in the Mediterranean and limited economic influence so the major role rests with the USA'.<sup>70</sup> Mauros defended his government's attitude in terms of the domestic constraints regarding anti-Americanism, sighing in a dramatic tone that 'every Greek [is] convinced that the Greek dictatorship was supported by the USA'.<sup>71</sup>

These first bilateral meetings were on the whole rather encouraging from a Greek point of view, as both the Germans and the French displayed great willingness to help Karamanlis. But they also served to paint a clearer picture of the expectations of the Nine regarding Athens' future orientation. Even the French did not want Greece's European policy to be considered as an alternative to the country's relationship with the United States. The reason why the Nine and especially the French, Germans and British were inclined to support the Greeks was conditional upon the pragmatic and sober policy advocated by the Karamanlis government. Mauros had publically made it clear that

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<sup>66</sup> Record of Meeting between Callaghan and Roussos, London, 18 September 1974, WSG2/592/1,32, UKFCO 9/2007.

<sup>67</sup> Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (henceforth AAPD) 1974, Meeting between Genscher and Mauros, Bonn, 9 September 1974, Doc. 255, 1120-1125.

<sup>68</sup> Note by C. de Margerie, Athens, 22 February 1975, FRAMAE, d/p. 3312.

<sup>69</sup> Meeting between Genscher and Mauros, Bonn, 9 September 1974, Doc. 256, FRGAAPD 1974, 1127-1128.

<sup>70</sup> Meeting between Schmidt and Mauros, Bonn, 10 September 1974, Doc. 257, FRGAAPD 1974, 1131.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

Greece would continue to boycott the military side of NATO even if a satisfactory solution was found to the Cyprus question. But in private, Mauros had been less dogmatic. For instance, he gave the impression to the Belgian Permanent Representative to NATO on 12 September that as a result of his talks in Germany, Belgium and elsewhere he was much less determined to press on with the withdrawal from the integrated defence organisation. Mauros indicated that the Greek government really wanted something to save face until the conduct of free and fair elections. Similarly, in a meeting with Gaston Thorn, the Luxembourg Prime Minister on the margins of the UN meeting on 30 September, Mauros apparently accepted the political reality that those who were strong supporters of NATO within the EC would resent any serious damage to Western defence arrangements resulting from Greece leaving the military planning of the organisation.<sup>72</sup>

The Americans shared the conviction that Greece needed European endorsement, thus facilitating the role of the Nine. American attitudes have been portrayed in existing literature, as they were indeed depicted by the contemporary press, as vehemently opposed to Greece seeking the EEC support.<sup>73</sup> Indicatively, in an editorial entitled ‘Crucial Greek Mission’, the *New York Times* criticised the hostile American stance: ‘In short, Washington still seems as out of touch with the Greek political realities as it was at the start of the Cyprus crisis nearly two months ago. Two of those realities are that Premier Karamanlis had no alternative to withdrawing the Greek forces and that, in the absence of a positive response from the European partners, Greece could be lost to the West altogether.’<sup>74</sup> The matter, as the British acknowledged, had not been helped by the fact that the EEC presidency was held by France, reviving Kissinger’s memories of earlier difficulties.<sup>75</sup> However, transatlantic correspondence reveals that there was a common objective shared by the Nine and the Americans that surpassed any feelings of hesitation. Suddenly, given the relative diminution of American influence in the region

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<sup>72</sup> Telegram by R. Farkas, Luxembourg, 10 October 1974, USCFMF(1973-1976).

<sup>73</sup> On the negative US stance towards Greece’s EEC membership, see: Panayiotis Ioakeimidis, *Οι Σχέσεις ΕΑΑΑ-ΛΑΣ-ΕΟΚ-ΗΠΑ. Τα προβλήματα της ένταξης* [The relations Greece-EEC-USA. The problems of accession](Athens, 1980); M.J. Hillenbrand, ‘The American Response to Further Enlargement of the European Community towards the Mediterranean’, College d’Europe (Bruges, 1978).

<sup>74</sup> *The New York Times*, 7 September 1974.

<sup>75</sup> Paper for Cabinet on Greece-EEC Association Agreement, London, 2 September 1974, FCO 30/2190. See also, Daniel Möckli, *European Foreign Policy during the Cold War. Heath, Brandt, Pompidou and the Dream of Political Unity* (London, 2009); Pascaline Winand, ‘Loaded words and dispute meanings: the Year of Europe speech and its genesis from an American Perspective’, in van der Harst, Jan (ed.), *Beyond the Customs Union: The European Community’s Quest for Deepening, Widening and Completion, 1969-1975*(Brussels, 2007), 297-317; Keith Hamilton, ‘Britain, France and America’s Year of Europe, 1973’, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 17:4 (2006), 871-895.

whether in the form of extreme anti-Americanism in Greece or following the imposition by the American Congress of an arms embargo on Turkey,<sup>76</sup> the possibility of the EEC playing a more active role did not seem so unfavourable a development. An EEC gesture to strengthen links with Greece could provide the support which Karamanlis needed to further establish his position. This generous action by the Community would therefore play an important part in assisting Western efforts to bring peace to Eastern Mediterranean as well as making it easier for Greece to maintain its links with the West at a time when the country's old allegiances were in doubt – a reality of which the Americans were well aware.

The USA was convinced that with Karamanlis at the helm, and if the West acted decisively, NATO's interests in Greece could be maintained.<sup>77</sup> In this spirit, American representatives informed the Commission in September 1974 'que les États-Unis considèrent de façon positive le désir manifesté par la Grèce de se rapprocher de l'Europe. Un tel rapprochement est de nature à faire progresser le retour de la Grèce à la démocratie et, de ce fait, devrait être encouragé'.<sup>78</sup> A further illustration of this policy was Kissinger's telegram sent to Van der Stoep before the latter visited Greece in August 1974. He had warned the Dutch Foreign Minister about the danger of the recent Soviet *démarches* in the context of growing anti-Americanism, and welcomed moves by America's European allies to strengthen their links with Greece in terms of reactivating the frozen Association agreement and encouraging the return of Greece to the Council of Europe. As Kissinger observed in a telegraph sent to the US embassy in Brussels on 28 August 1974: 'we have noted the Greek government's interest in resuming forward movement on EC/Greek association and regard this to be a positive development. The US strongly favours any move, such as closer EC/Greek ties which will help Prime Minister Karamanlis in his efforts to strengthen democratic institutions in Greece'.<sup>79</sup>

Against this backdrop, the country's swift readmission to the Council of Europe on 27 September and the EEC's decision to reactivate the Association agreement on 17 September 1974 should come as no surprise. Evangelos Averoff, the Foreign Minister who had negotiated the Association agreement in 1959-61, and at the time the Minister of Defence, praised the importance of the Council of Europe: 'tout cela avait été très

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<sup>76</sup> Imposed on February 1975.

<sup>77</sup> Telegram by J.Kubisch, 4 September 1975, USGRF, NSA PSF/ME&SA, box 10, folder, Greece: Telegrams: to SECSTATE-EXDIS(4).

<sup>78</sup> Historical Archives of the European Commission (henceforth ECBAC) 50/1982 29, Note on Relations between the Community and Greece, Brussels, 3 September 1974.

<sup>79</sup> Telegram by H.Kissinger, Washington, 28 August 1974, USCFPF(1973-1976).

important pour l'encouragement du peuple à la résistance à la dictature. L'Europe avait tenu en vie l'espoir d'un peuple opprimé'.<sup>80</sup> In order to comprehend the importance of these decisions, we must remember that by this point Greece had not yet conducted its elections. The Council of Europe could have taken a strictly legalistic view on Greek readmission, based on Article 25, potentially keeping out of the organisation any country until elections were held.

However under strong French pressure, it was deemed that there was a clear intention by the Greek government to restore individual and political liberties rapidly and that in the view of the Nine this should permit Greece to resume its place in democratic Europe and particularly in the Council of Europe.<sup>81</sup> There had been the clear desire on the part of the member states generally, to have a democratic Greece in the Council. Membership was expected to encourage and strengthen the process of democratisation in Greece. Moreover as the perceived cradle of European civilisation, Greece had special claims to sympathy. All of these concrete measures, along with the unfreezing of the Association were to serve on the one hand to underline publicly Western Europe's welcome of the democratisation of Greece and on the other, to make less urgent any EEC response to Greece's aspiration to full membership which was viewed with some reserve by the Community for both economic and political reasons.<sup>82</sup>

#### **1.4. First warning sign**

As the Greeks would fully experience the following year, there was a real distinction between the rhetoric and the reality of the Community. And it was during Mauros' last stop at the EEC's Brussels headquarters on 11-12 September 1974 that the Greeks got a first taste of the Community's workings. The Commission was aware that Athens was interested in the political and publicity advantages to be gained from the return to normality in EEC-Greek relations.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, there was a strong political case for the Community doing what it could to strengthen the hand of the new Greek government in resisting pressure to loosen further the country's ties with the West. As the French Permanent Representative Étienne Burin des Roziers underlined 'indépendamment de la valeur des arguments économiques contestés par certaines

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<sup>80</sup> Averoff's Speech at the Meeting of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 27 September 1974, FRAMAE, d/p, 3316.

<sup>81</sup> *Le Monde*, 7 August 1974.

<sup>82</sup> National Archives of Ireland, Department of Taoiseach (henceforth IRDOT) 2005/7/516, Note on Greece's political situation, Dublin, 10 September 1974.

<sup>83</sup> Churchill Archives Centre, Christopher Soames Files (henceforth UKCSF) 48, Note by C. Soames, Brussels, 29 August 1974.

délégations, c'est l'aspect politique de nos relations avec la Grèce qui a déterminé les positions prises par nos partenaires'.<sup>84</sup> Although the EEC was quick to decide on the reactivation of the Athens agreement, there was a difference of opinion on what normalisation would actually entail. Officially, reactivation of the association would mean the release of the outstanding \$56 million under the frozen financial protocol, the signing of the additional protocol with the new members, harmonisation of agriculture and putting into force once again the arrangements that had applied before April 1967 and finally, the eventual accession of Greece to the EEC.

Out of these main proposals, the Council of Foreign Ministers on 17 September 1974 announced 'as part of a package of measures to respond to the new situation in Greece, the Community is taking steps to unfreeze the Association agreement'.<sup>85</sup> This involved proposals for the swift signature of the adaptation protocol, the unfreezing of the \$56 million left unspent under Protocol 19 of the old agreement and the negotiation of a new financial protocol. These measures were easy to see through. A draft on the additional protocol was already the subject of negotiations with the colonels' regime, with which agreement had almost been reached earlier that year.<sup>86</sup> The principal reason why the Protocol had not been signed hitherto was the deterioration in the political climate in Greece in 1973. When therefore in September 1974, it was agreed to hold a meeting of the Council of Association, it was felt that the adaptation protocol was a suitably solemn piece of business, the signature of which would be appropriate for the occasion.<sup>87</sup>

Indeed, on the margins of the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting on 17 September 1974, the Nine were set to hold the first meeting of the Athens Association Council after the restoration of democracy. But the Greeks complicated the situation by cancelling the meeting on the grounds of insufficient material to discuss and unfavourable economic treatment, particularly regarding agriculture.<sup>88</sup> Therefore, the reason why the Europeans failed to meet with the Greeks was largely due to the complexity of the issues rather than a tapering off of the Community's resolve to cooperate with the new regime. The most difficult problem and the one that caused the Greeks to turn down the Community's offer for an Association Council meeting was agricultural harmonisation. In Brussels, officials had the impression that the Greeks had

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<sup>84</sup> Telegram by B. Des Roziers, Brussels, 20 September 1974, FRAMAE, d/p, 3314.

<sup>85</sup> Archives Nationales, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (henceforth AG) 5 AG 3/921, Note by J.P. Dutet, Paris, 17 September 1974.

<sup>86</sup> Note by R. Hattersley, London, 5 September 1974, MWE3/358/2,114, UKFCO 30/2190.

<sup>87</sup> Note for Minister, Dublin, 13 September 1974, IRDOT 2005/7/516.

<sup>88</sup> Record of Roussos' call on Secretary of State, London, 18 September 1974, WSG 6/598/1, 45, UKFCO 9/2016.

not fully thought through the implications of the changes in the Community since 1967 when the Association agreement 'froze'. Agricultural harmonisation was a primary Greek objective and the one on which the Commission officials had been able to be the least forthcoming. The unsuccessful negotiations on agricultural harmonisation had been going on from 1962 to 1967 with little success only to be broken off when the Association was frozen. If anything it was an even harder problem for the Community in its current form.<sup>89</sup>

Furthermore, there was a huge divergence in Greece's and the Community's perceptions of what harmonisation of agriculture actually entailed. It is true that article 33 of the Association agreement stipulated the progressive harmonisation of agricultural policies. For the Community, harmonisation consisted in bringing about the free movement of agricultural products between Greece and the EEC. For Greece, however, harmonisation consisted not only in ensuring the free movement of agricultural products but also pursuant to article 19 of the Treaty of Rome, of financial assistance for Greek producers, and consequently, in a sense, of the inclusion of Greece in a financial arrangement not unlike that existing within the framework of the EEC agricultural policy (Fonds Européen d'Orientation et de Garantie Agricole: FEOGA).<sup>90</sup> In a meeting with Commission President François-Xavier Ortoli, Pesmazoglou underlined the importance of agriculture for his country: 'il faut tenir compte d'un élément psychologique important suivait: le peuple grec doit avoir le sentiment que quelque chose change dans les relations avec la Communauté et plus particulièrement « point cardinal » aux yeux Pesmazoglou, la population agricole grecque doit rapidement sentir un changement dans les activités agricoles grecques qui ont subi des dommages considérables à cause de la suspension de l'accord'.<sup>91</sup> However, Agricultural Commissioner Pierre Lardinois insisted that the Community would not be able to respond to the Greek demands regarding agriculture. 'Par exemple, depuis 1967, il y a dans la Communauté toute une série de réglementation qui n'existait pas en 1967'.<sup>92</sup>

The cancellation of the meeting of the Association Council scheduled for 17 September, and the apparent procrastination in proceeding with harmonisation of agriculture, planted the first seeds of doubt in Karamanlis' mind regarding his transition strategy. In other words, if he wanted to fully reap the fruits of the European support in

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<sup>89</sup> Note by C. Soames, Brussels, 1 September 1974, ECBAC 48/1984 649.

<sup>90</sup> EP's paper on EEC-Greece Association Status, Brussels, 12 June 1975, ECBAC 66/1985 183.

<sup>91</sup> Note by E.P. Wellenstein, Brussels, 3 September 1974, ECBAC 48/1984 649.

<sup>92</sup> Meeting between Ortoli and Mauros, Brussels, 4 September 1974, ECBAC 66/1985 186.

political but also in economic terms, he would have to further accelerate the process of his country's integration into the European Community. As mentioned above, even though eventual EEC membership was at the forefront of his strategy, he had been hesitant to pursue it directly because of internal political and economic difficulties. He had opted instead for the full implementation of the Association agreement as he sought to link the country's democratisation with the European integration process. The news from Brussels however was not encouraging. The Nine had understood the importance of the European link and had indeed offered the requested support to the Greek government, yet at the same time they did not seem willing to go beyond what was absolutely necessary. They would only reactivate those parts of the Association agreement that were easy to implement whereas harmonisation of agriculture, which was so vital to Greece, could easily drag on for a long time, as had been the case in the past.

Karamanlis thus became convinced that a full restoration of relations with the EEC was contingent on the existence not just of a civilian government, but of a democratically elected one. During a visit to Athens, the leader of the EP's Socialist Group had declared that elections would be Greece's ticket to Europe.<sup>93</sup> In this context, Karamanlis announced to the Greek people that elections would be held on the historic day of 17 November, namely in the anniversary of the 1973 student uprising against the junta, claiming that an elected government would reduce the opportunities for frictions that might result from a prolonged tenure in power.<sup>94</sup> However, the decision to hold elections so quickly was heavily criticised by the opposition parties on a number of grounds. The main argument rested on the contention that holding elections so soon after the restoration of democracy did not allow enough time for the parties to organise a proper electoral campaign. In this light, the main opposition party, Centre Union under its President Mauros leaked to the press its intention to ask for a postponement of the elections.<sup>95</sup> Adding to the opposition, Andreas Papandreou, leader of the newly established PASOK (Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement) went on to accuse the government of irresponsible behaviour as the conditions in the countryside did not yet permit a fair expression of opinion.<sup>96</sup> Karamanlis was worried that as time passed, the troubles endemic to Greek democracy may again strengthen army solidarity against

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<sup>93</sup> *Vradyni*, 4 October 1974.

<sup>94</sup> Radio-televised Address, 3 October 1974, *GRKaramanlis*, vol. 8, 175.

<sup>95</sup> *Kathimerini*, 20 September 1974.

<sup>96</sup> *Athinaiki*, 21 September 1974.

civilian ‘mismanagement’.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, the EEC would be given further ammunition to resist the country’s further integration, the longer the elections were delayed.

The electoral campaign that followed was conducted in a remarkably orderly fashion. Already in September, Karamanlis declared the foundation of a new party called New Democracy (ND). The name that Karamanlis chose for his party was anything but accidental, as it reflected his deep conviction in the linkage between a genuine pluralist democracy and Greece’s European integration.<sup>98</sup> In the course of the campaign, Karamanlis visited the major Greek cities where he presented his party’s main goals. All his speeches during the pre-election period, from Thessaloniki to Athens, concentrated on three main topics: the Cyprus issue and contingent to that the Turkish factor, the issue of economic modernisation, and lastly the overriding goal of accession to the EEC. For the first time, however, he was making explicit the connection between his country’s European option and its democratisation process. More specifically, after Karamanlis had analysed what measures were deemed necessary for a true restoration of democracy, he concluded by saying ‘this is the only way for Greece to overcome her current problems and make progress economically and socially so as to reach the level of the developed countries of Europe’.<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, Karamanlis publicly expressed his gratitude to the governments of Western Europe, and especially to the EEC, for the aura of approval that surrounded him and his government’s work. He was confident that his country’s democracy ‘could only be strengthened by international solidarity’.<sup>100</sup> He missed no occasion to stress the grave consequences that Greece would face if it was ever cut off from the West.

The 17 November 1974 election was a personal triumph for Karamanlis with his party winning a massive victory, 54% of the popular vote and 219 out of 300 seats in parliament.<sup>101</sup> The implicit slogan, ‘Karamanlis or the tanks’, illustrated an unprecedented desire of the Greek people to ensure democracy at any cost. On this basis, Karamanlis was viewed as the one person who would ensure the survival of democracy. Having legitimised his authority through free elections, Karamanlis received a strong mandate to pursue the European agenda that he deemed so crucial for the country’s consolidation of democracy.

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<sup>97</sup> Note by B. Richards, Athens, 3 October 1974, WSG 1/5,60, UKFCO 9/1999.

<sup>98</sup> *To Vima*, 29 September 1974; see also Paulos Bakogiannis, *Ανατομία της Ελληνικής Πολιτικής* [Anatomy of Greek Politics] (Athens, 1977), 113; Hatzivassiliou, *Greek Liberalism*; Takis S. Pappas, *Making Party Democracy in Greece* (Basingstoke, 1999).

<sup>99</sup> Campaign Speech in Larisa, 3 November 1974, GRKaramanlis, vol. 8, 82.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> *To Vima*, 18 November 1974.



## 1.5. From elections to the EEC application

In pursuit of further stability, a referendum on the future of the monarchy followed the parliamentary elections. On 8 December, and with the same respect for democratic procedure, a majority of nearly 70% of Greeks voted for a republic and against re-instituting a monarchy. The latter outcome of the referendum resolved the debate over the institution of the monarchy once and for all and hence ended a controversy that was over 50 years old and had caused friction and political instability. Moreover, Karamanlis' neutral stance on the monarchy issue, although met with acute criticism in Greece, was positively commented on by the Western governments as an act encouraging democratic procedures.<sup>102</sup> By the end of 1974 the main partners of the old establishment, notably the army and the monarchy, had thus been deprived of political power. Henceforth, power was concentrated in political parties, a development that reinforced Greece's image as an emerging genuine democracy.

In an interview with the foreign press, Karamanlis was asked to outline the main achievements of the National Unity Government he presided over and to state the main goals of the first political government. His answer was 'the restoration of democracy and the consolidation of democracy' respectively.<sup>103</sup> The EEC played a major role in both of these goals with its clear external approval which only added to the new government's legitimacy. Moreover, with its stance and application of democratic conditionality, the European Community placed serious pressure on the Greek political elite to pursue the fulfilment of those requirements necessary for normalisation of relations with the Nine. But most importantly, Karamanlis' government capitalised on the EEC prospect as part of its transition strategy to safeguard democracy. However, the next stage of consolidation was the most difficult. Karamanlis saw early on that European support was not guaranteed in the long haul, and, even more worryingly, that the current status of the Association agreement did not meet the pressing Greek demands for agricultural harmonisation and further economic assistance so important for the stabilization process.

Several days later, the formal convening of the first Association Council on 2 December 1974 further exacerbated Karamanlis' fears of the gap between European rhetoric and actual practical results. Although the Council's proceedings confirmed the political will of the Nine to develop closer cooperation with Greece and to assist the

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<sup>102</sup> Record of Meeting between Ennals and Roussos, London, 16 November 1974, WSG6/598/1,58, UKFCO 9/2016.

<sup>103</sup> Interview to Foreign Press, 16 November 1974, GR*Karamanlis*, vol. 8, 218.

country to draw nearer to the Community, concrete achievements were very limited.<sup>104</sup> The Community indicated its readiness to sign the additional protocol extending the Association to the three new members of the EEC in the near future, namely Britain, Denmark and Ireland. The Council had also already sent a letter to the President of the European Investment Bank (EIB) asking the Bank to resume its financing operations in Greece. However, no solution was found for the agricultural issue. As the Commission had warned, it proved very difficult to resume negotiations on how to harmonise Greek policies, especially regarding fruit and vegetables, with those decisions taken in Brussels during the period of the freeze. The Greeks declared their intention to achieve harmonisation within a year or two at most but this timetable was judged too optimistic by most observers. This meeting therefore achieved no real breakthrough, particularly since the reactivation of agreement and the unfreezing of the EIB funds were by this point a foregone conclusion.<sup>105</sup>

In sum, it is hardly surprising that in the aftermath of the elections, Karamanlis persistently highlighted the European-liberal democratic linkage both in public and in contacts with leaders from the EEC. Karamanlis also launched a series of economic measures in order to deal with the deep economic recession that had hit the country after the international energy crisis and the disastrous fiscal policy of the dictatorship.<sup>106</sup> His aim was to bring Greece closer to the advanced economies of Western Europe by promoting modernisation and development, whereas Greece's European identity would in turn further promote modernisation in an interactive process. However, Karamanlis' strategy of linking Greece's European integration with the democratisation process was hardly welcomed by all sides in Greek politics. In fact, even before the formal EEC application had been lodged, a series of parliamentary debates took place that gave clear indication of the fact that EEC membership was a matter of dispute in the Greek political arena. With the exception of the Centre Union, which under Mauros' leadership embraced the European beliefs of the ruling party, PASOK and KKE opposed the choice of the EEC on the grounds that it was offensive to national independence and served the interests of multinational capitalism.<sup>107</sup>

In spite of this opposition, Karamanlis held firmly onto the European option. His government's constitutional draft was placed before parliament for approval on 7 January

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<sup>104</sup> Michalis Psalidopoulos(ed.), *Παναγής Παπαληγούρας: Ομιλίες - Άρθρα* [Panagis Papaligouras: Speeches - Articles] (Athens, 1996), 588-604.

<sup>105</sup> Meeting of the Association Council Greece - EEC, Brussels, 2 December 1974, ECBAC 66/1985 187.

<sup>106</sup> Psalidopoulos, *Παναγής Παπαληγούρας*, 490-95.

<sup>107</sup> For a detailed study on the accession debate see Susannah Verney, 'Panacea or Plague'.

1975, the last hurdle in the democratisation process. Given the ND party's majority in parliament, Karamanlis was free to put forward any constitutional reforms he had in mind. Still, because Greece's recent history had shown that the previous constitutions had been a source of political friction and instability, Karamanlis was eager to offer his country a modern democratic institutional framework, capable of ensuring a normal political life but most importantly of supporting Greece's eventual accession to the EEC. This, in addition to his general goal of ensuring a quick and successful transition, formed the background for his announcement of his government's intention to complete the constitutional amendments as soon as possible.<sup>108</sup>

Having further strengthened the country's domestic democratic structures, the Greek Premier could approach the Nine with greater confidence. The Association Council's meeting of 2 December 1974 had convinced him that the Athens agreement hardly constituted a suitable framework for Greece's political and economic ambitions. As Ortoli would later admit 'le gouvernement grec comptait très vite que l'intérêt suscité en Europe par le changement de régime s'érousserait rapidement et qu'il risquait de ne pas obtenir de la Communauté le soutien qu'il recherchait s'il restait dans le cadre de l'association. Les difficultés rencontrées en 1974-5 sur la reprise des travaux concernant l'harmonisation des politiques agricoles et les retards enregistrés à l'heure actuelle dans la négociation d'un second protocole financier dont le principe a pourtant été acquis dès septembre 1974, montrent que ces appréhensions ne sont pas sans fondement'.<sup>109</sup> Therefore, it was imperative for Greece to be integrated into the EEC as an equal member. On 24-25 February 1975 during an official visit of French Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues to Athens, Karamanlis reiterated his European vision, this time explicitly asking for full membership. Because of the sense of humiliation and bitterness over the Cyprus issue and NATO attitudes, he had felt it was urgent to give the Greek public opinion EEC membership as a necessary objective to head off a drift towards neutralism.<sup>110</sup>

In discussing the EEC with Thorn, Karamanlis stressed the political arguments for Greek membership by maintaining that the only way to shift Greek public opinion from its morbid concern with Cyprus was to focus attention on Europe instead.<sup>111</sup> He was confident that the aspiration and expectation of eventual membership with all its

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<sup>108</sup> Speech in Parliament, 7 January 1974, GR*Karamanlis*, vol. 8, 281.

<sup>109</sup> Note on Greece-EEC, Paris, 26 March 1976, FRAMAE, direction économique(d/e), 1410.

<sup>110</sup> Memorandum by B. Richards, Athens, 5 June 1975, WSG6/598/1, 35, UKFCO 9/2243.

<sup>111</sup> Telegram by R. Farkas, Luxembourg, 16 July 1975, USCFPF(1973-1976).

economic and political benefits would hasten the development towards democratic restoration and would also convey to the Greek electorate the importance of Greece's European integration for political and democratic stability. In turn, this democratic stability would ensure the country's continuous attachment to the West. In other words, Karamanlis deeply believed in the reciprocal relationship between democratic consolidation and possible accession. It was during this period that this linkage started to appear not only as a central part of Greek transition politics, but also as an argument to be used in pressing for the country's successful EEC application.

The continuing prominence of this motive was confirmed in Karamanlis' official visits to France and Germany between April and May 1975. The Greek government was keen to relay to the Europeans that the decision to apply was influenced by political rather than economic considerations. Particularly, he wanted to convey that Greece did not have any unrealistic expectations nor did it underestimate the practical problems of economic adaptation.<sup>112</sup> The other important reason for his trip was to convince the Europeans of his pro-Western orientation.

It was on this basis that Karamanlis, who had lived in Paris between 1963 and 1974, chose France as the destination of his first official visit. The trip had a widely symbolic political importance, and the press was dominated by impassioned rhetoric about the idyllic state of Franco-Greek relations. In this context, the Greek Prime Minister emphasised his gratitude for France's support in his country's endeavours to promote democracy and reminded the French that he saw the Greek EEC membership as necessary primarily for the survival of democracy in Greece.<sup>113</sup> As a senior Elysée official wrote, 'dans ce grand dessin, la France occupe une place de choix. D'abord, pour des raisons sentimentales, qui tiennent à la culture, à l'histoire et à la sympathie que Karamanlis lui-même a trouvé en France durant son exil et depuis qu'il est revenu au pouvoir. Par nécessité aussi dans la mesure où la France est le seul pays important vers lequel la Grèce puisse se tourner sans arrière-pensée'.<sup>114</sup> At the same time, Karamanlis did not fail to underline the domestic constraints that his government was facing. He was aware of the Nine's anxieties regarding Greece's future orientation with the USA and NATO. He explained that although his parliamentary control was complete, it would be a mistake to assume that he could or would pursue policies which were unacceptable either to his opponents or to public opinion. 'In particular, although his own position on

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<sup>112</sup> *Kathimerini*, 13 April 1975.

<sup>113</sup> Meeting between Karamanlis and Giscard, 18 April 1975, *GRKaramanlis*, vol. 8, 370.

<sup>114</sup> Note by G. Robin, Paris, 16 September 1975, FR5 AG3 /998.

NATO and on the US presence in Greece was well known, we should not expect him to alienate public support at this stage by pro-American gestures or by a conspicuous return to NATO'.<sup>115</sup>

Following the same line of reasoning, Karamanlis approached the German Chancellor Schmidt in mid-May 1975. Apart from the economic incentives, Karamanlis stressed that being an EEC member was identified with prosperity and liberal democracy in the eyes of public opinion. In this light, accession to the EEC would act as long-term guarantee for the maintenance of democracy since the Greek domestic institutions had proven inadequate for this purpose in the past. In the meeting, however, Schmidt's main preoccupation was the need for his Greek counterpart to accept the link between the EEC and NATO membership. Karamanlis was hardly surprised, underlying instead that in his 40 years as a politician he has always been pro-Western and pro-Atlantic and 'qui ne laisse guère passer d'occasion pour réaffirmer que le retrait de la Grèce de l'OTAN n'exclut pas la fidélité son pays à l'Alliance'.<sup>116</sup> He did warn the Germans, though that 'if he does not get support in regards to EEC membership, Greece would be forced into new adventures and would be lost to the West for good'.<sup>117</sup> According to the German Head of European Affairs in the Foreign Ministry, Jürgen Trumpf, the Chancellor understood Karamanlis' predicament and in turn told him that the FRG would support Greek efforts to join the Community.<sup>118</sup>

These meetings were crucial to the creation of a feeling of mutual trust between Karamanlis, Giscard and Schmidt respectively and would turn out to be extremely helpful in the arduous negotiations ahead. Confident that Karamanlis had no aspirations of steering Greece away from the West and acknowledging Greece's domestic constraints, both European leaders committed themselves to helping Greece in its European course regardless of the apparent economic and political difficulties. As the French ambassador to Greece wrote back to Paris 'en tout état de cause, on peut ajouter que la personnalité de Karamanlis, le sérieux et la connaissance des dossiers des délégations qui l'accompagnaient dans les trois capitales ont favorablement impressionné les gouvernements ; les milieux bien informés et la presse ont rendu compte que le crédit

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<sup>115</sup> Record of Meeting between Chirac and Karamanlis, Paris, 17 April 1975, GRKaramanlis, vol.8, 371.

<sup>116</sup> Note by C. de Margerie, Athens, 23 May 1975, FRAMAE, d/p, 3312

<sup>117</sup> Meeting between Karamanlis and Schmidt, Bonn, 16 May 1975, Doc 120, FRGAAPD 1975, 534-541.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

de la Grèce auprès de deux des principaux pays membres de CEE a été renforcé au cours de ces voyages'.<sup>119</sup>

In the next month and staying true to his strategy of complementing the transition process with the country's European integration, Karamanlis succeeded in having a new constitution approved that came into effect on 11 June 1975. Although the first governmental draft had been heavily criticised by the opposition parties, the main provisions remained intact, leading the opposition to boycott the approval of the constitution on 7 June 1975. However, the new constitution signalled the complete normalisation of public life and the last necessary step towards the full restoration of democracy. Karamanlis was deeply moved and satisfied as 'we provide today our country with a constitution that reflects Greece's special circumstances and responds to the demands of our time. A constitution that guarantees the democratic progress of our national life'.<sup>120</sup>

Karamanlis was satisfied for another important reason. The new constitution secured the subsequent legally unhindered accession of Greece to the EEC. In particular, the new legislation provided for the possibility of transferring a portion of national sovereignty to international organisations when important national interests were at stake.<sup>121</sup> After establishing the basic institutional and constitutional arrangements at home and only one day after the activation of this new constitution, Karamanlis applied for full membership to the EEC. His decision was considered historic and the Greek press along with the public greeted the application with enthusiasm. The mainstream newspaper *Kathimerini* ran on its front page an article focusing on the reasons that led Karamanlis to seek membership of the EEC. Apart from the economic and security factors, the democratic dimension featured as the most prominent.<sup>122</sup>

According to the newspaper, the EEC application constituted the last stage of Greece's transition to democracy but at the same time paradoxically the starting point for its consolidation. In other words, the prospect of accession had had influential effects during the one year transition period, while the formal application and final accession would become the ultimate guarantee for the nascent Greek democratic institutions in

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<sup>119</sup> Note by C. de Margerie, Athens, 23 May 1975, FRAMAE, d/p, 3312.

<sup>120</sup> GRGPR, E' Αναθεωρητική, περ. Α', συν. Α', 3147-3156.

<sup>121</sup> Nikos Fragkakis, 'Το Ελληνικό Κοινοβούλιο και η Συμμετοχή της Ελλάδος στις Ευρωπαϊκές Κοινοότητες' [Greek Parliament and Greece's Participation in the EEC], in Couloumbis, Theodore and Konstas, Dimitris(eds.), *Το Ελληνικό Κοινοβούλιο στην Εξωτερική Πολιτική* [The Greek Parliament in Foreign Policy] (Athens, 1986), 86.

<sup>122</sup> *Kathimerini*, 12 June 1975.

the years to come.<sup>123</sup> The latter theme was reiterated in 1980, on the eve of Greece's entry to the EEC, by the then Foreign Minister Constantinos Mitsotakis when he argued: 'naturally, we do not expect our nine partners in the Community to become the guardians of Greek democracy. By joining a broader group of like-minded Western Democracies, however, our own democratic institutions will be reinforced... They [potential dictators] are bound to know that the abolition of democracy entails immediate ostracism from the Community. This could have grave internal and external consequences. So, in this respect, the EEC is a safe haven'.<sup>124</sup>

## 1.6. Conclusion

Greece under the premiership of Karamanlis invoked the European option from the beginning of the democratic transition and maintained it until its consolidation, not only for economic and security reasons but mainly as a necessary means to further facilitate the country's democratisation process. This strategy of linking democratisation with the country's European integration was facilitated by the fact that the EEC had emerged as an actor enjoying significant goodwill within the Greek public in the aftermath of the junta. The freezing of the Athens Association agreement and the overall critical attitude towards the military dictatorship had led the EEC to be identified with liberal democratic values. Even economic experts in the Greek government conceded that Karamanlis regarded the European option as an essential element in the nurturing of a stable Greek democracy.<sup>125</sup> Economic motives naturally mattered too but were mostly linked to their importance as stabilisation factors in the democratisation process.

Likewise, security gains were expected mainly in the increase of the country's international leverage rather than in substituting the American/NATO power. Karamanlis certainly did not look to the EEC as a substitute for US influence and security. That is why he did not hesitate to accept in private the link between NATO and the EEC in the meetings with the Nine and further affirm his attachment to the West. This strategy, which on the one hand underlined the domestic constraints of the dominant anti-Americanism in Greece that had limited Karamanlis' options and had forced him to partially withdraw from NATO, thus concentrating primarily on the EEC, and on the other entailed the reaffirmation of his Cold War allegiances, constituted the perfect combination. It succeeded in assuaging any fears the Nine may have had

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<sup>123</sup> *Kathimerini*, 12 June 1975.

<sup>124</sup> *The Times*, 15 December 1980.

<sup>125</sup> Telegram by J.Kubisch, Athens, 31 July 1975, USCFFP(1973-1976).

regarding Greece's potential drifting away from the West, while at the same time working as a bargaining chip for Karamanlis to ensure that the European Community would need to respond favourably to Greece's EEC application, a development that will be traced in greater detail in the next chapter.

Karamanlis who had unveiled his European option in 1958 with the request for an Association agreement, reiterated the option from the moment he returned to power in 1974. However, what this chapter also showed was that the deliberations with the Nine and the experience of the first months of the reactivated Association agreement further accelerated the timing of Greece's decision to apply for Community membership. In the end, it was the inadequacies of the association system and the desire to derive maximum possible advantage from the short-term surge of European pro-Greek sentiment that drove Karamanlis to proceed *so quickly* to full membership, before the political and economic realities took central stage.



## Chapter 2: Why did the Nine say ‘Yes’? June 1975-February 1976

### 2.1. The formal application and the initial reactions

European reactions to the early news of the Greek application were overwhelmingly positive. Harold Wilson, Britain’s Prime Minister, expressed satisfaction at the Greek government’s European choice.<sup>1</sup> Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, the French President commented on the application by saying: ‘we were the first to openly support the membership of Greece, entry of which would contribute positively to the development of the European construction’.<sup>2</sup> The Bonn government followed suit, describing Greece’s decision to seek full membership of the EEC ‘as a further demonstration of the unbroken power of attraction exercised by the process of European unification’.<sup>3</sup> In the same spirit, Italian Foreign Minister, Mariano Rumor, sent his ‘warmest congratulations’ while his Dutch counterpart conveyed a similar welcome.<sup>4</sup> The Irish side praised the Greek application as a historic event coming as it did a few days after the referendum in the United Kingdom.<sup>5</sup> As expected, Turkey was alarmed by the Greek application and expressed its opposition through different communications to the EEC. In an aide-mémoire to the Dutch Secretary of State for European affairs, Laurens Jan Brinkhorst, the Turks complained that this EEC application ‘purports to change in Greece’s favour the military and political balance existing between her and Turkey, tries to isolate and possible leave her out of the Community’.<sup>6</sup>

Formally the Nine could not but welcome or at least accept the Greek application. There could have been no other reaction given the provisions of the Treaty of Rome and the Association agreement. One of the paragraphs in the preamble of the Treaty of Rome reads that the signatories are resolved by ‘pooling their resources to preserve and strengthen peace and liberty’ and calls upon the other peoples of Europe who share their ideals to join in their efforts.<sup>7</sup> It was this reference to the ideals of the Community that had led the EEC to ‘freeze’ the Association agreement with Greece after the Colonels’

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<sup>1</sup> Record of a Meeting between Wilson and Karamanlis, Brussels, 30 May 1975, MWE3/358/1, 126, UKFCO 30/2724.

<sup>2</sup> Constantinos Karamanlis Papers (henceforth GRCKP), 135A, Report on the French stance towards Greek entry, Athens, 12 January 1976.

<sup>3</sup> Telegram by A. Frydas, Bonn, 14 June 1975, GRCKP 135A.

<sup>4</sup> Historical Archives of Greek Foreign Ministry (henceforth GRHAGFM), Telegram by M.Karandreas, Bonn, 13 June 1975, 3450/5.1.

<sup>5</sup> *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 June 1975(in www.ena.lu).

<sup>6</sup> Aide-mémoire by S. Cancardes, Hague, 18 June 1975, UKFCO 30/2728.

<sup>7</sup> EEC Treaty, Article 237, the corresponding articles of the ECSC and EAEC are, respectively, 98 and 205.

coup in 1967. Greece at that time could not be said to be sharing the Community's ideals. The situation now was utterly different with the country's declared firm attachment to the ideals of the EEC and the existence of recognisably democratic political institutions.

Moreover, Greece's application for EEC membership was the first application by an already previously associated state. It constituted a unique case as the Athens agreement of 1961 gave the Greeks a privileged position in comparison with later agreements in that it had been specifically designed to lead to full membership.<sup>8</sup> According to article 72, 'as soon as the operation of this agreement had advanced far enough... the contracting parties shall examine the possibility of the accession of Greece to the EEC'.<sup>9</sup> In view of the legal position, there could thus be no formal opposition to the principle of Greek membership. Last but not least as Commission President, François-Xavier Ortoli stressed 'thanks to the Association we have got used for over fifteen years to working together, to thinking together... consequently, Greece's move from Association to Accession will only constitute a qualitative leap forward'.<sup>10</sup>

These official reactions, however, did not reflect the true feelings with which the majority of the European governments received news of Greece's application. The carefully phrased expressions that on the one hand praised Greece's European vocation but on the other, stressed the serious political and economic implications of a possible accession, concealed unease vis-à-vis the prospect of enlargement. It is true that the Nine were content to support Greece in the framework of the Association agreement, but this support did not extend to full membership, at least not at that point in time. In reality, the Commission and the member states, although deeply aware of the largely political reasons that had led to Greece's early application, and although they had publicly welcomed the request, were much less enthusiastic in private.<sup>11</sup>

## **2.2. The three main problems**

This awkwardness owed much to the timing and the nature of the Greek application. The fall of the three dictatorships in southern Europe drastically changed the political landscape of Europe, and the Community undoubtedly played an influential, albeit indirect role in aiding the successful return to democracy through the symbolic importance attached to EEC membership by the fledgling democracies. Nonetheless,

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<sup>8</sup> With the notable exception of Turkey.

<sup>9</sup> Athens Association agreement, 9 July 1961.

<sup>10</sup> Speech by F.X. Ortoli, Strasbourg, 5 May 1977, ECBAC 79/1982 250.

<sup>11</sup> Letter by W.R. Tomkys, London, 25 June 1975, MWE3/358/2, 44, UKFCO 30/2728.

Greece's application, in particular, took the Nine by surprise, seemingly revealing to them that their Community had become a strong pole of attraction for Greece and the rest of its southern neighbours and that they were expected to play an active role. Up until then, the Community's Mediterranean policy was mainly economic, consisting of preferential ties and Association agreements with few political overtones. In the case of Greece, the Community had hoped to address Greece's European aspirations through the mechanisms of the reactivated Association agreement alone and thus was not prepared for its drive for full membership.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the emergence of these three countries and especially Greece, which was the first one to officially approach the Nine, presented an immense challenge to the Community.

To make matters worse, the application came during a period of deep economic crisis for the whole of the industrialised West, making it a less than opportune time for a new enlargement. The outbreak of war in the Middle East and the onset of the OPEC's oil embargo had brought about recession accompanied by high unemployment. Although recent studies have questioned the depth of the economic crisis compared to what would come later, it is important to understand that 'there was, in short a widespread perception of crisis in the 1970s' after thirty years of boom and that alone was enough to halt progress.<sup>13</sup> In this economic downturn, the deepening of the Community suffered a major setback. The ambitious plan to complete an Economic and Monetary Union by 1980 became an early and inevitable victim of the international monetary crisis.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, the European Political Cooperation (EPC) process, the Community's attempt to launch a coordinated European foreign policy, did enjoy several initial successes, especially in light of its effectiveness in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) context, but had not been able to transform the Community into a credible global player.<sup>15</sup>

The Tindemans report - published in January 1976, shortly before the Commission issued its Opinion on Greek membership – held: 'it is hardly surprising if the Community is crumbling beneath the resurgence, which is felt everywhere of national

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<sup>12</sup> See chapter one.

<sup>13</sup> Niall Ferguson, 'Crisis, What Crisis? The 1970s and the Shock of the Global', in Ferguson, Niall et al (eds.), *The Shock of the Global. The 1970s in Perspective* (London, 2010), 14.

<sup>14</sup> Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, *The Emergence of a European Bloc? The Origins and Creation of the European Monetary System* (Cornell, forthcoming).

<sup>15</sup> For further study, see Angela Romano 'A single European voice can speak louder to the world. Rationales, ways and means of the EPC in the CSCE experience' in Knudsen, Ann - Christina & Rasmussen, Morten (eds.), *The Road to a United Europe: Interpretations of the Process of European Integration*, (Brussels, 2007); Möckli, *European Foreign Policy*; Angela Romano, *From Détente in Europe, to European Détente. How the West Shaped the Helsinki CSCE* (Brussels, 2009).

preoccupations.... in its present state, [the Community] is unbalanced.<sup>16</sup> Eighteen months later, on the eve of the start of Greece's negotiations with the EEC, Dutch Foreign Minister Max Van der Stoep would declare the Community's new slogan to be 'stagnation, regression and extrication, with governments seeking their salvation outside the Communities'.<sup>17</sup> In 1975, just two years after the entry of the UK, Denmark and Ireland, the Community was clearly suffering the after-effects of the previous wave of expansion, especially with the obstructionist policy of Britain, which had culminated in the request to renegotiate the country's terms of entry.<sup>18</sup> Under these circumstances, in the midst of economic, institutional and political stagnation, there appeared to be a rather strong case against further enlargement, in the short term at least.<sup>19</sup>

The second and equally serious difficulty connected with Greece's application lay in the structural weaknesses of the Greek economy, which limited its ability to combine homogeneously with the economies of the Community. Although the Greek economy grew rapidly in the 1960s and early 1970s with the real level of Gross National Product (GNP) rising by 6% against the EEC's 4.5%, in 1975 the country faced severe trade deficits and a continuing depreciation of its currency that contributed to the continuation of the inflationary spiral.<sup>20</sup> These, coupled with the structure of the Greek economy, called for structural changes for which the Community would have to bear a share of the cost. In particular, Greece would, upon entry, become a substantial net recipient of funds from the Community budget. The largest single item would likely be payments from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)'s European Guarantee and Guidance Fund (usually known by its French acronym, FEOGA), which would be substantial in view of Greece's large agricultural sector. Up to 40% of the Greek working population was employed in agriculture, while the industrial sector was relatively small, representing 17% of total employment.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, the agricultural potential and lower costs of Greece's production caused concern primarily to the French and Italians who had similar agricultural produce, and who were already resentful of the Community's concessions to third countries under

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<sup>16</sup> Leo Tindemans, 'European Union: Report by Mr Leo Tindemans to the European Council', *Bulletin of the European Communities* 1/76 (Commission of the European Communities).

<sup>17</sup> EP Debates, 7 July 1976, 107-8.

<sup>18</sup> Aoife Collins, 'The Cabinet Office, Tony Benn and the Renegotiations of Britain's Terms of Entry into the European Community, 1974-1975', *Contemporary British History*, 24:4 (2010), 471-491.

<sup>19</sup> Stephen George, *An Awkward Partner. Britain in the European Community* (Oxford, 1998), 71-106.

<sup>20</sup> Tsoukalis, *The European Community*, 38.

<sup>21</sup> Greece's Annual Review for 1975, Athens, 1 January 1976, WSG/1, UKFCO 9/2395.

the global Mediterranean policy.<sup>22</sup> Greek accession would thus be likely to impose additional costs in terms of compensation demands by Italy and France. Moreover, Greece's economic, as well as administrative backwardness would prevent its smooth absorption into the Community and necessitate in fact an increase in the EEC's expenditure.<sup>23</sup> The total cost was estimated at the time of application to be around 300 million unit of account (m.u.a)<sup>24</sup>, constituting about 4% of the 1976 budget.<sup>25</sup>

These economic problems in themselves did not however constitute an insurmountable obstacle, given the economic magnitude of the EEC compared to the applicant. The actual problem lay in the fact that existing member states saw the Greek application as a forerunner of the other two emerging southern European democracies, namely Spain and Portugal.<sup>26</sup> Apart from the economic concerns, there was a general feeling that the addition of Greece followed by the application and entry of the Iberian countries, would add considerably to the problems of Community coordination. The decision-making apparatus of the Community was already notoriously cumbersome as many different and complex interests had to be reconciled. These disadvantages would be further compounded by the new additions, since the new member states differed markedly from the existing ones in their economic, political and administrative structures.<sup>27</sup>

If the economic and institutional implications were not already negative enough, Greece's entry would also entail the risk of getting the Community embroiled in the Greek-Turkish dispute. The two countries had recently reached the brink of war over a third EEC associate, namely Cyprus. Before 1975, the Community had striven to maintain a political balance between Greece and Turkey.<sup>28</sup> Hence, in admitting Greece, the Community ran the risk of alienating the other strategically important country in the eastern Mediterranean. This fear was further amplified by the rather vocal reaction of the Turkish side to the news Greece's application. Ankara suspected that the main motive behind Athens' request for entry was to marshal Community support against them in

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<sup>22</sup> See chapter four.

<sup>23</sup> See chapter seven.

<sup>24</sup> A book-keeping device for recording the relative value of payments into and from EC accounts, and replaced in 1981 by the European Currency Unit (ECU).

<sup>25</sup> European Commission, 'Enlargement of the Community: General Considerations', *Bulletin of the European Communities* 1/76.

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Gabriel Robin (in [www.ena.lu](http://www.ena.lu)).

<sup>27</sup> Memorandum for Cabinet on Greece and EEC, London, 3 July 1975, MWE3/358/2, 49, UKFCO 30/2728.

<sup>28</sup> Elena Calandri, 'La CEE et les relations extérieures 1958-1960', in Varsori, Antonio (ed.) *Inside the European Community. Actors and Policies in the European Integration. 1957-1972* (Brussels, 2006), 399-431.

their current confrontation and ‘drive Turkey into Asia’.<sup>29</sup> On 15 June 1975, Turkey’s Prime Minister, Suleyman Demirel, commenting on the Greek-Turkish relationship and the EEC, warned the latter that any possibilities for the EEC countries to play a positive role in the conflict would be seriously restricted by the prospect of Greece’s accession.<sup>30</sup>

Karamanlis, in response, reminded Turkey that Greece’s European policy dated back to the 1950s, a long time before the outbreak of the Greek-Turkish dispute; and that Athens had no objection to a future Turkish accession. In particular, ‘the presence of the two countries in the Community would ease their relations with one another and give them the opportunity of overcoming their problems’.<sup>31</sup> Regardless however of Greek reassurances, the Nine and in particular the Germans and the British, who attached great importance to NATO and to the stability of the south-eastern Mediterranean region, were especially worried about the Turkish reaction. They feared that the Greek application might prove increasingly tiresome should the Greeks try to use the EEC as a channel for polemics against Turkey and as a forum for enlisting support on Cyprus.<sup>32</sup>

### **2.3. The Nine do not deliberate**

All three factors explored above help explain the sense of concern and confusion that the Greek application generated within the Community. These factors would dominate the deliberations among the Nine throughout the period before and during the opening of the negotiations. This sense of confusion and unease was evident in the meeting of the Permanent Representatives’ Committee (COREPER) on 19 June 1975, which prepared the agenda for the upcoming meeting of the Council of Foreign Affairs.<sup>33</sup> COREPER suggested to the Council of Ministers that they acknowledge the receipt of the Greek demand for accession and limit themselves to general phrases of welcome that would not be revealing of the member states’ attitudes, while ensuring that the Council along with the Commission fulfilled its formal responsibilities under Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome. In other words, COPEPER proposed that the Community should begin to consider the Greek request, but without committing itself to accepting it or exposing the members’ internal divisions. When the Irish Presidency in the Committee suggested delaying matters by referring to the need to study the legal relationship between Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome and Article 72 of the Association agreement, the rest of the

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> GRKaramanlis, Vol.8, 451.

<sup>31</sup> Note by P. Molyviatis, Athens, 16 June 1975, GRCKP 128A.

<sup>32</sup> Note by J. Denson, Athens, 15 July 1975, MWE3/388/3,81, UKFCO 30/2729.

<sup>33</sup> The formal term was Council of Ministers (General Affairs), but it was attended by Foreign Ministers, that is why the thesis uses the term Foreign Affairs.

representatives agreed that for political reasons the Council had to proceed without delay at this stage.<sup>34</sup>

On 24 June 1975 in Luxembourg, the Council of Foreign Ministers held its meeting. The main issue on the agenda was Greece's demand to enter the EEC. The preliminary discussions between the representatives of the nine member states registered general agreement in favour of accepting the application in principle, while the discussions on the margins of the meeting revealed the growing awareness of the problems posed by the Greek application for the future cohesion of the Community. These had much more to do with the state of the EEC, than with the nature of the Greek application itself. As the Dutch representative put it, 'it was not a question of when Greece would be ready to join but of when the Community would be ready to receive Greece'.<sup>35</sup>

However, the talks did not concentrate exclusively on the impact of the application on the Community. The subsequent discussions concentrated on whether, in the light of the delicate political situation in Greece, it would be desirable for the Community to 'welcome' the Greek request or whether the difficult reality of the situation required a more laconic and formal acknowledgement. Irish Foreign Minister Garret Fitzgerald, supported by the Foreign Minister of Luxembourg, Gaston Thorn and by the Commission, was anxious that the reply should not appear to prejudge any subsequent view on the issue of membership while at the same time they all expressed deep concern about possible adverse Turkish reactions.<sup>36</sup> The question of Ankara's future orientation had already been raised in response to the arms embargo imposed by the US in the aftermath of the Cyprus invasion. Against this background, the Nine were conscious of the need to show to the Turks the value they placed upon their continued relationship with Ankara and avoid any appearance of upsetting the sense of balance that the EEC had so far maintained between the two eastern Mediterranean countries, or still worse avoid the appearance of rejecting Turkey altogether.<sup>37</sup>

In contrast to the continuing hesitation of the Presidency and of the Commission, the foreign ministers of Germany, the Netherlands and France spoke against this proposal, stressing the need to take a more positive and warmer line in view of the special political circumstances. In the end the Council agreed on the following

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<sup>34</sup> Note by R. Kergorlay, Brussels, 20 June 1975, ECBAC 48/1984 41.

<sup>35</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Luxembourg, 24 June 1975, MWE3/350/2,49, UKFCO 30/2728.

<sup>36</sup> Report on the Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Luxembourg, 25 June 1975, ECBAC 50/1982 30.

<sup>37</sup> Meeting of CORERER, Brussels, 24 June 1975, FRAMAE, d/p, 3315.

ambiguous reply to the Greeks: 'the Community welcomes the desire of Greece to seek membership of the Community'.<sup>38</sup> The initial tendency of the member states then was to opt for a cautious approach to the Greek application while maintaining a welcoming public posture. In the bilateral discussions among the Nine, murmurs persisted that they had 'got out in front in welcoming the Greek application too warmly and too early'.<sup>39</sup> It was this obvious perplexity of the member states that led Ortoli to ask for a 'frank indication of the true sentiments of the governments of the Nine'.<sup>40</sup> He suspected that for political reasons the member states were concealing some of their reservations and therefore called for a restricted session in September when the foreign ministers could re-examine in depth the Greek request.<sup>41</sup>

The very next day, after the meeting of the Council of Ministers, the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the Mixed Parliamentary Committee between Greece and the EEC was held in Athens, under the joint chairmanship of John Pasmazoglou, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of Greece and Willy de Clercq, Chairman of the Association Committee of the European Parliament. It was the first time that Greek representatives met with their European counterparts after the formal application was handed in. The Committee expressed its profound satisfaction that the Greek government had applied for full membership and also emphasised that the Council of Ministers had already set in motion the procedure for Greece's entry, 'which will strengthen the democratic structure of the EEC and also contribute to the fulfilment of the aims of the Greek people and the people of the Community'.<sup>42</sup> The meeting provided an occasion for a good deal of well-intentioned rhetoric, but had little practical value.<sup>43</sup>

The Greeks did however have an opportunity to learn about the Nine's intentions in a series of bilateral meetings that Karamanlis held with most of the members' representatives during this period. The British Foreign Secretary, in a private talk with Karamanlis on the margins of the CSCE, suggested that the British side was prepared to support the Greek application but had warned him that a successful application needed unanimity. The British worried that there 'might be opposition because Greece was not yet sufficiently strong to play her part as a full member of the Community and it needed

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<sup>38</sup> Note by F. X. Ortoli, Brussels, 26 June 1975, ECBAC 15/1993 63.

<sup>39</sup> Note by J. Denson, Athens, 15 July 1975, MWE3/388/3,81, UKFCO 30/2729.

<sup>40</sup> Telegram by R.Q. Braithwaite, London 25 June 1975, MWE3/350/2, 42, UKFCO 30/2728.

<sup>41</sup> Note by F. X. Ortoli, Brussels, 26 June 1975, ECBAC 15/1993 63.

<sup>42</sup> Note on the Joint Parliamentary Committee Greece-EEC, Athens, 25-27 June 1975, GRCKP 229A.

<sup>43</sup> Telegram by J.Kubisch, Athens, 1 July 1975, USCFPF(1973-1976).



only one country to say no'.<sup>44</sup> In a similar manner, during his visit to Athens, Thorn's public statements were cautious, making special note of how slow the process of negotiation could prove to be. Both incidents confirmed Greek fears that there was an emerging shift in the Nine's attention towards the severe difficulties of the negotiations and away from the political merits of Greek entry. The Community continued to welcome the Greek application, but without committing itself to specific dates regarding the Commission's Opinion - the necessary step in any enlargement process - or the formal opening of negotiations. The main emphasis rested on the practical technical and economic difficulties of the negotiations. The rationale behind this policy was to make the Greeks themselves realise that they were not ready for immediate membership and allow the whole process of negotiations to bring home to them some of the harder facts of European life. A memorandum by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office is quite indicative of this, as it states that 'there can be no question of being seen as delaying the Greek negotiations. The objective obstacles to Greek membership, will make themselves felt in due time'.<sup>45</sup>

The restricted meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers on 15-16 September 1975 turned into another fruitless attempt to address the Greek question. The idea behind this preliminary restricted session had been to take up Ortolí's call for an occasion in which some of the practical disadvantages of the Greek application could be discreetly examined. Indeed, the Commission President drew attention to three aspects in the Greek application: 1) the economic-technical element, with a special focus on the agricultural ramifications, 2) the institutional threat of dilution of the Community's cohesion, and 3) the political consequences regarding Turkey. But in the event, none of the member states spoke out. The then President of the EEC, Italian Foreign Minister Mariano Rumor, opened the meeting by asking for comments, and as no one volunteered he instituted a *tour de table*. Fitzgerald said that he was doubtful about discussing the Greek question because of the risk of leaks, while he along with the Dutch and Belgian Foreign Minister felt that the correct procedure would be for the Commission's Opinion to be on the table first. Rumor concluded the talks, saying that 'le Conseil fait confiance à la Commission pour son avis et qu'il a renouvelé sa volonté de donner une réponse satisfaite à la demande grecque, compte tenu de tous les problèmes ouverts'.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Report on the Historical Background of Greece, London, 30 August 1975, MWE3/358/2, UKFCO 30/2728.

<sup>45</sup> Memorandum on Greece and the EEC, London, 3 July 1975, MWE3/358/2, UKFCO 30/2728.

<sup>46</sup> Historical Archives of the European Union, Émile Noël Papers (henceforth ECEN) 408, Preliminary Session of Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Brussels, 16 September 1978.

The meeting was a major disappointment for the Commission, which was looking for a political steer from the member states in order to draft a comprehensive account. The Commission's Director-General for External Relations, Edmund Wellenstein wrote to Ortoli and Commissioner for External Relations Christopher Soames : 'je crains que les Ministres ne vous donneront que très peu d'aide, ne voulant pas s'engager au-delà de la banalité. Plusieurs prétendront, probablement, qu'il appartient à la Commission de dire d'abord son point de vue'.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, Ortoli's main fear was that the Commission would end up producing a positive opinion based on a mistaken appreciation of the Nine's true feelings. This would only handicap the Community's future ability to negotiate more effectively on matters of considerable interest to individual member states.<sup>48</sup>

In reality, three factors can explain the reluctance of the ministers to openly express their concern over the possible problems of the Greek accession to the Community. The intense diplomatic activity of Karamanlis' government was the first factor that limited the Nine's room for manoeuvre. The two other factors that combined in making Karamanlis' political arguments all the more convincing were the emergence of the EEC as a promoter of democracy and the need to address Cold War imperatives.

## **2.4. Greek Lobbying**

The Greek side grew rapidly aware of this emerging sense of apprehension on the part of the Nine and launched a more intensive diplomatic campaign in order to drum up further support for its application.<sup>49</sup> As shown in chapter one, Karamanlis had capitalised on the promises made to Greece by the Community during the 'freezing' of the Association agreement and then again during the transition period, creating a dynamic in favour of relatively rapid Greek accession, in which democratic political considerations explicitly outweighed economic concerns. This line of argument concerning the Community's democratic obligation towards Greece was used not only as a central part of the Greek transitional policy, but also as a convincing argument to persuade the Community to take a positive decision on the opening of the negotiations.<sup>50</sup> Echoing this strategy was Karamanlis' talk with Giscard, during the latter's formal visit to Athens on 17-21 September 1975. Giscard warned the Greek Premier that the 'yes' expressed by the Europeans was mainly diplomatic and as such was not guaranteed to translate into

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<sup>47</sup> Note by E.P. Wellenstein, Brussels, 12 September 1975, ECEN 1106.

<sup>48</sup> Historical Archives of the European Commission (henceforth, ECHAEC), Commission Working Document, no.366, 16 September 1975.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Byron Theodoropoulos, 30 March 2007.

<sup>50</sup> See chapter one.

anything concrete. Responding to these challenges, Karamanlis stressed that a potential EEC rejection would play into the hands of the more extremist Greek nationalists and might imperil the country's rediscovered yet still fragile democracy. In turn, this would intensify the potential instability of the eastern Mediterranean as Greece's effectiveness as an ally on the important south-eastern flank could be further diminished or cease altogether were democracy to fail. Such an outcome would be contrary to the interests of the Community and of the Western allies in general. Similar considerations played a vital role in Giscard's commitment to act as Greece's sponsor within the EEC.<sup>51</sup> As he saw it, the primary reason behind embracing the Greek EEC request was the realisation that it constituted the only way Western Europe could exert any real influence on the political development of Greece and in turn of the Mediterranean. In Giscard's mind, such a prospect 'was worth a hundred démarches'.<sup>52</sup>

Similarly, during an official visit to Britain on 9 October 1975, Karamanlis advised Wilson that 'if the Community wished to protect democracy then there would be times when member states must make financial sacrifices'.<sup>53</sup> When Foreign Secretary James Callaghan referred to the fact that the Greek negotiations involved a great number of complex problems, Karamanlis replied very cheerfully: 'great countries - great problems, small countries - small problems'.<sup>54</sup> It was clear that the Greek administration was in no mood to cross bridges before it had to come to them. Also, when in Rome, the Greek Premier mainly drew attention to the political significance of his country's EEC application: 'il s'agissait pour lui [Karamanlis] d'attacher définitivement la Grèce à l'Europe occidentale et de la détourner « des mirages de l'orient »'.<sup>55</sup> The Italians, despite being direct competitors of the Greeks in terms of agricultural products, saw the Greek application in mainly political terms and thus received it with unreserved support. Given this intensive diplomatic activity, it is hardly surprising that the *Herald Tribune* commented on the astonishment of the EEC member states at the determination of Constantinos Karamanlis to join the club as soon as possible.<sup>56</sup>

Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's visit to Athens on 28-29 December 1975 took place mainly in a context of 'damage control'. The Germans wished to consolidate Greece's democracy as a means of ensuring political stability in the Mediterranean. At the same

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<sup>51</sup> Note by C. de Margerie, Athens, 25 September 1975, FRAMAE, d/p, 3321.

<sup>52</sup> Note by G. Lennox, Paris, 8 December 1975, MWE3/358/2, UKFCO 30/2731.

<sup>53</sup> Record of Meeting between Karamanlis and Wilson, London, 9 October 1975, MWE3/358/2, 153, UKFCO 30/2730,

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Telegram by F. Puaux, Rome, 7 October 1975, FRAMAE, d/p, 3317.

<sup>56</sup> *Herald Tribune*, 20 October 1975.

time, however, they were deeply concerned about the implications of Greece's partial withdrawal from NATO. To assuage these fears, Karamanlis and other members of the government reassured Schmidt that they would like to see Greece reintegrated into the military structure of NATO, but that for so long as the Cyprus issue rendered this an impossibility they saw the EEC as an indirect link with the Atlantic Community. In particular, Karamanlis told Schmidt that he had always been an advocate of an Atlantic Europe since 'without the United States' support, Europe would not be able to maintain either unity or dependence'.<sup>57</sup> In light of this, the Chancellor stated that he fully supported Greek wishes to join the Community. The Germans, like the rest of the Nine, knew very well that the Community's unequivocal support could find great favour with public opinion and the maintenance of social order, considering that the Greek government had oversold membership as a major factor in the preservation of democracy. Against this backdrop, Schmidt followed the example of the other European leaders who had visited Athens before by emphasising that his government embraced Greece's EEC application without reservation and that the Greek people should be aware of this.<sup>58</sup>

## 2.5. Emerging Political Identity

Existing studies on enlargement tend to neglect the possible role of social factors such as the political-ideational discourse surrounding enlargements. Ulrich Sedelmeier is right to suggest that this analytical blind spot has resulted from the rationalist and materialist assumptions that underpin most studies on enlargement. 'The assumptions that actors are driven by narrow self-interests that are primarily influenced by material factors lead them to ignore the impact of identity on enlargement and of identity formation through the EU's enlargement policy practice'.<sup>59</sup> This neglect is rather surprising, given that the perennial issue of 'what is Europe' and what the Community represents, inevitably arises with enlargement.<sup>60</sup>

In the Greek case, its application came about during a turbulent time in the European Community's history. Besides the economic and institutional problems, there were ongoing talks about the future of the Community. Indeed, 'defining Europe' had become an important issue for the EEC by the 1970s. Just a few years prior to the

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<sup>57</sup> Meeting between Schmidt and Karamanlis, Athens, 29 December 1975, GRCKP 176A.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Ulrich Sedelmeier, 'EU Enlargement, Identity and the Analysis of European Foreign Policy', *EU Working Papers*, 2003/13.

<sup>60</sup> Helen Sjursen, 'Why Expand? The Question of Legitimacy and Justification in the EU's Enlargement Policy', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40:3 (2002), 491-553.

official Greek application, there had been an attempt to give European integration a more explicitly political dimension. In December 1973, the *Document on European Identity* was published in order to 'help the EC countries define their relations with other countries, as well as their place in world affairs'.<sup>61</sup> The search for identity reached its culmination with the Tindemans Report which was published in January 1976, just a few days before the Commission would issue its opinion on Greece. Leo Tindemans, the then Belgian Prime Minister had been asked to compile an overview of the EEC, with the aim of working out a common concept of a European Union.<sup>62</sup> According to Tindemans, the Community 'had lost its guiding light, namely the political consensus between our countries on our reasons for undertaking the joint task'.<sup>63</sup> There was a pressing need for the Community to find a new *raison d'être* to move forward with European integration. The pursuit of economic interdependence was not as appealing as before. In view of the failure of several economic plans and the general economic downturn, any major new advances in the economic field looked unrealistic. Equally, the pursuit of peace and stability, as declared in the Treaties of Rome, were considered achieved goals by the 1970s.

In contrast, the promotion of democracy constituted a concept that might offer the EEC a way out of the impasse.<sup>64</sup> Democracy had emerged as a feature in the Community's political discourse in early 1960s. The European Parliament was the first European political actor, through the Birkelbach report of 1962, that discussed the Community's political identity as protector of democracy in relation to enlargement.<sup>65</sup> The Commission and the Council however did not embrace the concept wholeheartedly then.<sup>66</sup> The debate on the role of democracy within the political identity of the Community came back to the fore in 1967 with the Colonels' coup in Greece, but it was mainly during the fall of the three dictatorships in Portugal, Greece, Spain and the subsequent application for EEC membership that it became rather prominent among the Nine. The prospect of enlargement was considered an ideal occasion to make a crucial statement about the Community's *finalité politique*. As Fernando Guirao has noted, 'the

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<sup>61</sup> Ine Megens, 'The December 1973 Declaration on European Identity', in van der Harst, Jan (ed.), *Beyond the Customs union: The European Community's Quest for Deepening, Widening and Completion, 1967-1975* (Brussels, 2007), 317-340.

<sup>62</sup> Jürgen Nielsen-Sikora, 'The Ideas of a European Union and a Citizen's Europe. The 1975 Tindemans Report', in Van der Harst, *Beyond the Customs Union*, 380.

<sup>63</sup> Leo Tindemans, 'European Union: Report by Mr Leo Tindemans to the European Council', *Bulletin of the European Communities 1/76* (Commission of the European Communities).

<sup>64</sup> Edwards & Wallace, *A Wider European Community*, 2.

<sup>65</sup> Emma De Angelis, 'The Political Discourse'.

<sup>66</sup> Charles Powell, 'The Long Road to Europe: Spain and the European Community, 1957-1986', paper presented to the conference *From Rome to Berlin, 1957-2007* (Madrid, June 19-20 2007).

decision to enlarge constitutes a major moment of self-definition for the European Community’, entailing more than growing in geographical size.<sup>67</sup> In early 1976, Genscher commented that the decision to welcome the poor southern countries was an illustration that ‘Europe had emerged from the stage of an economic community, today being a political community’<sup>68</sup>, while British Foreign Secretary Anthony Crosland described ‘enlargement as an investment in the democratic future of Europe’ and predicted that in the long run the benefits will outweigh the costs.<sup>69</sup>

In other words, the aim of promoting peace, which was once the central legitimating strategy for moving forward with the process of European integration, was now complemented by the Community’s obligation to promote democratic ideals.<sup>70</sup> In this context, the Greek request for EEC membership as a means to strengthen its nascent regime spoke directly to the Community’s attempt to promote itself as a protector of democracy. The Greek case shows the effect of talking about enlargement on the self-conceptions of the EEC and how these conceptions influenced in a positive way the attitudes of the existing member states. In other words, the Nine’s response to Greece’s EEC application, which was perceived as part and parcel of the same process as the country’s democratisation, would attest to the Community’s own credibility and consistency with its newly self-proclaimed identity. At the same time, by emphasising the democratic importance of membership, the EEC explicitly articulated the fundamental characteristics that it ascribed to its identity, configuring new declared goals. Therefore, the discussion on post-war norms of liberal democracy, which later became a central element of European identity, took a more concrete form during the talks over the Greek request.

This process was further cemented by the fact that Greece was widely perceived as the ‘cradle of democracy’. Indeed, the French President attached great importance to Greece’s deeply European identity as a contribution to the Community’s own European nature. Following the end of negotiations, Giscard characteristically described Greece’s entry as a ‘return to the roots’<sup>71</sup> while later on in his memoirs he admitted that ‘it was

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<sup>67</sup> Fernando Guirao, ‘Solving the Paradoxes of Enlargement’, 5-11.

<sup>68</sup> Quoted in Thomas Derungs, ‘The Integration of a Different Europe. The European Community’s Enlargement to the South and Evolving Concept of the Civilian Power’, in Affinito, Michele et al (eds.), *The Two Europes. Proceedings of the Third Annual RICHIE Conference* (Brussels, 2009), 311-326.

<sup>69</sup> Note by S. Roussos, London, 2 October 1976, GRCKP 139A.

<sup>70</sup> Address by F.- X. Ortoli, 10 February 1976, *Ninth General Report on the Activities of the European Communities* (Brussels, 1976).

<sup>71</sup> *Katbimerini*, 22 April 1979.

impossible to exclude Greece, the mother of all democracies, from Europe'.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, Louis de Guiringaud, the French Foreign Minister during the climatic moments of the Greek accession talks, noted that 'Greece's history and traditions are part of our common heritage... and it can and must contribute to defending the European identity.'<sup>73</sup> In this sense, the discourse on the Greek application played directly in the contemporary identity debate within the Community.<sup>74</sup> There could have been no better case study than Greece to implement this, and Karamanlis hugely capitalised on these merits in his contacts with his fellow European leaders, explaining how the democratic obligation provided the fundamental rationale for accepting the Greek application.

## 2.6. Cold War Imperatives

Adding to these political arguments, the question of Greece's EEC membership was also framed in strategic Cold War terms. Chapter one has shown how southern European allies were plagued by internal unrest. Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Portugal gave the West cause for concern and a vulnerable southern flank.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, as Ludlow insightfully notes, 'the second enlargement was not in other words just a Community affair, or even a Greek, Spanish or Portuguese story. It was also part of the solution to a genuine Cold War crisis'.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, the Cold War environment had rendered enlargement an issue of international relevance, especially for Greece, which constituted a strategically significant Cold War front line state that needed to be kept within the Western fold. The Nine knew that the Greek government had gambled heavily on the success of its application as a major factor in the preservation of democracy in Greece, and in turn of the country's future foreign policy orientation.<sup>77</sup> In a meeting with the British Minister of State Roy Hattersley, Panayiotis Papaligouras, the Greek Minister of Coordination, admitted that the movement in Greece 'from the tyranny of the generals to democracy had been a comparatively smooth one but the development could only

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<sup>72</sup> Berstein & Sirinelli, *Les années Giscard*, 135.

<sup>73</sup> Statement by L. de Guiringaud, 31 May 1977, GRKaramanlis, Vol. 10, 240.

<sup>74</sup> Susannah Verney, 'Justifying the Second Enlargement: promoting interests, supporting democracy or returning to the roots?' in Sjursen, Helen (ed.), *Enlargement and the Nature of the Euro-Policy* (London, 2006), 19-43.

<sup>75</sup> Ennio di Nolfo, 'The Cold War and the Transformation of the Mediterranean, 1960-1975', in Leffler, Melvyn & Westad, Odd Arne (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 2011), 238-257.

<sup>76</sup> N.Piers Ludlow, 'The New Cold War and the Expansion of the European Community - A Nexus?', paper presented in conference *From Crisis to New Dynamics: the European Community 1973-1983* (Aarhus, 11-12 February 2010).

<sup>77</sup> See chapter one.

continue if the European Community accommodated them in their efforts, not just economically but also politically'.<sup>78</sup>

Furthermore, Greece's withdrawal from the integrated military command of NATO and the rise of the domestic left in Greece had raised concerns about Greece's future direction. Although Karamanlis was firmly attached to the West and his government had made it clear that the withdrawal from NATO was the least damaging course that was open to them at that time, there were fears over the whole question of Greece's future political orientation, with possible knock-on effects for Spain, Portugal and Turkey. It was therefore of major political interest to promote early Greek membership as a means of assuring continued Greek adherence to the West. As the German political commentator Beate Kohler observed, 'security for Western Europe is today regarded less as a matter of defence against external aggression than as the maintenance of a workable social and political order'.<sup>79</sup> Similarly the Head of the British Southern European department, A.C. Goodison wrote to the eight British ambassadors of the EEC member states: 'I agree that we should not take for granted either the long-term stability of democracy in Greece or Greece's commitment to the West. Since it is highly unlikely that western countries can encourage this commitment, and with it democracy, by giving Greece what she wants over the Cyprus and Aegean disputes – and indeed there is a danger that the Greek disappointment in these areas will have an adverse and possibly disastrous effect – the West's chief opportunity to encourage the western connection in Greece is, as the Ambassador says, to facilitate Greece's entry into the EEC'.<sup>80</sup> In other words, accepting Greece constituted the only policy the Nine could successfully follow to dispel anti-western feelings and facilitate the Greek government's efforts to keep the country within the Western fold.

This Cold War argument does not feature as prominently as might have been expected as a main motive behind justifying a new European expansion to the South in the Community archives. Indeed, the records of the Council of Ministers and of the Commission barely bear witness to such considerations. These underlying strategic imperatives that actually lay at the root of the second enlargement might hence be partially overlooked. However, documents of the governments of the major European powers and most importantly transatlantic correspondence reveal a different story. The

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<sup>78</sup> Record of Conversation between Papaligouras and Hattersley, London, 29 July 1975, MWE3/358/2, 71, UKFCO 30/2729.

<sup>79</sup> Beate Kohler, 'Germany and the Further Enlargement of the European Community', *The World Economy* (1979), 200.

<sup>80</sup> Letter by A.C. Goodison, London, 22 July 1976, WSGO21/1, 5, UKFCO 9/2399.



argument that entry into the European Community could stabilise Greece's shaken Western orientation featured prominently among the Nine and in their contacts with the Americans. As shown in the previous chapter, the Americans were in constant talks with the Europeans regarding the Greek case. In fact, the Ford administration had fully supported the reactivation of the Association agreement and the outpouring of economic aid, especially following Greece's withdrawal from the military command of NATO and the strong anti-Americanism that dominated the Greek scene. What is more, Greece's withdrawal from the Atlantic alliance came at a time when American influence in the Mediterranean region was waning.<sup>81</sup> According to a special British report on relations between the US and Europe, 'the world economic crises as well as the trauma of Vietnam issue have induced a sense of realism... the Americans have come to realise that they cannot go it alone'.<sup>82</sup>

However, there was a similar feeling amongst the Nine. Admittedly, the 1970s saw the rise of the EEC's effort to establish the Community as an international actor, capable of acting upon Cold War politics. In particular, on the eve of negotiations with Greece, members of the European Parliament reminded the Community's incumbent President not to leave the initiative to the United States: the Community should accept 'its historical responsibility and act on a par with the superpowers'.<sup>83</sup> However, previous attempts by the Community to take over responsibility and act collectively had been limited and rather unsuccessful.<sup>84</sup> In particular, the Cyprus debacle clearly illustrated the limitations of the Community's foreign policy. In fact, the handling of the Cyprus crisis was not a success for any of the actors involved. The *Economist* declared that 'the Turks have had their way in Cyprus. For everyone else concerned there is only failure to report'.<sup>85</sup> Yet things need not have turned out this way. As Panos Tsakaloyiannis has noted: 'Cyprus was the ideal ground for the Nine to prove their presence and their partnership with the United States. Unlike in the Middle East, the Soviet Union was not as involved and all three interested parties were EEC associates'.<sup>86</sup> Although the Nine had taken pride in their initial response to the first Turkish invasion, with Genscher emphasising to President Ford the pragmatic and successful way in which consultation

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<sup>81</sup> *The Economist*, 21 July 1975; John Campbell, 'The Mediterranean Crisis', *Foreign Affairs*, 53:4 (1975), 605-624.

<sup>82</sup> Brief on Greek PM's visit to Britain, 13 October 1975, ESG3/304/1, 29, UKFCO 9/2230.

<sup>83</sup> EP Debates, 14 May 1975, 63.

<sup>84</sup> The challenge of the October War in 1973 and the Oil crisis in 1973-4.

<sup>85</sup> *The Economist*, 16 August 1974.

<sup>86</sup> Panos Tsakaloyiannis, 'The European Community and the Greek-Turkish dispute', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 19: 1 (1980), 36.

had been carried out, the second stage of hostilities in August and after democracy in Greece had been restored took the EEC completely by surprise.<sup>87</sup> The Nine's incapacity to exert any influence during the second invasion deeply disappointed the Europeans, bringing back memories of the October war and undermining the newly established EPC mechanism. The Greeks themselves admitted 'qu'ils n'attendent guère d'avantage «l'appui moral» des Neuf dans les négociations de Vienne'.<sup>88</sup>

The EEC, having realised the limitations of its mediatory capacity over Cyprus actively sought closer cooperation with the USA. Equally, the Americans came to the conclusion that the fact that the most pro-US and generally pro-Western Greek political figures such as Karamanlis, Bitsios and Averoff had believed it necessary to withdraw from the Atlantic Alliance, demonstrated how far the Greek-Turkish problem along with the conflict over Cyprus had crossed over Cold War barriers, demanding a new approach. It was obvious to policy-makers on both sides of the Atlantic that the situation called for the 'interpenetration of security and economic issues'.<sup>89</sup> In contrast to Portugal, which constituted a further source of transatlantic controversy, the Greek case proved an area of cooperation.<sup>90</sup> Both Brussels and Washington were uncomfortably aware of their own limitations and were, thus, prepared to work out a division of labour between themselves in the hope of addressing these limitations.<sup>91</sup>

Utilising different fora but mostly through intense bilateral consultation, the US, in agreement with the EEC and especially with the main Western powers, concluded that in order to insure that there was no diminution in the US role in southern Europe they should anchor these countries more firmly to their neighbours in Northern and Central Europe. This policy, imaginatively dubbed political and economic 'devolution', meant supporting closer association or full membership in the European Community for the states of the Southern Europe, even at a relative cost of US direct political influence and its economic interests.<sup>92</sup> One wonders though whether the Americans felt threatened by

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<sup>87</sup> Note by C. Ramsbotham, Washington, 1 August 1974, MWP3/3-4/1, 392, UKFCO 30/2501.

<sup>88</sup> Note by C. de Margerie, Athens, 23 May 1975, FRAMAE, d/p, 3312.

<sup>89</sup> Eirini Karamouzi, 'Telling the whole story. America, the EEC and Greece, 1974-1976, in Varsori, Antonio & Migani, Guia (eds.), *Europe in the International context during the 1970s: entering a different world* (Brussels, 2011), 355-353.

<sup>90</sup> Mario Del Pero, 'A European Solution for a European Crisis', *Journal of European Integration History*, 15:1 (2009), 21; Kenneth Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy* (New York, 1997); Carlos Gaspar, 'International Dimensions of the Portuguese Transition', in Marietta Minotou(ed.), *The Transition to Democracy in Spain, Portugal and Greece: Thirty Years After* (Athens, 2006), 121-141.

<sup>91</sup> To see more, Karamouzi, 'Telling the whole story'; Mario del Pero, 'Which Chile, Allende? Henry Kissinger and the Portuguese revolution', *Cold War History*, online 23 August 2011.

<sup>92</sup> Paper prepared in response to National Security Study, Memorandum 222, 'US and Allied Security Policy in Southern Europe', 15 December 1975, USFRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXX.

such an escalating involvement of the Europeans in this strategic region. Ultimately, both sides acknowledged the fact that ‘devolution’ could at best supplement and possibly compensate for declining US influence in southern Europe, but that it could not provide a full substitute for US influence. No combination of European states would be able to take on the US’ military role in the region. The leaders of Greece were well aware of their exposure to the power and proximity of the USSR. In a restricted conversation with Kissinger over the possibility of a European initiative, Karamanlis was surprised to hear the American side welcoming a fresh approach by the EEC-Nine, before responding: ‘the Europeans do not have the same possibilities that you do’.<sup>93</sup>

In particular, the French concluded that ‘on doit se préoccuper de ne pas laisser ce pays seul devant les sollicitations du neutralisme ou du bloc soviétique. Il y a donc une certaine urgence à consolider un gouvernement né dans l’adversité et que de nouveau revers peut abattre ou dévoyer. Les modalités d’appui que les Neuf sont en mesure d’apporter à la Grèce relèvent du politique et de l’économie’.<sup>94</sup> However, this would not mean in any case the undermining of Greek-American relations. On the contrary, Paris thought: ‘loin d’encourager la Grèce à s’écarter d’avantage de l’alliance atlantique, l’action spécifique des Neuf pouvait détourner ce pays de l’aventure’.<sup>95</sup> Similarly, de Margerie, now the Director of European Affairs in the Quai, emphasised in his dealings with American officials that the Nine were in no way attempting to interfere with or replace the US in Greece. Rather, they were simply trying to do their best to encourage the democratic regime and in turn keep the country aligned with the West: ‘the Europeans feel that Greece needs now more than anything the moral support of its Western friends’.<sup>96</sup> As Van der Stoel underlined commenting on the anti-Americanism dominating the Greek scene: ‘La Grèce éprouverait-elle aujourd’hui le besoin d’établir des relations plus étroites avec l’Europe. Mais cela ne doit pas supposer d’antagonisme avec les Etats-Unis’.<sup>97</sup>

## **2.7. The Commission’s Opinion and the 9 February Council of Ministers**

All of these arguments were familiar to the Commission, which shared the Nine’s perception of the need not to rebuff the Greeks in the current political circumstances.

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<sup>93</sup> Memorandum of conversation between Ford and Karamanlis, 30 July 1975, USGRF, NSA Memcons, box: 14.

<sup>94</sup> Note on relations between Greece and Europe, Paris, 13 September 1974, FRAMAE, d/p, 3314.

<sup>95</sup> Note by F. Puaux, Paris, 16 September 1974, FRAMAE, d/p, 3316.

<sup>96</sup> Telegram by J. Irwin, Paris, 19 September 1974, USCFPF (1973-1976).

<sup>97</sup> Note by H. Giacobbi, Hague, 2 September 1974, FRAMAE, d/p, 3314.

However, the Commission also felt it had the obligation to deliver a report that would protect the Community without at the same time creating a breach with the member states. This difficult balancing act partly explains why the Greek government had to wait six months for the first official EEC response to its application to join.<sup>98</sup> During these deliberations, the Commission was extremely divided on what stance to adopt, given its reluctance to take from the Council the responsibility of turning down or opposing the Greek application. Its main concern was how to measure ‘the danger of diluting the effectiveness of the Community against the political consequences of rejecting applications which would doubtless be valid under the Treaty of Rome’.<sup>99</sup>

The Commission was deeply aware of the EEC’s colossal ability for procrastination. It could quite easily say ‘yes’ in principle to all the applicants knocking on the door and then spend years haggling about details. However, such a course of action would be inefficient not only for the applicants but also for the Community. The latter had already been forced to put a brake on institutional development after the entry of Britain, Denmark and Ireland.<sup>100</sup> All in all, the Commission had great difficulty in agreeing to put forward its Opinion. Long and controversial debates took place about whether Greek accession should be granted immediately for political reasons or whether a longer waiting period would be advisable because of the economic and structural problems faced by the country. The Commissioners agreed by only a bare majority that the Opinion should go forward. The clash of views within the Commission was such, that some of the Commissioners who had been outnumbered in the vote, namely Altiero Spinelli and Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza, publicly expressed their discontent and dissociated themselves from the Opinion’s resolution, which represented a clear victory for those in favour of a cautious response to the Greek application. In particular, the French and Italian commissioners would have preferred a more forthcoming position in favour of Greece. Otherwise, as Spinelli told the press, ‘it risks bringing the Community closer to a two tier Europe’. This split within the Commission ‘was an extremely unusual breach of the discipline imposed by this body on itself’.<sup>101</sup>

The Commission’s Opinion put forward on 28 January 1976 was a qualified and lukewarm statement.<sup>102</sup> The Opinion had two parts, with the first one dedicated to

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<sup>98</sup> *The Economist*, 31 January 1976.

<sup>99</sup> Commission Working Document, ECHAEC, no.367, 16 September 1975.

<sup>100</sup> *The Economist*, 31 January 1976.

<sup>101</sup> *Die Zeit*, 6 February 1976 (in [www.ena.lu](http://www.ena.lu)).

<sup>102</sup> European Commission, ‘Enlargement of the Community: Conclusion’, *Bulletin of the European Communities* 1/78.

general considerations and the second concerned with specific aspects of the Greek application. In both parts, the question at hand was no longer if Greece should enter or not but rather about the when and the how of such accession. In this light, it contained a recommendation that there should be a preparatory pre-accession period in addition to the normal transitional period to give Greece and the Community more time to adjust to each other. In the Commission's Opinion, the Greek economy in its present state displayed a series of difficulties. Greece's per capita income amounted to half of the EEC average while the inflation rate was higher. The Opinion also analysed a series of issues on a more technical level, with a special focus on the financial and budgetary implications of Greek membership.

The Commission's document finally referred to the political problems in relations with Turkey and Cyprus. To avoid upsetting the balance that the Community had maintained between Greece and Turkey, the Commission proposed that the EEC play an active role in resolving their dispute in parallel with the preparatory work for Greece's accession. Admittedly, the Commission was deeply divided, especially over the section referring to the Greek-Turkish dispute. The Italian and the French Commissioners, including President Ortoli, thought that this political aspect should not be included in the Opinion but it rather ought to be expressed privately in the next Council of Ministers meeting. They believed that such a reference would create an unfavourable political climate with the Greek public and its government. Any initiative in this field ought to come directly from the Council of Ministers. Nonetheless, as the French permanent representative Jean-Marie Soutou reported, 'Ortoli est assez isolé, du moins pour le moment, Soames conduit l'opposition. Ortoli a mis en garde ses collègues contre toute expression de certaines réserves touchant l'état des relations entre la Grèce et la Turquie. Il n'a été appuyé que par Scarascia Mugnozza'.<sup>103</sup> In particular, Soames had already defended to the Greeks his idea of the need to include in the Opinion a reference to the Greek-Turkish differences. In a private talk with the Greek ambassador to the EEC, Stephanos Stathatos, Soames opened up about his intentions, days before the formal publication of the Opinion: 'the Avis will be satisfactory neither to the Turkish permanent representative nor you [Greeks] for that matter. If the Commission does not underline the hard facts of life, then who will?'.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Telegram by J.M. Soutou, Brussels, 27 January 1976, FRAMAE, d/p, 3315.

<sup>104</sup> Stephanos Stathatos, *Σαράντα Χρόνια στην Διπλωματική Αρένα* [40 years in the Diplomatic Arena](Athens, 2007), 57.

In this context, the Commission was anything but out of touch with the developments within the Community. It fully understood the political importance of supporting Greece's application, but at the same time considered that enlargement called for an acceleration of the process of integration. The suggestion of a pre-accession period stemmed from these considerations. This period was presented as an opportunity for the Community to reform its institutions and at the same time to develop a substantial economic aid programme that would enable Greece to overcome its structural weaknesses and adapt more easily to the Community's obligations and mechanisms.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, this proposal for a preparatory period seemed to reflect the desire of some member states to delay Greece's accession without causing a political rebuff. Taking into account what followed, the Commission's opinion was the first but certainly not the last of several attempts to delay Greece's entry.

Irrespective of the problems mentioned, the Commission's Opinion concluded that 'it is clear that the consolidation of Greece's democracy which is a fundamental concern not only of the Greek people but also of the Community and its member states, is intimately related to the evolution of Greece's relationship with the Community. It is in the light of these considerations that the Commission recommends that a clear affirmative reply be given to the Greek request'.<sup>106</sup> Therefore, it was above all the democratic obligation that provided the fundamental rationale for accepting the Greek application. The Commission's Opinion, just as the member states' attitudes had been, was indicative of the balancing act which the Community was trying to maintain between the political need to welcome Greece and the growing awareness of the impact of this future accession.

However, the Greek government reacted furiously to the idea of a pre-accession period and also to the hints that the state of Greece's relations with Turkey might cause difficulties for the Community. Karamanlis considered the Commission's Opinion a political mistake: 'the Commission could have used other arguments if it wanted to delay or block our integration but not those which will hurt the feelings of the Greek people'.<sup>107</sup> The Greek government feared that the reservations expressed regarding timing could easily be transformed into a de facto pre-accession period, which would rob the formal opening of negotiations of much of its significance. On 29 January a press release

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<sup>105</sup> Commission Working Document, ECHAEC, no.373, 28 January 1976.

<sup>106</sup> European Commission, 'Enlargement of the Community: Conclusion', *Bulletin of the European Communities* 1/78.

<sup>107</sup> *To Vima*, 30 January 1976.

was issued in Athens stressing that the ‘negative points [in the Opinion] are in complete contrast to the political will clearly expressed by the governments of the member states with a view to immediate Greek membership, for the benefit not only of Greece but of democratic Europe as whole’.<sup>108</sup>

Sources within the Commission were not particularly surprised by the generally negative interpretation that their Opinion on the Greek application had received in Athens. According to Sir David Hannay, Soames’ cabinet chief ‘the Greeks have been fed a rather heavy diet of positive commentary about Greek membership from the very highest levels of governments in the member states. At these rarefied levels of diplomacy it is usual for generalisations to be made without caveats or reservations. The Commission however, cannot permit itself such freedom of action and felt obliged to point out to the Council some of the problems to both the Community and Greece that membership would entail’.<sup>109</sup> To further defend their positions, the majority of Commissioners reminded the COREPER that, in September 1975, Ortoli had initiated a discussion on Greece around three themes, one of them being the political nature of the Greek application. Back then ‘aucun ministre n’a contesté l’inclusion du troisième aspect présenté par Ortoli dans l’avis de la Commission. Le Président Rumor, concluant le débat, a constaté que le Conseil faisait confiance à la Commission pour son avis, en renouvelant sa volonté de donner une réponse satisfaisante et qui tiendrait compte de tous les problèmes ouverts’.<sup>110</sup>

Karamanlis’ government fought back. Utilising its diplomatic channels to the full, the Greek side made clear to the member states, especially France and Germany, its strong negative stance on the pre-accession period. In a meeting with the Nine EEC ambassadors, Karamanlis noted: ‘if the Greeks are convinced that they cannot find a future in democratic Europe because of Turkey... inevitably a problem will be formed in their in minds with regard to the external orientation of the country’.<sup>111</sup> With this single sentence, the Greeks had capitalised on both the EEC’s concerns regarding the need to consolidate Greece’s fragile democratic regime and also to keep Greece as a stable partner in the eastern Mediterranean. Karamanlis thus attempted to cash in on the assurances of support that his country had received from the Nine as well as the political and strategic imperatives linked to Greece’s EEC entry. The Greek press coverage drew a

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<sup>108</sup> European Commission, ‘Greece’s Request for Membership’, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, 1/76.

<sup>109</sup> Telegram by F. Morris, Brussels, 3 February 1976, USCFPF (1973-1976).

<sup>110</sup> Note by A. Rogerson, Brussels, 6 February 1976, ECBAC 66/1985 236.

<sup>111</sup> Meeting with the Nine EEC Ambassadors, Athens, 31 January 1976, GRCKP 57B.

gloomier picture of the situation with headlines like ‘NATO and Turkey close door to the EEC’<sup>112</sup>, while the British press wrote: ‘EEC rebuffs Greece’s request for membership’ or ‘Greece considered by the Commission too poor to join the EEC’.<sup>113</sup>

Having already deliberated for months on the strategic and political merits of offering membership to Greece, in the wake of the vehement Greek reaction, the Nine instantly put into effect what they had already decided but were afraid to implement because of the well-known problems associated with the Greek enlargement. On 2 February, before the Council of Ministers had even taken place, the Dutch and German Foreign ministers issued a statement on behalf of both governments condemning the idea of a pre-accession period with the view to opening negotiations as soon as possible. Van der Stoep had said to his German counterpart that ‘on Greece it was not sufficient to look merely at the economic aspects, with the recent restoration of democracy and the emotional problem of Cyprus. Greece had to be offered an international prospect’.<sup>114</sup> Equally supportive towards Athens was Genscher, who thought that the volatility of Greek public opinion should not be aggravated further.<sup>115</sup> In particular, following a Federal cabinet meeting, Genscher made clear ‘that we support a full membership for Greece without any inner reservation and that we would not agree with arrangements which amounted to a discrimination against Greece’.<sup>116</sup> Schmidt and the majority of his cabinet were of the opinion that the EEC must make every effort to keep the fragile southern tier of Europe in the democratic camp. Jürgen Trumpf, director of the Federal Foreign Ministry for European Affairs, regretted the unfortunate wording of the Commission’s Opinion: ‘tout comme sa présentation, le contenu n’était ni politiquement défendable, ni adroit’.<sup>117</sup> It was clear that Schmidt’s commitment to Greek membership, highlighted during his visit to Athens, had reinforced the FRG’s bureaucratic and political leanings in the same direction.<sup>118</sup>

Similarly, the French considered that the Commission had both exceeded its competence and had made a political error in entering into the Greek-Turkish dispute, causing unnecessary political problems for Karamanlis. In a rather detailed letter to the Quai d’Orsay, French Ambassador to Greece Jean-Marie Merillon wrote: ‘sur le plan international, l’avis de la Commission affaiblit la position d’Athènes et réduit la marge de

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<sup>112</sup> *To Vima*, 1 February 1976.

<sup>113</sup> Telegram by S.Stathatos, Brussels, 7 February 1976, GRCKP 57B.

<sup>114</sup> Telegram by J. Engels, Bonn, 4 February 1976, Doc 29, FRGAAPD 1976, 114-115.

<sup>115</sup> Telegram by J. Engels, Bonn, 4 February 1976, Doc 29, FRFGAAPD 1976, 114-115.

<sup>116</sup> Letter by J.Trumpf, Bonn, 3 February 1976, Doc 28, FRGAAPD 1976, 111-112.

<sup>117</sup> Telegram by O.Wormser, Bonn, 4 February 1976, FRAMAE, d/p, 3315.

<sup>118</sup> Telegram by M. Hillenbrand, Bonn, 5 February 1976, USCFPF(1973-1976).



manœuvre du gouvernement. La politique étrangère grecque est également affectée par cette affaire car il n'existe pas, semble-t-il, d'alternative réaliste à l'intégration européenne. Déçu par les États-Unis et l'OTAN, conscient des dangers du neutralisme et des limites du rapprochement balkanique, Athènes ne peut guère tourner les yeux que vers la CEE. Le gouvernement d'Athènes est donc conscient du caractère nécessaire de la réussite, car dans l'immédiat, l'état de l'opinion publique lui interdit de rechercher ouvertement un recours du côté de Washington'.<sup>119</sup>

Such a strong and immediate reaction on the part of the French and Germans in particular caused disappointment amongst those in the Community who saw enlargement more in economic and institutional terms. The British, along with the Irish and the Belgians, had hoped to steer the Council away from taking a position on idea of a pre-accession period so as to allow time for it to be studied. However, as Genscher said in the Council of Foreign Ministers on 9 February 1976, 'if the Community was interested in democratic Europe, Karamanlis must be encouraged. Greek public opinion had misunderstood the Commission's Opinion and the Council should therefore give a political signal to Athens that it was in favour of an early opening of negotiations'.<sup>120</sup> The French Prime Minister underlined the emotional reaction of the Greek government and stated that it was imperative not to convey to Athens any suspicion that a special procedure might be used towards the Greek membership bid.

Likewise, Rumor called for a return to the spirit of June 1975, when the Council had first welcomed the Greek application. Nevertheless, the Dutch Foreign minister agreed with the point made by his Irish counterpart, namely that the further expansion of the Community via the admission of Greece would force the EEC to re-examine its decision-making process. However, as soon as the decision was framed in political terms, none of the member states could come out publicly against it. Hopes of postponing the decision were disappointed in an atmosphere where potential opposition to Greek accession was construed as a negation of the country's democratic ideals and a threat to the stabilisation of the southern flank of NATO.

## **2.8. Conclusion**

In an unprecedented act, the Council unanimously rejected the Commission's Opinion out of hand, just two weeks after its submission. At a press conference at the end of the Council meeting, Gaston Thorn said that 'for the nine delegations there could

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<sup>119</sup> Note by J.M. Merillon, Athens, 5 February 1976, FRAMAE, d/p, 3315.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

be no trial period or political considerations attached to Greece's accession. He did not deny that a number of economic problems would have to be solved... but answers would be found during the negotiations'.<sup>121</sup> Finally, after eight months of deliberations, the Community had decided to give the green light to Greece's bid for membership.

Karamanlis described the Council's decision as 'historic for Greece', but it was even more so for the Community, whose course was being steered in an unpredictable direction.<sup>122</sup> Enlargement had major implications, not only for the entire course of the EEC's future but also for each member state of the Community. There is no dispute that the problems enumerated in the Opinion did exist and caused a severe headache to the Nine. 'If the Community wants to bring the Greeks up to its level of development, it will have to dig deep into its pockets to pay for it one way or another', commented a German newspaper.<sup>123</sup> The problem with the Greek application nonetheless was that it came at a time of political, economic and institutional stagnation with the majority of the member states resorting to protectionism. So why did the Community say yes?

The contemporary press claimed that the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Nine for Greek EEC entry was compensated by the fact that no one wanted to be seen as opposing it. *The Financial Times* wrote: 'If Greece becomes a member, it will be largely by default'.<sup>124</sup> Indeed, Greek lobbying had made it difficult for any member state to incur the odium of asking for a delay or rebuffing the application, despite the evident awareness of the problems involved. However, embarrassment barely serves as an analytical framework on why the Nine were willing to overlook the problems and say 'yes' to Greece. Equally, Karamanlis' strategy, although important and one of the factors behind the Greek success, does not suffice to explain the influence it had on the Nine. There were two reasons why Karamanlis' arguments became so convincing: the political argument of the Community's democratic obligation and the EEC's vested strategic interest in preventing Greece's economic and political collapse made it impossible to say no at that point to Greece's eventual membership of the Community.

The Community's political commitment to the prospect of the southern enlargement was determined by two developments in the mid-1970s that influenced the Community's perception of itself. Besides legal reasons, there was firstly the pressing need of the Community to find a new *raison d'être* to move forward with European

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<sup>121</sup>European Commission, 'Position adopted by the Council', *Bulletin of the European Communities* 1/76.

<sup>122</sup>Note by M. Lumberopoulos, 10 February 1976, GRCKP 134A.

<sup>123</sup>*Die Zeit*, 6 February 1976 (in www.ena.lu).

<sup>124</sup>Quoted in Tsoukalis, *The European Community*, 136.

integration. In a period, therefore, when the Community was attempting to establish a European identity, the second enlargement involving the newly emerged Greek democracy and the debate it generated significantly affected the EEC's self-perception. In the course of discussing Greece's request for entry, arguments for enlargement were defined and refined, transforming the promotion and maintenance of democracy and the rule of law into undeniable elements of the European identity. Meanwhile, the tendency to talk about enlargement in terms of exporting democratic ideals essentially minimised any other arguments over the technical and economic difficulties. The very real difficulties that existed in Greece's case paled in comparison to the stabilisation of democracy, and no actor in the debate wanted to be seen as undermining the new legitimising strategy of the Community, and thus defying the principal elements of its emerging identity as a promoter of democracy.<sup>125</sup>

This did not mean that the Community's emerging political identity as promoter of democracy was the only cause of Greece's accession. Even though it did not feature as prominently as the democratisation factor in the public debate, the strategic Cold War argument did exist in the minds of policy makers among the Nine. The intricacies surrounding the Greek case in the mid 1970s lend support to the emerging claim that there are clear and distinct links between aspects of European integration and the overarching Cold War framework.<sup>126</sup> The highly important political decision to accept Greece and support Karamanlis in the midst of intense crisis, apart from leading to the Community's second enlargement, added to the EEC's collective weight on the world stage. This was not equivalent to the prevention of US dominance in the southern European region. On the contrary, it promoted transatlantic cooperation. The lack of the necessary mechanisms on the part of the Community and the intense anti-Americanism that dominated the Greek scene left no room for individual and separate policies. The Community's role, in full agreement with the Americans and buttressing the USA's military role, consisted in offering economic and political support to the newly-established Karamanlis government, despite the evident problems surrounding the Greek accession to the EEC. Both concerns were further compounded by the Greek strategy, which constitutes the third factor in explaining the Nine's attitude. Karamanlis constantly reminded the Nine that he had put EEC membership at the top of his election promises,

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<sup>125</sup> For more, see: Frank Schimmelfennig, 'The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union', *International Organisation*, 55:1 (2001), 47-80.

<sup>126</sup> For a general study on the links between European integration and the Cold War, see: N. Piers Ludlow (ed.), *European Integration and the Cold War* (New York, 2007).

so much so that his political survival depended on it, and so did the country's stability and future foreign policy orientation.

In most instances during Greece's road to stabilisation, the Community's conduct tended to confirm the charge levelled against European diplomacy that it rarely sets the agenda but rather reacts to external events.<sup>127</sup> However, what this chapter has tried to illustrate was that the decision to grant Greece EEC membership was completely conscious. It was not due to luck or the desire to avoid the embarrassment of acting otherwise. The political and strategic reasons were evident in the Community's planning. The problem however with these realisations on the part of the EEC was that they were lacking, as so often with the Community, a long-term policy. There were substantial reasons behind the 'yes' of the Nine at that specific moment of time. Nonetheless, there was no discussion about the future. From 1974 to 1976, the Community never really devoted much time to explaining how it was going to reconcile the threat to its economic interests and internal cohesion with the geostrategic and identity-related considerations that had encouraged Greek accession. At the end of the day, the Nine's leaders were politicians, ready to only address the present in order to survive politically. Indeed, it might have been easy to agree to open entry negotiations with Greece, only because the Nine were fully aware that the accession talks would be long and arduous. Therefore timing was also a crucial factor in explaining why the Nine said yes. This did not apply to the Commission, which as the guardian of the treaties of Rome felt the need to step in and suggest specific proposals that aimed to protect the Community in the long run.

As the Commission had rightly predicted and as the Greeks would experience themselves, there was a real distinction between the rhetoric of the Community and the reality of the Community. Once the negotiations entered the heated phase of discussing peaches and tomatoes, in other words when Western democratic ideals and Cold War imperatives receded to be replaced by immediate economic considerations, governments grew more realistic about the immediate implications of enlargement. They could easily say yes in principle and then spend years dragging their feet about the details. Would Greece undergo the frustrations and uncertainties of a long-drawn out entry negotiations? Only time would tell.

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<sup>127</sup> David Allen, 'Foreign Policy at the European Level: Beyond the Nation-State?' in Wallace, William et al(eds.), *Foreign Policy Making in Western Europe* (Surrey, 1978), 135-152.

## **Chapter 3: The Inauguration of Negotiations (9 February – December 1976)**

### **3.1. Introduction**

The Greek application to join the Community was endorsed by the Council of Foreign Ministers on 9 February 1976. The Council rejected the Commission's notion of a pre-accession period and instructed the latter and COREPER to prepare the way for the opening of the negotiations as soon as possible. The formal opening of talks took place on 27 July 1976, nearly six months later. The first part of this chapter will examine the main reasons behind the Community's procrastination, with emphasis on the Turkish factor, especially the EEC's journey to meet the Turkish demands whilst honouring its promises to the Greeks. Although the Council of Foreign Ministers had disagreed with the Commission's decision to include a reference to the Greek-Turkish dispute in its Opinion, the reality was that Turkey was a very important parameter that could not be ignored. In other words, the Nine, in order to maintain some form of balance between the two countries, strove to compensate Turkey for the prospect of Greek accession. The second part of the chapter looks at the second half of 1976 and deals exclusively with the setting up of the procedures that would govern the Greek negotiations with the EEC. The system devised reflected the Community's intentions and was an unwelcome surprise to the Greeks who had envisaged a swift conclusion of the accession talks. It looked ominously like an early warning sign of the troubles ahead.

### **3.2. Commission on the rebound**

The Commission had suffered the rare experience of a public internal split in adopting its Opinion on the Greek application, as well as an implied rebuke from the Council of Foreign Ministers following the decision of 9 February 1976. To make matters worse, the Commission's relations with Greece were also strained. Many commentators at the time viewed the Council's response 'not only as an act of ideological commitment to the consolidation of Greece's nascent democracy but also as an act of confrontation with the Commission - and affirmation of the Council's power as the sole organ to assume political initiatives on such sensitive issues'.<sup>1</sup> Still, on 17 February 1976, the principal driving force behind the formulation of the Opinion on Greece, Christopher Soames defended the basic lines of the Commission's Opinion by stressing the imminent danger of the Greek-Turkish dispute. He insisted 'il faut se référer, en

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<sup>1</sup> Tsalicoglou, *Negotiating*, 34,

considérant cette demande à la situation dans l'est de la Méditerranée et aux différences entre la Grèce et la Turquie. Si un de ces pays est membre de la Communauté et l'autre pays associé, ces différences pourraient nuire à la solidarité interne communautaire'.<sup>2</sup>

During a session in Strasbourg, the European Parliament held a two-hour debate on 10 March 1976 on relations with Greece as a follow-up to the Council's decision to accept the Greek application for membership. The ensuing debate afforded Soames a further opportunity to dispel doubts. In responding to a plethora of questions concerning the difference of opinion between the Commission and the Council, Soames tried to play down the whole situation, claiming the only point of difference was the fact that the Council did not accept the pre-accession period initially recommended by the Commission. However, he also underlined again the danger of the Greek-Turkish conflict. For him, the main concern was that the Greek government would use accession as a means of furthering its own interests on Cyprus vis-à-vis Turkey; Soames thought that Greece 'has already given undertakings to this effect'.<sup>3</sup> His insistence on the right of the Commission to point out obvious obstacles in the Greek case demonstrated the determination of the recently arrived British in Brussels, with Soames and Hannay at the forefront, to show their new colleagues how foreign policy *ought* to be done with a rigour and clarity that had, in their view, been lacking from earlier Commission behaviour. According to Soames himself, the Commission's responsibility: 'c'est de viser plus haut que le possible, d'aller plus loin que l'immédiat, et de mener jusqu'à leur terme les tâches qu'elle s'est fixées'.<sup>4</sup> Similar behaviour has been documented in the Commission's recent attempt to set up diplomatic relations with China.<sup>5</sup> The emergence of Soames at the Commission's diplomatic helm, as Sulzberger wrote in *Foreign Affairs*, had raised expectations 'for better coordination and direction in the Community's foreign policy'.<sup>6</sup>

However what the Commission and especially the British Commissioner for External Relations came to discover was that trying to apply cold logic to a situation where others were swayed by 'mere emotion' was not necessarily an easy or effective course. The majority of the leaders of the Nine had disapproved of the Commission's decision to publicly express its anxieties concerning the political problems of the Greek application in its Opinion. They believed that the clear economic difficulties involved in

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<sup>2</sup> Note on Soames and Greece, Brussels, 17 February 1976, FRSGCI 19920406/11.

<sup>3</sup> Telegram by D. Hinton, Brussels, 12 March 1976, USCFFP (1973-1976).

<sup>4</sup> Interview of C. Soames, 9 September 1976, UKCSF 16.

<sup>5</sup> Marie-Julie Chenard, 'The European Community's Opening to the People's Republic of China, 1970-1980', Ph.D. Thesis (LSE, London, forthcoming).

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in *New York Times*, 10 January 1973.

Greek accession would be a sufficient reason for maintaining a cautious attitude, without bringing delicate political considerations out into the public. The *Times* characterised the whole episode as ‘a disappointing setback for Soames’, who was one of the principal authors of the novel idea of a pre-accession period.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the differences of opinion within the Community, the Council of Foreign Ministers had given instructions for the opening of the negotiations, which meant that the Commission’s primary objective became rectifying its relationship with Greece. The current situation meant that the Commission ran the risk of being forced to work with a resentful new member should Greece succeed in its application. Similarly, the Greeks were eager to overcome the existing rift and establish closer relations with the Community’s executive organ, ‘whose role in the process of European integration was known and appreciated in Greece’.<sup>8</sup> Against this backdrop, Minister of Coordination and Planning Panayiotis Papaligouras visited Brussels at his government’s own initiative to rectify the image that had been conveyed to the press and initiate a satisfactory working relationship with members of the Commission, since ‘we cannot afford the luxury of a victory over the Commission’.<sup>9</sup> Equally, the Commission wanted to demonstrate that there was only good will on its side. Indicative of the Commission’s effort to infuse confidence in its relations with Greece, was the fact that Papaligouras was received in Brussels by a star-studded delegation, including Commission President Ortolí and Commissioner for External Relations Soames.<sup>10</sup>

The Greeks, feeling vindicated by the Council’s decision, confidently moved a step further in their talks with the Commission, delineating their negotiating strategy. The Greek government was of the view that due to the country’s minimal size, no significant problems were expected to arise in accession talks. Moreover, Athens envisaged a broad sweep in the examination of most issues, in order to achieve as soon as possible the membership which would be so politically beneficial for the country. As Wilhelm Haferkamp, the Commissioner for Economic, Finance, Credit and Investments, who visited Athens on 22 April 1976, concluded : ‘du côté grec, l’on a repris les arguments désormais habituels (l’affaire est politique, il faut conclure rapidement)... nos interlocuteurs sont prêts à signer n’importe quoi. Que cette disposition d’esprit faciliterait sans doute la négociation mais qu’elle pourrait conduire les Grecs à souscrire à des

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<sup>7</sup> *The Times*, 11 February 1976.

<sup>8</sup> Note by A. Rogerton, Brussels, 27 February 1976, ECBAC 66/1985 185.

<sup>9</sup> Note by P. Papaligouras, Athens, 15 February 1976, GRCKP 115A.

<sup>10</sup> Telegram by D. Hinton, Brussels, 27 February 1976, USCFPF (1973-1976).

engagements qui se révéleraient plus tard difficiles à tenir'.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, in the name of speed, the Greek negotiating team declared its intention to utilise the *acquis d'association* as a bargaining line to obtain the swift completion of the negotiations. Expressing his government's desires, Papaligouras explained to the Commission why the negotiations could be expedited in a relatively short time: 'The reason why the process of accession would be facilitated in Greece's case was that the association provided an extremely useful legal instrument for applying piecemeal some important provisions of the Treaty before accession'.<sup>12</sup> Far from hindering the accession negotiations, the framework of the Association Council could be used to secure for example agreements on the harmonisation of agricultural policies, which would take immediate effect and then simply be transposed to the accession negotiations as a pre-agreed item.

The Commission, albeit weakened slightly by the recent debacle over its Opinion, resisted Greek pressure. In particular, they disagreed with Papaligouras' overall assessment of the Commission's Opinion, as an 'accident de parcours'.<sup>13</sup> Despite the divisions over several aspects of its content, Ortolí considered the Opinion in its entirety an extremely useful tool in assessing important aspects of the Greek problem. In addition, he underlined how the carrying out of thorough technical background work would be crucial for the early commencement of negotiations, especially since the Greek government had given no indication of the nature of the problems it wanted to solve in the accession negotiations. Significantly, on 22 March 1976, a team from the Mediterranean Program Division of the World Bank, which was returning from an annual three-week economic report mission in Greece, met with some of the Commission staff responsible for the Greek enlargement such as Roland de Kergorlay and Inger Nielsen. During their meeting, the background and perspectives of the Greek application for membership were discussed in detail, although the lack of information meant that no definitive conclusions were reached.<sup>14</sup>

During the same period, the Federation of Greek industries (FGI), an important domestic organ, attacked the Greek government. In early 1976 the FGI, which had long been a vocal supporter of the government's European policy, heavily criticised not the policy itself, but the manner in which it was carried out, touching a very raw nerve and confirming the Commission's worst nightmares.<sup>15</sup> In *Kathimerini*, a Greek mainstream

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<sup>11</sup> Telegram by J. M. Merillon, Athens, 23 April 1976, FRAMAE , d/e, 1410.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Telegram by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 7 February 1976, GRFMA 03/351.

<sup>14</sup> Note by A. Rogerson, Brussels, 23 March 1976, ECBAC 48/1984 52.

<sup>15</sup> Letter by T.J. Everard, Athens, 10 March 1976, MXE020/358/1, 168, UKFCO 98/47.



newspaper, the industrialists' representative maintained that 'there were still many illusions that a common market is a panacea. The Greek government is undoubtedly guilty of having oversold the EEC and glossed over difficulties as part of their general policy of taking Brussels by frontal political assault and hoping that the maximum number of tricky details will get lost in negotiations or will get covered under a comfortable umbrella'.<sup>16</sup> Among industrialists who were bound to face difficulties were the small Greek iron and steel industry, the tyre industry, makers of various appliances and indeed a good number of those who had built up their commercial position on the basis of a protected market of nine million and in many cases of monopolistic privileges.

In response to these concerns, in March 1976 Papaligouras led the Greek administration in the inauguration of a five-year economic plan 'with the intention of creating the necessary fiscal conditions that will allow for the easy transition of the Greek economy to European standards in a short period of time'.<sup>17</sup> However, the government seemed torn between the need to maintain social cohesion, which was deemed so important for the consolidation of the democratic regime, and the promotion of measures that would limit the deficit which already carried the extra burden due to the increased defence expenditures in the midst of crisis with Turkey.<sup>18</sup> This led to increased state interventionism which Richard Clogg has described as follows: 'for a government ostensibly wedded to the free enterprise system, New Democracy displayed a curious penchant for taking banks and other enterprises into state ownership, adding to the very large numbers of those employed, directly or indirectly, by the state'.<sup>19</sup>

### **3.3. Difficulties arise**

Concern about the Greek attitude was not confined to the Commission. While accepting the Greek EEC application, the Community started to embrace the view that it had not yet come to grips with problems and inequities in its existing structure and that taking Greece on board *too rapidly* would not be in the best interest of either the Community or Greece. In the aftermath of the Council's decision, there was thus extensive discussion at COREPER as well as at Council of Foreign Ministers level of *four* key issues that needed to be addressed before negotiations could take off. Officially, the Commission told the Greeks that the period prior to the formal opening of the

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<sup>16</sup> *Kathimerini*, 6 March 1976.

<sup>17</sup> Meeting in the Ministry of Coordination and Planning, Athens, 18 March 1976, GRKaramanlis, vol. 9, 166.

<sup>18</sup> Kazakos, *Between State*, 314.

<sup>19</sup> Clogg, *Concise History*, 174.

negotiations with Greece would be used, as indeed had been the case with the first enlargement, for collecting necessary documentation and information in collaboration with the Greek authorities. Although this was true to some extent, it fails to tell the whole story: it was in fact precisely during this period that the Nine started, albeit timidly, to question the more imminent implications of the possible Greek entry to the EEC.

First, the Nine saw Greece's intense activity over the Commission's Opinion as an early indication of similar rough tactics likely to be followed in the course of negotiations. The Greeks would undoubtedly use all their diplomatic skills to gloss over the difficulties by underlining the political imperatives. In this light, the Commission along with the Nine considered it appropriate to avoid the mistakes of the past and in preparing the mandate for the next few months, to try to find some means of reconciling the economic realities with the political imperatives which had led the Council to behave as it had. This preoccupation explains the lengthy discussion of the nature of the principles that were supposed to direct the Nine's opening statement during the formal start of negotiations with the Greeks. The drafting of such statement was considered a very serious matter, as it would set the tone for the whole negotiation process and it would attract a good deal of public attention. The Dutch delegation was of the opinion that the Harmel declaration of 1 June 1970, which had been used for the opening of the first round of enlargement negotiations would suffice.<sup>20</sup> The majority of the other delegations however disagreed with this position, noting the distinctive aspects of the Greek case, such as the existence of the Association agreement, which called for different solutions and approaches and the need to highlight Greece's achievement in democratic consolidation as well as the Community's external and internal situation.<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, the Commission agreed that only a limited number of points of principle from the 1970 statement could be re-used in preparation of negotiations with Greece. In particular, the members of the Commission drew attention to the fact that the opening declaration in 1970 had been the result of six months of intensive preparation on the part of the Community. Such intensive and substantive preparations over a comparatively short period of six months had only been possible because the main problems which would need to be solved in the negotiations were already fairly well known after the enlargement negotiations which had taken place in the 1960s, and following numerous

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<sup>20</sup> For more on the British accession, Daniel Edwin Furby, 'The Revival and Success of Britain's Second Application for Membership of the European Community, 1968-1971', Unpublished PhD thesis (Queen Mary, London, 2011).

<sup>21</sup> Note by R. de Kergolay, Brussels, 22 June 1976, ECBAC 48/1984 41.

indications by the candidates as to the nature of the problems they would submit for solution in accession negotiations.<sup>22</sup> The Greek case was different.

The Nine were torn on how to reconcile this dawning reality with the need to satisfy the Greeks for the by then well-rehearsed political and strategic reasons.<sup>23</sup> For instance, the Danish permanent representative Niels Ersbøll and his British colleague Donald Maitland insisted on the need for a deeply detailed preparation on the part of the Community, with formal negotiations beginning in October 1976 at the earliest. They were supported by the Commission's working groups, which due to the scarcity of information provided by the Greek authorities had been unable to prepare the negotiating mandate. The French however deemed this proposal to be a mere delaying tactic. In particular, French EEC ambassador Jean-Marie Soutou, supported by his Dutch counterpart, expressed his preference for a formal opening of the negotiations before the summer.<sup>24</sup> Soutou believed that the information contained in the Opinion was enough to start and that anything else could follow after the formal opening of the negotiations.<sup>25</sup> The Greeks, worried that the Nine were using the lack of information as a delaying tactic, had already underlined in their contacts with the British that for political and psychological reasons, it was important to get the Greek-EEC talks started before the summer holidays. For the Greeks, even a ceremonial meeting would assist with the preparation of the Greek position at the actual talks. Roy Hattersley, the British state secretary, while expressing his understanding, also emphasised his hope that the Greeks should not be deluded about entry being a foregone conclusion, as there was a long period of hard negotiating ahead. He hoped that the Greek public opinion would not misconstrue the difficulties which might arise: 'The Community was a slow moving animal but not an ill-disposed one'.<sup>26</sup>

A second problematique was the unanimous opinion within the EEC that the admission of Greece would ultimately pave the way for other countries from the same area. Although it was highly uncertain when and how applications from Spain, Portugal and Turkey might be made, most of the Community's representatives acknowledged the fact that the admission of Greece would mark a decisive moment in the development of the Community, making it impossible to say 'no' to those applicants in the future. At the time, however, the Commission and the Nine still falsely believed that this prospect lay a

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<sup>22</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 6 May 1976, ECBAC 79/1982 249.

<sup>23</sup> Note by R. de Kergorlay, Brussels, 16 July 1976, ECBAC 48/1984 41.

<sup>24</sup> Letter by A. Gore-Booth, Brussels, 12 May 1976, MXE020/358/1, 250, UKFCO 98/49.

<sup>25</sup> Telegram by I. Raigaut, Brussels, 14 July 1976, FRSGCI 19920406/11.

<sup>26</sup> Call by Roussos to Hattersley, London, 24 May 1976, MXE020/358/1, 303 UKFCO 98/49.

long way into the future. In particular, Ortoli in a meeting with Papaligouras drew a clear distinction between Greece and all the other southern European aspirants. According to him, Portugal's case was not comparable to that of Greece, and Spain was a 'long term affair'. Similarly, in the same meeting, Pierre Lardinois, Commissioner for Agriculture, confidently claimed that 'Portugal was not going to submit a demand for membership till 6-12 months time at the earliest. Different modalities might be envisaged for Portugal than for Greece. As for Spain one could hope for early democratisation but no one could say whether it would come about in one - two or three years'.<sup>27</sup>

Despite the timing however, the Nine were well aware that any decisions taken on the Greek case could be used as a precedent for the next round of enlargement.<sup>28</sup> A report by the Centre National des Jeunes Agriculteurs (CNJA), an influential French agricultural pressure group noted: 'les faits sont les faits. La Grèce entrera dans le Marché commun. Il est inutile de nous lamenter. Les Grecs vont nous poser des problèmes sur une petite échelle. En fait nous sommes venus ici avec une arrière-pensée. Certes la Grèce nous intéresse mais c'est surtout le reste qui importe. Et nous savons qu'après elle il y aura l'Espagne et le Portugal et qu'il faudra un jour compter plus ou moins directement avec le Maghreb, avec les Turcs. Voilà notre véritable préoccupation'.<sup>29</sup> Similar concerns were widely spread across the Community. In particular, it was considered that 'any terms for Greek accession as it would have implications for Portuguese and Spanish accession should be studied in that wider context and not in isolation'.<sup>30</sup> It is striking therefore how soon the Nine stopped viewing Greece on its own merits alone. Already, the French side exemplified by the Minister of Agriculture, Pierre Méhaignerie, 'dresse ainsi immédiatement un constat très pessimiste sur les conséquences particulièrement graves pour les agriculteurs français d'un élargissement de la Communauté vers le Sud, et dans un premier temps d'une éventuelle adhésion de la Grèce'.<sup>31</sup> In short, the French ministries unlike the Élysée, which tended to stress the broader picture, were very conscious of the problems that the similarities between Greek, Spanish and Portuguese agricultural economies would pose for French agriculture particularly in the south of France. 'The Greek negotiations will have to be conducted with «even greater care»', urged Cantoni, the Quai's deputy director for Western

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<sup>27</sup> Note by I. Nielsen, Brussels, 23 September 1976, ECBAC 66/1985 185.

<sup>28</sup> Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting, Paris, 10 May 1976, FRSGCI 19920406/11.

<sup>29</sup> Telegram by J.-M. Merillon, Athens, 7 April 1976, FRAMAE, d/e, 1410.

<sup>30</sup> Letter by S. Griffith-Jones, London, 27 August 1976, MXP070/358/1 UKFCO 98/82. No page number

<sup>31</sup> Note by P.R. Bernard, Paris, 10 August 1976, FR5AG3 101.

Europeans affairs, ‘to make sure Greeks do not set [an] awkward precedent for Spain’.<sup>32</sup> ‘Le simple jeu de temps’, which according to Ortoli would be to Greece’s advantage, did not preclude the tendency of the Nine to think about prospective candidates while considering the Greek case.<sup>33</sup>

This ‘globalisation’ in reflections added gravity to the third problem, which referred to the nature and manageability of the Community.<sup>34</sup> Several representatives and in particular the Irish wondered how the Community, which was still digesting the effects of the first enlargement, would bear the institutional burden of a new admission. It was believed that the entry of a whole group of southern states with different attitudes to public administration and taxation would fundamentally change the whole balance and nature of the Community.<sup>35</sup> During a discussion with US ambassador Walter Curley, Irish Foreign secretary Paul Keating said that in principle the Irish had no problems with Greek progress toward full membership. Greece was at least as able as Ireland to bear the burden of EC membership. The question, he observed, was ‘whether the EC, already under considerable internal strain, could stand another member with another set of problems... another baby tugging at its apron strings’.<sup>36</sup> In this spirit, the Irish posed two additional preconditions before accepting to open negotiations with the Greeks. Firstly, they insisted that the volume of Community financial resources accruing to their country, especially those of the European Regional Development Fund, should not be reduced when establishing Greece’s share. Secondly, Ireland pressed for amelioration of the Community’s decision making before the enlargement took place.<sup>37</sup>

Finally and most crucially, potential Greek membership rendered the EEC more sensitive to Turkish needs in an effort to establish a certain balance in the Community’s relations with the eastern Mediterranean region. Although the Nine had rejected the Commission’s decision to point publicly to the Greek-Turkish divisions, they deeply believed that the Turks should not be made to feel abandoned. If Greece was considered important for the stabilisation of the southern flank of NATO, Turkey was a *sine qua non*. According to Kissinger, Turkey more than Greece was a ‘strategically indispensable ally and host to 26 surveillance installations from which the United States was monitoring

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<sup>32</sup> Telegram by K. Rush, Paris, 1 December 1976, USCFPF (1973-1976).

<sup>33</sup> Note from I. Nielsen, Brussels, 23 September 1976, ECBAC 66/1985 185.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Globalisation’ was a widely used term to describe the Community’s tendency to treat Greece as part of a package with Spain and Portugal in the EEC accession negotiations.

<sup>35</sup> Public Record Office, The National Archives, Cabinet Papers (henceforth UKCAB) 129/188/12, Memorandum by R. Hattersley, London, 19 March 1976.

<sup>36</sup> Telegram by W. Curley, Dublin, 4 February 1976, USCFPF (1973-1976).

<sup>37</sup> Note by C. Soames, Brussels, 19 June 1976, ECBAC 48/1984 649.

Soviet missile and nuclear testing'.<sup>38</sup> To make matters worse, the US Congress had reacted to developments in Cyprus by suspending American military aid to Turkey. The arms embargo was officially imposed in February 1975 to the chagrin of the Ford administration which since the trauma of Vietnam and Watergate had limited power while the Congress was becoming more assertive.<sup>39</sup> The Ford administration then no longer enjoyed the same flexibility and latitude in foreign affairs - a development that would add an unexpected complexity in the conduct of US international policy.<sup>40</sup> In the case of Greece and Turkey this complexity was further exacerbated by the anti-American sentiment that dominated both countries' domestic scenes. Such American preoccupations added to the pressure on Europe to be more generous to Turkey, leading to an emerging consensus in the EEC to attend to Turkey in any way possible. In other words, no progress could take place with the Greeks unless the Turks had been satisfied to the fullest. The latter became the main preoccupation of the Nine during these months.

### **3.4. How to deal with Turkey?**

Besides the divisions over the contents of the Opinion, the Commission and the member states were united in being sincerely and deeply concerned with the deterioration of the EEC's relations with Turkey, particularly with view to the Greek application. As Kohlase has aptly put it, 'in politics as in Pythagorean geometry, you cannot alter your relationship to one of the two equidistant points without simultaneously changing your position as regards the other'.<sup>41</sup> In this light, there was a dominant view that the Community should aim to restore a certain symmetry towards Greece and Turkey by addressing several outstanding issues at the forthcoming EEC/Turkey Association Council, which was to be held on the margins of the 1-2 March Foreign Affairs Council. 'Le Conseil prévu pour le mois mars devrait donc, dans l'esprit de la Commission, être utilisé pour tenter d'apaiser les griefs d'Ankara'.<sup>42</sup> Ultimately the Council was not in a position to take any major decision of substance, yet it provided a golden opportunity for the Turks to express their concern over possible Greek entry as well as to enlist the benefits they expected to accrue from their Association agreement.

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<sup>38</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (New York, 1999), 192.

<sup>39</sup> Robert David Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (Cambridge, 2006), 206.

<sup>40</sup> Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 192.

<sup>41</sup> Norbert Kohlase, 'The Greco-Turkish Conflict from a European Community', *The World Today*, (April 1981), 128.

<sup>42</sup>Note by J. M. Soutou, Brussels, 9 February 1976, FRSGCI 19880514/137.

In particular, Turkey's Foreign Minister İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil 'a fait état de la déception de son gouvernement devant ce qu'il a qualifié de « malaise » de l'association'.<sup>43</sup> He stressed the urgent need to restructure Turkey's Association agreement in light of the Greek accession.<sup>44</sup> In the past, Turkey's European responses were dictated to a large extent by Greek initiatives, the aim being to neutralise putative Greek attempts to isolate Ankara from Europe. In the words of a contemporary expert on EEC-Turkish affairs: 'the traditions of Turkish foreign policy required that Greece be watched very closely so that it would not use the political and economic weight resulting from a new relationship with Europe against Turkey'.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, Greece's Association agreement, signed in 1961, had been quickly followed in 1963 by a similar agreement between the EEC and Turkey. Byron Theodoropoulos, ambassador and general secretary of the Greek Foreign Ministry, had stated in an interview that 'had it not been for Greece's application, Turkey would have taken much longer to decide what kind of relationship to establish with the EEC'.<sup>46</sup> As the Turks were in no place to apply for full membership in the 1970s, the next best choice was to opt for an upgrade of the existing association mechanisms.<sup>47</sup>

Echoing this view, the President of the Council of Ministers, Gaston Thorn in a discussion in the European Parliament in March 1976, emphasised the need to give full encouragement to the Association with Turkey, as Greece's accession should be an influence for peace and co-operation in the eastern Mediterranean and not a further bone of contention. The majority of the participants to the parliamentary debate agreed that on no account should Turkey be given reason to feel that the Community was favouring Greece.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, it was decided to hold an Association Council meeting when the Nine could discuss Turkish demands to the fullest extent possible.

In particular, the EEC was called upon to address four main issues pertaining to the Ankara agreement, namely the agricultural review, free movement of labour, the negotiation of the third EEC/Turkey Financial protocol and Turkey's participation in European Political Cooperation. All of these four *volets* presented serious difficulties for the Nine which meant that coming up with a package that would satisfy the Turks would take time. Against this backdrop, the Nine were convinced that it was politically impossible to have the opening of accession negotiations with the Greeks before an

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<sup>43</sup> Note on relations with Greece and Turkey, Paris, 29 May 1976, FRAMAE, d/e, 1410.

<sup>44</sup> Note by M.J. Richardson, Brussels, 12 March 1976, ECBAC 66/1985 236.

<sup>45</sup> Ali Mehmet Birand, 'Turkey and the European Community', *The World Today* (February, 1978), 52.

<sup>46</sup> Byron Theodoropoulos, interview with the author, 30 March 2007.

<sup>47</sup> Tozun S. Bahçeli, 'Turkey and the EC: The Strains of Association', *Journal of European Integration*, 3:2 (1980), 221-237.

<sup>48</sup> EP Debates, Strasbourg, 8-12 March 1976.

Association Council with Turkey. Jean Dondelinger, the Luxembourg permanent representative, had insightfully proclaimed in an earlier COREPER meeting that ‘for Greece the pill of postponement would be sweetened by eventual opening of the accession negotiations, the Turks had no sugar’.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, it was argued that the Turks had priority and it was finally agreed that a meeting with the Turks could not be arranged until the Community was sure of being able to offer a substantially improved aid package to them.<sup>50</sup>

However, the ongoing recession and the recently launched Global Mediterranean Policy made it very difficult to translate declarations into practical results.<sup>51</sup> The first obstacle was to agree on the sum of money provided under the third Turkish/EEC financial protocol. As the existing EEC/Turkey second financial protocol was due to expire in May 1976, the Commission proposed a total figure of 500 m.u.a of which 85% would be aid elements in the form of special loans to be provided by the member states. The Commission had taken the figures of the previous financial protocols and increased them to take account of the inflation. Although all representatives acknowledged the Community’s clear political interest in giving money to Turkey in order to maintain equilibrium between Athens and Ankara, they worried about the high sums involved, and the French in particular were reluctant to take any final decisions on the figures under discussion until the Joint Council of Foreign and Finance Ministers on 5 April 1976.

The Joint Council failed however to agree on the Community’s external financial commitments, mainly due to the dismal economic environment that prevented the tabling of generous offers. In particular, they could not reach an agreement on how the total amounts of funds available might be distributed. According to a COREPER report, Greece was to receive 230 m.u.a in EIB funds, 50 m.u.a in grants, in total 280 m.u.a and Turkey would receive 85 in EIB funds, 215 grants, adding up to 300 m.u.a. Soames complained on behalf of the Commission that the amounts envisaged for Greece and Turkey were insufficient. The previous Turkish financial protocol alone amounted to 290 m.u.a. If accepted, the Council President’s proposal meant that they would, in absolute terms, be getting the same amount as last time, nowhere near the 500 m.u.a the Commission had originally proposed. The French were the least satisfied with this proposal, arguing that the Greek share should exceed that of Turkey in order to prepare

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<sup>49</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 22 May 1976, ECBAC 66/1985 135.

<sup>50</sup> Meeting of Council of Ministers(Foreign Affairs), Brussels,31 May-1 June 1976, MXE/020/358/1, 300, UKFCO 98/49.

<sup>51</sup> Elena Calandri, ‘A special relationship under strain: Turkey and the EEC, 1963-1976’, *Journal of European Integration History* 15:1(2009), 57-76.



the country for full membership. However, Irish Foreign Minister Garret Fitzgerald pointed out that the Greeks were unlikely to thank the Community for sabotaging the Association Council with Turkey and consequently the opening of Greece's accession negotiations. Therefore, given the failure to agree on the grant distributions, nobody dissented from the proposition that the Association meeting with Turkey foreseen for 26 June would have to be postponed and that this also meant delaying the opening of the negotiations with Greece.<sup>52</sup>

The Greeks were getting increasingly worried. The French ambassador in Greece had a brief discussion with Karamanlis and Papaligouras in early June. Naturally the object of conversation revolved around the latest inability of the Council of Ministers to finalise the Community's financial commitments. This impasse was regarded in Greece's eyes as a stumbling block on their European path. What was of importance to Greece and in particular to the prestige of Karamanlis, who had promised his people the dream of European membership, was the opening of negotiations as soon as possible. As Papaligouras claimed: 'pour des raisons purement pragmatiques «un bon tiens vaut mieux que deux tu l'auras» et tout autant politiques, Karamanlis veut montrer au peuple hellène que cette accession à l'Europe tant de fois promis se présente enfin de façon concrète'.<sup>53</sup> To make things easier for the French who seemed to be the main supporters of the Greek case, Papaligouras added: 'Ce qui compte pour nous essentiellement c'est le volume de notre enveloppe. La comparaison avec la Turquie est relativement secondaire. Par ailleurs nous sommes conscients de l'existence d'un barrage'.<sup>54</sup>

Following the same diplomatic tactics, on 10 June 1976 Papaligouras visited West Germany, where he expressed his severe disappointment over how matters were being held up by the lack of agreement over Community aid to Mediterranean countries. According to Jürgen Trumpf, head of the European Communities department of the German Foreign Ministry, the Greek government was not pressing for a higher sum than Turkey. Indeed, they accepted that they would receive a lower figure. The Greeks mostly wanted the formal opening of their negotiations. They appreciated France's support in getting high sums in the second financial protocol, but as Papaligouras noted the French 'might kill the child by hugging it too tightly'.<sup>55</sup> Both Schmidt and Genscher had agreed to try to get negotiations going quickly. Trumpf had expressed hope that, if the Nine

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<sup>52</sup> Meeting of Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Brussels, 31 May/1 June 1976, MXE/020/358/1, 300, UKFCO 98/88.

<sup>53</sup> Telegram by J.M. Merillon, Athens, 4 June 1976, FRSGCI 19920406/10.

<sup>54</sup> Telegram by J.M. Merillon, Athens, 4 June 1976, FRSGCI 19920406/10.

<sup>55</sup> Meeting between Schmidt and Papaligouras, Bonn, 10 June 1976, Doc 182, FRGAAPD 1976, 835-839.

could reach agreement on a sum for a third Turkish financial protocol, they would then agree to hold the Turkish/EEC Association Council in early July armed with that sum. This would also allow the opening of negotiations with the Greeks.<sup>56</sup>

The French after an acrimonious dispute with the rest of the Community and having received the green light from the Greeks, agreed on 30 June 1976 to finally grant 310 m.u.a to Turkey and 280 m.u.a to Greece. Although it received more than Greece, the final amount was rather insufficient to cover Turkey's deteriorating economic situation. In the 1970s, as Pamuk has noted, Turkey 'was governed by a series of fragile coalitions with short-term horizons. As a result, the government made no attempt to shift towards exports-oriented policies or even adjust the macroeconomic balances after the first oil shock of 1973'.<sup>57</sup> To make matters worse, the balance of trade deficit with the EEC had reached the astonishing amount of £3 billion in 1976; whilst Turkey was particularly dependent on EEC countries for its trade (49% of her exports, 46% of its imports), none of the EEC members were particularly dependent on Turkey as an export market or a source of imports.<sup>58</sup>

However, it was not just the inability to offer the necessary economic aid that hindered the possibility of improving EEC-Turkish relations. The EEC had failed to follow up article 35 of the Additional Protocol signed in November 1970, which required biannual agricultural negotiations. There should also have been an agricultural review in 1973 regarding Turkish products, but this had been postponed pending the preferential agreements with the Mediterranean countries. In 1976, these had been concluded; therefore the Turks were expecting their turn. In particular, they hoped the Nine could contribute to Turkish exports by facilitating access for Turkey's agricultural products.<sup>59</sup> But Italian and French obstructionism meant that the Community could not agree on these agricultural concessions – a problem that would recur during the Greek negotiations in 1977.<sup>60</sup> As a result, the Nine failed to deliver on their promises to Turkey in the agricultural sphere. The same story played out regarding the free movement of labour. Under article 36 of the 1970 Additional Protocol, the Community was expected to begin this process with Turkey in 1976.<sup>61</sup> Ankara was deeply interested in seeking greater freedom of movement and better social security benefits for its workers in

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<sup>56</sup> Letter by F. Cornish, Bonn, 15 June 1976, M8E020/358/1, 346, UKFCO 98/50.

<sup>57</sup> Sevket Pamuk, 'Economic Change in twentieth-century Turkey', in Kasaba, Resat (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey, Turkey in the Modern World*, vol. 4 (Cambridge, 2008), 285.

<sup>58</sup> *The New York Times*, 10 October 1976.

<sup>59</sup> Tsakaloyiannis, 'The European Community and the Greek-Turkish dispute', 46.

<sup>60</sup> Chapter four.

<sup>61</sup> Telegram by D. Hinton, Brussels, 14 July 1976, USCFFP(1973-1976).

Europe. Already, remittances from these workers, a major source of foreign exchange in Turkey, had dropped 30% in the first half of 1976.

However, the same economic troubles that had caused the slump in Turkish remittances explained the Community's inability to honour the agreement. The position of Turkish migrant workers in the Community had become a very critical issue, 'since by 1976 their number had reached around 600,000, plus about one million dependants, with annual remittances to Turkey running at an estimated £1 billion'.<sup>62</sup> There was no surprise therefore that when the target date arrived, the EEC merely pledged to improve the freedom of movement of Turkish workers *already* in the Community.<sup>63</sup> Even the Germans, who had taken a pro-Turkish line, refused to accommodate more Turkish immigrants, a rather sensitive domestic political issue in a country that hosted the majority (85%) of Turks within the EEC.<sup>64</sup> The German ambassador to Ankara, Gustav Sonnenhol had warned the Auswärtiges Amt to no avail, against continuing to address the problem of employment of guest workers only in the light of labour market situation and separated from all international political factors.<sup>65</sup> Once more this difficulty would foreshadow problems that Greece too would encounter later in the decade.

The final blow was given over the emerging European Political Cooperation mechanism. In the 1970s, optimism for closer political cooperation in the EEC did not leave the EEC's associate members unaffected, Turkey and Greece in particular. They too desired to take part in the progressive alignment of the foreign policies of the Nine. The EEC held intensive talks on how the political cooperation process could be developed so that it could provide contacts with aspirant countries without diluting or holding up the convergence of the foreign policies of the existing Nine.<sup>66</sup> The origins of the discussion between Greece, Turkey and the EEC over the EPC were contained in a decision taken by Foreign Ministers in the Hague in November 1972: 'the Ministers decided that the President will inform the Turk and Greek Foreign Minister respectively, on a personal basis of developments in political cooperation'.<sup>67</sup> This resulted in political cooperation sessions between the Presidency and the associate country, attended by member states if they so wished, on the margins of the Association Council. When Ministers agreed in 1972 that Turkey should be kept generally informed by the EEC

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<sup>62</sup> Telegram by D.Oncken, Athens, 29 July 1976, Doc 250, FRGAAPD 1976, 1158.

<sup>63</sup> William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000* (London, 2002), 176.

<sup>64</sup> Meeting between Schmidt and Demirel, Ankara, 28 May 1976, Doc 162, FRGAAPD 1976, 732-736.

<sup>65</sup> Telegram by G. Sonnenhol, Ankara, 11 August 1976, Doc 261, FRGAAPD 1976, 1196-1197.

<sup>66</sup> Note by R.A. Hibbert, London, 20 December 1976, MWEQ1/1, 221, UKFCO 98/83.

<sup>67</sup> Brief for the Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Brussels, 26 July 1976, MXE/358/1, 476, UKFCO 98/52.

Presidency of developments in political cooperation, there was some discussion about extending this information procedure to Greece. However, no decision had been made, largely because of EEC members' disapproval of the Greek colonels' regime. Once constitutional government in Greece had been re-established, there was no reason for the Nine to deny Greece the arrangements which had been extended to Turkey, especially as they merely involved offering information and excluded consultation. Moreover, such a move would reflect the EEC's overall policy of maintaining an equal distance towards the two associate states.

Since Greece's application in June 1975, Turkey had on several occasions attempted to establish a 'special relationship' with the Nine in political cooperation as a means of compensating for the consequences of a possible Greek accession. Their last attempt was during the 1-2 March Association Council, when, knowing that the Greeks could possibly accede to the Community, they pressed member states for closer cooperation and consultation between Turkey and the Community on the grounds that the Greek application would destroy the previous balance between Turkey, Greece and EEC. The member states then responded firmly that there was no need to change the existing EPC arrangements. As a compromise and in its resolve to preserve the balance between Greece and Turkey, the Nine strove to make Greece understand that membership of the Community would not get them automatically on its side in relation to Turkey and that the Nine would take active steps to prevent Greece's membership prejudicing their relationship with Turkey.<sup>68</sup> In order to assuage the fears of the Nine as well those of Turkey, the Greek delegation, in a premeditated move, made an attempt to alleviate any apprehension of the Greek-Turkish dispute encroaching on the EEC workings, by proposing to Turkey a non-aggression pact.<sup>69</sup> Already on 7 April 1976 the Greek Prime Minister, during a debate on foreign policy in the Greek parliament, had proposed that Greece and Turkey should conclude a treaty banning the use of force and stopping the arms race. Dimitris Kosmadopoulos, the Greek Ambassador in Ankara, immediately gave the text of this part of Karamanlis' speech to the Turkish government. The immediate Turkish reaction to Karamanlis' initiative, although not negative, was nonetheless somewhat vague and did not lead to any concrete measures being taken.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Note by L.P. Neville-Jones, London, 5 November 1976, MWE020/358/1, 631, UKFCO 98/55.

<sup>69</sup> Letter by D. Oncken, Athens, 22 April 1976, Doc 110, FRGAAPD 1976, 501-504.

<sup>70</sup> Dimitris Kosmadopoulos, *Οδοιπορικό ενός Πρέσβη, 1974-1976* [An Ambassador's journey, 1974-1976] (Athens), 297-298.

Overall, the Nine's final offer to Turkey proved unsatisfactory on all levels. Commissioner for External Relations, Christopher Soames was deeply disappointed with the turn of events: 'time and again Ministers have decided that relations with Turkey are important from a political point of view, but each time the experts have subsequently not been able to translate this into serious proposals'.<sup>71</sup> The EC/Turkey Association Council meeting previously planned for 24 July 1976 in Ankara had been definitely postponed at the suggestion of the Turks. Furthermore, the Turks declined Dutch Foreign Minister Van der Stoel's offer to go to Ankara for informal discussions on the same date. Christian de Margerie, President's Ortolí Chef de cabinet, reported that in seeking postponement of the Association Council meeting, the Turks indicated that they would not take it amiss if the Community went ahead with its planned Greek/EEC Association council meeting and formal opening of the accession negotiations with the Greeks.<sup>72</sup>

Failure to address the Turkish demands also meant that no progress had been made in the Greek case in the six months following the Council's decision of 9 February 1976. This deadlock was badly received on the Greek side. The *Financial Times*, in an editorial dedicated to the Greek case, referred to the Greeks' desire to hasten EEC entry primarily for political reasons, springing from the experience of the Colonels: although nearly two years had passed since the military returned to the barracks, the memory of the preceding seven years was still very much alive in Athens.<sup>73</sup> Coup fever still gripped the capital and extended across most of the political spectrum. Reports from the Quai d'Orsay underlined this anxiety in the following statement: 'en bref, les autorités helléniques sont dans l'expectative. Elles manifestent une certaine déception. Soulignent avec intention tactique que la faiblesse de l'acquis d'association et le rejet par les instances communautaires des propositions avancées du côté grec dans le dossier d'harmonisation sont susceptible de renforcer ici la position des adversaires de l'adhésion. Mais, pour finir, tiennent essentiellement à ne pas envenimer le climat de leurs relations avec les Neuf'.<sup>74</sup>

With rumours flying around that the Nine would further procrastinate in opening talks with the Greeks, British journalists were waging bets with their German colleagues against the opening of the negotiations with Greece.<sup>75</sup> However, the diplomatic tactics on the Greek side coupled with the Nine's acceptance of their inability to offer a more generous package to the Turks, despite intense efforts to the contrary, finally contributed

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<sup>71</sup> Note by C. Soames, Brussels, 21 May 1975, ECBAC 50/1984 41.

<sup>72</sup> Telegram by D. Hinton, Brussels, 22 July 1976, USCFPF (1973-1976).

<sup>73</sup> *The Financial Times*, 24 June 1976.

<sup>74</sup> Telegram by J.M.Merillon, Athens, 28 June 1976, FRSGCI 19920406/10.

<sup>75</sup> Stathatos, *40 Years*, 65.

to the affirmation of the Nine's political will to formally open negotiations with the Greeks irrespective of the outcome of the Turkish Association talks. The Nine knew very well that the Greek government had placed exaggerated hopes on entry into the EEC. The reasons that had led them to say 'yes' a few months earlier still existed; and the Nine's public expression of enthusiastic support had tended to bolster political hopes. Already in March, the Community knew that progress on the Aegean was likely to be very slow and any settlement reached in Cyprus could be represented as making the best of a badly handled situation but hardly as a success. For Karamanlis' political survival, it was significant that he continue to derive maximum political benefit from his application to the EEC. For this reason, the Nine were rather apprehensive towards any approach to the Greeks which might be perceived by Athens as second-class treatment.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, they decided to ceremonially open the negotiations for Greek membership on 27 July 1976, even though the real negotiations were not to begin until the autumn.

Symbolically, on 24 July 1976, that is to say the day of the abortive EEC-Turkish association meeting and only three days before the Nine would give the official go ahead to negotiations with Greece, the Turks sent an exploratory vessel into the disputed area of the Aegean.<sup>77</sup> Although the issue of the continental shelf's delimitation between Greece and Turkey dated back to 1973, the dispatching of the Sismik 1 at that particular time demonstrated how easily a small incident could escalate into a major clash. Moreover it acted as a reminder of the imminent danger the EEC faced in becoming entangled in an unwanted Greco-Turkish dispute.<sup>78</sup> As tension was at its highest, the Nine in collaboration with the USA were instrumental in obtaining unanimous approval at the UN Security Council for a resolution calling for the two countries to reduce tensions in the area and seek a negotiated solution.<sup>79</sup> Van der Stoep, commenting on the event in the European Parliament, argued: 'the role of the Nine has not always found its way into the press, but I can assure you that in those days of crisis in connection with the oil drilling operation the Nine definitely asserted themselves in a very active way. I can also assure you that there was the closest cooperation between the Nine and the

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<sup>76</sup> Note by B. Richards, Athens, 30 November 1976, MWE020/358/1, 691, UKFCO 98/56.

<sup>77</sup> Sotiris Rizas, 'Managing a Conflict between allies: United States Policy towards Greece and Turkey in relation to the Aegean dispute 1974-1976', *Cold War History*, 9:3 (2009), 367-387.

<sup>78</sup> Andreas Wilson, *The Aegean Dispute* (London, 1980). For the Greco-Turkish dispute in general: Jonathan Alford (ed.), *Greece and Turkey: adversity in Alliance* (Aldershot, 1983); Thanos Veremis, *Ιστορία Ελληνοτουρκικών Σχέσεων, 1453-2005* [History of Greek-Turkish Relations, 1453-2005] (Athens, 2005).

<sup>79</sup> Panos Tsakaloyiannis, 'Greece, Turkey and the Politics of Accession', in Minet, Georges (ed.), *The Mediterranean Challenge* (Sussex, 1981), 135.

Netherlands Presidency on the one hand and the United States administration on the other hand, precisely in order to prevent any further escalation'.<sup>80</sup>

However, the Aegean episode along with the failure to meet Turkish demands provided a typical example of the interaction between politics and economics and showed the futility of trying to treat these two aspects independently.<sup>81</sup> The Nine, reflecting pressures from their treasuries, would not go along with a generous economic package for Turkey, despite political imperatives dictating to the contrary. Similar pressures also led to procrastination in the talks with Greece. Indicative of the deterioration in EEC-Turkish relations was the fact that the EEC-Turkish Association Council did not convene once between March 1976 and February 1980. In 1978, the Community would try to rectify the situation, to no avail.<sup>82</sup> Henceforth, the disparity in relations with Greece and Turkey reached the point of no return. At all levels of informed public opinion in Turkey, there was a deep feeling of unease regarding relations with the Community. However, it was not solely the EEC who bore responsibility for the stagnation in its relations with Turkey in 1970s. The Turkish government, for its part, could not reach agreement to take steps on any critical issue largely because of internal divisions and the fear that any concessions would be exploited by the opposition for electoral purposes.<sup>83</sup> Hannay, Soames' chef de cabinet, speculated that it was more 'Turkey's view of its general political situation in the world and its domestic political considerations than the merits of the specific Association agreement proposals that played a role in EC-Turkish relations'.<sup>84</sup> This was not the case with the Greek government, which with Karamanlis at the helm and having recently won the elections with overwhelmingly majority, had made EEC entry its ultimate political objective.

### **3.5. Formal opening of the Greek negotiations**

In spite of the above mentioned obstacles, the Nine held the EEC/Greece Association Council on 27 July 1976. This was followed by the formal opening of the negotiations for Greece's accession to the Community, which went off without a hitch. Van der Stoel declared the meeting open and welcomed the Greek delegation and in particular Papaligouras in his capacity as spokesman. Van der Stoel's statement developed along the lines already agreed upon by the latest Council of Ministers. Besides shedding

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<sup>80</sup> On the working symbiosis between EEC and USA in the Aegean debacle, see Karamouzi, 'Telling the whole story'.

<sup>81</sup> Tsakaloyiannis, 'Greece, Turkey and the Politics of Accession', 135.

<sup>82</sup> See chapter five.

<sup>83</sup> Telegram by K. Gould, Hague, 9 September 1976, USCFFP (1973-1976).

<sup>84</sup> Telegram by D. Hinton, Brussels, 3 September 1976, USCFFP (1973-1976).

light on the Community's recent achievements, the Council's President was eager to underline two issues. Firstly, he referred to the democratic character of the EEC and how well Greece's return to democracy fitted within this emerging identity, and then he attempted to disassociate the pre-existing Association agreement from the formal opening of the accession negotiations.

Papaligouras made it clear that Greece definitely intended to subject itself to the Community's rules and that a transitional period would be needed after full accession, and made several points with regards to specific problems. A striking element in Papaligouras' statement was his insistence on viewing the Association agreement as evolving and as the starting base for future negotiations between Greece and the Community. Although he agreed with the President of the Council that the formal opening of the Greek accession negotiations was much more than just one more stage along the path laid out in 1961, he was of the opinion that this 'qualitative leap forward' should not apply 'for certain consultation procedures already provided for by the Association agreement'.<sup>85</sup> In relation to the Association agreement, Papaligouras expanded the Greek case along familiar lines and made a synopsis of the functioning of the agreement. On the financial protocol, he said that the amounts were less than his government had hoped for or felt Greece merited. They would however accept what was proposed, but expected the Community to make up for the smallness of its offer by flexibility on the modalities. In particular, he hoped that Greece could have access to the money before ratification of the protocol.

Van der Stoel assured Papaligouras that all the delegations present shared the latter's wish that the voice of Greece be heard alongside those of the present member states. He considered that his statement, which dealt explicitly with the objectives of Greece and made it possible to identify the broad outlines of Greece's position from the outset, could only facilitate the opening of the negotiations, but warned from experience that such complex negotiations would inevitably require a relatively long period. The real discussions would get under way as soon as possible after the holidays. He felt that in these circumstances it was still too early to fix an official date for a further ministerial meeting between Greece and the Community; Papaligouras observed that there were two problems which, in his view, should not be difficult to resolve. The first was the establishment of procedures and also that the work should be started immediately after the holidays at all levels, and particularly the work of those responsible for conducting

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<sup>85</sup> Opening Statement by Panayiotis Papaligouras, Brussels, 27 July 1976, ECBAC 79/1982 249.



technical negotiations. Van der Stoel concluded that there was agreement on this point and that the negotiations would therefore begin on a date fixed by mutual agreement.<sup>86</sup>

The formal opening of the negotiations and specifically the opening statements revealed the contradictory policies of Greece and the Community. On the one side, the Greeks went into great detail in outlining their position for the negotiations while on the other side the Community representatives presented only a number of fundamental principles as a basis for negotiation.<sup>87</sup> Greece wanted to press ahead and emphasised speed whereas the Community was reluctant to propose detailed solutions in the absence of a *vue d'ensemble* of the Greek positions, a recurrent theme throughout the negotiations in the following year. Moreover, Inger Nielsen, who headed the Commission team in DG1 staffing the Greek accession talks, and Charles Coporale, DG I Division Chief for Southern Europe, noted that 'while Greek government is insisting on speedy negotiations, there is still a great amount of preparatory work to be done before the two sides can begin serious substantive discussions'.<sup>88</sup> The initial comparison of Community law with applicable Greek law and regulations to identify and then determine how to reconcile discrepancies alone would be a very time-consuming task. Nielsen further indicated that in pushing for early substantive talks at the time of the ceremonial opening of accession negotiations on 27 July the Greeks tried to minimise the importance of detailed preparations.

Speed was certainly the watchword in Greece's negotiating strategy. Although Karamanlis was completely aware that the main precondition for the start of substantive talks was the systematic examination of the *droit dérivé* (Community's secondary legislation), the volume of which surpassed 25000 pages signifying the immensity of the task, he considered a negotiating team of about 10 people who would be generally based in Athens but would frequently visit Brussels to be adequate. The smallness of the Greek permanent team was justified in terms of speed and in an effort to avoid being bogged down by too many subject experts. In the same spirit, a law authorising the Minister of Coordination to represent Greece in the negotiations and setting up internal consultations and adaptation machinery was put through the parliamentary committee. Nicolas Kyriazidis, former Deputy-Governor of the Bank of Greece was formally appointed as chief negotiator – under the overall responsibility of Papaligouras while

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<sup>86</sup> Draft Minutes of the Ministerial Meeting, Brussels, 27 July 1976, ECBAC 79/1982 249.

<sup>87</sup> Constantin Symeonides - Tsatsos, 'The European Community and Greece: A Multilateral, Bilateral and Personal negotiation', Unpublished PhD thesis (University of Geneva, 1989), 172.

<sup>88</sup> Telegram by D. Hinton, Brussels, 28 September 1976, USCFPP (1973-1976).

Gregory Varfis, Director-General for European Cooperation and International Economic Relations at the Ministry of Coordination and Planning since 1974, occupied the role of deputy. Alexander Chloros, Professor of Law along with Professor Dimitrios Eurugenis headed the team of legal experts. The fifth place went to the Director-General of Economic Affairs in Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There was a fear that permanent agriculture or industrial experts on the team would risk going too much into the details and thus slow down the proceedings. Papaligouras retained a whip hand for internal organisation of EEC matters in Greece.<sup>89</sup> At the same time, Karamanlis moved on with the reshuffling of the Greek government. Ioannis Boutos was appointed Minister of Agriculture. The government spokesman, Panayiotis Lambrias commented: ‘great importance is attached to the harmonisation of agricultural policies in the light of Greece’s forthcoming admission to the Community. This is the reason why this sector has been particularly reinforced. During the coming period of preparation for full entry into the EEC, ‘a decisive and firm hand will be required at the ministry of agriculture to carry through the necessary adjustments with a minimum of social and political disturbances’.<sup>90</sup>

At Greek request, COREPER agreed on 23 September 1976 to hold the first Ministerial Greece-EEC meeting on the margins of the Foreign Affairs Council on 18-19 October in Luxembourg. The presidency proposed it to be short and confined to procedure. Several member states led by Britain were doubtful about holding an early ministerial meeting simply to discuss procedure and wondered whether a meeting could take place more profitably later in the year, when there would be substance to discuss as well. However, it was argued that the Greeks attached great importance to a meeting in October and the Nine thus saw no alternative but to deal with procedure first and substance later.<sup>91</sup> The first Ministerial meeting was therefore entirely devoted to the organisation of the negotiating procedures. The Nine looked to past experience for guidance. They decided that the negotiations with Greece would be conducted in the same format that was used in 1970-72, i.e. the Council of Foreign Ministers would be the negotiating body for the Community and the Presidency would act as the Community spokesman, except for cases where the Commission had specific competences when it would speak for the Community. It was agreed that there would be two phases in the negotiations: the first, exploratory phase would entail a stocktaking of both sides’

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<sup>89</sup> Telegram by B. Richards, Athens, 22 September 1976, MXE020/358/1, 540, UKFCO 98/53.

<sup>90</sup> Note by P. Boutos, Athens, 30 September 1976, GRCKP 96.

<sup>91</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 23 September 1976, MXE020/358/1, 548, UKFCO 98/53.

positions on all areas of Community activity with a view to identifying the various problems of each side and the choices open for their solution.<sup>92</sup> The Commission's role in putting proposals to the Council would be therefore particularly important in this preparatory phase.<sup>93</sup> The second phase would consist of substantive negotiations aimed at aligning the Community and Greek positions with a view to drafting the Treaty of Accession.

The negotiations *per se* would be conducted on the basis of regular meetings between the Community and Greek delegations at two levels: ministerial and deputy level. In particular, it was decided that there should be one meeting at Ministerial level every three months and one one-day meeting at Deputy level each month, on the understanding that meetings could be held more frequently if this was felt necessary. The Ministerial meetings would be chaired by the Foreign Minister of the country assuming the EEC Presidency while the Greek delegation would be headed by the Minister of Planning and Coordination or the Foreign Minister and the Minister responsible for relations with the EEC, a position created in 1977.<sup>94</sup> The ministerial discussions would be preceded however by more frequent meetings at the Deputy level, where Greece would be represented by the President of the negotiating team and the Nine by their EEC Permanent representatives. Here was where most of the preliminary discussion would take place and most technical problems would be resolved. Only important points of contention would be handled at ministerial level. As Ludlow notes, 'the deputies, in other words, performed a role equivalent to that of COREPER in the usual Community structure'.<sup>95</sup>

The Community resisted the Greeks' desire to dictate the speed and substance of the negotiations. Either way, it would not be possible for the Community to make its response to Greek views at the same session in which these were expressed. The pattern, which was the same as in the UK negotiations six years earlier, meant that at least in the exploratory phase the Deputies' sessions and presumably also the Ministerial ones would be little more than an exchange of formal statements and that usually the Greeks would make a statement at the end of the meeting to which the Community would respond at the subsequent meeting. Only during the substantive phase, would the two sides attempt to align their respective positions in order to reach an agreement.

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<sup>92</sup> Tsalicoglou, *Negotiating*, 38.

<sup>93</sup> Telegram by D. Hinton, Brussels, 12 May 1976, USCFFP (1973-1976).

<sup>94</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Luxembourg, 19 October 1976, GRCKP 111A.

<sup>95</sup> Ludlow, *Dealing with Britain*, 68.

The real complexity of the Greek negotiations emanated not from this multi-layer format of negotiations, but from the Community's determination to always present a common Community stance in their meetings with the Greeks. This Community-first attitude meant that before any encounters with Greece, the Community needed to deliberate *à Neuf* and reach a unified position. This was the most time-consuming aspect of the negotiations and, much to the dismay of the applicant, it was also in this context that the true bargaining took place. In the same defensive spirit, the Community delegation stated that it was prepared to brief the Greek delegation at regular intervals on developments within the Community so as to enable it to make any adjustments to Greek legislation which such developments might require, on the understanding that until Greece's accession had taken effect, the development of the Community would be a matter for the Community alone. The EEC therefore remained true to its long-standing insistence that had emerged out of the first abortive enlargement negotiations with the British in the early 1960s and which reflected the need to protect the Community, that enlargement negotiations should not be permitted to slow down the internal development of the Community and that candidate countries should not be allowed to influence the shaping of internal legislation during the enlargement talks. As the French put it, the Nine 'tendent à rechercher une formule qui, d'une part obligerait la Grèce à accepter l'acquis communautaire sans pouvoir le discuter en négociations, mais qui d'autre part, permettait à la CEE d'infléchir éventuellement cet acquis dans certains secteurs pour tenir compte du poids du nouvel adhérent'.<sup>96</sup>

The Greeks however hardly welcomed this attitude, which after all ran in fundamental contrast to their overriding emphasis on speed. Indicatively, in the first Deputy level meeting on 10 December 1976 no decision was reached. In accordance with Papaligouras' own wish, negotiations began with the topic of the customs union and the free movement of goods in the industrial sector. The two sides, led respectively by the Dutch Minister of Economic Affairs Ruud Lubbers and Nikolaos Kyriazides, exchanged speeches along the expected lines, but the Greek representative pressed for a decision on the length of the transitional period, at least as a working hypothesis. Lubbers avoided being drawn beyond the content of the agreed Community statement. The Greeks were thus somewhat disappointed by the outcome of the meeting, which however, as Varfis claimed, constituted a reality check for the negotiating team. On 2 December 1976 the representatives in COREPER referred to the Greek obsession with a swift completion of

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<sup>96</sup> Note by I. Raigaut, Brussels, 14 July 1976, FRSGCI 19920406/11.

negotiations, stating: 'il est à noter enfin que, se référant au calendrier suggéré, par les Grecs dans leur note du 29 novembre en ce qui concerne la conduite des négociations (fin des travaux sur le droit dérivé en juillet prochain, fin de la première phase exploratoire au niveau des suppléants en avril, conclusion des négociations dans un an), la plupart des délégations a souligné l'irréalisme de telles échéances et suggéré que l'attention de nos partenaires helléniques soit appelée sur ce point'.<sup>97</sup> The tension between Greek haste and Community caution was thus apparent from the very start of the negotiations.

### **3.6. Conclusion**

The first months of deliberation between the EEC and Greece brought home the magnitude of the task on both sides. The Community discovered that reconciling political considerations with economic imperatives proved rather difficult, with repercussions in the Community's relations with Turkey and the delay in the commencement of negotiations with Greece. However, the Nine did exhibit resilience and firmness in protecting the mechanisms of the Community. They resisted Greek tactics of glossing over economic and institutional difficulties in the name of political imperatives that had led the Nine to accept the Greek application in February 1976. The Nine had said 'yes' to the Greeks but shown no intention of letting them dictate the *how* and the *when* of the entry process. They had refused to correlate the association with the accession negotiations despite pressure from the Greeks; there had been a better coordination between Commission and Council so as to avoid the mistakes of the previous months; and finally the Nine had ensured that all the proper mechanisms were in place before starting negotiations with Athens.

Therefore, the Nine attached greater importance to their own internal unity than to the rapid conclusion of enlargement, as desired by the Greeks. Karamanlis may have won 'round one' in February 1976 with his strategy and political arguments, but the following months provided the Greek government with a reality check. The Greeks, pleased with their hugely successful strategy up until that time, expected a quick entry while bargaining over such issues as the Association agreement's link to the accession talks. Instead, they caught a glimpse of what lay ahead; a gulf that had started to emerge between the Greeks and the Community in their perceptions of how the negotiations should be run. It became evident that the Community consensus in favour of Greek membership did not guarantee swift accession and that indeed accession was by no means inevitable. To make matters worse for Athens, the Greek enlargement talks, although officially due to be

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<sup>97</sup> Telegram by E.Cazimajou, Brussels, 3 December 1976, FRAMAE, d/e, 1410.

examined on their own merits, did not preclude the Nine from considering other future members' cases. This further weakened Greece's bargaining position as questions surrounding the Community's capability to assume the challenges of a new enlargement, already difficult in their own right, were about to 'prendre leur véritable dimension dans la perspective de futures demandes d'adhésion et de l'ensemble de la politique méditerranéenne de la Communauté'.<sup>98</sup> It is to this newly formed situation that the next chapter will turn.

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<sup>98</sup> Meeting of the Political Affairs Committee, Brussels, 23-24 February 1977, FRAMAE, d/p, 4093.

## Chapter 4: Stagnation (January- November 1977)

### 4.1. Reshuffling

Early 1977 was a frustrating period for the Greeks, who started to realise that their initial plans for swift accession would not come to fruition.<sup>1</sup> This feeling of disappointment caused frictions within the Greek negotiating team which finally led to its reshuffling. Nikolaos Kyriazides, the President of the team and Gregory Varfis, the second in command, resigned on 5 January 1977. The revamped Greek negotiating team came to be headed by Byron Theodoropoulos, a former ambassador to NATO and Secretary-General of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was joined by Athanasios Andreopoulos, director-general of the ministry of Coordination, who took over Varfis' responsibilities for the technical preparation of the dossiers.<sup>2</sup>

The European press had a field day with this sudden change. *The Economist*, reporting on both resignations, wrote 'the Greeks are in a hurry to get into the EEC and will try anything to speed up the process' while the journal *Europa* ran an extended article entitled 'Papaligouras' fever' observing that 'leur départ rend donc à la position grecque une certaine unité et consacre en tout cas la primauté de l'approche politique de la négociation'.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, the Nine were also trying to understand the sudden change. The French ambassador to Greece, Jean-Marie Merillon speculated that: 'Le poids qu'ils avaient acquis, la volonté de défendre pied à pied à Bruxelles, les divers éléments du dossier grec, leur compétence même, les avait conduit à prendre quelque liberté avec la ligne de négociation fixée par Karamanlis et Papaligouras'.<sup>4</sup>

In several interviews following his resignation, Kyriazides denied press speculation that he had been arguing for a tougher line in negotiations, particularly concerning the application of all the provisions of the Association agreement in contrast to his government's directives for flexibility and speed. Although the existence of the Association agreement as an experience of sixteen years in bringing Greece both politically and economically closer to the Community had been and would be used as a strong argument in Greece's quest for speed, this was very different to the initial negotiating strategy that claimed that the *acquis d'association* should underpin the *acquis communautaire*. In other words, the Greeks were struggling to come to terms with the fact that the association was qualitatively and legally distinct from accession. Indeed, ever

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<sup>1</sup> See chapter three.

<sup>2</sup> Zaxaropoulos, *The Odyssey*, 72.

<sup>3</sup> *Europa*, 28 February 1977.

<sup>4</sup> Telegram by J. M. Merillon, Athens, 13 January 1977, FRAMAE, (d/e), 1411.

since the formal opening of the negotiations in July 1976, the Community had been absolutely determined to completely differentiate the two processes, bringing the Greeks to progressively abandon their strategy.<sup>5</sup> In a letter to the Minister of Coordination Panayis Papaligouras, Kyriazides however had clearly ‘found unacceptable the idea to demand less than we deserve (in the context of the Association agreement) in order to speed up the negotiations. Undermining our positions may mean throwing into the sea 20.000-30.000 tons of peaches, oranges and tomatoes.’<sup>6</sup> Likewise, Varfis had accused Papaligouras of glossing over the subjects and of mutilating the Association agreement on the altar of accession.<sup>7</sup> The new appointments shifted the internal balance of power towards the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and away from the Minister of Coordination and reflected the emergence of a more flexible and pragmatic Greek strategy where economic considerations were further subordinated to political ones.<sup>8</sup> It was also consistent with the ease with which Greece, in the months to come, would water down or abandon many of its initial goals and demands simply to achieve a speedy entry.

#### **4.2. First warning signs?**

The newly appointed Greek team was quick to start to prepare for the second Deputies’ meeting, scheduled for 31 January 1977. The Greeks had understood the Community’s need to have a so-called view of the whole (*vue d’ensemble*) before engaging in a more thorough discussion of the various points of the negotiations. However, in the interest of speed they too tried their best to prepare the basic papers (on the customs union of industrial goods, external relations, budgetary questions, competition and regional policy) including the one on agriculture, in the vain hope that this material would allow the rapid start of discussion of the more essential matters.<sup>9</sup> The paper on agriculture, although the most important item on the negotiating agenda, was rather brief and followed the general pattern set by the Greek opening statement in late 1976. This Greek paper focused not on details, but on the need to move forward, showing Athens’ clear goal of achieving quick results even at the expense of addressing real problems. As expected however, the British Permanent Representative Donald Maitland, in conveying the Nine’s response to the Greek demands as President of the Deputies’ committee,

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<sup>5</sup> See chapter three.

<sup>6</sup> George Kontogeorgis Papers, (hereafter, GRGKP) 1977, Letter by N.Kyriazides, Athens, 14 December 1976.

<sup>7</sup> Letter from T.J. Everand, Athens, 13 January 1977, MWE020/358/6, 2, UKFCO 98/249.

<sup>8</sup> Tsalicoglou, *Negotiating*, 48.

<sup>9</sup> Record of 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputies Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 31 January 1977, GRGKP/0103.



reiterated the Community's line that the real negotiation process would begin only when the *vue d'ensemble* was complete. Moreover, he maintained that accession would create a new legal situation in which the Association agreement could not apply. Theodoropoulos understood this, but warned 'that I can hardly conceive a situation where Greece, by acceding to the Community would find itself worse off than under the Association agreement'.<sup>10</sup>

The third and fourth Deputies' meetings, in February and March 1977, followed the same pattern with Greece pressing for negotiations at any cost and emphasising to this end the existence of the Association agreement, whilst the Nine reminded them that the aim of the lengthy exploratory phase was solely to arrive at a *vue d'ensemble* which would identify the points of difference between Greece and the EEC. The Association agreement was of hardly any help in this respect. To make matters worse for Greece, the Commission started complaining about the lack of detailed statistics coming from Athens. The Greek National Statistical service had many difficulties in compiling the necessary data. After seven years of dictatorship, the lack of organisation of the Greek civil service further undermined Greece's ability to respond to the EEC's increasing enquiries.<sup>11</sup> Italian Commissioner responsible for enlargement, Lorenzo Natali in his visit to Athens brought home to the Greeks just how poor their preparation of papers was, especially on agriculture. Greece had presented seven memoranda but the Commissioner thought 'que les dossiers d'Athènes sont pauvres, mal tenus, peu convaincants. En bref la volonté politique ne devait point être constamment mise en avant car elle ne pouvait être la panacée des réalités communautaires'.<sup>12</sup> However, the Greeks began to suspect that the Community's incessant need for detailed statistics and the slowness in responding to Greek proposals were ways of delaying the negotiations.<sup>13</sup> This fear was further exacerbated by another development: possible EEC membership applications from Portugal first and then Spain.

While formal Greece-EEC business was taking place as planned, the Council of Foreign Affairs that had met on 18 January 1977 saw the Nine discussing the possibility of the Portuguese applying for EEC membership earlier than had been expected. A mere six months after they had agreed to open formal negotiations with Greece, the Nine had to face the uncomfortable reality that they might soon have to deal with an application

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<sup>10</sup> Byron Theodoropoulos Archives (hereafter GRBTA) 149A, Record of 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputies' Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 31 January 1977.

<sup>11</sup> Tsatsos, 'The European Community'.

<sup>12</sup> Telegram by J.M. Merillon, Athens, 18 May 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1411.

<sup>13</sup> Record of meeting between Judd and Natali, London, 23 May 1977, MXE021/1, 168, UKFCO 98/253.

for membership from Portugal as well.<sup>14</sup> The French were sceptical, suggesting that Portugal was not ready for full membership, even with a provision for a long transitional period. The Danes, Germans and Dutch agreed. Yet they believed that while it was advisable to be cautious over Portuguese membership, the ultimate response of the Nine should not to be interpreted as a political rebuff to Portugal. The French had confessed to the Greek Minister of Coordination that they were not prepared for a swift application from the Iberian countries. Indeed, the timetable for accession of the ex-dictatorships seeking membership had acquired a momentum which the Community had not expected. As a consequence, France's stance towards enlargement was to harden, especially in the run-up to the French elections. They warned the Greeks to prepare themselves for their forthcoming aggressive rhetoric against enlargement.<sup>15</sup>

The new President of the Commission, Roy Jenkins, raised similar doubts in his address to the European Parliament on 8 February 1977, which exacerbated Greek fears. Jenkins stated: 'before the Community proceeds to an enlargement there are certain careful adaptations needed in order to be able to face the problems that the enlargement is going to bring to the Community itself and to the new candidate members [...] we are determined to study a global approach to the problem of enlargement, to calculate the consequences for the coherence of the Community in the future'.<sup>16</sup> In a press conference after his speech Jenkins reaffirmed, however, that the Greeks would continue to be treated separately: 'when I talk about overall approach, I mean that we should do that rather from here forward and not that we should try to catch back in any way as far as the Greek position is concerned'.<sup>17</sup> However, neither Jenkins' repeated assurances that Greek accession was not in question nor the European Parliament's resolution expressing satisfaction with the opening of the entry negotiations<sup>18</sup> could alleviate Greek fears that their negotiations would be lumped together with those of Portugal and Spain. In a letter to all the Greek ambassadors stationed in the nine EEC member states, Greek Foreign Minister Dimitris Bitsios warned about the possible repercussions of Jenkins' call for an *overall approach*<sup>19</sup> and directed them to gather information about their host countries' reactions.<sup>20</sup> The first members the Greeks contacted were naturally the British, who held the presidency of the EEC at the time (January-June 1977). Indeed, the Foreign

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<sup>14</sup> *The Financial Times*, 9 February 1977.

<sup>15</sup> Note by A. Andreopoulos, Athens, 6 April 1977, GRGKP 0103.

<sup>16</sup> Telegram by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 9 February 1977, GRGKP 1977.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> EP Resolution, 9 March 1977.

<sup>19</sup> The French equivalent that appears in the archives: 'approche globale'.

<sup>20</sup> Telegram by D. Bitsios, Athens, 9 February 1977, GRGKP 1977.

Office Political Director, Reginald Hibbert in a meeting with his Greek counterpart, Ioannis Tzounis, did admit that Spain and Portugal's eventual application and accession talks might have adverse effects on Greek EEC membership negotiations. Nonetheless, he reassured him that, in the end, the practical fact remained that Greece's negotiations were already in progress, therefore the problems raised would be treated on their merits.<sup>21</sup>

The European Council held in Rome on 26-27 March 1977 confirmed these fears as 'laudable statements of Mediterranean solidarity gave way to the cool calculation of interest'.<sup>22</sup> Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, for instance, argued that before the Community gave a verdict on the question of new accessions, an extremely thorough study should be carried out. The suggestion found the favour with his counterparts, and resulted in the decision to organise an informal gathering of Foreign Ministers at Leeds Castle where all the problems concerning enlargement could be tackled.<sup>23</sup> The widespread Greek impatience and frustration resulting from the Community's decision was accentuated by the press. Indicatively, *Le Monde* reported: 'La France freine l'élargissement de la Communauté'. According to the article a new French doctrine had been formulated that took a holistic view of enlargement including Spain and Portugal, imaginatively dubbed 'globalisation' of the negotiations.<sup>24</sup> Director-General of the Quai d'Orsay Henri Froment-Meurice confirmed this idea but explained that it was 'globalisation des études' and not a 'globalisation des procédures'.<sup>25</sup> As soon as the Council was over, Portugal formally applied for membership on 28 March 1977.

As the second Ministerial Greece-EEC meeting, scheduled for 5 April 1977, approached, the atmosphere in Athens was gloomy. Eight months after the formal opening of talks, the development of negotiations had been such as to give serious indications of a possible change in the Community's attitudes towards Greece. In practice, the Nine did not seem to have a common position either on the date and terms of Greek membership or on the question whether Greece's EEC candidacy should be linked with those of Spain and Portugal.

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<sup>21</sup> Record of a meeting between Tzounis and Hibbert, London, 7 February 1977, WSGD20/1, 871, UKFCO 98/244.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Leigh, 'Mediterranean agriculture and the enlargement of the EEC', *The World Today* (1977), 207.

<sup>23</sup> Conclusions of European Council, Rome, 26-27 March 1977, FR5 AG 3/ 919.

<sup>24</sup> *Le Monde*, 10 March 1977.

<sup>25</sup> Telegram from S. Stathatos, Brussels, 29 March 1977, GRGKP 0103.

### **4.3. Two conflicting pressures: political imperatives and the challenges to the Community**

Two conflicting pressures explain the impasse in the EEC's negotiations with Greece, in the first half of 1977. On the one hand, the Nine were completely aware of the political reasons behind the Greek pressure for speeding up the negotiations. A completion of the accession talks before the 1978 Greek elections would grant Karamanlis a deeply needed success with stabilising effects on the country's foreign policy orientation and internal development.<sup>26</sup> On the other, the Community was only now seriously thinking about the implications of a new round of enlargement and its impact on its functioning. The problem was further exacerbated by the formal applications of Portugal and Spain in March and July 1977 respectively. In particular, the appearance of the Iberian applications aggravated in the minds of the Nine, especially the French and the Italians, the already divisive issue of Mediterranean agriculture.

#### **4.3.1 Political Imperatives**

According to Brooke Richards, the British ambassador to Greece, Karamanlis stood a good chance of survival in the domestic political arena, but was far from invulnerable. 'If he disappeared the results would not necessarily be catastrophic, though I can only repeat what I often said in the past that Karamanlis can still do more than any other political figure to consolidate parliamentary government and remains by far the best bet for the West that we are likely to see. He therefore deserves all the support we can give him'.<sup>27</sup> Along similar lines, the French ambassador to Greece, Jean-Marie Merillon deemed it important for both Karamanlis and Western Europe as a whole that the Greek leader did not find himself in a position at his next elections where he was waiting *sine die* for decisions to be taken concerning Greek entry over which he had no control. General studies by the Nine of a 'globalisation' nature would fall into this category.<sup>28</sup> Adding to this, in the light of President Carter's determination to lift the arms embargo on Turkey, Greece was desperately looking to the EEC for support and most importantly a victory for Greek foreign policy.<sup>29</sup> Overall, the Nine were convinced that Greek political stability was tied up with Karamanlis' personal leadership, which could be further secured by a success in the Greek EEC talks.

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<sup>26</sup> See chapter two.

<sup>27</sup> Telegram by B. Richards, Athens, 31 March 1977, MWE020/388/1, 136, UKFCO 98/245.

<sup>28</sup> Telegram by J.M. Merillon, Athens, 5 June 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1411.

<sup>29</sup> *Le Monde*, 12 May 1977.

The effectiveness of this argument was further increased by the diplomatic ability of Karamanlis and his policy to by-pass the Community level discussions altogether and appeal directly to the heads of government. This practice, applied in the aftermath of the Commission's Opinion in early 1976, had repeatedly shown itself to be a successful weapon in the Greek team's artillery. In this vein Karamanlis, on 26 April 1977, sent a letter to the heads of government of the Nine in which he emphasised the political consequences of a possible delay in Greek negotiations through a linkage with the future Iberian deliberations. He particularly stressed that continued faltering of the negotiations could be exploited by the opposition parties to shake the trust of the Greek people in the European democracies and pull Greece away from the West. In practice, during the Greek parliamentary debate on EEC on 14 January 1977, Andreas Papandreou, leader of the socialist party PASOK, opened with an all out attack on Greek entry including allegations that the government was being blackmailed by the EEC and would sell out Greek interests in Cyprus and the Aegean in order to achieve quick process.<sup>30</sup>

Another possible explanation behind Karamanlis' personal intervention was the fact that the Greeks were fully aware of the informal discussion by Community Foreign Ministers on enlargement which was to be held at Leeds Castle on 21-22 May 1977. Karamanlis' letter aimed *inter alia* at pre-empting any decision to tie the Greek negotiations to those with Portugal and possibly Spain.<sup>31</sup> Considering that bilateral discussions between the Greeks and the Community member state governments had yielded results for Athens in the past, Karamanlis embarked on a European tour. On 9 May 1977, Karamanlis met with German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt on the margins of the NATO summit in London where he conveyed his grave concern over the possibility of his country's candidacy being combined with the membership applications of Portugal and Spain and thus being severely delayed. Although Schmidt gave little away in his conversation with Karamanlis, in general the encounter helped raise Greek morale.<sup>32</sup> Talks with the Belgians and the Dutch also enabled the Greek to be more optimistic. The Political Director of the Belgian Foreign Ministry noted 'there is no possibility of globalisation of the three applications since the Greek case is so advanced'.<sup>33</sup> However, all meetings pointed to France as the key to the problem of rapid progress.

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<sup>30</sup> On the attitude of the Greek political parties towards EEC membership, see Verney, 'Panacea or Plague'.

<sup>31</sup> Supplementary Brief on Greek-EEC negotiations, London, 2 May 1977, MWE020/358/1, 166, UKFCO 98/245.

<sup>32</sup> Meeting between Karamanlis and Schmidt, London, 9 May 1977, Doc. 116, FRGAAPD 1977,602-607.

<sup>33</sup> Telegram D. Papadopoulos, Brussels, 29 April 1977, GRGKP 0103.

No wonder therefore that Karamanlis' next visit was to Giscard in Paris. Giscard knew that 'au moment où la Grèce éprouve des sentiments d'impuissance et de solitude, et où elle se raccroche d'autant plus à l'amitié de la France, elle a l'impression que notre sympathie se refroidit à son égard'.<sup>34</sup> The French informed the Greeks that they simply wanted to ensure that the CAP regarding Mediterranean products was suitably strengthened, a development that could potentially be to Greece's advantage. In the aftermath of the meeting, the Elysée issued an official statement. This reiterated the special Franco-Greek relations while emphasising that 'cette amitié ancienne repose sur le sentiment d'appartenir à une même Communauté de culture, mais aussi sur un choix délibéré'.<sup>35</sup> Despite the forthcoming tone of the declaration, French Foreign Minister Louis de Guiringaud told the British that Giscard had given Karamanlis no grounds for thinking that negotiations were going to be anything but difficult and prolonged. The French ambassador to Athens, meanwhile, noted that the Greeks were growing aware of this reality: 'ils [les Grecs] commencent à prendre conscience de la complexité de l'entreprise. Peu à peu, ils comprennent que leurs dossiers doivent être mieux établis. Qu'il est hasardeux de jouer souvent son va tout'.<sup>36</sup>

#### **4.3.2 The Leeds Castle Meeting on enlargement**

Meanwhile, on 21-22 May 1977, the Nine Foreign Ministers along with the President of the European Commission met at Leeds Castle to informally discuss enlargement to southern Europe and to try to define a common policy. This was one month after Portugal had submitted its application for membership and two months before Spain was to formally apply.<sup>37</sup> It was hoped that the informal atmosphere and the virtually complete exclusion of the press from contact with Ministers would contribute to a very frank and easy discussion.<sup>38</sup> In the past, the Nine had been reticent to express any apprehension regarding the accession of these countries given the political vulnerability of the newly established democracies.

There was general agreement that discussion with the Greeks should continue and actually be given priority over the other two applications. David Owen, in his capacity as chairman of the Nine conceded that Karamanlis' latest European tour had brought home how important it was for his government's survival to succeed in the negotiations with

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<sup>34</sup> Note by G. Robin, Paris, 11 May 1977, FR5AG3/ 998.

<sup>35</sup> *Le Monde*, 14 May 1977.

<sup>36</sup> Telegram by J.M. Merillon, Athens, 13 May 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1411.

<sup>37</sup> 28 March 1977-Portugal, 28 July 1977-Spain.

<sup>38</sup> Informal Meeting of Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Leeds Castle, 21-22 May 1977, MWE021/14, 44, UKFCO 98/280.

the EEC. Inevitably, however, when the discussion turned to the actual implementation of the general agreement to accept Greece, no common decision could be reached. The French along with the Italians vehemently maintained that substantial negotiations with Greece could only start after revisions to the Community's internal agricultural regimes for the Mediterranean had been agreed. De Guiringaud insisted 'qu'une priorité pour les Grecs n'exclut pas que, pendant les négociations grecques, nous n'ayons présent à l'esprit le précédent que ceci va constituer. Il faut donc procéder à un examen global. Il ne peut y avoir de mandat dans aucun domaine s'il n'y a pas eu au préalable un accord sur les produits méditerranéens'.<sup>39</sup> For the Germans, the 'globalisation' of negotiations with the three applicants was a non-starter. Even if the French meant by 'globalisation' that, in the negotiations with the Greeks, detailed account needed to be taken of the implications for the Community of the accession of all three, Genscher still had serious doubts.<sup>40</sup> In the face of impasse, the Nine simply agreed on their desire not to move fast in admitting Spain and Portugal.

Besides discussing the southern European candidatures per se, the Foreign Ministers toyed with the idea of an institutional reform prior to enlargement. In particular, the French proposed tinkering with the order in which the countries held the Presidency. The reason was primarily to spread out the Presidencies of the smaller states and to avoid a situation where, as had occurred in 1975-6, three small countries in succession held the Presidency, thus allowing 'bad ideas' to gain ground. The proposed list would balance the large with the small countries. The French also wanted to flank the Presidency with two vice-Presidencies, to be filled by the previous and subsequent holders of the Presidency. This so-called troika would act as a 'guardian angel' especially to buttress the efforts of the small states. In the same line of thinking, the French, supported by Belgium and Luxembourg, argued 'que la Commission européenne avec l'élargissement ne pourra plus fonctionner sur règles. Il faut modifier le nombre des membres de la Commission...'<sup>41</sup>

In addition to this, there was a long discussion on the question of safeguarding democracy in the present Community of Nine as well as in an enlarged EEC. Due to pressure from the Dutch, British and Germans, this issue was forwarded to the

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<sup>39</sup> Record of Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Leeds Castle, 21-22 May 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

<sup>40</sup> Note on the position of other member states on Enlargement, London, 20 May 1977, MWE020/358/1,209,UKFCO 98/246.

<sup>41</sup> Record of Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Leeds Castle, 21-22 May 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

Commission for further study as were the institutional proposals.<sup>42</sup> In the aftermath of the Leeds Castle meeting, the Commission in accordance with the Council's mandate, started working on the institutional implications of enlargement. There was no specific timetable but the Council of Foreign Ministers had wished for an answer by the end of the year. In response, Jenkins commissioned a group to be chaired by the Commission Secretary General, Émile Noël to think through the consequences of enlargement for the smooth running of the Community. Noël proposed to the group, based on the Ministers' discussion, three items to work on: firstly, enlargement and democracy, secondly the functioning of the institutions and improvement of the decision making process in an enlarged Community, and finally the economic implications of enlargement with particular regard for the Mediterranean agricultural sector.<sup>43</sup> The Nine were satisfied with the working assumptions of the report, which however failed for the moment to address what was the burning issue of the day: the question of Mediterranean agriculture.

#### **4.3.3 Mediterranean agriculture: the central prize**

Italy and France were responsible 'for putting Mediterranean agriculture near the top of the Community's agenda for the late 1970s and of linking it to the enlargement question'.<sup>44</sup> In both countries, the agricultural lobby had succeeded in politicising an otherwise sectoral set of issues as the farmers and related pressure groups vocally raised their fears. Farmers, especially in southern France and Italy felt threatened by competition from the lower priced products of the three applicant countries, particularly in view of Spain's large agricultural production. These fears can be further understood when considered in the context of the EEC's existing Mediterranean policy, which was already considered unfair by Italy and France and which had been the cause of serious grievances in the past. The new 'global Mediterranean' policy was specifically viewed as unbalanced, providing too many Community concessions.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, the recent wine wars between France and Italy, following the bad harvest of 1973-4, and the fall of the lira, underlined the threat of cheaper Mediterranean products entering the French and wider EEC markets.<sup>46</sup> Protests from the farmers were quickly followed by protests from

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<sup>42</sup> Note on the Informal Meeting of European Foreign Ministers at Leeds Castle, London, 13 June 1977, MWE021/14, 52, UKFCO 98/281.

<sup>43</sup> See chapter five: this Commission's survey was named 'Fresco on Enlargement' and was published finally in April 1978.

<sup>44</sup> Leigh, 'Nine EEC attitudes to Enlargement', 33.

<sup>45</sup> Guia Migani, 'La politique globale méditerranée de la CEE, 1970-1972', in Varsori, Antonio & Migani, Guia (eds.), *Europe in the International context during the 1970s: entering a different world* (Brussels, 2011), 193-210.

<sup>46</sup> Maria Chen is currently working on this topic in her Ph.D. entitled: 'Wine, Identity, and Changing Political Relationships in France and the European Community: 1967-1980'.



political parties hurrying to capitalise on this sensitive issue. This strong domestic reaction made the French and the Italian governments very sensitive to the immediate implications of enlargement.

With France entering a long drawn-out electoral campaign for the 1978 parliamentary elections, the proposed enlargement turned into a major political issue.<sup>47</sup> For many observers of French politics, the outcome of the municipal elections in March 1977 had confirmed the view that the parties of the left might be able to win a majority of seats in the 1978 parliamentary elections.<sup>48</sup> With so much at stake, both the government and the opposition's positions on enlargement were gaining in significance and becoming more markedly radicalised. Indicatively, on 5 April 1977 at the Congress of the Confederation of French Farmers in Strasburg, the French Minister of Agriculture, Pierre de Mehaignerie declared that the Community's agricultural policy for Mediterranean products should be reformed before any commencement of negotiations with the new applicant countries. Two days later Jacques Chirac, head of the French Gaullist Party, *Rassemblement pour la République* (RPR), in a public declaration referred to the problem of the French farmers and the CAP by stating that 'the difficulties within the Community can only be aggravated in the case of enlargement to third countries... the RPR reconfirms its opposition to the accession to the EC of the new state members, without denying the need to support the new democracies of Southern Europe'.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, in *Nouvel Observateur*, François Mitterrand stated: 'we must be careful not to transform the Community into a free trade area. Neither Greece nor Spain is in a position to join the Community. Their entry is neither in their interest nor in our own. Some kind of intermediate solution would be desirable'.<sup>50</sup>

Given these pronouncements, the French Ministry of Agriculture entrusted François Desoushes, former Director of the Centre National des Jeunes Agriculteurs (CNJA) with the task of producing a report on the agricultural problems which enlargement posed for France. His background suggested that he was likely to take a particularly narrow view of enlargement problems, close to the interests of French agricultural producers. His premise was that over the period in which the EEC had developed, French wine, fruit and vegetable producers, particularly those in the south, had fallen even further behind other sections of the French population. Yet those

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<sup>47</sup> Report on France's political situation, 22 February 1977, ECEN 1544.

<sup>48</sup> George A. Magnus, 'The French elections in 1978: background and outlook', *The World Today* (July 1977).

<sup>49</sup> Press Office, Paris, 4 April 1977, GRGKP 1977.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

producers were the very people whose interests would be most gravely affected by the Community enlargement. No wonder therefore that the Desoushes study viewed it as necessary to first bring the disadvantaged regions of the existing Community up to the level of the rest before embarking on further enlargement. As this, he argued, could not be done overnight; new members should not be admitted until the existing injustices had been rectified. In short, the whole enlargement question should be shelved indefinitely.<sup>51</sup>

During the same period, another report on the agricultural implications of enlargement was submitted to the French Senate. It was written by Edgar Pisani, former Minister of Agriculture under De Gaulle and Michel Sordel, President of the National Union of cereal producers' co-operatives. The report, although not painting an equally unremittingly bleak picture as that by Desoushes, concluded that the second enlargement was a major political decision, and that the economic and social problems that it created had to be resolved by a slow, methodical and organised approach. In their view, the Community would have to 'globalise' the negotiations and propose a series of internal Community changes that would permit the EEC to better absorb the second enlargement. The report was debated and subsequently endorsed by the French Senate on 21 April 1977. Both reports were indicative of the negative climate that was developing in France against a possible EEC's second enlargement. To make matters worse, a few months later, one of the most influential agricultural producers' organisations among the Nine, the Comité des Organisation Professionnelles Agricoles (COPA) also voted against the accession of new members and offered the following solution: 'l'observation d'une période transitoire dont la fin sera déterminée non pas par un calendrier mais pas le constat par les Neuf que les engagements pris par les pays candidats auront été effectivement tenus'.<sup>52</sup> In the face of such a sustained attack from left and right, official French policy shifted towards accommodating the demands of the agricultural lobby. Whether or not this would occur at the expense of the Greek candidacy, the French authorities did not seem to have decided. Procrastination was the temporary solution.

The situation in Italy was fairly similar, but for different reasons. On the one hand, Italy was one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the second round of enlargement. Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti and his Foreign Minister Arnaldo Forlani shared the view that the political purpose of enlargement was the over-riding one.<sup>53</sup> In essence,

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<sup>51</sup> Letter by C.M. James, Paris, 16 February 1977, MXE021/1, 35, UKFCO 98/252.

<sup>52</sup> Note by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 9 June 1977, GRGKP 1977.

<sup>53</sup> Note by R.A Hibbert, London, 30 May 1977, MXE020/358/1, 224, UKFCO 98/246.

Italy pursued a policy of rallying behind the Greek candidacy in the name of Mediterranean solidarity for historical and cultural reasons. But at the same time Italy still held bad memories from the Hague conference of 1969 where it had to accept the completion of the CAP *à la française* so as to clear the way for the first round of enlargement. This time round, Italy, although not as pressed domestically as France, was determined to shed its negative image as a 'weak negotiator' unable to defend its national interests.<sup>54</sup> It is then no coincidence that Italy pressed and won two of the portfolios in the Jenkins Commission of most relevance to the Mediterranean in late 1976: Antonio Giolitti was responsible for the regional, social and agricultural guidance funds and Lorenzo Natali became Commissioner for Enlargement.

Furthermore, on a visit to Athens, Andreotti and Forlani complained that the northern products of the CAP enjoyed iron-clad safeguards in contrast to the Mediterranean ones that received much weaker protection, especially after the launch of the Global Mediterranean policy.<sup>55</sup> In Forlani's words: 'Italy had missed the opportunity in the previous enlargement to review and revise the Mediterranean part of the CAP. They would not miss this second chance'.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, in the period between 1965 and 1976, the imbalance in market protection between northern and southern products had led to a steady diminution of Italian agricultural exports to the rest of the Community: 'devant la crise profonde que traverse actuellement l'agriculture italienne et devant l'énorme déficit de la balance des paiements agro-alimentaires - causé principalement par le déséquilibre existant entre le volume élevé des importations de la CEE des produits agricoles continentaux, contre le volume relativement faible des exportations vers la CEE des produits méditerranéens italiens'.<sup>57</sup> It was no surprise therefore that the Italian government committed itself in front of the Parliament on 28 April 1977 to revise the CAP in favour of Mediterranean products before any enlargement took place.

The Greek negotiator, Theodoropoulos had tried on several occasions to demonstrate that Greece's agriculture, with its limited quantities for export and limited number of products, posed few problems to France and Italy. But his efforts were in vain. As acknowledged by both EEC Mediterranean countries, their problem was not Greece but Spain. France could easily absorb Greek production with the possible exception of tomato purée, but the point was to avoid anything that could serve as a

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<sup>54</sup> Maria Eleonora Guasconi, 'Italy and the Hague Conference 1969', *Journal of European Integration History*, 9:2 (2003), 101-118.

<sup>55</sup> Visit of G. Andreotti, Athens, 23-25 May 1977, GRKaramanlis, vol. 9, 453.

<sup>56</sup> Letter by V. Theodoropoulos, Athens, 18 April 1977, GRGKP 1977.

<sup>57</sup> Note on Italy and Enlargement, Rome, 6 March 1978, GRGKP 0378.

precedent for the Spanish negotiations.<sup>58</sup> With 58% of Spanish agricultural exports going to the EEC whereas only 10% of Spain's agricultural imports came from the Community, Italy and France feared economic collapse in the face of Spanish accession to the EEC with its agricultural potential and low cost produce.<sup>59</sup>

Although the Italians had more to lose than the French, the impression was that the Italian government did not have the coordinating machinery to ensure a single governmental point of view or to maintain an aggressive stance. The French themselves shared this opinion. In an inter-ministerial meeting on the effects of enlargement on Mediterranean agriculture, the secretary general of the Secrétariat Général du Comité Interministériel (SGCI), the key coordinating committee for French European policy, Jean-René Bernard in a frustrated manner admitted that 'on ne peut pas guère compter sur l'Italie pour s'appuyer d'une façon durable à une concurrence accrue dans ces domaines'.<sup>60</sup> At the end of the day, nonetheless, both countries would soon be called to make a decision and find a formula to satisfy both their domestic audience and the southern candidates.

The Nine had a first opportunity to coordinate their positions when the *ad hoc* working group on Greek accession met on 19 April 1977 to discuss the Commission's proposed paper on agriculture. The meeting registered the first doubts. The French were surprisingly frank in arguing that the time was not yet ripe to open substantive negotiations on agriculture with Greece. They had difficulty even with a reference to the acceptance of the *acquis* in the agricultural sector because, as they said, there were a number of important discussions in progress which could substantially alter the present *acquis* before Greek accession. The Germans however questioned whether any significant changes in the *acquis* were likely in the near future, signalling German unwillingness to stand for excessive French demands. Other delegations agreed that the sector was both important and difficult, yet deemed it essential to make at least a general introductory statement of the Community's position at the June Ministerial meeting with the Greeks. Equally, all the Nine governments acknowledged that Athens would have to accept the *acquis* as it existed at the time of accession and only technical adaptation and transitional measures were matters for the enlargement process.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Note by G. Henderson, Paris, 19 May 1977, MWE020/14, 43, UKFCO 98/280.

<sup>59</sup> Julio Crespo MacLennan, *Spain and the process of European integration, 1957-1985* (London, 2000).

<sup>60</sup> Note by J.R. Bernard, Paris, 10 May 1977, FRSGCI 2000295/03.

<sup>61</sup> Note by D. Maitland, Brussels, 13 May 1977, MWE020/358/1, 200, UKFCO 98/246.

In April, even with Giscard's European policy under attack, the French were still keeping open channels of communication with the Greeks. De Guiringaud in talks with the Greek ambassador asked for Greece's understanding during the difficult French electoral period ahead. The Foreign Minister was convinced that the problems concerning EEC market regulations over Mediterranean agriculture were too complex to be resolved until the elections, but for reasons of domestic consumption, the French authorities were obliged to persist on stating the need for change. In practice, that meant that no progress in the Greek negotiations could take place until then.<sup>62</sup> It was evident that the French were in a bind electorally and hence in a position where they had to avoid any attitude in Brussels vis-à-vis the Greeks for which they could be punished domestically. Still, they remained politically committed to the enlargement process that they had helped foster in the first place. In these circumstances, Paris deemed it necessary to have a private word with the Greeks explaining the realities of the situation and asking for patience.

Nonetheless, Athens remained dismayed with the apparent procrastination that characterised the French and in turn the Community's stance towards the Greek negotiations. During the third Greece- EEC Ministerial meeting of 5 April 1977, the Greek Minister of Coordination, Panayis Papaligouras took the opportunity to recap recent developments in the Greek negotiations and to underline the slowness of progress. Admittedly, the main purpose of Papaligouras' statement was to dispel certain false impressions that seemed to exist on the subject of agriculture, and to explain why Greece represented a unique case distinct from the Iberian candidates. Firstly, the total value of Greek agricultural production amounted to a mere 6% of the overall Community production and most importantly Greek agriculture, with the exception of a limited number of products, barely covered the country's needs. Therefore, the fears of competition were unfounded. Secondly, its economy was limited in size therefore Greece's integration would not disturb the Community. This was important considering that a basic criterion in determining whether or not a new membership was desirable, would be the cost. Even the latest OECD report, had confirmed that the Greek economy had been stable during the current economic crisis and had proved that it had enough vitality to weather the international economic storm.<sup>63</sup> Thirdly, Greece had already been associated with the Community since 1962 (when the agreement entered into force) and although the accession negotiations started from scratch, the existence of

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<sup>62</sup> Report by D. Papaioanou, Paris, 14 April 1977, GRGKP 1977.

<sup>63</sup> Annual Review of Greek Economy by OECD, 9 May 1977, ECBAC 48/1984 647.

an association agreement meant that Greece had already lived through a long period 'which could be rightly be called pre-accession... Whatever the premises, there is one thing that cannot be ignored, the facts. In the case in question, the indisputable historical fact is that we have lived through a long period of gradual interpenetration of our economies. This is one factor that makes our case unique'.<sup>64</sup> Last but not least, the Minister underlined the well-rehearsed argument of the domestic political dangers in the case of failure in the negotiations.

The Greeks were desperate to make progress in their negotiations. Any further delay would mean losing the advantage of their early start. It would become even harder to disassociate their application from the two Iberian candidatures and avoid a systematic joint evaluation. Indeed, the fact that they had begun negotiating a year earlier, would count for nothing if the situation remained stagnant.<sup>65</sup> Consequently, reiterating the above-mentioned arguments became common Greek practice throughout 1977. In reply to Papaligouras' statement, Owen adopted a rather cautious line on the future rhythm of the negotiations and an utterly negative one towards the link between accession negotiations and the existence of an Association agreement. Inger Nielsen, head of the Task Force on Greece-EEC had earlier advised the Greeks to avoid making excessive demands and most importantly to abandon their insistence on the role of the Association in the entry talks. The Greek government nonetheless felt that the existence of such an agreement would help support their case against 'globalisation', even if the Commission along with the Nine were unequivocal in their position that there could be no connection between association and accession. Despite his unforthcoming tone, Owen at the end of his speech still told the Greeks what they wanted to hear: 'although the Community cannot ignore the more general implications of further requests for accession already submitted or likely to be submitted, it also feels that our negotiations, which are already under way, should continue to be conducted on their intrinsic merits'.<sup>66</sup>

It was only with the start of serious discussions about Greek domestic agriculture and its repercussions on the CAP - first tackled at COREPER level on 2 June 1977 - that all prospects of quick negotiations were squashed. During this COREPER meeting, the French - with the support of the Italians - continued their obstructionist policy.<sup>67</sup> The French were unwilling to respond to the Greek statement before the Commission's text

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<sup>64</sup> Telegram by V. Theodoropoulos, Brussels, 12 April 1977, GRCKP 112A.

<sup>65</sup> Telegram by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 11 June 1977, GRGKP 0608.

<sup>66</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 5 April 1977, GRCKP 112A.

<sup>67</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 2 June 1977, ECBAC 48/1984 46.

had emphasised the evolving nature of the *acquis* and foreshadowed fundamental reform of both internal and external aspects of the Community's Mediterranean agricultural policy. But above all both Mediterranean countries were keen to include in the text the assertion that substantive negotiations could not begin until the reforms had been agreed.<sup>68</sup> The other Seven however were seriously opposed to adopting such a hard-line opening position. The Germans gathered resistance against French demands, perceived as deliberately exaggerated for tactical reasons.<sup>69</sup>

Nevertheless, two days later, the French and Italian delegates vetoed the majority text on agriculture to the consternation of all of their colleagues. France's representative insisted that the paragraph where Greece was called to accept the established principles of EEC agricultural policy be struck from the agenda because, as he argued, there was no point in subscribing to principles which as yet needed to be changed. De Nanteuil repeatedly stated that his country's demands were hardly complicated. But other delegations thought differently.<sup>70</sup> The Germans and Danes especially refused to countenance any changes in the existing text. France thus appeared to be heading for confrontation over its outspoken insistence that the EEC undertake an extensive reform of its policies on Mediterranean agricultural products before admitting new members.

In the early morning hours of 9 June, prior to the Deputies' meeting with the Greeks, there was still no accord on the Community's response to the Greek memorandum on agriculture. During these internal Community talks, there were admittedly signs aplenty that the Italian delegation would be prepared to soften their stance. The patterns that Ruano has noted in later discussion of Spanish agriculture were already apparent in 1977: 'the primacy of the Foreign Affairs Ministry on EC policy, the weakness of the administrative system, the consensus of political parties in favour of enlargement and the division of its farmers into a diversity of organisations' softened the Italian attitude.<sup>71</sup> The Italian EEC ambassador Eugenio Plaja did, as a matter of fact, lift his veto, admitting that after Andreotti's visit to Athens in early June, his delegation had received instructions to accommodate the Greek negotiations and to distinguish them from the Iberian candidatures.<sup>72</sup> By contrast, the French maintained their intransigent

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<sup>68</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 2 June 1977, MWE020/358/1, 249, UKFCO 98/246.

<sup>69</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 2 June 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1411.

<sup>70</sup> EU Bulletin, *Agence Europe*, 10 June 1977.

<sup>71</sup> Lorena Ruano, 'The Consolidation of Democracy vs the Price of Olive Oil: The Story of why the CAP Delayed Spain's Entry to the EC', *Journal of European Integration History*, 11:2 (2005), 97-107.

<sup>72</sup> Telegram by S.Stathatos, Brussels, 8 June 1977, GRGKP 0608.

line: 'elle [la France] n'a pu renoncer à ses demandes de renforcer la réglementation agricole avant d'élaborer des directives de négociations'.<sup>73</sup>

Many of these internal divisions were known to the Greeks. Therefore, it came as no surprise to them that during the sixth Deputies' negotiating session on 9 June 1977, agriculture was deleted from the agenda. Despite the Community's continued efforts to persuade Paris, the French position remained unchanged. The head of the Greek team, Theodoropoulos was deeply saddened by the delay and was completely baffled by the difference between the higher governmental French declarations and what was actually happening in Brussels. In a state of indignation, he mocked the French promise of 'ni blocage ni freinage'.<sup>74</sup> The British, representing the Nine via the EEC Presidency, were lost for words and restricted themselves to delivering the Community text on social affairs. The latter's lack of substance however was a further disappointment to Theodoropoulos. In particular, the paper made no mention of the free movement of labour.<sup>75</sup> This constituted a further indication to the Greeks that the Community had no intention of tackling the truly thorny issues and reaching a *vue d'ensemble* in the near future. The Athens government was becoming increasingly worried that they were losing the advantage of time over the Iberian applications. The threat of 'globalisation' loomed large.

In the meantime, Athens was desperately seeking to gather information on the outcomes of the informal meeting of the Foreign Ministers at Leeds Castle in May. Because of the meeting's secrecy, the Greeks were at pains to comprehend what had happened during these informal talks, presuming the worst, i.e. possible 'globalisation' of the negotiations. The conflicting reports from the press only heightened their anxiety. *The Herald Tribune* talked about the decision of the Nine to make internal changes as 'the Community had not worked well since it was enlarged from Six to Nine members four years ago'<sup>76</sup> while *The Economist* reported that 'the French must have given the Greeks a bout of nerves'.<sup>77</sup> Phillippe Lemaitre of *Le Monde* reported that 'les services de la Commission ont la conviction que l'intégration de la Grèce, du Portugal et de l'Espagne ne devra suivre un calendrier – la possibilité de les intégrer progressivement serait souhaitable'.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 9 June 1977, ECBAC 48/1984 46.

<sup>74</sup> Telegram by S.Stathatos, Brussels, 9 June 1977, GRGKP 0608.

<sup>75</sup> Record of 6th Deputies' Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 9 June 1977, GRBTA 149A.

<sup>76</sup> *Herald Tribune*, 29 May 1977.

<sup>77</sup> *The Economist*, 18 June 1977.

<sup>78</sup> *Le Monde*, 23 May 1977.



It was the Germans however, in their role as pacifiers who cleared the air. Günther van Well, undersecretary of state, reassured the Greek Ambassador in Bonn, Aristeidis Frydas of the fact that the momentum the Greek case had gained distinguished it from the other applications. Referring to the exaggerated French proposals on the CAP, he noted that Athens should get used to such practices within the Community. According to him 'progress was achieved only through crises' and 'any government's intransigence can only be viewed as a way to satisfy domestic audiences and nothing more'.<sup>79</sup> Clearly, in 1977, France and Germany had completely switched roles in regard to enlargement. In the run up to the elections of 1978, France was unable to act as patron to the Greek membership despite Giscard's personal preferences. On the other hand, Germany had shed the doubts it had originally harboured regarding Greece's application and had wholeheartedly embraced the country's candidature.<sup>80</sup>

The recently re-elected Schmidt's coalition had discussed enlargement at great length and had decided very clearly that for them political considerations predominated. Schmidt in his meeting with Jenkins expressed remarkable enthusiasm about enlargement and admitted that 'it was a central duty of the Community'.<sup>81</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher was the leading proponent of the view that the political case for supporting the new democracies in southern Europe overrode the economic and institutional difficulties involved in the enlargement process. In the case of Greece, Genscher was taken by Karamanlis' personality. 'For me', he admitted in an interview 'Germany's favourable policy was determined by the convincing attitude of the Greek Prime Minister. I think that a country which is represented by such a man, is a country that has to belong to the EEC'.<sup>82</sup>

Karamanlis, freshly equipped with unconditional German support, sent another letter to Giscard and Andreotti in June 1977 complaining about the delays in the Greek negotiations and reminding them of their promises. As the Italians had already lifted their opposition, the letter acted rather as a reminder of Greek thoughts. As for Giscard, he assured Karamanlis that he had become aware that there was a difference between the assurance which he personally had given to Karamanlis and the French attitude displayed at the lower technical level of negotiations. He promised to issue new instructions shortly.<sup>83</sup> Far from playing their usually skilful hand, the French had gotten themselves

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<sup>79</sup> Telegram from A. Frydas, Bonn, 29 May 1977, GRGKP 0103.

<sup>80</sup> See chapter two and chapter three.

<sup>81</sup> Jenkins, *European Diary*, 170.

<sup>82</sup> Record of interview with Genscher, May 2006, GRCKP 156A.

<sup>83</sup> Report on Greece, France and the EEC, London, 17 June 1977, MXE020/358/1, 271, UKFCO 98/247.

into a terrible tangle compounded by increasing embarrassment about the inconsistency between the French attitude expressed in COREPER and Giscard's personal assurances to Karamanlis. In a note to Giscard, his diplomatic advisor Gabriel Robin outlined the situation: 'les services français sont en effet dans l'incertitude sur la ligne adoptée par le gouvernement. Actuellement, les instructions reçues et appliquées par notre représentant permanent sont de subordonner l'ouverture du chapitre agricole des négociations à la modification des règlements agricoles méditerranéens. Ces instructions sont en contradiction avec les indications que vous avez vous-mêmes données en Conseil des ministres. Elle a toute chance d'être inefficace quand nous sommes déjà complètement isolés parmi les Neuf et que nous serons de toute façon amenés à assouplir notre attitude'.<sup>84</sup>

In the weeks that followed Karamanlis' letter, the fragility of the French line became progressively more apparent. France's vacillating position appeared to reflect a deepening internal division between its foreign and agriculture ministers, which emanated primarily from Giscard's own inability to reconcile his political decision to press for Greece's acceptance as an EEC member with the domestic imperative to protect the interests of France's powerful farming lobby.<sup>85</sup> The French started to realise the impasse ahead. De Nanteuil, reporting back to the Quai d'Orsay on the proceedings of the last meeting with the Greeks, confessed 'nous sommes dès lors apparus totalement isolés'.<sup>86</sup> Progressively, the French realised that the attempt to make reform of the Mediterranean regimes a pre-condition for continuation of the accession negotiations did not act as an effective lever on the other member states. The only result was to increase Greek pressure on them.

Therefore both the Élysée and the SGCI were looking for a face-saving escape formula. The new strategy implied abandoning the attempt to use the Greek negotiations to crack the CAP Mediterranean problem. In a meeting with his diplomatic advisors, Giscard expressed his disagreement with any proposal that undermined Greece's possible entry. Completely aware of the finely poised French political balance he suggested: 'il serait en effet maladroit de poser à une adhésion à laquelle nous sommes favorables une condition que nos partenaires rejeteraient: nous nous mettrions dans la position d'avoir à renoncer à notre position soit sur l'admission de la Grèce, ce qui est exclu, soit sur le préalable que nous aurions posé. C'est à l'égard des autres candidatures pour lesquelles

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<sup>84</sup> Note by G. Robin, Paris, 2 June 1977, FR5 AG 3/921.

<sup>85</sup> *The Financial Times*, 13 June 1977.

<sup>86</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> Deputies' Meeting Greece-EEC, 9 June 1977, BRAMA, d/e,1411.

nous sommes au contraire réservés, qu'il conviendra de soulever le préalable et de prendre une position de force'.<sup>87</sup> Instead of the Greek case which was manageable in itself and therefore unsuitable for use as a blocking device, the new strategy was based on the premise that 'le jour où la question portugaise et espagnole viendra sur la table nous serons dans une meilleure position pour soulever alors un préalable que nous pourrions tenir parce que nous ne souhaitons pas l'adhésion du Portugal et de l'Espagne'.<sup>88</sup> So the French saw Portugal's and Spain's prospective accession as the most suitable occasion to pursue changes in the CAP's Mediterranean policy.

Indeed, in an informal discussion during lunch after the European Council on 29 June 1977, Giscard strongly emphasised that he wanted the Commission to understand with complete clarity that Portugal could not be admitted to the EEC unless the provisions of the CAP on Mediterranean products were revised. Despite allegations to the contrary, the French were now not opposed to Greek entry. But the Portuguese case was quite different.<sup>89</sup> Giscard also indicated that his real concern however was Spain. Madrid's entry without CAP reform would be impossible in French domestic political terms, given the interests of south-western France. The total area of vineyards in Spain for example was greater than that of France and the quality of 'vin ordinaire' was similar. Although Spanish output was less efficient, the average bottle price was up to 60% lower. If free trade prevailed, thousands of winegrowers in the French Midi would go bust.<sup>90</sup>

Against the hostile backdrop that was developing in Brussels and having formulated a new concept to protect their interests, the French knew that continued resistance would be of little use. They therefore abandoned their rearguard action and in the Foreign Affairs Council on 21 June 1977 they lifted their reserve, allowing a statement to be made to the Greeks in the following Deputies' meeting.<sup>91</sup> France's withdrawal of its veto came after the promises by the Commission that a renegotiation of the agricultural regulations concerning the Mediterranean products would take place soon.<sup>92</sup> True to its statements, the French government in the annual conference with its major four agricultural organisations, promised farmers long transitional periods for the new candidates especially regarding the highly sensitive products such as tomatoes and

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<sup>87</sup> Preparation for Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Paris, 25 May 1977, FR5 AG3 277.

<sup>88</sup> Note by G. Robin, Paris, 2 June 1977, FR5 AG 3/921.

<sup>89</sup> Note on Enlargement, Paris, 7 October 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

<sup>90</sup> *The Economist*, 30 July 1977.

<sup>91</sup> Note by C. Taittinger, Paris, 21 June 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1411.

<sup>92</sup> *Agence Europe*, 22 June 1977.

peaches as a *préalable* to negotiations, instead of CAP reform.<sup>93</sup> In addition, Prime Minister Raymond Barre, during his visit to Athens on 25 June 1977 reconfirmed that France would not seek a ‘globalisation’ of the accession negotiations and the CAP reforms would not constitute a precondition to the Greek accession. Somewhat more worryingly though he added: ‘mais des précautions doivent être prises. Il ne s’agit pas de poser un préalable, mais bien de ne pas se montrer passif compte-tenu de l’importance des enjeux en particulier la perspective de la négociation avec l’Espagne.’<sup>94</sup>

The French and Italians, having resolved their differences over Greece and in view of the Commission’s promise to deliver a detailed study on the wider Mediterranean aspects of the CAP, met in Rome on 16 July 1977 in an effort to cooperate in formulating a plan to protect their agricultural products from the effects of the potential Iberian enlargement. This contrasted with France’s previous reluctant attitude towards coordinating its positions with Italy, whom they had found a ‘weak negotiator’. However, the meeting brought to the surface further differences between the two countries. Whereas France had almost 70% of its output in northern products and only 20% in southern, 40% of Italian products were southern. France was therefore much less vulnerable than Italy and far more likely to gain markets for temperate products in Iberia. Nevertheless the French attitude on agriculture was much harder than that of Italy, and this difference was evident in the respective memoranda on agriculture that each country submitted to the Commission for consideration.<sup>95</sup>

Italy and France wanted a better market organisation for Mediterranean products which in most cases meant increased price support and protection from third countries. Both memoranda focused on the four feared financial effects of new accession on the agricultural budget: a) the cost of internal market support, b) the cost of export subsidization, c) the cost of agricultural guidance and d) receipts from import levies and duties (own resources).<sup>96</sup> Italy’s pressing need however was for structural reforms, in contrast to the French desire for price guarantees. The French emphasised the need for the Community ‘de mettre en œuvre des politiques de soutien des prix fondées sur l’intervention et sur l’octroi des subventions à l’exportation à un niveau suffisant, par analogie avec ce qui est fait pour les productions du Nord’.<sup>97</sup> The major issue where the two parties totally parted company was on the regulation of intra-community trade in

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<sup>93</sup> Leigh, 40.

<sup>94</sup> Note by S. Georgiou, Paris, 7 July 1977, GRGKP 1977.

<sup>95</sup> Italy on 5 July 1977; France on 26 July 1977.

<sup>96</sup> Tsoukalis, *The European Community*, 235.

<sup>97</sup> Meeting between Barre and Andreotti, Paris, 18 July 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1794.

fruit, vegetables and especially wine where the French were asking for minimum prices as the best technique for intervention.<sup>98</sup> This followed shortly after the Franco-Italian wine war of 1975-6. The Italians were vehemently opposed: '[l'Italie] en revanche, se montre très réticente à l'égard d'une régulation des échanges intra-communautaires qui serait interprétée comme un obstacle à la libre circulation des marchandises. Une telle formule lui semble dangereuse pour les exportations italiennes, en particulier de vin'.<sup>99</sup> No surprise therefore that the French Minister of Agriculture admitted that an alignment between the two countries' positions was still not possible.<sup>100</sup>

But it was not just the two Mediterranean countries which could not agree on how to address the agricultural issues of their region. For the Commission it was also a challenge, mainly because none of the member states was ready to admit that the problems of the countries in the Mediterranean were intractable. Resources such as minerals and water, or transport infrastructure, which rendered an industry profitable, were limited while the increase in populations that once used to be siphoned off by emigration militated against any attempt to raise the standard of living. Moreover, the agriculture of the Mediterranean region was dominated by small independent producers who lacked proper storage as well as properly organised publicity or marketing arrangements. To make matters worse, unemployment, despite the relative average figures constituted a deeply rooted problem as it was immune to the kind of remedies which could be applied elsewhere.<sup>101</sup>

In addition the Mediterranean products such as fruit and vegetables, wine, cut flowers, tobacco, olive oil, or sheep meat had a number of peculiar characteristics. Variations in their yield and seasonal variation in consumption led to fluctuation in prices and incomes. The marketing season was often very short with the products being perishable and with no available international market. If a small quantity of produce was imported at the moment of domestic production peak, this could seriously affect market prices. Producer incomes therefore were much more vulnerable than those of the northern products. It was in this light that the Community had found it practically impossible to adopt the same kind of intervention measures as those that applied to most cereals, meat and dairy products. This vulnerability was further aggravated by the fact that there was now total sufficiency for the major Mediterranean products.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Note by J.P. Dutet, Paris, 11 May 1977, FR5 AG 3/ 998.

<sup>99</sup> Telegram by F.Puaux, Rome, 17 June 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1794.

<sup>100</sup> *La Croix*, 7 July 1977(in www.ena.lu).

<sup>101</sup> Note by C.Tickell, Brussels, 18 March 1977, ECEN 120.

<sup>102</sup> Note by D. F. Williamson, London, 31 May 1977, MWE 021/1, 198, UKFCO 98/254.

Finn Olav Gundelach, Commissioner for Agriculture warned that the size of the FEOGA budget was already coming under increasing criticism. He in turn was under substantial internal pressure from Jenkins to avoid further escalation in agricultural spending. Therefore it was advisable to avoid adding to the general problems of agricultural expenditure. According to him, any revisions of market support mechanisms should be geared, not to further increases in the protection of products which were already in surplus, but to the encouragement of alternative crops for which there was growing demand in the Community. Secondly, any available funds should be concentrated on encouraging high quality produce and improving production and marketing structures. Otherwise, it would be a great misuse of Community funds to finance wine lakes and tobacco mountains as a means of supporting the agricultural population of the Mediterranean region: 'I am convinced that the problem in many sections of the Mediterranean agriculture is one of quality and market structure rather than questions of inadequate market support'.<sup>103</sup>

Similarly, the Germans, the Community's 'paymasters', had realised that the French and Italians would have to be granted some form of compensation but felt that the money should be spent in the most productive manner. 'I am prepared to pay', Schmidt told *Der Spiegel* 'but it seems senseless to make such sacrifices if they result only in agricultural surpluses'.<sup>104</sup> This meant that they favoured 'adjustment aids' rather any substantial extension of the market mechanism via increased intervention or minimum prices. These last measures would lead to surpluses in Mediterranean produce, most of which would have to be destroyed, as most products were perishable. Essentially, they felt, as the Commission did, that the bulk of the compensatory action should be in the structural sector. The answer would be given in early 1978.<sup>105</sup>

#### **4.4. The hypothetical 'breakthrough'**

Against this flurry of activity, the fourth Ministerial Greece-EEC meeting took place on 25 July 1977. As the Nine met to prepare for the discussion with the Greeks, the Germans and the Dutch made no secret of their desire to get the ball rolling on in the Greek negotiations. Both Klaus von Dohnanyi, the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Max van der Stoep, the Dutch Foreign Minister, insisted on the need

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<sup>103</sup> Note by F. O. Gundelach, Brussels, 21 March 1977, ECEN 120.

<sup>104</sup> Press Office, Bonn, 27 October 1975, GRGKP 1977.

<sup>105</sup> See chapter five.

‘d’accélérer le rythme de la négociation et de prévoir deux nouvelles réunions ministérielles d’ici à la fin de l’année’.<sup>106</sup> The Germans had proven themselves both masters of compromise and the most accurate and reliable source of advice and support to the Greeks. Besides French and Italian representatives, who had been so far rather apprehensive regarding the progress of the Greek negotiations for domestic agricultural reasons, the Belgians taking their cue from the Commission were also less forthcoming. In fact, the Belgian Presidency (July-December 1977) adopted a cautious line towards accelerating the negotiating process on the basis of the Commission’s assessments. Natali in particular mentioned that more work of substance had to be done especially on agriculture before the Community would be able to adopt a negotiating mandate. Moreover, there was the issue of the incomplete and weak Greek memoranda and the process of clarification needed to finish the necessary ground work. The Commission was doing its best to carry this out quickly, but in some cases the process would be lengthy. Still, under the combined pressure of the Germans and the Dutch who gained support by a less reticent France and Italy, the Belgians too conceded to hold a ministerial meeting on 17 October with the prospect of another in December 1977. There, the Nine together with the Greeks could investigate whether the Community could begin substantive negotiations, even if only in certain sectors (i.e. customs union and external relations) rather than across the board.

During the meeting with the Greeks on 25 July, Papaligouras expressed his anxiety over the rather general nature of the Community’s remarks. In essence, the sterility of the discussions led the Greek delegation to openly discuss two ways in which a faster and more productive negotiating tempo could be assured. The first proposal was the setting up of working groups that would prepare the ground for the Deputies’ and Ministerial meetings. The second referred to the possibility of adequate consultation on possible changes to the agricultural *acquis*. The Community promised to examine further both requests after the end of the summer break. Despite the dominant ambiguity as to the prospects of the negotiations, the Greeks rejoiced in the fact that the issue of ‘globalisation’ had in theory been rejected. On his return to Athens, Papaligouras underlined that the subject of linkage between Greece, Portugal and Spain had not been discussed at the meeting. Moreover Jenkins had confirmed to him in private that there would be ‘no “globalisation” of the three sets of accession negotiations, even if they

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<sup>106</sup> 4th Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 25 July 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1411.

would obviously affect each other and none could be seen in isolation'.<sup>107</sup> The Greeks were again given promises but no tangible results.

#### **4.5. The Commission strikes back**

In early September, COREPER met several times to settle the two Greek requests, raised at the fourth Ministerial meeting, on working groups and prior consultation over the agricultural sector. A similar demand for consultation on agriculture had in fact already been raised in the previous enlargement round, but the EEC had rejected it on the grounds that it might have endangered its freedom of decision.<sup>108</sup> The same decision was to apply to the Greeks. In terms of working groups, the permanent representatives doubted their usefulness, as they were afraid that these might be counter-productive and would lead to a diffusing of responsibility for the negotiations. Moreover, de Kergorlay reported on the behalf of the Commission that the Greeks had been more parsimonious in providing the prerequisite information than earlier applicants. In particular, he expressed 'les réserves très marquées de la Commission à l'égard d'une proposition qui risque de fractionner et de disperser les dossiers de la négociation. De plus, il n'existe actuellement aucun domaine dans lequel les données disponibles soient suffisantes pour engager la négociation'.<sup>109</sup> The Belgian Presidency however underlined the psychological need to either give some satisfaction to the Greeks on working groups or to propose an alternative. The Community needed to look for any possible means of maintaining the rhythm of the negotiations. The Nine concluded that a better method of making progress was to reinforce contacts between the Greeks and the Commission and to further encourage the Greeks to provide more information.<sup>110</sup>

On the same day, Jenkins, disappointed with the progress so far, summoned the nine permanent representatives to discuss the enlargement dossier. The Commission's role needed to be reinforced as it was incumbent on the executive body to give a genuine *communautaire* view of all problems involved. In order to achieve this, Jenkins announced the need for the Commission to meet for a weekend away from Brussels where the atmosphere would favour a general and intimate 'Gymnich-type' discussion.<sup>111</sup> The Commission convened in La Roche en Ardennes on 17-18 September 1977 in order to further brainstorm on issues related to enlargement on which they had been asked to

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<sup>107</sup> Meeting between Jenkins and Papaligouras, Brussels, 25 July 1977, ECBAC 66/1985 192.

<sup>108</sup> David Hannay (ed.), *Britain's Entry into the European Community: Report by Sir Con O'Neill on the Negotiations of 1970-1972* (Portland, 2000), 41.

<sup>109</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 8 September 1977, FRAMAE, d/c, 1411.

<sup>110</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 15 September, ECBAC 48/1984 42.

<sup>111</sup> Informal Meeting of Commission, La Roche, 17/18 September, ECEN 127.



elaborate by the Nine at Leeds Castle earlier that year.<sup>112</sup> Although Jenkins' main focus in this meeting was to re-proclaim the goal of a monetary union, enlargement was an equally important topic during the weekend.<sup>113</sup> In fact, the relaunching of monetary cooperation came to be linked with enlargement, whilst part of a certain logic, it also created a feeling of déjà vu from the first enlargement. Giscard and Barre recently confirmed that events during that period had followed a degree of logic: 'Il ne faut pas voir ces événements comme des événements désordonnés - la création de SME, l'élargissement, etc. Il y avait une logique'.<sup>114</sup> Basically they thought that further economic and monetary integration would be much more difficult in an enlarged and even more economically diverse Community.

In La Roche, the Commissioners agreed not to take any decisions or approve any documents, but to discuss the general guidelines which should be applied in the following months and years. Following the work initiated in the aftermath of the Leeds Castle meeting, the Commission had embraced the Nine's objective to further enhance the perception of the EEC as a champion of democracy, especially on the eve of the applications of the emerging southern democracies. Ever since the Birkelbach report in 1962, the EEC's promotion of the principles of democracy had grown to become one of the defining elements of the Community's political identity, as recognised in its 1973 declaration on European identity.<sup>115</sup> Moreover, the decision to hold the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979 put further pressure on the need to find a way to 'établir un lien entre la pratique de la démocratie parlementaire pluraliste et l'appartenance à la Communauté'.<sup>116</sup>

The majority of Commissioners was in favour of the idea of a 'solemn declaration' on democracy to be adopted at a suitable moment by the Nine and endorsed by all existing and new members. There was heated discussion on the timing and implication of such declaration. Initially, it was thought preferable to insert the declaration into the preamble of the new accession treaty for the Community of Twelve, but 'comme il a déjà été noté à Leeds Castle la Grèce, le Portugal et l'Espagne accepteraient difficilement dans les Traités d'adhésion une « clause démocratique » qui leur serait applicable

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<sup>112</sup> Note by F.O. Gundelach, 18 September 1977, Brussels, ECEN 130.

<sup>113</sup> For the genesis of EMS, see: Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, 'The Emergence of a European Bloc?'; Ludlow, *Making of the European Monetary System*.

<sup>114</sup> Berstein & Sirinelli, *Les années Giscard*, 143.

<sup>115</sup> See chapter two; On the European identity, see: Emma De Angelis, 'The European Parliament's enlargement discourse'.

<sup>116</sup> Telegram by L. de Nanteuil, Brussels, 23 September 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

exclusivement'.<sup>117</sup> Jenkins insightfully commented on this to the Danish Foreign Minister, Knud Borge Andersen by noting that 'to interrogate a recently recovered patient for signs of a relapse was not the best way to maintain his health'.<sup>118</sup> The most important element was to find an appropriate moment to make such a declaration 'sans offrir le flanc au soupçon'. The holding of the first direct elections was considered the ideal occasion.<sup>119</sup> Interestingly, the Commissioners had little desire to give more specific definitions of democracy; this way, they were able to find convergence on the principle without venturing into the details to what extent and how the Community's idea of democracy was to be realised in practice. As the democratic practice varied considerably amongst the Nine, any attempt to define a set of clear democratic norms was likely to encounter strongly divergent opinions and lead to an impasse.

It was during the last day of the weekend in La Roche that the most controversial debate took place. Commissioner Natali put forward what was 'the first real attempt to adapt a 'global' approach to the three applications for membership'.<sup>120</sup> According to this report, the best solution to avoid a serious weakening of the Community would be accession by stages. 'L'écart accompli entre la CEE et les candidats peut conduire à définir une négociation par étapes, chaque étape n'étant franchie que quand un certain nombre de critères et d'objectifs ont été atteints'.<sup>121</sup> This accession by stages would possibly involve the setting of certain objectives and economic criteria, GNP, balance of payments which each applicant should fulfil before it could make progress from one stage of membership to the other. He then went on to argue that during this intermediate period, the Commission should explore the possibility of an ad-hoc 'financial instrument' from outside the existing Community budget to deal with the financial implications of enlargement.<sup>122</sup>

Jenkins reiterated Natali's ideas on several occasions during October. In the Foreign Affairs Council on 17 October 1977, Jenkins envisaged the possibility of a large transfer of resources to the applicant states to make their level of economic activity more compatible with that of the existing Community.<sup>123</sup> This so called 'solidarity fund' would try reducing the difference in economic performance between candidate countries and the Community. In addressing the Foreign Ministers, he declared that 'enlargement – and

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<sup>117</sup> Note by C.J. Audland, Brussels, 29 June 1977, ECEN 48.

<sup>118</sup> Meeting between Anderson and Jenkins, Brussels, 14 June 1977, ECEN 1544.

<sup>119</sup> Report by É. Noël, La Roche, 17 September, ECEN 48.

<sup>120</sup> Tsoukalis, *The European Community*, 139.

<sup>121</sup> Note by J.R. Bernard, Paris, 7 October 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1801.

<sup>122</sup> Informal Meeting of Commission, La Roche, 17/18 September, MXE021/1, 315, UKFCO 98/255.

<sup>123</sup> Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Luxembourg, 18 October 1977, ECEN 128.

its implications – will cost us a lot of money, and we should recognize it from the outset.<sup>124</sup> The nine Foreign Ministers however, on 8-9 October 1977, during an informal meeting at Villers-le-Temple rejected such ideas on the grounds that these might lead to the indefinite postponement of accession and therefore political unrest in the applicant countries. The only feasible solution to the economic differences was accession accompanied by a long transitional period especially for agriculture and the free movement of labour. In particular, the Germans and the Dutch considered such mechanisms totally useless. ‘Bonn est également hostile à la création d’un nouvel instrument financier, ainsi qu’à un transfert massif de ressources au profit des candidats avant l’adhésion car cela ramènerait au concept de préadhésion. Les fonds existants au sein de la Communauté doivent être utilisés au profit de ses seuls États membres’.<sup>125</sup> The main preoccupation was to offer equality to the prospective members. In this light, ideas for special economic aid sent just the wrong message.

#### **4.6. The call for elections: threat or desperation?**

During the second half of 1977, negotiating activity was greatly reduced by the decision of the Greek government, on 21 September 1977 to hold elections a year earlier than planned. Karamanlis had decided not to leave the elections until the last possible moment in order to avoid the risk that events largely beyond his control would turn sour on him.<sup>126</sup> The *Financial Times*’ article on Greece, entitled ‘A poll before the clouds gather’, reflected the Greek government’s calculations well.<sup>127</sup> Athens had not yet entered the second phase of its EEC accession negotiations and was missing two very essential elements in the *vue d’ensemble*: the Community’s position on the transitional period and a more comprehensive position on agriculture. Greece had become concerned about the atmosphere of the negotiations. All sorts of rumours, ideas, non-official opinions by members of the Commission and influential members of various parliaments tended first to introduce new ideas and second to ‘globalise’ the negotiations. The Greeks had been informed, for instance, of the idea of a very slow gradual integration of new members in parallel with a creation of a special fund. All of these tended to create the impression that the Community was trying to find a way of saying no to fast Greek accession on the

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<sup>124</sup> Statement by Jenkins at the Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Luxembourg, 18 October 1977, MXE21/1, 348, UKFCO 98/256.

<sup>125</sup> Record of Informal Meeting of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Villers-le-Temple, 8-9 October 1977, EC5 AG 3/ 921.

<sup>126</sup> Letter by M.C. Clements, Athens, 16 September 1977, 337, MWE020/358/1, UKFCO 98/247.

<sup>127</sup> *The Financial Times*, 28 September 1977.

technical level. Moreover, the merits of the Greek case were getting confused and lost within this avalanche of new ideas.<sup>128</sup>

Even worse, during the summer break, the French returned to their vacillating position on enlargement. The submission of Spain's application for membership on 28 July 1977 had exacerbated the hostility of the country's agricultural lobby to the admission of southern European candidates. The reform of the CAP almost instantly returned to the top of France's national agenda. In addressing an agricultural audience in Meuse on 18 August, Giscard's focus was thus again on 'prior changes' as opposed to parallel consultations. It is also worth noting that his widely reported remarks included no distinction between Greece and the other candidates, which obviously attracted Athens' attention. Further bad news came with the publication of the long awaited Commission report on the proposed changes in the mechanisms of the CAP regarding Mediterranean areas. The Nine may have formally disassociated the revision of CAP regulations from the ongoing Greek talks but it was obvious that a good deal struck on that front would make it easier for the French and Italians to be generous towards the Greeks. On 14 October 1977, Vice President of the Commission Wilhelm Haferkamp introduced the Commission's proposals. The report considered that agriculture would remain in the foreseeable future the fundamental economic activity in the Mediterranean region. Therefore, the Commission proposed a dual approach which consisted of improvement in the quality of agricultural sectors and of restructuring of the market organisation for the most important product groups in the southern areas of the Community. The key to such a policy would be to direct structural policy in the Mediterranean towards specific measures such as irrigation in the Mezzogiorno and the restructuring of the low quality wine producing regions.

This Commission's paper was met with vehement opposition by the French and the Italians in the Council of Foreign Ministers on 17 October 1977. Forlani was really disappointed 'avec un document de caractère général et qui ne laisse apparaître que d'une façon timide et vague les solutions à apporter à certains problèmes'.<sup>129</sup> Jean-François Deniau, the French Deputy Minister of Agriculture, shared the Italian's views and was compelled to 'exprimer une déception devant la minceur des réflexions de la Commission' but mainly drew attention 'qu'il ne suffisait que d'affirmer une volonté politique. Il fallait voir où on allait et réfléchir sérieusement aux conséquences de ses

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<sup>128</sup> Telegram by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 14 October 1977, GRGKP 1977.

<sup>129</sup> Minutes of Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Luxembourg, 17-18 October 1977, ECEN 128.

actes pour en tirer des conclusions concrètes'.<sup>130</sup> At the same time, the British stressed that any changes should lead neither to structural surpluses nor to a hyper-protective stance against third countries.<sup>131</sup>

Karamanlis' decision to call for elections however had troubled the Nine, who felt obliged to offer the Greek Premier a tangible positive result in the EEC negotiations. During the fifth Ministerial meeting, on 17 October 1977, Belgian Foreign Minister Henri Simonet read the COREPER declaration on the state of negotiations. Regarding the Greek demand for working parties, Simonet thought that the most appropriate way of expediting the negotiations was to make greater use of existing procedures rather than the formation of new working groups.<sup>132</sup> However, the new element in the Community's declaration was that it moved from the phase 'd'inventaire à la phase de négociation proprement dite'. In particular, the Community proposed the opening of substantive negotiations on certain folders 'tout en réservant pour le moment les questions agricoles et les mesures transitoires'.<sup>133</sup> Papaligouras rehashed the same positions, underlining the problem of having these two factors of prime importance still undefined. The Community nonetheless was firm in its opinion. Only four files were mature enough to proceed with to the next stage of negotiations: customs union, ECSC, movement of capital and external relations.

Given the Community's past procrastination, this was, if not a turning point, certainly an important development in the negotiations with Greece. The Nine had concluded that the Greek negotiations warranted speeding up. According to Van der Stoel, a great deal of time had been spent charting the problems surrounding Greek entry; therefore it was now imperative to get down to serious talking.<sup>134</sup> This change in attitude as observed in October 1977, constituted 'un geste politique pour faciliter la tâche des dirigeants d'Athènes à l'approche des élections législatives des mois prochains'.<sup>135</sup> Indeed, in a telegram to Paris, the French ambassador in Greece explained that 'la décision de la Grèce d'avancer au 20 Novembre prochain la date des élections est étroitement liée aux problèmes que pose la candidature hellénique à la CEE. Karamanlis souhaite également n'avoir point à partir durant cette même période d'une campagne

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<sup>130</sup> Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Luxembourg, 18 October 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1795.

<sup>131</sup> Telegram by L. de Nanteuil, Brussels, 9 November 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

<sup>132</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 17 October 1977, GRCKP 126A.

<sup>133</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 17 October 1977, GRCKP 126A

<sup>134</sup> *The Guardian*, 10 October 1977.

<sup>135</sup> Note by L. de Nanteuil, Brussels, 17 October 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1411.

hostile aux thèses grecques qui pourront inopinément se nouer entre tel ou tel pays membres'.<sup>136</sup>

Despite the Nine's political decision to move forward, the Commission was still reticent to make such a move. In the *ad hoc* Greek accession group, Roland de Kergorlay, head of the delegation on enlargement, explained 'qu'elle serait hors d'état de faire des propositions tant qu'elle ne disposerait pas de données techniques que la Grèce n'avait pas encore fournies. Un seul chapitre était techniquement prêt, celui des mouvements de capitaux'.<sup>137</sup> This reluctance to advance was unacceptable to the Germans. In what had become common practice, it was the Germans who intervened again in favour of the Greeks. During his trip to Athens (17-19 August 1977), Genscher had pledged to the Greek government the EEC's willingness to solve any outstanding problems. Athens, to Germany's satisfaction, had decided to reintegrate to NATO but, as confessed by Karamanlis 'cannot continue this friendly policy in public if the dialogue in Brussels failed as far as the EEC membership is concerned'.<sup>138</sup> Therefore, it was decided at the Germans' insistence that the Community's declaration in the Deputies' meeting on 11 November would confirm the opening of substantive negotiations but at the same 'dire très franchement à la Grèce que la CEE attend toujours les éléments techniques indispensables pour ouvrir la négociation'.<sup>139</sup>

The Greek parliamentary elections took place on 20 November 1977. It is noteworthy that the result constituted a relative success of the anti-European movement. Despite the fact that the New Democracy and its leader Karamanlis, won a relatively comfortable majority (172 seats out of 300), the anti-EEC parties increased their share of the vote by 15% from 20% to 35%.<sup>140</sup> Papaligouras had warned Natali that 'anti-European and anti-western forces inside the parties might make devious use of what looked like Community reluctance on the enlargement file'.<sup>141</sup> The French ambassador reported back to the Élysée suggesting that 'on estimait à Athènes que le progrès spectaculaire du parti de Papandreou s'expliquait par la désaffection pour l'Europe d'une partie de l'opinion hellénique. Celle-ci était déçue en effet par les réticences qu'elle sentait

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<sup>136</sup> Telegram by J.M. Merillon, Athens, 3 October 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1411.

<sup>137</sup> Note by I. Nielsen, Brussels, 25 July 1977, ECBAC 66/1985 192.

<sup>138</sup> Telegram by G. Poensgen, Athens, 20 August 1977, Doc. 223, FRGAAPD 1977, 1112-1113.

<sup>139</sup> Minutes of meeting de Groupe d'adhésion Greece-EEC, Brussels, 4 November 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1801.

<sup>140</sup> Greek elections, Athens, 19 November 1977, GR*Karamanlis*, vol. 10, 43.

<sup>141</sup> Papaligouras' visit to Natali, Brussels, 17 October 1977, ECBAC 66/1985 147.

chez les États membres de la CEE à l'égard de la candidature grecque'.<sup>142</sup> The impact on the negotiations of the Greek elections result is dealt with in the following chapter.

#### **4.7. Conclusion**

Viewing 1977 as a whole, we can summarise that as Greece's case became entangled with the Portuguese and Spanish application during the early months of the year, the issue of enlargement rose high on the agenda of the Nine in Brussels. The economic threat posed especially by Spain, rendered the Nine and the Commission increasingly reticent towards Greek membership. During this time, the Athens government had to fight against two nightmare scenarios. Firstly, the prospect of 'globalisation' of the negotiations which would inevitably entail a long-term prolongation of the negotiations. Secondly, there was the initial French and Italian request to set the revision of the CAP mechanisms concerning Mediterranean agricultural products as a precondition to the continuance of the negotiations. In order to address both threats, Greece capitalised on the political imperatives underpinning its membership. Karamanlis, who preferred bilateral diplomacy at the highest level, linked the successful conclusion of his country's EEC negotiations with his own political survival. He used his political clout to his advantage as he had established himself in the eyes of the Nine as the only politician capable enough to secure Greece's continued attachment to the West. It was not a surprise therefore, that in the time of crisis, with few indications that fast advance was close at hand Karamanlis decided to go to the polls. Either an act of desperation or an illustration of fine tactics, it shook the Nine. How much so, would become apparent in 1978.

1977 was also a year of lessons for the Greek delegation. Through the experience of encountering so many obstacles, they came to understand the complexity of the Community. An applicant state needed to have a great deal of patience and to work steadily behind the scenes in order to argue its position to the members and the Commission. One of the main obstacles was the Community's growing request for detailed information in every sector involved in the negotiations. The Greeks may have suspected the Community of using this method as a way of delaying the negotiations, but at the end of the day, they came to realise how important it actually was to devise complete reports. British Political Director Reginald Hibbert had rightly advised the Greeks that the speed of negotiations depended very much on the clarity and comprehensiveness of their answers, placing the responsibility for the pace at least by

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<sup>142</sup> Note by G. Robin, Paris, 1 December 1977, FR5AG 3/ 998.

half in Greek hands. If the questions were answered rigorously, it would be exceedingly difficult for anyone to hold up the process.<sup>143</sup> The Greeks learned this the hard way. A good example was the use on the part of the Greeks of the Association agreement. Throughout the year and despite the Community's expressed opposition, the Greeks brought to the fore the importance of the existence of such an agreement. Truth be told, Greece insisted on this in a desperate effort to differentiate its case from the Iberian ones. In practice, however this angered the people working behind the scenes in the Commission and the permanent representations and in the long term did more harm than good. Moreover, the Greeks discovered that the formula adopted for the first enlargement, especially regarding the transitional mechanisms, could no longer be taken for granted for what was, in essence, a very different enlargement.

The detailed examination of the Brussels negotiating process also reveals much about the Nine Community members. The Greek negotiations were a challenging test for the Nine to find a cohesive approach vis-a-vis Greece. The eleven months of negotiations had confirmed that the French would show no spontaneous generosity, especially when national agricultural interests were at stake. However, rather than buckling to French demands, the other Eight under strong German leadership held remarkably firm, opposing any excessive demands by France that might have led to the stagnation of the negotiations with Greece. This was a rare example of French inability to conduct an effective European policy. For months, Giscard's government tried in vain to reconcile long-term geopolitical considerations with conflicting short-term domestic economic-agricultural interests. The upcoming legislative elections, scheduled for March 1978 further exacerbated Giscard's dilemma. In the end, under extreme pressure from Karamanlis and faced with Community intransigence, the French under Giscard's directions lifted their demand for the 'globalisation' of the negotiations. Another factor contributing to the softening of France's policy was Paris' inability to cooperate with Rome. Both stood to lose the most from the possible widening to the south in terms of agriculture, but they could not reach a common position. What is more, Italy seemed to confirm her role as a 'weak negotiator' at least during 1977. In turn, France's softening hardly meant a fundamental change of attitude towards southern enlargement. As it turned out it was just a change in tactics. Paris' focus swiftly shifted away from Greece, to Spain's and Portugal's detriment.

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<sup>143</sup> Meeting between Hibbert and Theodoropoulos, Athens, 28 November 1977, MWE/021/1, 440, UKFCO 98/256.



In late 1977, however, nobody could really predict what the future held for the Greek candidacy. 'Globalisation' and agricultural preconditions had been rejected in theory, yet both were strong recurrent themes. Admittedly, enlargement was for the Community an opportune time to address pending issues and for the member states to pursue the improvement of Community policies that they deemed damaging or unfair to their national interests. Indeed, in 1977 an incessant series of informal meetings amongst the Nine and the Commission took place, dealing with the ideas of democracy and enlargement, institutional development and of course the revision of the CAP. In contrast, the negotiations with the Greeks remained stagnant and despite the Nine's promises in late December to the contrary, no substantive bargaining had taken place by the end of the year. To make matters worse, the Community had not even presented its complete position on two essential questions for the successful conclusion of the negotiations issues, namely the duration of the transitional period and agriculture. The French and the Germans had promised the Greeks that progress would take place after the French legislative elections and during the German presidency. Could the Greeks trust them? Time was of the essence.

## Chapter 5: Closing the Gap (November 1977- July 1978)

### 5.1. Karamanlis' European tour

Viewed in its entirety, the result of the November 1977 elections ensured that Greece would continue under stable and effective democratic rule. However, Karamanlis' reduced majority limited his freedom of manoeuvre and marked the emergence as a serious political challenger of Andreas Papandreu, leader of PASOK. One of the main reasons behind Papandreu's success was the simple desire for change in the nation's political life on the part of large sectors of the electorate.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, the prospect of EEC membership played a role that should not be underestimated. During the electoral campaign PASOK vehemently opposed Greek entry on the grounds that eventual Greek membership under EEC rules would consolidate the country's peripheral position, and create fatal problems for Greek industry and agriculture. As an alternative, PASOK advocated a special arrangement with the EEC, similar to that of Norway.<sup>2</sup> Capitalising on this anti-EEC rhetoric, Papandreu managed to win over rural voters who might have normally been expected to support Karamanlis, but who had been frightened off by the latter's strong advocacy of EEC entry. Papandreu also profited from a feeling of resentment that Greece had been abandoned by the West as well as a fear of the plunge into the unknown represented by the European Community.<sup>3</sup>

In his valedictory dispatch on 12 January 1978, UK ambassador in Greece, Sir Brooke Richards (September 1974-March 1978), warned about the chances of Karamanlis not remaining in power for long. He rightfully considered the rise of Papandreu's PASOK, which had doubled its vote, as the most striking event in Greek politics. Thus he urged Britain to do its utmost to bring the Greek accession negotiations to an end that year, while Karamanlis was still leading Greece.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, President Carter, following in the Ford administration's footsteps towards Greece's EEC membership considered it crucial to support Karamanlis' EEC drive as 'the longer-term prospects in Greek politics are even more worrisome than short-term considerations.

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<sup>1</sup> Angelos Elefantis, 'PASOK and the Elections of 1977: The Rise of the Populist Movement', in Penniman, Howard Ray, *Greece at the polls: the Parliamentary elections of 1974 and 1977* (Washington, 1981), 105-129.

<sup>2</sup> Note by T.J. Everard, Athens, 19 April 1978, WS9014/1, 31, UKFCO 9/2732.

<sup>3</sup> Note by S.I. Soutar, Washington, 17 April 1978, WS9014/1, 29A, UKFCO 9/2732.

<sup>4</sup> Note by I.S. Winchester, London, 31 March 1978, WS9014/1, 27, UKFCO 9/2732.

Once Karamanlis leaves the scene, his party is likely to fragment; Greek politics will polarize around extremes'.<sup>5</sup>

Constantinos Tsatsos, the Greek President and one of the closest associates and friends of Karamanlis, confessed to Richards that the Greek Prime Minister was 'bitterly disappointed and shocked by the size of the drop' in his party's vote.<sup>6</sup> This feeling of despair was further exacerbated in light of Karamanlis' reasons for calling early elections in the first place: his explicit motivation had been to seek a fresh mandate in order to deal with foreign policy issues which he believed would reach a critical stage during 1978: Cyprus, the Aegean and most especially Greece's negotiations with the EEC. Despite the consistent and calculated euphoria in the government's official reporting to the public, the absence of tangible progress in the negotiations with the Community had become an embarrassment. Two years after the Commission had produced its first, disregarded, Opinion on Greece, the EEC ideal in Greece had gained no new adherents but a considerable body of sceptics. Karamanlis had realised that if he held elections a year later, slow progress over the accession negotiations might have exposed him to greater electoral difficulty. Indeed in 1978, popular support for the EEC would drop from 75% to 55%.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, within the EEC, there already was an increasing tendency among the Nine to think of the three applicants as one issue. And to make matters worse, there was a high chance that the French left, which was opposed to the Community's enlargement to southern Europe, might win parliamentary elections in March 1978. This would further complicate the Greek membership bid. In addition, Karamanlis did not want his government to be hamstrung by the turmoil of an extended pre-electoral period.<sup>8</sup>

After the elections, the Karamanlis' government was eager to increase pressure for accelerated negotiations. Like the year before, Karamanlis, capitalising on his prestige and personal connections with the European leaders, decided in January and early February to hold a series of bilateral meetings in London, Brussels, Paris and Bonn. He wanted to stress that any further delay in the negotiations and in the eventual Greek accession would seriously damage the European cause in Greece and affect his country's pro-Western orientation. As corroboration, he could point to the outcome of the recent Greek elections, and to the spectacular drop in his party's vote. Indeed, almost every

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<sup>5</sup> Jimmy Carter Presidential Files (henceforth CPF), JC-NSA Office of the National Security Advisor, Memorandum by P. Henze, Washington, 21 November 1977.

<sup>6</sup> Meeting between Tsatsos and Richards, Athens, 3 March 1978, WSG014/1, 188, UKFCO 9/2732.

<sup>7</sup> Valedictory letter by B. Richards, Athens, 7 March 1978, WSG014/1, 17, UKFCO 9/2732.

<sup>8</sup> Letter by M.C. Clements, Athens, 23 September 1977, WSG014/1, 67, UKFCO 9/2564.

contact with the Nine was used to stress the domestic political danger unearthed by the November 1977 elections.

During his visit to London on 25 January 1978, the Greek leader expounded to British Prime Minister James Callaghan the dangerous advance of anti-Europeanism at the last election and urged him to help the negotiations move forward, particularly over the knotty points of Mediterranean agriculture and the connection of the Greek application with those of Portugal and Spain. Karamanlis claimed that the reduction of his party's vote in the elections was largely because no solution had been found to the country's external problems and his political opponents had exploited the situation. Economic factors had not played a significant role, especially since Greece's economy was in a comparatively good shape. The Aegean and Cyprus issues, however, as the British recognised, were highly emotive problems with no prospect of imminent solution. The British agreed with the Greek logic that 'if the Aegean was Karamanlis' great point of vulnerability, then the EEC, if it went well, could be his greatest success'.<sup>9</sup> As for the CAP, Karamanlis stressed that Greek agricultural production was too small to make any difference to other members of the Community and was largely complementary to the agricultures of the Nine. Callaghan advised Karamanlis to leave the agricultural sector until the French elections in March had passed.<sup>10</sup> Callaghan's statement confirmed Theodoropoulos' worst fears. According a top secret telegraph from the latter to the Prime Minister, 'the timing of Karamanlis' tour is not the best. That is because the impending French elections limit any room of manoeuvre for the French government and also provide the rest of the Community with an excuse to blame France for any lack of progress'.<sup>11</sup> However, feeling that they were running out of time, Karamanlis and his entourage decided to proceed with their tour.

Next stop, on 27 January 1978, was the EEC Brussels headquarters where Karamanlis met with Commission members to examine some practical issues of the negotiations. Both sides acknowledged that a great deal of indispensable exploratory work had been completed. They now should start substantive negotiations, with view to reach an agreement on how to solve the problems of adjustment. The Greeks stressed that technocratic arguments should not override the confirmed political support of the member states. Commission officials had expected that aspects of the negotiations might seem to Karamanlis too technical and long-drawn out. Lorenzo Natali, the Commission

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<sup>9</sup> Letter by B. Richards, Athens, 31 March 1977, WSG014/1,22, UKFCO 9/2564.

<sup>10</sup> Letter by I.S. Winchester, London, 17 February 1978, WSG020/1, 55, UKFCO 9/2744.

<sup>11</sup> Note by V. Theodoropoulos, Athens, 5 January 1978, GRGKP G/1978.

Vice-President responsible for the enlargement dossier, explained that ‘unfortunately this is an inevitable fact of daily life in the Community. We have to get the details right off the start because it would all suffer if the machinery which we had created were to break down in practice. But Greeks can be confident that technicalities will never be used as an excuse to delay negotiations’.<sup>12</sup> George Kontogeorgis, the Greek Minister responsible for European affairs, who accompanied Karamanlis, gave the Commissioners further explanations regarding the Greek situation: on agriculture, Kontogeorgis explained that he did not foresee large changes in production and consumption patterns since Greek agriculture represented less than 5% of total EEC agricultural production, adding that for most basic products, Greece was in deficit or barely self-sufficient. He acknowledged that there were some problems in specialised sectors like peaches and tomatoes, but here Greece had taken measures to restrict production. Finally, he emphasised that the possibilities for dynamic growth in Greek agriculture were very limited because of the shortage of suitable soil conditions.

As in London, Karamanlis reminded the Commission that it had been sixteen years since he had begun to orientate current Greek policy towards the EEC. The Greek people - and indeed Karamanlis himself - were tired of discussing membership without visible result. The only tangible outcome thus far had been the financial protocol attached to the Treaty of Association in 1962 under which Greece had received \$120 million, even though very little of this money had in fact come to Greece at the beginning and its delivery had been spread over more than 12 years. To make matters worse, no funds had been committed under the second financial protocol since its signature at the end of February 1977. Unfortunately, the protocol had been ratified by only three member states.<sup>13</sup> To further reinforce his argument, Karamanlis pointed out that recent years had seen a general cooling of Greek popular approval for EEC membership from an earlier enthusiasm to the present atmosphere of inarticulate apprehension.

However, this time around, the Commission was much more prepared for Karamanlis’ tactics. Mediation became the forte of the executive institution. Less than two years before, the Commission had been a highly divided body especially with regards to the style and method of communication with the Greeks. The memories of the 1976 Opinion debacle were still rather fresh.<sup>14</sup> That is why on the eve of Karamanlis’ visit in

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<sup>12</sup> Note by I. Nielsen, Brussels, 20 January 1978, ECBAC 50/1982 32.

<sup>13</sup> France, Denmark and Netherlands.

<sup>14</sup> See chapters two and three.

early 1978, the Commission had conducted a series of studies concerning Greek politics. In doing so, they had paid special attention to the press and its influence on public life. Precise and accurate reporting about the Community in Greece was largely lacking and what information reached the general public tended to present the Community as either the answer to all of the country's problems or as their cause. The government was partly responsible for this state of affairs as the main focus of official attention had been directed at the benefits of accession most notably in raising the standard of living and more particularly in improving agriculture. The Association agreement was also presented in distorted terms. Politicians had repeatedly stated that sixteen years of association meant that Greece was well prepared for full membership, and the man in the street could thus hardly understand why the negotiations were now proving so long and cumbersome.<sup>15</sup> They concurred with the *New York Herald Tribune*, which wrote: 'the press in Greece which is a hectic farrago of sensationalism, tendentiousness and gossip, is of very little help, and the cooler voices of the academy are unheard, up against the great wind of Papandreou'.<sup>16</sup>

Against this backdrop, it is no surprise that Roy Jenkins, the Commission President, chose to adopt a conciliatory tone in his encounter with Karamanlis. His main priority was to convince the Greeks that the Commission was fully committed to these accession talks, and thus to correct the view dominating Greece's domestic political life that tended to portray the Brussels institution as 'une organe apolitique et dépourvu de compréhension pour les "vrais" problèmes de la Grèce'.<sup>17</sup> He confirmed the Commission's desire for rapid progress in the negotiations and conveyed to Karamanlis how well he understood the political problems the Greek Premier faced by recalling his own experience as a pro-European member of a British government at the door of the Community in the 1960s. Jenkins reiterated, as he had publicly done on several occasions, that the Commission wanted neither 'globalisation' of the entry negotiations, nor any synchronisation of their timetable. The Commission did have to reflect on the prospects and problems of the Community of Twelve but its President reassured the Greek leader that these reflections would not affect the timing of the Commission's work in the Greek negotiations. At the same time however, Jenkins was aware of the need to provide Karamanlis with a more realistic sense of how long the entry negotiations would take. He did not share the Greek view that the negotiations had so far been artificially

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<sup>15</sup> Note by N.Kohlase, Athens, 21 September 1978, ECBAC 48/1984 42.

<sup>16</sup> Note by N.Kohlase, Athens, 12 July 1978, ECBAC 48/1984 42.

<sup>17</sup> Note by N.Kohlase, Athens, 12 July 1978, ECBAC 48/1984 42.

bogged down. In fact, vital Greek information was missing and Karamanlis had held elections. Jenkins was happy to hear a sober analysis from Karamanlis and his team. On the 'globalisation des réflexions', the Greek Prime Minister stated that 'it was reasonable to say that Greece should come first, but not of course that Greece should come alone'.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, on the timetable suggested in the last ministerial meeting of December 1977 by the Greek Foreign Minister Panayis Papaligouras (March 1978 for completion of negotiations except for agriculture and budget, May 1978 for the latter and until July 1978 to tie up any remaining issues, October 1978 to prepare documents for accession) Theodoropoulos, head of the Greek negotiating team acknowledged 'that this timetable is far reaching and optimistic but necessary to put some kind of limit to the long process of negotiation'.<sup>19</sup>

In Paris, his next port of call, on 28 January 1978, Karamanlis stressed the importance of enlisting active French support in setting the procedure for the next phase of the negotiations, especially regarding the chapters of agriculture and the general transitional period, over which French officials had exhibited alarming intransigence during the previous year of negotiations. Because of this hesitant attitude, the French were accused of not translating their rhetorical enthusiasm for Greek membership into practical flexibility. Worse, further ammunition seemed to be provided to those in the Community who preferred a delay in the Greek accession talks in order to tie them up with those of Portugal and Spain. Giscard vehemently refuted the accusation stressing the fact that the French had already lifted their demand for the 'globalisation' of the negotiations. In practice, the reasons for the delay in the Greek case were largely because 'à la différence du premier élargissement, la CEE a, pour des raisons politiques, pris la décision d'ouvrir les négociations sans se ménager le temps nécessaire à sa préparation, et la Commission a rencontré de nombreuses difficultés lorsqu'elle a cherché à obtenir certaines données des autorités grecques'.<sup>20</sup>

The most pressing obstacle impeding Giscard's effort to support practically the Greek case lay however in the impending French general legislative elections, planned for March 1978. As mentioned in chapter four, the left was ahead in the polls thanks in part to the effect its rhetoric about the perils of enlargement had on the powerful farming lobby. This then was not the most opportune time for the Greeks to be asking for help. At the same time, the Elysée was aware of the difficult domestic political situation in

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<sup>18</sup> Meeting between Karamanlis and Jenkins, Brussels, 27 January 1978, ECEN 1143.

<sup>19</sup> Note by V. Theodoropoulos, Athens, 5 January 1978, GRGKP G/1978.

<sup>20</sup> Note by J.P. Dutet, Paris, 27 January 1978, FR5 AG 3/ 998.

post-elections Greece, and as Giscard acknowledged, 'Karamanlis a besoin dans ce domaine d'un succès ou tout au moins d'un progrès substantiel pour désarmer les critiques d'une opposition anti-européenne sortie renforcée des dernières élections, et pour remobiliser une opinion publique un peu désenchantée à l'égard de l'Europe'.<sup>21</sup> No wonder that one of Giscard's economic advisors, Jean-Pierre Dutet, in a note to the President concluded that a balance must be struck: 'l'appui politique de la CEE et de la France à la Grèce doit être entièrement confirmé. D'autre part, nous exigeons un progrès parallèle de l'examen des propositions que nous avons faites pour la réforme des réglementations appliqués aux produits méditerranéens agricoles'.<sup>22</sup> This was exactly what the President told Karamanlis in private over dinner, asking for patience until the elections.<sup>23</sup>

Karamanlis' final stop on his European tour was Bonn (31 January to 1 February 1978). Both Schmidt and Genscher were eager to stress their support for Greek membership and their shared desire for swift success in Brussels. More importantly perhaps, Schmidt signalled his government's readiness to achieve a breakthrough in the negotiations during the German Presidency in the second half of 1978. The Greek Prime Minister re-used most of the arguments that he had put to the French President: he pointed at the domestic political cost of lengthy membership talks and dwelt upon the negative impact of the Association agreement on Greece. In particular, the Greek leader expressed concern about the Greek trade deficit towards the EEC which amounted to \$1.5 billion in 1977 alone. 'The country's frontiers were open for EEC industrial products but not the EEC's doors for Greek agricultural goods', he complained, adding that 'the Greeks have the feeling they are being played with'.<sup>24</sup> Summing up, Karamanlis noted that in all his travels he heard support for acceleration, but he believed that Germany was the most influential of the Nine. The positive signs emanating from Bonn in late January were therefore extremely promising.

Alongside the German pledges of help however, Schmidt did not sugar-coat the problems ahead. He identified three major complexities. First, the French and Italian demand for better protection of Mediterranean agricultural products was highlighted. The Chancellor confessed that 'the solution was to be found more in Paris than in

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<sup>21</sup> Note on Karamanlis' visit to Paris, Paris, 25 January 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1412.

<sup>22</sup> Note by J.P. Dutet, Paris, 27 January 1978, FR5AG 3/998.

<sup>23</sup> Karamanlis' European Tour, 24 January- 1 February 1978, GR*Karamanlis*, vol. 10, 110.

<sup>24</sup> Record of Meeting between Schmidt and Karamanlis, Bonn, 31 January 1978, Doc. 26, FRGAAPD 1978, 152-153.



Rome... that is why he was interested to know what happened with Giscard'.<sup>25</sup> Second, he pointed to the Greek-Turkish tensions. The continuation of this rivalry created difficulties in the Community's relations with Turkey and also worsened the defence capabilities on the eastern flank of NATO. Karamanlis was taken aback, complaining that if the Greek application were dependent upon Turkey's concessions, then Greece would be its prisoner. Schmidt rejected a direct link between the Greek membership and the Greek-Turkish conflict. Nevertheless, he felt it was absolutely necessary that Western Europe show its concerns openly, especially because Greece and Turkey tended to see each other as a threat bigger than their shared threat from the Soviet Union.<sup>26</sup> On NATO membership, however Schmidt was impressed with Karamanlis' sincerity and his commitment to the West. Certainly, the Greek government had gone out on a limb by withdrawing in 1974 from NATO's military structure and had been trying, discreetly given the absence of a Cyprus settlement, to edge back in. In January 1977, Athens had produced a memorandum proposing detailed negotiations on a wide range of matters to enable them to resume a degree of co-operation with the military side of the Alliance. The Turks however blocked discussion of this paper and the deadlock continued for the rest of the year.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, Schmidt was aware that during the electoral campaign Karamanlis had the courage to point to the logic of the link between the EEC and NATO.<sup>28</sup> He referred to a speech on 12 November 1977, when the Greek Prime Minister declared that 'from the moment of our admission to the EEC we shall have to link our future with theirs in all sectors, including defence'.<sup>29</sup>

The third complexity regarding enlargement was the problem of surplus labour in the EEC. Already in November 1973, the FRG had suspended the bilateral agreement with Greece due to the German economic downturn. In early 1978, 150000 Greek workers were in Germany, approximately 85% of all Greek workers of EC countries, and the high unemployment rate, set to continue into the following years, made it impossible for the Chancellor to accept a higher number of foreigners looking for employment in his country.<sup>30</sup> 'Nous ne pouvons pas laisser s'accroître le nombre des étrangers en RFA.

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<sup>25</sup> Record of Meeting between Schmidt and Karamanlis, Bonn, 31 January 1978, Doc. 26, FRGAAPD 1978, 153-154.

<sup>26</sup> Letter by E.I Young, Bonn, 10 February 1978, WSG026/1, 50, UKFCO 9/2744.

<sup>27</sup> Christos Kassimeris, *Greece and the American Embrace. Greek Foreign Policy towards Turkey, the US and Western Alliance* (London, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> Telegram by B. Richards, Athens, 17 November 1977, WSG014/1, 91, UKFCO 9/2565.

<sup>29</sup> Meeting between Karamanlis and Schmidt, GRKaramanlis, vol.10, 116-118.

<sup>30</sup> Talk between Schmidt and Karamanlis, Bonn, 31 January 1978, Doc.26, FRGAAPD 1978, 156.

L'état du marché du travail et celui des infrastructures sociales l'interdisent. Le mouvement de main d'œuvre devrait rester limité'.<sup>31</sup>

The full impact of Karamanlis' tour was difficult to assess. The Greek ambassador to the EEC, Stefanos Stathatos noted that it had been useful and constructive, particularly on the question of Greek EEC membership prospects. In general the encounters helped raise the morale of the Greek government. They confirmed that substantial goodwill towards Greek membership remained among the Nine and, most importantly, suggested that there was a willingness to translate this goodwill into a readiness to press ahead in Brussels as fast as possible.<sup>32</sup> Indeed Kontogeorgis had written in his study of Greece's EEC accession that on the tour, the Prime Minister's motto was 'convaincre et expliquer' and he largely achieved that goal. Kontogeorgis had gone a step further in exclusively linking the opening of the substantive phase in Greek negotiations during February 1978 with Karamanlis' visits.<sup>33</sup> The assessment that the trip was the most important step in speeding up the negotiations was further strengthened by the Commission's formulation - for the first time - of concrete proposals on a number of key dossiers in the negotiations, namely capital movements, customs union, external relations and the industrial sector.<sup>34</sup>

On closer inspection however Kontogeorgis' claims fail to tell the whole story. Without seeking to take away from the importance of Karamanlis' prestige and his tour's influence on the accession talks, other factors contributed to the end of the exploratory phase. For a start, the European tour was not as much of a success as Kontogeorgis has made out, and as portrayed by the Greek officials and press. *The Economist* commented that 'Karamanlis was given sympathy but no promises on the whistle-stop tour he has just finished of four EEC capitals'.<sup>35</sup> Likewise, the French embassy in Athens reporting back to Paris painted a rather bleak picture: 'Il reste que l'exercice trouve en lui-même ses limites. Le consensus que Karamanlis a relevé chez ses interlocuteurs quant à l'adhésion à la CEE, n'a visiblement point dissipé tous les arrières pensés. Le scepticisme des experts britanniques quant à la possibilité de tenir le calendrier avancé ni toute les ambiguïtés, le souci mis par Schmidt à faire valoir qu'une diminution des tensions entre la Grèce et la Turquie «faciliterait» l'entrée de la première dans le concert européen. En bref, il ne

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<sup>31</sup> Telegram by P. Henry, Bonn, 3 February 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1412.

<sup>32</sup> Call by Stathatos to Tugendhat, Brussels, 30 January 1978, ECBAC 66/1985 192.

<sup>33</sup> Kontogeorgis, *Greece*, 360.

<sup>34</sup> Note by I. Nielsen, Brussels, 20 February 1978, ECBAC 50/1982 32.

<sup>35</sup> *The Economist*, 4 February 1978.

garantit point que la bonne volonté politique suffira, à elle seule, à mouvoir l'appareil de Bruxelles'.<sup>36</sup>

Truth be told, most of the EEC heads of state promised Karamanlis that the back of the negotiations could be broken by the end of the year, yet nobody would give him a firm date. This is vital in assessing the tour. In fact, the longer the negotiations with Greece were drawn out, the greater the danger that they would get tangled up with those with Spain and Portugal. Moreover these meetings, especially the one at the Commission, made Karamanlis and his team realise that they had not been model applicants. They picked up signs of growing irritation in Community quarters. Complaints were heard about the deviousness of Greek officials, about the difficulty of getting accurate information about the economy and about the unreliability of statistics.<sup>37</sup> Following this realisation, as Kontogeorgis confessed to the French ambassador in Athens, all Greek ministers involved in the negotiations were given directions to prioritise the problems related to the country's accession to the EEC. Likewise, the Greek government had designated 44 groups of jurists to work on the immense challenge of translating the EEC's secondary legislation in order to harmonise Greek law with the Community's regulations. Lastly, measures were taken to ease Greece's entry to Community structures. 'À cet égard, des séminaires commençaient déjà à être organisés. De plus, 2500 fonctionnaires qui passeraient par ces séminaires et seraient préparés à la connaissance des règlements communautaires. Karamanlis a débloqué les crédits nécessaires'.<sup>38</sup>

In sum, 1978 began with a major shift - often neglected by scholars - the preparatory work was completed and the Greeks began to seriously examine the secondary legislation. Without the requested information and data, the Commission would have been unable to open up the substantive phase. Roland de Kergorlay, deputy director of the Commission's external relations and in charge of the *ad hoc* group for Greek accession, had repeatedly drawn the attention of the Greeks to the need to reinforce their team with technical experts and provide the Community with the requested information, as at the end of the day in the Community 'tout est affaire de détails'.<sup>39</sup> The finalisation of the positions and the provision of all the statistical details was a truly demanding task for the Greek civil service.<sup>40</sup> Nonetheless, after a year of impasse, the Greeks had fully understood the consequences of this omission on their

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<sup>36</sup> Telegram by J. Folin, Athens, 9 February 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1412.

<sup>37</sup> *The Economist*, 1 June 1978.

<sup>38</sup> Telegram by J. Folin, Athens, 17 February 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1412.

<sup>39</sup> Telegram by J. Folin, Athens, 22 February 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1412.

<sup>40</sup> Note by V. Theodoropoulos, Athens, 5 January 1978, GRGKP G/1978.

part. The lack of information, the Greeks realised, was extensively used as an excuse to further procrastinate in the accession talks. The political arguments, although fairly convincing and helpful at difficult times, failed to oil the wheels of the Brussels machinery. Indeed, on the margins of the European Council on 5-6 December 1977, the Nine, in spite of their understanding for Karamanlis' trials, concluded that 'avec la Grèce la négociation entamée depuis un an, n'avance que très lentement, tant en raison du manque de préparation technique des dossiers du côté grec que de l'absence de réflexion et donc de position du côté des Neuf, sur les problèmes essentiels, notamment les mesures de transition et l'agriculture'.<sup>41</sup>

## **5.2. The opening of the substantive phase**

In a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers on 7 February 1978, Danish Foreign Minister and EC President-in-office Knud Borge Andersen suggested that the time had come to make real progress in the accession negotiations with Greece. He called upon the Nine to treat these accession talks as a test of the Community's credibility. He knew that the prospect of Greek membership had been warmly encouraged by Paris, Bonn, London, Brussels and any lack of progress would only invite controversy. From the beginning of their six month presidency (January-June 1978), therefore, the Danes appeared keen to hurry matters along as they pressed for an intensive timetable of meetings. Indeed, a few days earlier, during a COREPER meeting, the Danish Permanent Representative Gunnar Riberholdt with the support of the French and the Germans, had declared: 'qu'il n'était plus possible de prolonger d'avantage l'échange rituel des déclarations entre les deux délégations et conclu à la nécessité d'adopter, lors du prochain Conseil, les premiers directives pour l'ouverture des véritables négociations'.<sup>42</sup> At the end of the Council meeting, the Commission undertook to present all sectoral mandates before the summer recess while the nine member states agreed to try and reach a conclusion of the negotiations by the end of the year. The French suggestion that the Nine set a deadline of January 1980 for Greek entry was rejected. David Owen, the British Foreign Secretary, argued that setting precise targets of this kind was a mistake because of the political consequences, if for some reason they could not be met.<sup>43</sup> Moving to more controversial grounds, Owen gave a warning against the danger of becoming so preoccupied with the Greek negotiations that that the

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<sup>41</sup> Note on European Council, Brussels, 5-6 December 1977, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

<sup>42</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 27 January 1978, ECBAC 48/1984 42.

<sup>43</sup> Telegram by L.de Nanteuil, Brussels, 6 October 1978, FRAMAE d/e, 1412.

membership applications of Portugal and Spain were neglected.<sup>44</sup> No surprise, then that the *Financial Times*, in an article entitled ‘The Gaullism of Dr Owen’, compared the Greek membership negotiations to the first British application experience.<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, it was not only Britain that appeared cautious. The Italians, Dutch and Belgians were equally worried ‘that it was too risky to set a precise timetable in advance because of the disappointment that would follow if for any reason it could not be adhered to’.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, Jenkins in a conversation with Giscard, was somewhat reluctant to commit himself to precise dates.<sup>47</sup>

Despite these initial hiccups, the Council’s decision constituted a true turning point. It signalled the beginning of the substantive phase of Greece-EEC negotiations and it officially and practically separated for the first time the Greek application from those of Portugal and Spain.<sup>48</sup> In the weeks that followed, the Nine’s declaration was translated into action. The 11th Deputies’ meeting between Greece and the EEC, which took place on 10 February 1978, marked ‘un tournant dans le déroulement de la négociation avec la Grèce puisque c’est la première au cours de laquelle la discussion sur le fond a pu s’engager’.<sup>49</sup>

Indeed, the official start of substantive talks had a highly beneficial effect on the atmosphere of the negotiations. Over the next four months major progress would be achieved in customs union for the industrial sector, capital movements, external relations, ECSC and EURATOM, leading Theodoropoulos to refer retrospectively to early 1978 as a rather fruitful phase of the negotiations.<sup>50</sup> The debate on these issues was low-key. Ministers rarely intervened, preferring to entrust the matters almost entirely to the Deputies’ committee and the Commission’s working group of experts. It was at this expert level that steady if unspectacular progress was made.<sup>51</sup> Another factor contributing to this rhythm in the negotiations was Greece’s tendency to push its demands less forcefully, especially in the face of the Community’s intransigence.<sup>52</sup> Tsalicoglou has criticised the Greek tactics: ‘like in other initiatives in the course of the negotiations, the mere presentation of the Greek positions without the rallying of facts and estimates proved an inadequate line of defence no matter how serious problem or how eloquent its

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<sup>44</sup> *The Times*, 8 February 1978.

<sup>45</sup> *The Financial Times*, 8 February 1978.

<sup>46</sup> Note by L. De Guiringaud, Paris, 8 February 1978, FR5 AG 3/ 278.

<sup>47</sup> Record of a call by Jenkins on Giscard, Paris, 21 February 1978, ECEN 1144.

<sup>48</sup> Letter by L. Warburton, Copenhagen, 3 February 1978, MXP021/1, 6, UKFCO 98/398.

<sup>49</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> Deputies’ Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 10 February 1978, ECBAC 48/1984 46.

<sup>50</sup> Byron Theodoropoulos, GRFMA, vol.2, 16.

<sup>51</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> Deputies’ Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 10 February 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1412.

<sup>52</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> Deputies’ Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 21 March 1978, FRAMAE d/e, 1412.

statement.<sup>53</sup> For instance, although there was substantial disaccord over the issue of capital movement with the Greek side resisting the EEC's demand for a more liberal policy on the inflow and outflow of capital, the Greeks finally gave in to the Community's request. Indeed, as acknowledged by the Nine during the 16<sup>th</sup> Deputies' meeting on 23 June 1978, 'la délégation hellénique avait fait un effort important pour se rapprocher des positions de la CEE. Elle a ainsi abandonné la plupart des thèses souvent peu fondées, qu'elle défendait jusqu'ici'.<sup>54</sup> But there was an ulterior motive behind Greece's flexible approach that would become apparent in the second half of 1978.<sup>55</sup>

In spite of the encouraging turn of events, Karamanlis did not stay put. Fairly encouraged by the results of his first tour, he embarked on new round of visits from 30 March until 6 April 1978. He visited Copenhagen on 30-31 March 1978, where Prime Minister Anker Jorgensen reassured him that the Danish Presidency would facilitate the Greek negotiations, before going to the Netherlands and Luxembourg on 2-4 April 1978. Here he was warmly received in public but was unable to drum up the needed support in private. Official sources from Luxembourg depicted astonishment at how over-optimistic the Greeks had been in their assessment of the difficulties likely to arise during the accession negotiations. However, the Luxembourgers felt the moral obligation to respond positively to the Greek argument that 'military solidarity in NATO was not sufficient - Greece needed to maintain and develop the economic cooperation and social emancipation which only accession to the EEC would provide'.<sup>56</sup>

Finally, Karamanlis met with Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti in Rome on 5 April 1978. Karamanlis reiterated his hope that the back of the negotiations could be broken by the end of the year and the signing of the treaty could take place in the early months of 1979. His insistence on this tight timetable was mainly for domestic reasons. Already, 'sa politique européenne se heurte en Grèce à de graves oppositions et si les pourparlers se prolongent, le courant hostile à son action sera renforcé'.<sup>57</sup> Andreotti and Foreign Minister Arnaldo Forlani agreed to try and support a settlement by the end of the year as an indication of the Community's goodwill towards Greece's internal situation. Yet, they had no intention of creating a situation in which the exigencies of the timetable would force the Community into accepting unsatisfactory solutions. The Italians thus hinted that neither the revision of the Mediterranean aspects of the CAP nor

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<sup>53</sup> Tsalicoglou, *Negotiating*, 191.

<sup>54</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> Deputies' Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 23 June 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1412.

<sup>55</sup> See chapter six.

<sup>56</sup> Telegram by O.Wright, Luxembourg, 5 April 1978, MWE021/3, 70, FCO 30/3875.

<sup>57</sup> Meeting between Karamanlis and Andreotti, Rome, 6 April 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1412.

the future accession of Portugal and Spain could be ignored in this respect. There were thus signs aplenty that the Italians would not be prepared to fully concede to the Greek demands until they saw some fruitful results in the agricultural dossier.

The 3 April 1978 sixth EEC-Greece Ministerial meeting was a joyous occasion. It was the first time that both sides held *substantive* negotiations at ministerial level with each side negotiating from an established position. The issues at hand were the customs union, the industrial sector and capital movements. On the first two there was not much disagreement as the customs union had already been created to a certain extent under the Association agreement and the position of both sides had been presented and discussed the previous year. However, even here where it was easy to reach consensus, the term provisional was used extensively as both sides shared the opinion that no agreement would be final until there was convergence on all issues and sectors - in other words, when a *vue d'ensemble* had been reached. Nonetheless, the Commission promised to submit further proposals covering agriculture, social affairs, economic and monetary matters, the right of establishment and regional policy before the summer holidays. The agricultural proposal would cover the general adoption of the CAP by Greece and would have to be followed in due course by separate proposals for each agricultural sector after further examination of individual sectors. However, in all cases, the question of the duration of the transitional period which was necessary before Greece could fully implement the rules of the Treaty was left in abeyance. In practice, nothing could be done until the general proposal on agriculture had been adopted by the Commission because agriculture was one of the most important fields in which transition would be required and this in turn would influence the transitional period for other sectors, since an overall balance of reciprocal advantage was the aim of the negotiations.<sup>58</sup>

### **5.3. Five parallel influences**

At the heart of this wide-ranging progress in the first months of 1978 lay five interlinked issues that were happening parallel to the Greek negotiations and had an indirect but important effect on their progress. These developments had their roots in 1977 and even 1976 but only came to fruition during the period under examination. The first was the finalisation of the *Declaration on Democracy* designed to promote the Community's democratic credentials on the eve of the second enlargement, a process which had dragged on to no avail throughout 1977. The second was the unexpected success of Giscard's party in the French elections of March 1978. The third development

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<sup>58</sup> Note by I. Nielsen, Brussels, 10 May 1978, ECBAC 50/1982 32.

surrounded the so called ‘fresco’-survey published by the Commission reflecting on the implications of enlargement for the EEC<sup>59</sup>, while the fourth concerned the settlement of the Turkish question in the context of EEC’s enlargement to Greece. The final issue was the ‘Mediterranean package’ of May 1978 that promoted changes to the Mediterranean dimension of the CAP. The evolution of all these issues at the Community level addressed the Nine’s anxieties regarding enlargement which allowed them to exhibit more flexibility in their talks with the Greeks. This along with Karamanlis’ successful tour and the preparedness of the Greek team to finally provide all the necessary data made substantive progress in the negotiations possible.

The idea of a *Declaration on Democracy* among the Nine arose in the context of discussing about enlargement. Since the applicants contended that Community membership would help them consolidate their infant democratic systems, it seemed reasonable to seize the opportunity to make a declaration on the fundamental principles on which the Community was based. The aim was to put clearly on record the Community’s commitment to democratic principles, which could then be echoed in the Acts of Accession of the new member states. The idea of incorporating the declaration in the preamble of the eventual accession treaties was however rejected during the European Council meeting in December 1977. It was concluded that the Declaration would be sufficient in itself as it would form part of the *acquis* to which acceding states would have to subscribe.<sup>60</sup> As shown in chapter four, there had been an intense discussion within the Commission about the need to avoid any idea of juridical precondition for entry into the Community while at the same time some members of the Nine, mainly the British and the Danes, insisted on the necessity of linking membership with democratic rule.

In the end, the *Declaration on Democracy* was adopted at the European Council of 7-8 April 1978, coinciding with the announcement of the date for the first direct elections of the European Parliament. The text of the declaration ultimately drew heavily on the *Declaration on the European Identity* published by the Foreign Ministers of the Nine in Copenhagen in 1973; it also included references to the Community’s *Joint declaration on fundamental rights* adopted under the UK Presidency on 5 April 1977, while the most important breakthrough was the inclusion of the final paragraph where the Nine declared

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<sup>59</sup> As Jenkins writes in his European Diary on ‘fresco’: ‘A word, with no great respect for the literal Italian meaning, had become Commission jargon for looking at the overall problems of the admission of Greece, Portugal and Spain as opposed to the bilateral ones with each of them’.

<sup>60</sup> Letter by M. J. Fretwell, London, 10 March 1978, MWE021/3, 26, UKFCO 30/3873.



‘that respect for and maintenance of representative democracy and human rights in each member state are indispensable for membership of the European Communities’.<sup>61</sup> The Germans in particular had considered that the additional final paragraph might cause problems if a member state, old or new, ceased to observe the principles in the declaration: ‘we should not prejudice possible solutions to the difficulties that might arise’, Helmut Sigrist, the German Permanent Representative noted, adding that ‘we should avoid giving the impression that there are two categories of member states’.<sup>62</sup> By contrast, for Owen the final paragraph did not do enough. Seeing the ‘declaration as window dressing’, Owen made plain his dissatisfaction with the final text, whilst admitting: ‘there are problems with how you identify democracy. The Council of Europe does have a provision of non-participation. I think that member states acting unanimously, ought to have power to suspend membership, but that is very difficult to do. It would require treaty amendment with all the existing member states as well as the new incomers’.<sup>63</sup>

His fellow countryman Jenkins expressed a more optimistic view on the declaration: ‘a directly elected European Parliament will introduce a major new democratic dimension to the institutions of the Community. And for this reason, it was entirely appropriate that we should also adapt at this European Council a declaration on democracy, for our system of pluralist parliamentary democracy lies at the very basis of the Community’s existence’.<sup>64</sup> The Commission was very pleased with this development as it saw it as part of a bigger plan that would allow enlargement to take place without diluting the Community. Specifically, Jenkins, talking about the emerging European Monetary System (EMS), EP direct elections and enlargement, revealed that these three developments were powerfully interrelated: ‘we could not envisage monetary union without a European direct democracy. What better way of underwriting democracy in the three applicant countries than by inviting them to a new shared parliament? What better way of assuring that enlargement does not dilute the integration of Europe than by resuming the move towards EMU?’.<sup>65</sup> Besides the Commission’s satisfaction, the Nine also felt more reassured in moving along with the Greek negotiating process after having

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<sup>61</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 22 March 1978, MWE04/8, 63D, UKFCO 30/3874.

<sup>62</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 22 March 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1795.

<sup>63</sup> Extract from the Owen’s testimony to sub-Committee of House of Lords, London, 8 February 1978, FCO 30/3873.

<sup>64</sup> Meeting of European Council, Copenhagen, 8 April 1978, MWE021/2, 256, UK, FCO 30/3862.

<sup>65</sup> Note by G.Exsarxos, Brussels, 7 January 1978, GRGKP 0178.

addressed at least at a declaratory level the question of democracy in the present Community of Nine as well as in an enlarged EEC.

The situation for the Greek candidature improved further after the French legislative elections on 12 and 19 March 1978, which constituted the second positive external influence. The French government had faced considerable pressure during 1977 from the opposition parties over a few key issues related to the upcoming enlargement of the EEC. The most important topic at hand was the future and the protection of southern French farmers in the face of enlargement. It had become such an electoral issue that the government wanted to avoid taking a clear stand. France was caught between a rock and a hard place: Giscard found it nearly impossible to reconcile the need to win valuable seats in the south of France with its political commitment to support the Greek candidature. Despite gloomy predictions, the elections were a triumph for Giscard's party, the *Union pour la Democratie Francaise* (UDF) which increased its share of the vote at the expense of the Gaullist party. The socialist and communist parties on the other hand only made small gains. After the elections, the pressure was off the French government which could now more comfortably proceed with the Greek negotiations. What the Greeks could not predict at that point, however, was that this new domestic freedom would not preclude the French authorities from driving a very hard bargain in Brussels in order to defend the country's national interests, especially in the agricultural sector. Nonetheless, the French electoral result had three significant positive consequences for Athens. Firstly, the Nine could no longer hide behind the French, who had been blamed for the Community's earlier foot dragging. Secondly, Giscard who had always been in favour of Greek membership would have more leeway in domestic terms to pursue this policy in the aftermath of his party's win. Finally, and most importantly, it signalled the beginning of the negotiations at least among the Nine in order to determine the Community's position on two vital dossiers, agriculture and the transition period. During the previous year, the EEC with the French leading the way, had proved reluctant even to sit down at the negotiating table, let alone delve into details on either of these crucial agricultural issues.

The third development acting as a catalyst for the Greek case came from the Commission. After months of deliberation and in accordance with the Leeds Castle Council's mandate<sup>66</sup>, the Commission presented on 20 April 1978 a report entitled 'Fresco'-General Considerations on the Problems of Enlargement' which attempted to

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<sup>66</sup> See chapter four.

set out the conditions that in the Commission's opinion would need to be fulfilled if enlargement was to be achieved successfully. In other words, to 'bear the lessons of the first enlargement exercise and the peculiarities of the second in mind'.<sup>67</sup> In particular, six important policy areas were examined: economic and industrial problems, regional aid, agriculture, relations with third countries, transition and institutions. Overall, however, the report did not contain any concrete proposals nor did it directly touch upon the negotiations. The main purpose of the 'fresco' was to find ways to avoid the dilemma of 'élargissement versus approfondissement'. In fact, the Commission went to great lengths in its introduction to underline the fundamental purposes of the study. This extensive need for justification had its roots in the previous year, when the Commission struggled over enlargement. The institution was torn between its obligation as guarantor of the treaties to protect the EEC against any dilution and the challenge to satisfy the member states, which for political reasons concealed their apprehension regarding enlargement. No surprise therefore that the internal negotiations were long drawn out, lasting from September 1977 following the rejection of Natali's proposal for accession in stages until April 1978, with the final push coming after the French elections.<sup>68</sup>

Tentativeness was a problem suffered in the report on institutional questions connected with enlargement. The Commission's analysis was mostly rather moderate and carefully reasoned; they had taken some pain to avoid obvious special pleading. However the general presentation bore the stamp of the integrationist approach which was natural and proper to them.<sup>69</sup> It predicted that the decision-making process would most likely deteriorate. The change from Six to Nine had already revealed difficulties and deficiencies in the capacity to act and react jointly. In a Community of Twelve, the situation would become critical unless certain reforms took place in the modus operandi of the EEC. The Commission commented on the probability of a Treaty amendment, but it was hesitant to come up with such bold proposals. That is why it mainly focused on the third component of the survey, the systematic use of the transitional period and safeguard clauses.<sup>70</sup>

The Commission's report on the issue of transitional period was very important to the Greeks as it was the first time, even if merely in a general survey with no direct influence on their accession talks, that a Community representative had presented views

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<sup>67</sup>General Considerations on the Problems of Enlargement, Brussels, 20 April 1978, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, Supplement 1/78.

<sup>68</sup> See chapter four.

<sup>69</sup> Note by M.Jenkins, London, 29 June 1978, MXE021/1, 224, UKFCO 98/343.

<sup>70</sup> Note by L. de Nanteuil, Brussels, 20 April 1978, FRAMAE , d/e, 1389.

on such a delicate issue that affected all the dossiers of the negotiations. According to the Commission, it was clear that the applicant countries could not shoulder all the responsibilities involved in membership the moment they joined. It seemed therefore unrealistic to envisage a transitional period shorter than that adopted for the first enlargement, namely five years. But at the same time, it should not be too long lest the political incentive to reform was lost and Community cohesion jeopardised. Ten years as the maximum and five years as the minimum were suggested as necessary to complete the transition. The innovative element in this proposal was to divide the transition into two stages that would rule out a uniform conception of the transitional period. In the first enlargement, the acceding countries were granted a transitional period in which to adjust to Community legislation. This was essentially the same for all sectors and featured fixed, relatively short timetables. In addition, the three new countries were involved in the Community's decision-making procedures and in political cooperation activities as soon as the Treaty of Accession was signed.

During a COREPER meeting, the Commission's Secretary General Emile Noël observed that the precedent of the 1973 accession was useful but should not be followed exactly on the transitional period. Last time, he claimed 'five years were found just sufficient for the integration of the new member states into the Community as regards the bulk of the Community's *acquis*, although a few derogations still subsisted. This time, five years would be at the best the bare minimum'.<sup>71</sup> The Commission therefore suggested two stages, with the first phase lasting five years. By having this initial period of five years, pressure would be exerted on the new member states to make a maximum effort in each sector, while providing for extra time if difficulties were encountered.<sup>72</sup> In this round of enlargement therefore the aim would be to introduce an element of flexibility into the transition. This would allow the more complicated aspects of integration to take place in an orderly way. The content of the first and second stage would have to be determined sector by sector while the transitional period would depend in each case not only on the initial situation of the new member but also on the development of the economic situation in Europe and the world during the period of integration.<sup>73</sup> Indeed, the Commission's proposal of two stages was vague in its description. This lack of clarity stemmed partly from disagreement among

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<sup>71</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 8 June 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

<sup>72</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 8 June 1978, MXE021/1, 252, UKFCO 98/343.

<sup>73</sup> Note by L. de Nanteuil, Brussels, 20 April 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

Commissioners as to the perils of enlargement as well as the fear of provoking the Nine as it had happened with Natali's proposal of late 1977.<sup>74</sup>

Greek reaction to the 'fresco' was muted, although the documents presented the enlargement in a 'global' way. This is partly attributable to the foreword of this survey, where the Commission underlined: 'As it indicated in October 1977, the Commission considers it essential to inform the Council of the state of its thinking on the question of enlargement. Each of the applicant countries is at a different stage in the accession process. Greece is at such a stage that the Council recently envisaged that the main part of the negotiations would be completed by the end of this year'.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, they had been forewarned by Commission representatives such as Natali and de Kergorlay, who had both made an effort to reassure the Greek government. In private meetings with Kontogeorgis and Stathatos they had explained that 'the fresco was just a survey of the problems relating to enlargement without specific solutions so they do not see how it will influence the negotiations which are in a very advanced stage'.<sup>76</sup> Finally, the Karamanlis government was waiting for the Council's reactions before officially making a statement. As expected, nonetheless, the Greeks were opposed to any idea of transition in two separate stages out of fear of being 'put on probation' by the Community.<sup>77</sup>

Soon after publication, the Nine held their first discussions on the Commission's 'fresco'. The French, who had been expected after their legislative elections to relax their tough position on enlargement, were actually in favour of this long transitional period divided into two stages. This would better protect their national interests, especially in the agricultural sector. But the rest of the Community, such as the Belgian and German representatives were not convinced as to how Noël's idea of two stages could be applied in practice and were favourably inclined towards a classical single transitional period, with the possibility of exceptions. Likewise, the British concluded that 'the fresco is sound on diagnosis but short on prescription'.<sup>78</sup> Similar tendencies could be detected in the Council of Foreign Ministers on 2 May 1978 where Owen and Genscher declared themselves sceptical 'que les mesures transitoires devraient varier suivant les pays candidats. Il était douteux qu'un mécanisme de transition en deux étapes soit un bon choix'.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Telegram by D. Maitland, Brussels, 8 May 1978, MWE021/3, 121, UKFCO 30/3876.

<sup>75</sup> General Considerations on the Problems of Enlargement, Brussels, 20 April 1978, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, Supplement 1/78.

<sup>76</sup> Meeting between Stathatos and Natali, Brussels, 26 May 1978, GRGKP 0108/78.

<sup>77</sup> Telegram by J. Folin, Athens, 8 May 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1412.

<sup>78</sup> Community Heads of Mission Conference, London, 10 May 1978, MXE021/1, 220, UKFCO 98/342.

<sup>79</sup> Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Brussels, 2 May 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

It was true that the debate over the ‘fresco’ had thrown up a vast array of institutional, economic and philosophical questions. However, it turned out to be an opportunity for the Nine to register any doubts and for this reason it proved important in the negotiation process with the Greeks. In the previous months, the Nine had been reluctant to even discuss important issues such as a transitional period before the Commission had examined in depth the possible implications emanating from enlargement. With this out of the way, the Nine ran out of excuses to further procrastinate, thus signalling the inauguration of more substantive, hard core talks rather than the pondering vague proposals that had tended to dominate the year of 1977.

The fourth issue that indirectly had been thwarting progress in the Greek negotiations was the delicate Turkish question on the eve of Greece’s accession. Tsalicoglou has mistakenly assumed that the ‘Turkish factor, though crucial in the opening of Greece’s negotiations and in her post-accession relations with the Community, receded into the background during the actual conduct of the negotiations’.<sup>80</sup> While this was true to some extent as chapters two and three have shown, the minutes of meetings of the Nine in Brussels revealed a constant concern over the sterility of the Community’s discussions with Turkey regarding its Association status, a concern that was further exacerbated in 1978 when Greece’s accession became an increasingly realistic and imminent prospect. Admittedly, Tsalicoglou exclusively focused on the bilateral, formal meetings between Greece and the Community, where indeed Turkey never featured as an issue for discussion. Moreover, relations between the two countries improved significantly when Bulent Ecevit became Prime Minister of Turkey in January 1978.<sup>81</sup> The celebrated Montreux meeting between Ecevit and Karamanlis on 10-11 March 1978, followed by another one in Washington in May reinforced this idea. Both sides described these meetings as a very important political event which permitted an optimistic view of the future course of relations between the two countries.<sup>82</sup>

However, beyond the typical bilateral Greek-EEC level, things were more complicated. Turkey was extensively discussed on Community occasions, not least during the informal meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Nine at Hesselet on 20 May 1978. In the discussion, held at Henri Simonet’s request after his visit to Turkey and Israel, the Belgian foreign minister warned against a credibility gap between the Community’s

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<sup>80</sup> Tsalicoglou, *Negotiating*, 35.

<sup>81</sup> Note on Greek Foreign Policy, Dublin, 23 March 1979, IRDOT/2009/135/480.

<sup>82</sup> Letter by C. Hulse, Brussels, 22 March 1978, WS9020/318/1, 35, UKFCO 9/2738.

declarations and its actual policy in relations with third countries.<sup>83</sup> There was a consensus of opinion that Turkey was of the greatest importance, not only to the EEC but to the West as a whole, and therefore more should be done in the economic and political field *before* the Community was enlarged to Ten.<sup>84</sup> 1977 had passed without a ministerial meeting of the Turkey-EEC Association Council and at the Association Committee meeting on 13 December the Turkish delegate had commented that relations between the Community and Turkey were in a state of inertia and the Association arrangement lacked efficiency and effectiveness.<sup>85</sup> In a meeting with Schmidt, Ecevit expressed his concern that Greece as a full member would veto Turkey's eventual membership to the EEC. Ecevit stated that 'would not like to see the EEC constrained as the USA by a Greek group'<sup>86</sup>, referring to the influence of the Greek-American lobby on the US Congress' decision to enforce an arms embargo against his country in February 1975. As part of Turkey's political worries were connected with Greece's prospective membership of the EEC, there was agreement that all member states would, in bilateral contacts with the Turks, do their best to alleviate any political worries. Specifically, it would be emphasised that the EEC would not allow Greece to bring its conflict with Turkey into the Community.<sup>87</sup>

This policy alone however was deemed insufficient to ensure that Turkey would remain a factor of stability and balance in the sensitive region of the Eastern Mediterranean, on the southern border with the Soviet Union.<sup>88</sup> The problem was that the Nine could not upgrade the offer made in 1976, which the Turks had deemed disappointing in regards to free movement of labour, agricultural concessions and the third financial protocol.<sup>89</sup> Ecevit came to power in an extremely difficult situation from an economic point of view (inflation at nearly 40%, unemployment at nearly 20% of the labour force and a large balance of payments deficit). To make matters worse, at the beginning of 1978 the Community imposed restrictions under the Multifibre Agreement(MFA) on imports of textiles and clothing produce, Turkey's main industrial exports.<sup>90</sup> As an alternative Owen, who had been a staunch supporter of closer links with

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<sup>83</sup> Briefing on the Informal Meeting of Foreign Ministers, Hesselet, 20-21 May 1978, MXE021/7, UKFCO 98/347.

<sup>84</sup> Informal Meeting of Foreign Ministers, Hesselet, 20 May 1978, ECEN 1145.

<sup>85</sup> Discussion Paper on Turkey and West, EPC'S Mediterranean Working Group, Copenhagen, 3 March 1978, MXE021/7, A, UKFCO 98/347.

<sup>86</sup> Meeting between Schmidt and Ecevit, Bonn, 11 May 1978, Doc. 147, FRGAAPD 1978.

<sup>87</sup> Informal Meeting of Foreign Ministers, Hesselet, 20 May 1978, ECEN 1145..

<sup>88</sup> *Agence Europe*, 5/6 June 1978.

<sup>89</sup> See chapter three.

<sup>90</sup> Heinz Kramer, 'Turkey and the EC's Southern Enlargement', *Aussen Politik*, 35:1(1984), 99-116.

Turkey, proposed advanced Turkish access to the mechanisms of the European Political Cooperation, as an important political gesture from the Nine. In particular, he suggested that 'il s'agirait d'offrir aux Turcs, après l'adhésion grecque, la possibilité d'être entendus, et même de participer aux débats, sur toutes les affaires qui les intéressent'.<sup>91</sup>

Already on 12 February 1978, the Foreign Ministers had charged the EPC's Political Committee to investigate ways to satisfy Turkey in order to retain a balance after Greece's accession. The Turkish desire was to be included in EPC as a full member for discussion on eastern Mediterranean questions and as an observer for all other questions.<sup>92</sup> Turkey's unsatisfactory experience in maintaining contact with EPC was due to a failure of practice rather than to a failure of principle. Even since 1972, it had been agreed that the Presidency of the Nine should keep the Turkish government informed about political cooperation. In practice however, the performance of the Presidency had been patchy.<sup>93</sup> The British supported by the Germans encouraged Turkey's full participation in the EPC mechanism, only to meet vehement French opposition. The primary fear of the French, shared mainly by the Netherlands and Ireland and to a lesser extent by Italy and Belgium, was the desire to avoid the creation of a precedent that could be used by Cyprus or even worse, the United States.<sup>94</sup>

As the months passed by and the Greek negotiations advanced, pressure was also coming from the other side of the Atlantic. President Carter acknowledged in a meeting with Jenkins that political cooperation could not be detached from Community membership but he wanted the Nine to pay attention to the situation. Both agreed that Turkey's strategic situation meant that something special had to be done for Ankara.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, the Greeks themselves were asking to be allowed a degree of access to EPC mechanisms even before formally joining, as had happened during the first enlargement. The Nine had in principle decided, in view of the Greece's future accession, to start giving Greece documents relevant to the EPC and gradually to start its integration into the system. The problem however arose of when to initiate this process towards Greece's participation to the EPC mechanism, without further isolating Turkey. In a meeting of the Foreign Ministers on 12 June 1978, Owen and Genscher talking about Turkey 'ont souligné l'importance qu'ils attachaient à bien contrebalancer l'initiative en direction

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<sup>91</sup> Informal Meeting of Foreign Ministers, Hesselet, 20-21 May 1978, FR5 AG 3/921.

<sup>92</sup> Note by R.A. Hibbert, Ankara, 30 March 1978, MWE021/3, 66, FCO 30/3874.

<sup>93</sup> Note by R.A. Hibbert, London, 14 March 1978, MWE021/3, 33, UKFCO 30/3873.

<sup>94</sup> Telegram by D. Papaioanou, Paris, 13 June 1978, GRGKP 0108/78; Möckli, *European Foreign Policy*, 144-183.

<sup>95</sup> Meeting between Carter and Jenkins, Washington, 14 December 1978, ECEN 1148.



d'Athènes par un geste à l'égard d'Ankara. Il fallait éviter de donner l'impression aux Turcs que les Neuf avaient opté en faveur de la Grèce et se détournait de la Turquie. Il convenait de reconnaître à celle-ci « un statut *sui generis* » par le biais de consultations renforcées entre les Neuf et Ankara'.<sup>96</sup> The French and the Dutch were in complete disagreement with such an arrangement. In the face of impasse, Andersen as President of the EEC won agreement for a solution of consultation for Turkey and the EEC that struck a balance between existing procedures and the Anglo-German proposal for Turkey's participation to the EPC.<sup>97</sup> Political change in Turkey and the eventual freezing of the Association agreement in September 1978 by the Ecevit government left the issue suspended. However, the Nine's offer to Turkey was warmly welcomed by Karamanlis' government. The Greek ambassador to the UK, Stavros Roussos observed 'that the Greek-Turkish relations could always come to the fore and hinder the negotiations towards accession so the decision of the Nine to initiate the information exchange with the Turks should help to alleviate any anxieties of the Nine'.<sup>98</sup>

Finally, perhaps the most serious and fifth development that encouraged progress in the Greek negotiations was the solution, albeit partial, to the ongoing row among the Community members about the revision of the CAP's coverage of Mediterranean agricultural products. This conflict which had been sparked off in the mid 1970s by French and Italian anxieties about the implications of the prospective second enlargement on their Mediterranean products, had by early 1978 degenerated into an enormously complicated and time consuming dispute about the future of the CAP mechanisms in general. For Greece, the repercussions of this development were deeply felt as they hindered any progress in the most important dossier of the negotiations, namely agriculture. The fact that they could do nothing to influence the developments which clearly constituted an internal Community affair further exacerbated their sense of despair. Indicatively, Natali had confirmed to French Prime Minister Raymond Barre 'que la Commission ne déposerait pas de projet de mandat pour les négociations avec la Grèce dans le domaine agricole tant que les règlements méditerranéens ne seraient pas adoptés'.<sup>99</sup>

The balance of power inside the Council of Ministers was as important a factor as the very nature of Mediterranean products in explaining the relatively little attention they

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<sup>96</sup> Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Copenhagen, 12 June 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1796.

<sup>97</sup> Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Copenhagen, 12 June 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1796.

<sup>98</sup> Note by S.Roussos, London, 12 June 1978, GRGKP 0108/78.

<sup>99</sup> Note by J.C. Paye, Paris, 2 February 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1795.

had received in the previous decade. As shown in chapter four, Mediterranean agriculture became an important issue in the Community's negotiations with third countries. But it was only in the late 1970s that the real discussion started inside the Community. The main spark came from the preparation of the Global Mediterranean policy. It was reinforced by a growing sensitivity to regional disparities that started in the late 1960s with the Mansholt Plan<sup>100</sup> and was primarily driven by the Commission.<sup>101</sup> Finally, the prospect of the second round of enlargement brought it to the top of the Community's agenda.<sup>102</sup> It was then that the French and Italians, although not always agreeing on the formula, voiced their opposition to the imbalance in provision between Mediterranean produce and its northern European equivalents. Although formally CAP reform was never linked to progress in the negotiations with the Greeks, this internal debate on the reform of Community's agricultural policies – especially regarding Mediterranean products - continued as an undercurrent throughout Greek negotiations with member states using the accession talks as an arena for establishing positions of advantage in intra-Community trade and resisting the opening up of the crucial dossier of agriculture with the Greeks before they had harvested the fruits of their policy.

During 1977 several attempts were made to rectify the situation, to no avail. The French and Italian Agricultural Ministers deplored the absence of concrete proposals and both pressed for a move away from generalities. Italian Minister for Agriculture, Giovanni Marcora reminded his colleagues of the impending need for the typical Italian products to obtain the safeguards and guarantees afforded to products from the northern countries of the Community. Under extreme pressure to appease France and Italy, the Commission promised through Commissioner for Agriculture, Finn Olav Gundelach, to present a more promising set of measures by the end of 1977.<sup>103</sup> Indeed, the Commission on 8 December 1977 transmitted to the Council a first series of concrete proposals for reforming the CAP in favour of the Mediterranean regions: 'ces propositions tiennent compte parallèlement du double souci de réduire les excédents structurels des produits agricoles et d'éviter les difficultés dans les rapports avec les pays tiers'. The only way to achieve both goals was to reinforce structural policy. The Commission's document

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<sup>100</sup> Sicco Mansholt, Commissioner for Agriculture (1958-1972).

<sup>101</sup> Katja Seidel, 'Taking Farmers off Welfare. The EEC's Commission's memorandum 'Agriculture 1980' of 1968', *Journal of European Integration History*, 16:2 (2010), 97. Generally for CAP, see: Kiran Klaus Patel(ed.), *Fertile Ground for Europe?: the History of European Integration and the Common Agricultural Policy since 1945*(Baden-Baden, 2009).

<sup>102</sup> C. Strebler & C. d'Aloja, 'Action by Community Institutions on the eve of the Enlargement', Tracy, Michael & Hodac, Ivan (eds.), *Prospects for Agriculture in the European Economic Community* (Bruges, 1979), 247-249.

<sup>103</sup> Council of Ministers (Agriculture), Brussels, 7 November 1977, ECBAC 66/1985 147; See chapter four.

continued 'dans la même optique, les mesures qui concernent les organisations communes de marché visent l'amélioration de la qualité, l'encouragement des produits, dont la Communauté est largement déficitaire et une meilleure organisation de la commercialisation des produits. Ce premier ensemble des mesures sera suivi par d'autres propositions concernant tant la politique régionale et sociale'.<sup>104</sup>

The Commission's paper provided the Nine with a blueprint to work with during the annual price review meeting scheduled for 8-12 May 1978. The Agricultural Council finally reached agreement on a price package dubbed the '1978 Mediterranean Package' in the early hours of 12 May. The four day marathon ended with Ministers in continuous session, but for one six hour break, for 24 hours, a record even by the talkative standards of Community price negotiations. Throughout these days Marcora noted 'le Conseil était au bord de la rupture'. This makes sense if one considers what a burning issue Mediterranean agriculture had become, also featuring in the European Council meeting of Bremen, on 6-7 July 1978, better known for its EMS activity.<sup>105</sup> In Bremen, Andreotti introduced a debate on agricultural policy which Owen later described as the most interesting of his time. The Italian Prime Minister complained that the dairy sector cost six times as much as the proposed Mediterranean package. It was high time that the Community took another look at the CAP and did away with costly surpluses which should no longer be supported.<sup>106</sup> The catch however was, as Grant notes, that 'structural adjustments might make good sense, but it was not good politics'.<sup>107</sup> It was difficult to get politicians to agree to expensive measures that would only pay off in five or ten year's time. And as the Italians and French knew well, timing was of the essence in these decisions.<sup>108</sup>

The Mediterranean package and the additional measures introduced in February 1979 meant that the agricultural Council had agreed to spend a total of 3600 million units of account from 1980-84 on structural measures. This constituted almost a doubling of the annual expenditure incurred by the guidance section of FEOGA. The main purpose of the package was to make Mediterranean agriculture more up to date and competitive and thus better able to cope with the expected entry into the EEC of Spain, Portugal and Greece. It was seen as marking a significant shift in the balance of agricultural expenditure which had hitherto strongly favoured northern products. The irrigation of

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<sup>104</sup> Note on Mediterranean Agriculture, Brussels, 20 January 1978, ECBAC 66/1985 192.

<sup>105</sup> Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, 'The Emergence of a European Bloc'.

<sup>106</sup> Meeting of European Council, Bremen, 6 July 1978, MWE021/2, 447, UKFCO 30/3870.

<sup>107</sup> Wyn Grant, *The Common Agricultural Policy* (New York, 1997), 70.

<sup>108</sup> Katja Seidel, 'Taking Farmers off Welfare', 97.

some 770 square miles in Italy's Mezzogiorno, the improvement or conversion to other uses of 380 square miles of vineyards in and about the Languedoc-Roussillon region of southern France, the modernisation of marketing and processing techniques, and the improvement of roads and electricity supplies in both countries claimed a large part of this five year expenditure.

The prospect of enlargement seems to have acted as an important catalyst in the conclusion of the Mediterranean package, especially regarding the Germans, the paymasters of Europe who bore much of the cost.<sup>109</sup> The British reporting back on the meeting, admitted that 'failure to achieve any reduction in this over-generous commitment to France and Italy was due to Germany's refusal at the end of the day to make an issue of this'.<sup>110</sup> In its essence, it was a political pay-off to France and Italy in return to their agreement to enlarge the European Community. As Genscher forcefully put it, 'l'Europe dont nous voulons ne doit être ni un club fermé, ni une alliance défensive dirigée contre le vin grec, les oranges espagnoles et les olives portugaises'.<sup>111</sup> Therefore, in May 1978, a deeply important step was taken towards resolving an issue that was substantially delaying the Greek negotiations: the reform of the CAP's Mediterranean products. Without agreeing to an outright reform, the Council granted financial support for some of the sensitive Mediterranean products that were likely to be affected by the Greek accession.<sup>112</sup> This move did not eliminate the objections to the Greek accession from the agricultural lobbies of both countries and other parties, but it was sufficient to weaken the opposition and minimise the political costs of enlargement. The measures agreed in May were deemed enough for a Community of Ten; more would be needed for a Community of Twelve.<sup>113</sup>

#### **5.4. Conclusion**

At the 7<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Greece-EEC Meeting on 26 June 1978, which marked the end of the Danish Presidency, a general recap of the accession negotiations took place. Greek Foreign Minister George Rallis, in post since May 1978 when Papaligouras had resigned for medical reasons, praised the progress achieved noting that the 'near

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<sup>109</sup> Note by J. Sidre, Luxembourg, 5 April 1978, FRSGCI 19880334/13.

<sup>110</sup> Council of Ministers(Agriculture), Brussels, 8-10 May 1978, UKFCO 30/3665.

<sup>111</sup> Letter by J.P. Brunet on Genscher's talk in Mayence, Bonn, 16 May 1978, FRAMAE,d/e, 1389.

<sup>112</sup> Memorandum on Enlargement, Dublin, 2 May 1979, IRDOT/ 2009/135/480.

<sup>113</sup> Indeed, the Iberian enlargement talks were concluded only after the launch of the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes (IMP) for the development of the southern regions of Italy, France and Greece.

completion of five chapters meant that the negotiations were advancing well'.<sup>114</sup> From the overall fourteen dossiers of the negotiations, budgetary issues, economic and monetary affairs, the right of establishment, social affairs, institutions, transport, regional policy, agriculture and transitional period remained to be tackled. On regional policy, under the Commission's responsibility Greece asked for arrangements similar to those applicable to Ireland under Protocol 30 of the Accession Treaty, namely to declare Greece an underdeveloped region and thus in need of development aid. Greece had asked to be allowed to participate in the Regional Development Fund immediately upon accession and to have the whole country count as an underdeveloped region, so that its own generous government subsidies could continue unchecked. The Community accepted this position with the exception of Athens and Piraeus.<sup>115</sup> The Danish Chairman, Andersen responding to Greek concerns at the delay that had occurred in the examination of secondary legislation on agriculture, acknowledged the need for progress in parallel with that on the substantive dossiers. Finally, he announced that due to the advanced stage of the negotiations, the Nine had decided to commence Greece's progressive incorporation into EPC based on the scenario of three stages agreed at the Foreign Ministers' Council meeting of 12 June 1978 (initially information of discussions in political cooperation, after signature of the treaty closer consultations and from time of ratification, full participation).<sup>116</sup> To this end, Rallis was given the basic texts pertaining to the foundation of the EPC (the Luxembourg Report, the Copenhagen Report, the Declaration on European Identity, and the Procedures Report) and a selection of agreed documents of a confidential nature illustrating the substance of EPC.<sup>117</sup>

As the Ministers and officials left for their summer holidays, they could legitimately feel that much had been accomplished. The Greek negotiations had officially entered the substantive phase with arrangements devised for customs union of industrial goods, capital movement, external relations, ECSC and EURATOM. Five out of the fourteen chapter headings set out in the February Deputies' report had been completed. In addition, success was within grasp in another dossier - regional policy- while the processes regarding EPC had advanced considerably. This was in contrast to the previous year of complete inertia and procrastination. In a way, Greece's preparedness to respond to all the Community's requests as well as Karamanlis' successful political

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<sup>114</sup> 7<sup>TH</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Luxembourg, 26 June 1978, FRAMAE 1412.

<sup>115</sup> Note on state of negotiations, Athens, 26 June 1978, GRGKP 0478.

<sup>116</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Ministerial meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 26 June 1978, WS9022/598/1, 119, UKFCO 9/2742.

<sup>117</sup> Telegram by S.Stathatos, Brussels, 27 June 1978, GRGKP 0108/78.

pressing of European leaders had been rewarded. These two factors, albeit crucial, do not however fully explain the positive progress in the negotiations. Indeed, Greek efforts were buttressed by five, parallel and external to the accession talks, events. The *Declaration on Democracy* of April 1978, the Commission's report on the implications of enlargement, the handling of the Turkish question, the reform of the CAP regulations of Mediterranean products and the outcome of the French elections, were important developments that helped Greek accession talks progress in the first half of 1978. The first three removed serious obstacles that had plagued Greek negotiations in the previous years and had been a constant source of concern among the Nine. But most importantly, the latter two provided a glimpse of hope for the Greeks that there would be even better advancement in the negotiations. Admittedly, the Greek enthusiasm over the progress of the talks achieved in the first half of 1978 was blunted by the lack of any useful progress in the most critical issues of the negotiations, namely the agricultural issue, the social chapter and the transition period. The Nine had been reluctant even to discuss these issues among themselves in an effort to reach a common position, leaving the Greeks with little chance of breaking the back of the negotiations by the end of 1978 and bringing to the surface the underlying disagreements which the previous year had revealed. However, there were grounds to hope that the victory of Giscard's party in the French elections and the signing of the Mediterranean package would bear fruit in the months to come, leading to more flexibility in the French and Italian positions over Greek agriculture. On top of these developments, the assumption of the EEC Presidency by the Germans, a staunch supporter of the Greek enlargement, only raised the expectations still further.

## **Chapter 6: The German Presidency: the race against time (July-December 1978)**

### **6.1. Commission and Agriculture**

On 1 July 1978 the EEC Presidency was passed to the Germans. The first formal statement of the German Presidency was made by Genscher to the European Parliament on 4 July 1978. Germany aimed to achieve considerable progress in the enlargement negotiations before the end of the year. Indicatively, the Foreign Minister declared that ‘in the accession negotiations now before us we must constantly bear in mind that the proper purpose of the European Community lies in the common ideals to which we feel committed. For all the importance of the economic aspect it is in the final analysis only a means to an end’.<sup>1</sup> Against this backdrop, Peter Hermes, State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry, in a meeting with Konstantinos Mitsotakis, the newly appointed Greek Minister of Coordination, stated that it was a fortunate event that the next two presidencies would be assumed by West Germany and France, both staunch supporters of the Greek case.<sup>2</sup>

The inauguration of the German Presidency coincided with great activity, at least on the part of the Commission, as it managed to submit its positions to the Council of Ministers on all the remaining negotiating dossiers - even the most controversial ones such as the duration of the transitional period and agriculture. None of the issues discussed so far though, matched the significance of the negotiations over agriculture. For it was by the success or failure of Greek negotiating efforts on this specific dossier, that the accession talks would be judged. Therefore, there was cause for concern when the Commission presented its paper on agriculture on 29 June 1978. The paper acknowledged that the Greek agricultural sector was small in relation to that of the Community as a whole. Indeed, new sources suggested that there had been a substantial decline in the proportion of agricultural employment in Greece since it had last been recorded in the 1971 census. Instead of 42% of total active population, the Bureau of Economic Research and Planning of the Agricultural Bank conducted a survey which suggested figures as low as 21-33%, around 750000 people. However, the report concluded that ‘straws ultimately do break the camel’s back and the underlying thesis was

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<sup>1</sup> Speech by H.- D. Genscher, Luxembourg, 4 July 1978, Archive of European Integration(AEI), University of Pittsburgh, <http://aei.pitt.edu/11198>.

<sup>2</sup> Meeting between Mitsotakis and Hermes, Athens, 21 June 1978, GRGKP G/1978.

that the working of the CAP would be more difficult after enlargement'.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the Commission predicted significant modifications of prices which, if not progressive, could create imbalances between sectors and bring about an artificial modification in the level of production. These distortions could well necessitate interventions which would be costly for the Community as a whole. Against this backdrop, the only solution was to propose a seven year transition period for agricultural products.

This proposal was in complete contrast to the most recent Greek position on agriculture, which demanded a full implementation of CAP from the first day of accession, with no transition period deemed necessary.<sup>4</sup> The Greek Minister responsible for EEC negotiations, George Kontogeorgis had put forward a request for no transitional period for agricultural issues because of the preparatory work already achieved on the Greek side as well as the need to provide Greek producers with CAP support from the first day of accession, so as to counterbalance the likely deficit that would develop in the industrial sector. Moreover, in the climate of the time, the exchange rate of Greek currency to the European Unit of Account created almost no actual difference in agricultural prices between Greece and the Community.<sup>5</sup> Lastly and most importantly, the Greeks had decided to imitate the British tactics during the first enlargement, in other words, to open the negotiations with a 'high bid' hoping that public opinion at home would recognise the need for softening of an initially hard bargaining line.<sup>6</sup>

In sharp contrast to Greek perceptions, the Nine in turn deemed the Commission's paper on Greek agriculture too generous and vaguely general. After the August vacation, it was thus decided to hold three weeks of technical negotiations concerning the agricultural issue on a sector-by sector basis. In these negotiations, the Community would be represented by *ad hoc* and special committees covering different issues. In the aftermath of these deliberations, the Commissioner for Agriculture Finn Gundelach would submit a second more detailed proposal on agriculture, scheduled for 9 October 1978. Meetings between Greek and Commission experts hence took place from 4 to 28 September 1978.<sup>7</sup> The Commission team was headed by Natali and Gundelach while Minister of Agriculture Ioannis Boutos, Kontogeorgis and Theodoropoulos led the Greek team. The formation of these committees offered a glimmer of hope in the

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<sup>3</sup> Commission's Paper on Greek Agriculture, Brussels, 1 July 1978, GRGKP AGR/1978.

<sup>4</sup> Greek Paper on Agriculture, Athens, 8 July 1978, GRGKP 0108/78.

<sup>5</sup> Note by G. Kontogeorgis, Athens, 4 August 1978, GRGKP 0478.

<sup>6</sup> Uwe Kitzinger, *Diplomacy and Persuasion: How Britain Joined the Common Market* (London, 1973), 89-90.

<sup>7</sup> Telegram by J. Folin, Athens, 10 October 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1314.



agricultural dossiers and echoed the use of the Mansholt committee at the tail end of the 1961-1963 enlargement negotiations.<sup>8</sup> The Greeks, having realised the seriousness of the situation, were under no illusions that the discussions in September would be anything but tough.<sup>9</sup>

During those three weeks, the Greek team took advantage of the close collaboration with the Commission to further advance its case. Kontogeorgis, in defending his country's request for no transitional period, took refuge in the well-rehearsed argument about the Association agreement. In particular, he drew attention to the injustices incurred during the Association regarding the harmonisation of agricultural policies between Greece and EEC. Although this argument had proved rather powerful in Karamanlis' contacts with Europe's political leaders, it did not function well in the Commission's technocratic environment. Gundelach was quick to reject it. He reminded the Greeks 'that we are not talking anymore about harmonisation of Greek agricultural policy but accession of Greece and adoption of the rules of the CAP. The CAP has been completed so there are two choices for states outside the EEC: you are either in or out'.<sup>10</sup>

## **6.2. Jenkins' visit to Athens**

In the meantime and contributing to the Commission's flurry of activity, its President visited Athens for the first time. As Jenkins remarked: 'I am not here to negotiate. Clearly I expect to review the current situation in these negotiations, but I see my visit primarily as a demonstration of the political commitment of the Commission to a successful outcome'.<sup>11</sup> Although this was deemed more than enough to satisfy the Greek government, Jenkins did not stop there. In a meeting with Kontogeorgis, he expressed his great surprise at the Greek proposal of withdrawing all requests for transitional arrangements on agricultural prices. The Commission had found this approach very hard to understand as it would involve some very sharp increases in consumer prices in Greece between then and accession, which was not more than two years away. Jenkins evoked the British example where the increase in food prices due to the application of the CAP price levels over five years of transition had led to a great deal of resentment. To make matters worse, food was a more important item in the budget of a Greek household than it was in Britain in 1972 while inflation was already the weakest aspect of the Greek economy. The Greek counter argument was the rather general

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<sup>8</sup> Ludlow, *Dealing with Britain*, 194-5.

<sup>9</sup> Note by M.R.M. McIntosh, Athens, 10 August 1978, MWA141/6, 3, UKFCO 30/3675.

<sup>10</sup> Meeting between Kontogeorgis and Gundelach, Athens, 22 August 1978, GRGKP 0108/78.

<sup>11</sup> Statement by R. Jenkins, Athens, 28 September 1978, GRGKP 091278.

suggestion that any price increase could be offset by a fall in the price of industrial imports due to Greek tariff cuts.<sup>12</sup>

Jenkins also met with Karamanlis, in what turned out to be a very sincere discussion. So heart-felt was the encounter, that Jenkins rightfully thought that the Commission no longer seemed the target of Greek hostility.<sup>13</sup> Despite the good atmosphere, however, there were several divisive issues up for discussion. Responding to the Greek Prime Minister's plea not to turn the Greek membership into a matter of petty bargaining, Jenkins advised that the best solution could be found in more intensive formal contacts between the Greek administration and the Commission over the next few months, in order to identify and resolve the more difficult issues. This approach had proved useful in the British entry negotiations, with extensive contacts in which 'the British Minister in charge of negotiations had spent perhaps half his time in Brussels during the crucial months'.<sup>14</sup> As to agricultural transition itself, the Commission's wish was to avoid the polarising of positions. If Greece persisted in its demand for no transition in agriculture, this would provoke certain member states to request ten years for agriculture whereas the Commission wanted seven years. This would bog down the whole negotiations. Thus, according to Jenkins, the important thing was to be pragmatic about the negotiating position and not drive the member states into seeking an unrealistically long period in response to a Greek request for none.<sup>15</sup> It came as no surprise therefore that when Jenkins informed COREPER of the outcome of his visit, he commented on 'l'enthousiasme de Karamanlis, mais a dit ne pas être certain que les Grecs réalisaient pleinement les difficultés encore à résoudre, en particulier en ce qui concerne la période de transition'.<sup>16</sup>

Jenkins' visit to Athens was pivotal not only for the further improvement of relations between Greece and the Commission, but also for the future progress of the negotiations. The President of the Commission thoroughly advised Karamanlis on what the Greek strategy should be in the following months for a successful conclusion of the entry talks. Most importantly, however, he encouraged Karamanlis to undertake another European tour, especially to tackle French and Italian apprehensions on the outstanding agricultural issues. Furthermore, if Greece was worried about the possibility of having its negotiations 'globalised' after the Community's decision to officially open up talks with

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<sup>12</sup> Note on Greek negotiations, Brussels, 29 September 1978, ECBAC 66/1985 194.

<sup>13</sup> Jenkins, *European Diary*, 317.

<sup>14</sup> Meeting between Jenkins and Karamanlis, Athens, 24 September 1978, ECEN 1579.

<sup>15</sup> Meeting between Mitsotakis and Jenkins, Athens, 29 September 1978, ECBAC 66/1985 194.

<sup>16</sup> Jenkins meeting with Nine EEC ambassadors, Brussels, 5 October 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1412.

Portugal in June 1978, Giscard's letter to the eight heads of state on 12 September 1978 significantly increased Greek anxieties. In this letter, Giscard proposed the formation of a committee of Three Wise Men<sup>17</sup> in order to investigate ways to improve the workings of the Community in the face of enlargement.<sup>18</sup> He justified it on the grounds that: 'two developments concerning the organisation of Europe claim our attention and consideration. On the one hand a new impulse is about to be given to Europe by the election of the European Parliamentary Assembly under a system of direct elections and by the setting up of the EMS. On the other hand, we are preparing to bring to a conclusion the accession negotiations with Greece and we have given favourable reception to the candidature of Portugal and Spain.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, 'a simple transposition to twelve of the arrangements originally made for Six will not be enough'.<sup>20</sup>

Although the March elections had freed Giscard from any serious electoral challenge until 1981 and thus made it less necessary for him to pay attention to domestic political parliamentary considerations, he still needed to ensure that his own party had a defensible case on enlargement to present to the electorate in the following year's European Parliament elections.<sup>21</sup> His proposal had a dual advantage. Firstly, such a pro-European proposal could serve his policy of broadening support on the left, particularly if a centre-left personality was chosen as the French member of the Three Wise Men. At the same time it would strengthen his position against those on the right (Michel Debré or Jacques Chirac) who criticised France for rushing into enlargement without sufficient care for its impact on French interests and who had made enlargement one of their central preoccupations.<sup>22</sup> It was clear that other Community governments were equally anxious about some of the consequences of enlargement, yet they had been generally reluctant to face up to the problems or to follow up any of the thoughts exchanged in private discussions. The treatment of the Commission's 'fresco' on enlargement was a prime example of that tendency.<sup>23</sup>

But Greece's worst fear was that the report by the Three Wise Men would be invoked as a reason for delay in the final stages of the Greek accession negotiations. And such fears were not restricted to the Greeks. The Germans also shared the same doubts

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<sup>17</sup> Previous similar initiatives: Tindemans 1976 - Marjolin 1965 - Fouchet 1961.

<sup>18</sup> Keith Middlemas, *Orchestrating Europe. The Informal Politics of the European Union 1973-1985* (London, 1995), 89; Giscard d'Estaing, *Le Pouvoir et La Vie*, vol. 3, 262-262.

<sup>19</sup> Giscard's letter to Callaghan, Paris, 12 September 1978, MWE021/3, UKFCO 30/3879.

<sup>20</sup> *The Times*, 15 September 1978.

<sup>21</sup> See chapter five.

<sup>22</sup> Note by E. Fretwell, London, 14 September 1978, MWE021/1, 258, UKFCO 38/3879.

<sup>23</sup> See chapter five.

as to Giscard's intentions. Bonn suspected initially that the proposal was intended to delay or even halt enlargement. However, Giscard's European credentials were such that the FRG felt bound to respond positively.<sup>24</sup> In his state visit to Luxembourg, Giscard made clear to Gaston Thorn that his motivation in making this proposal had been two-fold; firstly, to satisfy internal Gaullist criticism on enlargement and secondly, to provide an independent estimate of the effects of enlargement on French interests.<sup>25</sup> As the Greeks realised in the following months this proposal had more to do with the Iberian enlargement. Either way, Giscard's proposals dominated the press, further aggravating the climate of pessimism surrounding a successful conclusion of the Greek talks by the end of the year.

Indeed, progress since the last Ministerial session in July between Greece and the EEC had been slow. From September to November, three Deputies' meetings were dedicated to economic and monetary policy, states aids, regional policy and VAT. The real snags however were encountered internally, in attempting to work out agreed Community positions before presenting them to the Athens side. A Ministerial Greece-EEC meeting planned for 16 October was cancelled due to continued internal disagreements on several subjects for discussion, namely social, institutional and transitional dossiers. Substantive negotiations on agriculture were also put on hold until the end of October since the French at least were not willing to take this up until they had the Commission's second, more elaborate proposal on agriculture. Things did not look good for the Greeks. Indicatively, commenting on the cancellation of the 16<sup>th</sup> October Ministerial meeting, *La Libre Belgique* wrote 'les Neuf sont divisés quant aux positions à défendre devant les négociateurs grecs'<sup>26</sup> while *Il Corriere della Sera* predicted 'there is a distinct possibility of the negotiations being stalled indefinitely'.<sup>27</sup>

### 6.3. Major hiccups

The first major division among Community partners was registered over the institutional dossier. Following the previous negative reactions of the Nine to the idea of substantive institutional reform in the face of enlargement<sup>28</sup>, the Commission's paper on the institutional implications of Greek accession, submitted to the Council on 20 July 1978, was restricted solely to numerical adjustments to the treaties. The main criterion

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<sup>24</sup> Telegram by P.R. Wright, Bonn, 9 October 1978, MWE021/3, 312, UKFCO 30/3880.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Libre Belgique*, 4 October 1978 (in www.ena.lu)

<sup>27</sup> Press Office, Brussels, 5 October 1978, GRGKP G/1978.

<sup>28</sup> Like the 'fresco', see chapter five.

used was the population of Greece, in line with the approach adopted at the time of the first enlargement.<sup>29</sup> On this basis, the Commission proposed 24 Greek members for the European Assembly, five votes for Greece in the Council of Ministers and one Commissioner. It was decided that the possibility of a reduction of the total number of Commissioners was to be tackled on the eve of Spanish and Portuguese accession. However, there was one divisive problem within the Council of Ministers regarding the institutional questions, i.e. how to settle weighted majority voting in the aftermath of the Greek accession in order to maintain the present political balance between larger and smaller member states.<sup>30</sup> In practice, qualified majority voting was extremely rare in most areas of Community business. It was, however used regularly for the numerous detailed decisions the Council had to take on each year's Community budget. Such a decision was hence of some practical importance.

In the Community of Nine, 41 out of 58 votes were required to carry a decision by qualified majority voting. For instance, if states possessing 19 votes between them were opposed to a measure, it could be blocked. The Commission had proposed that Greece should be given five votes on accession (like Belgium and the Netherlands), resulting in a total of 63 votes. Out of those, 44 should suffice for a decision, i.e. 20 votes would be needed to block. The British, the Danes and the French had successfully insisted that the present blocking majority of 19 should be retained. The guiding concern especially for Britain and France was not to erode the capability of two large member states acting together to block an action.<sup>31</sup> As far as the European Parliament and the EEC's decision to hold its first direct elections in 1979 were concerned, the Commission gave Greece two options. Either have the 24 members who would represent Greece in the European Parliament as from the date of accession directly elected or have them nominated from among members of the Greek parliament in proportion to the representation of parties. Most European Parliamentarians were likely to press the Greeks to hold direct elections; however Karamanlis' government was against it as the direct vote could act as an alternative form of referendum on Greek entry.<sup>32</sup>

The Community still lacked a common position on the second divisive issue of the negotiations, namely free movement of labour, with the Germans and the French

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<sup>29</sup> Commission's Paper on institutions implications, Brussels, 24 July 1978, MXE021/1, 213, UKFCO 30/3878.

<sup>30</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 22 July 1978, MXE020/358/1, 209, UKFCO 30/3878.

<sup>31</sup> Preparation for the Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Luxembourg, 16-17 October 1978, MWE021/3, UKFCO 30/3881.

<sup>32</sup> Note by M.C. Clements, Athens, 7 December 1978, MWE021/3, 427, UKFCO 30/3882.

disagreeing with the Commission that Greece's accession would not create additional serious problems considering unemployment in the Nine already ran at 6 million.<sup>33</sup> The Commission proposed a phased progression to full free movement over a period of seven to eight years. Most delegations could accept this; the Germans however rejected it outright. Schmidt in particular proposed a much lengthier but unspecified transition period with the possibility of further extension. To this end, he was supported by the Economic and Social Committee which reported: 'the free movement of workers is still a cornerstone of the EEC Treaty. However, structural and cyclical unemployment in the Community make a relatively long transitional period necessary on this front. It is worth recalling that the free movement of workers within the Six took ten years to achieve'.<sup>34</sup> Schmidt was less concerned about Greece than about the implications of an influx of workers from Spain and eventually Turkey. In the previous two years there had been a net return of Greek workers from the Community to Greece, with the total of those working within the EEC falling from 250000 to 150000.<sup>35</sup> In contrast, anxiety appeared more justified about the '580000 salariés turcs installés dans la Communauté en 1977'.<sup>36</sup>

Indeed, Chancellor Schmidt, in a meeting with Jenkins, admitted that the Greek problem taken in isolation was not very serious. But whatever was done for Greece would set the precedent for negotiations with Portugal and Spain. 'He did not want the FRG to be a country of immigrants and was even contemplating a transition period of 12 years'.<sup>37</sup> In the Council of Foreign Ministers of 17 October 1978, Germany confirmed that it could not accept free movement before the end of the transitional period, while other members underlined the need for progressive adaptations with a safeguard clause that would permit each member state to suspend free access of labour in a period of crisis.<sup>38</sup> On family allowances, the Germans, with their large migrant worker populations and mindful of their relative generosity in this sector, proposed that Greek workers in the Community should be paid family benefits at the rate appropriate in the country of residence rather than the country of employment. This ran counter to the Commission's attempts to extend the country of employment principle throughout the Community. On this issue, France was the odd man out. Most of the Nine and especially the Commission found the German proposals clearly discriminatory and therefore *non-communautaire*. 'Ceci

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<sup>33</sup> Ad hoc Group (Greek Accession), Brussels, 11/12 September 1978, MWE021/3, 254, UKFCO 30/3879.

<sup>34</sup> Opinion of the ESC, Brussels, 29 November 1978, ECBAC 48/1984 42.

<sup>35</sup> Note on Free movement of labour, Paris, 8 December 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

<sup>36</sup> Note on Enlargement, Paris, 14 December 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1389.

<sup>37</sup> Call by Jenkins to Schmidt, Bonn, 27 October 1978, ECEN 1148.

<sup>38</sup> Council of Meeting, Brussels, 17 October 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

créerait une discrimination entre deux travailleurs qui sont dans une situation identique, c'est-à-dire travaillent dans le même État-membre. C'est une discrimination contraire à l'art. 7 du Traité de Rome'.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, the Greeks could never accept the German proposal politically, 'as it appeared that they [the Germans] wanted to create second class citizens in the Community in respect of social security payments.'<sup>40</sup>

If the Nine were slow in resolving their differences over the main dossiers of the Greek negotiations, discussions about the transitional period and safeguard clause, which pertained to the whole spectrum of negotiations, were even worse. The Nine found it impossible to devise a common position, and, in the absence of an agreement over transitional period, negotiations with the Greeks were impossible. Since the opening of negotiations, Greece had made general and specific proposals concerning the duration of transition, while the Community had reserved its position on the question of basic and maximum duration, even for those negotiating chapters that were at a more advanced stage such as the industrial customs union. But in the aftermath of the Commission's 'fresco' and in accordance with the first enlargement, the Community had laid down a number of principles for the determination of the duration of the transitional measures and temporary derogations. These were to permit the adaptation necessitated by enlargement in such a manner that a balance of mutual advantages was ensured and would comprise fixed timetables where the duration might vary according to the subject matter. Already there were distinct differences between the two sides. Greece had contested the principle of mutual advantage and had expressed strong doubts as to the possibility, in practice, of establishing balances within as well as between sectors, as requested by the Community. Along similar lines, the Greeks had rejected a safeguard clause in any sector of negotiations. As Kontogeorgis noted 'because of the crisis in several sectors of industry like textiles and clothing as well as the precarious situation of France's and Italy's agriculture, the safeguard clause will be used against us, to minimise the exports of our products towards the Community. That is why we think of it in Athens as a step backwards'.<sup>41</sup> Either way, as far as the Greeks were concerned, the safeguard clause from the Athens Association agreement of article 68 had expired in 1968 as had article 12 of the additional protocol in 1977.

The gap widened even further when the Nine held a first series of discussions on the issue. 'Les Britanniques soutenus par les Irlandais et les Danois, demanderont une

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<sup>39</sup> Note by V. Lambers, Brussels, 12 September 1978, ECBAC 48/1984 42.

<sup>40</sup> Call by Stathatos to Tugendhat, Brussels, 20 October 1978, ECBAC 66/1985 192.

<sup>41</sup> Note by G. Kontogeorgis, Athens, 4 August 1978, GRGKP 0478.

période transitoire homogène et d'une durée aussi courte que possible, soit 5 à 6 ans. La France demande approximativement 10 ans, au moins pour les secteurs difficiles. Les Allemands adopteront sans doute une position intermédiaire, qui est aussi celle de la Commission (7 ans avec prolongation d'un an) sauf dans le domaine social'.<sup>42</sup> On the other side, Greece had proposed, as a general rule, that transitional measures should not exceed five years. Karamanlis' government had originally proposed a longer duration of seven years in three specific cases, namely tariff harmonisation and preferences towards third countries as well as own resources. But in the course of the negotiations, the first two proposals were withdrawn. Greece justified its proposal for a five year period with reference to the transitional period under the Association agreement which expired towards the end of 1984 as well as to the precedent set by the Community's first enlargement. Moreover, the Greek economy had weathered the world recession better than most, with low unemployment and a relatively high growth rate, the sole blackspot being inflation which remained at high levels (about 12%). As Karamanlis stated to the newly inaugurated Social and Economic Policy Council in Greece: 'despite the burdensome inheritance left by the dictatorship, large defence expenditure and the universal economic crisis, Greece's economic development has been satisfactory both in itself, and in comparison with that of other countries which did not have to contend with Greece's critical problems.'<sup>43</sup>

But neither argument pertaining to the Association agreement's arrangements and the country's relatively good economic status found sympathy within the Community. Regarding the well-rehearsed argument about the association *acquis*, Natali noted in a meeting of the mixed Parliamentary Committee that 'the difference between the association and accession in economic terms was that between swimming across the Seine and swimming across the channel, this could not be disguised by legal nit-picking'<sup>44</sup> whereas any economic forecast was deemed impossible due to the uncertain prospects for economic development during the next decade in the Community and in the world.

#### **6.4. Karamanlis' final tour**

In the meantime, as the sense of impasse mounted, Karamanlis followed Jenkins' advice, and embarked on yet another tour of Western Europe with the aim of 'settling

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<sup>42</sup> Note by G. De Panafieu, Paris, 20 October 1978, FR5AG 3/998.

<sup>43</sup> Karamanlis' address to Social and Economic Policy Council, Athens, 3 July 1978, WS9022/598/1, 134, UKFCO 9/2742.

<sup>44</sup> Meeting of the EEC-Greece Mixed Parliamentary Committee, Paris, 21-25 November 1978, ECBAC 66/1985 212.



the remaining details for Greece's full membership of the Common Market'.<sup>45</sup> Despite the fact that the talks among the Nine were strictly confidential, Karamanlis' records indicate that the Greeks were fully aware of the deliberations taking place in Brussels. This was also clearly reflected in the governmental talks in Paris, Rome and Dublin. Karamanlis initially met with Giscard on 2 October 1978 in Paris. The Greeks were deeply worried at how French officials in Brussels had stone-walled over key dossiers, especially the transitional period indicating that 'en même temps l'arrivée de la Grèce ne saurait être considérée comme la simple addition d'un dixième membre. C'est en fait l'amorce d'une évolution qui doit déboucher sur une Communauté à douze. Toutes les négociations, menées actuellement avec Athènes sont obligés d'en tenir compte'.<sup>46</sup>

Significantly, the Élysée was equally concerned. Gabriel Robin, diplomatic advisor to Giscard underlined the importance that Karamanlis attached to his European policy recommending to the French President 'nous avons, à mon sens, un intérêt politique majeur à l'y aider' while conceding 'je crains que les services conservent quelques réticences au nom du précédent que les conditions faites à la Grèce risquent de créer pour l'adhésion de l'Espagne'.<sup>47</sup> Reports had indeed observed a hardening of French public opinion on enlargement in recent weeks. That is why President Giscard suggested that Karamanlis see Chirac and other political leaders to assuage their worries and stress the political imperative. Giscard reiterated the French political will to see through the agreed timetable but criticised the Greeks for not helping their case. He was referring to the Greek proposal for no transitional period in agriculture. Given that time was not on their side 'le gouvernement grec devrait assouplir ses positions notamment sur le plan politique de transition' and further warned them that 'la Grande Bretagne n'ayant pas d'intérêt particulier à défendre dans cette négociation, a adopté une position tactique consistant à soutenir les positions grecques pour retarder la formation d'une position commune et donner satisfaction aux autres candidats à l'adhésion en œuvrant ainsi pour une globalisation'.<sup>48</sup> In the face of Greece's flexibility, however, Giscard hinted that the French would reciprocate with a better compromise formula on the transitional period, one that would be acceptable to Greek domestic opinion.

Karamanlis' trip to Rome was, as hoped, more encouraging. The Mediterranean package of May 1978 had met most of the Italian demands and Prime Minister Andreotti

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<sup>45</sup> Note by J.M. Sutherland, Athens, 3 October 1978, WSG026/1, 67, UKFCO 9/2744.

<sup>46</sup> *Le Figaro*, 22 October 1978.

<sup>47</sup> Note by G. Robin, Paris, 23 October 1978, FR5 AG 3/998.

<sup>48</sup> Note by G. De Panafieu, Paris, 20 October 1978, FR5 AG 3/998.

did not face the same domestic constraints as Giscard.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, the two Prime Ministers apparently agreed that the political decision of a five year period across the board would be sufficient and Karamanlis could consequently point out to the Greek people that they were securing equal treatment with other countries.<sup>50</sup> The Italian government also reassured Karamanlis that it would do its best to ensure that the agreed negotiating timetable was adhered to, but considered that there would be difficult negotiations ahead. In a meeting with Callaghan, Andreotti further confirmed Italian political willingness to successfully conclude the Greek negotiations. He indicatively said: 'it was paradoxical that in the midst of all the talk of strengthening the forces of democracy and cradles of civilisation, the Greek negotiations should be bogged down in a wrangle about tomatoes'.<sup>51</sup> He thought that the transitional period of five years seemed reasonable and right, despite the reservations of certain Italian Ministers, particularly the Minister of Agriculture who wanted to see a transition period for Greece of up to seven years.<sup>52</sup>

On 23 October 1978, Karamanlis paid his first official visit to Ireland where he gave a lengthy account of his commitment to joining the Community. Karamanlis' interest in visiting Ireland was part of Greece's continuing canvassing of support for its application. Also, as the Irish Prime Minister Jack Lynch mentioned, 'the social and economic circumstances in Ireland were similar to those in Greece and both countries were geographically on the periphery of Europe', therefore this trip offered an opportunity to consult on negotiating tactics.<sup>53</sup> The Greek side regarded the previous February's agreement between Greece and the EEC on the accession timetable as a binding agreement which should be strictly adhered to. Lynch however prepared Karamanlis for possible delays as 'unfortunately the history of the EC since its foundation showed that target dates were not always met as one would like'.<sup>54</sup> Karamanlis then raised the issues of the free movement of labour and agriculture and stressed on several occasions that it would be morally and politically impossible to accept any discrimination against Greece.<sup>55</sup> Especially as regards the agricultural problems put forward by France and Italy, he believed these to be the result of demagogic party

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<sup>49</sup> See chapter five.

<sup>50</sup> Telegram by Y. Omnes, Athens, 23 October 1978, FRAMAE,d/e, 1412.

<sup>51</sup> Public Record Office, The National Archives, Prime Minister Files (henceforth PREM) 16/2037, Meeting between Andreotti and Callaghan, London, 22 November 1978.

<sup>52</sup> Call of Jenkins on Andreotti, Rome, 28 November 1978, ECEN 1148.

<sup>53</sup> Discussion with Karamanlis, Dublin, 24 October 1978, IRDOT/ 2008/148/640.

<sup>54</sup> Record of Meeting between Karamanlis and Lynch, Dublin, 24 October 1978, IRDOT/ 2009/135/479.

<sup>55</sup> Letter by R. W. James, Dublin, 1 November 1978, WSG026/1, 66, UKFCO 9/2744.

political conflict in these countries. The leaders of both countries agreed that there was no economic problem of substance involved.<sup>56</sup>

## **6.5. Un barrou d'honneur**

Even if Karamanlis' latest tour looked successful, the future looked rather grim. It was with the start of serious deliberations among the Nine and the Commission about the agricultural dossier, the most divisive issue, that the prospects of quick success in forming a common Community position began to dwindle. Even within the Commission there was an ongoing row. In the paper presented to the Commissioners on 18 October 1978, Gundelach and Natali surprised everyone by stating that they were convinced that 'the in-depth examination of the Greek agricultural sector during September had shown that there was no need for a transitional period longer than five years for alignment of prices.' In this light, they proposed a general transitional period of five years but with an opportunity to review the situation in the third year and if need be to extend it for another two years. The only exception would be olive oil and livestock, for which they proposed a maximum period of seven years accompanied by a safeguard clause.<sup>57</sup> Jenkins supported five years while the French Commissioners François-Xavier Ortoli and Claude Cheysson, the German Wilhelm Haferkamp and the Italian Antonio Giolitti supported a longer period, around seven-eight years. The others were neutral and ready to follow the majority.<sup>58</sup>

At governmental level, the French and the Italians wondered why the Commission had not proposed a longer transitional period for fruit and vegetables. They also queried the Greek ability to adapt rapidly to the Community's mechanisms and structures. Natali and Gundelach felt that the Greeks had made substantial progress over the last few years in their preparation for adapting to the mechanisms and structures of the CAP. 'Most Community regulations were already translated into Greek. There was a high level of knowledge of Community legislation among many officials while the Association agreement had been helpful in providing experience. A transitional period of five years therefore would suffice'.<sup>59</sup> The French in particular were not convinced and accused the Commission of lacking consistency, criticising it for changing its position all the time on the fundamental issue of transition in the agricultural sector as they had begun the year

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<sup>56</sup> Record of Meeting between Karamanlis and Lynch, Dublin, 24 October 1978, IRDOT/ 2009/135/479.

<sup>57</sup> Commission's Proposal on Greek agriculture, Brussels, 2 November 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

<sup>58</sup> Note by G. Kontogeorgis, Rome, 20 October 1978, GRGKP 0478.

<sup>59</sup> Public Record Office, The National Archives, Treasury (henceforth T), Ad Hoc Group (Greek accession), Brussels, 7 November 1978,3/203/02, UKT 384/51.

with a proposal for ten years in the ‘fresco’, then seven years in its June paper and now five years transitional period. ‘Elle [Commission] donne ainsi l’impression de n’être préoccupé que par les exigences des autorités helléniques et semble oublié que la Communauté se doit aussi d’avoir une attitude prudente et de protéger certains secteurs de son agriculture’.<sup>60</sup>

In meetings that followed at *ad hoc* working level, the French maintained their position of including all fruit, vegetables and wine in the maximum transition period of 8 years while the Irish wanted beef and dairy products to be accorded no more than five years. The Commission thought that both proposals would not be politically acceptable to the Greeks.<sup>61</sup> The French however, in desperate need to appease domestic opposition and in the face of upcoming EP elections, remained intransigent.<sup>62</sup> Equally, the British were sticking determinedly to a five year transitional period, further undermining the possibility of a compromise within the EEC. In the COREPER meeting of 30 November 1978, the British came under strong pressure to agree to some lengthening of the transitional period beyond the five years in order to bridge the gap among the Nine and have a Community position ready to be presented in the upcoming ninth Ministerial meeting with the Greeks on 6 December. Such was the pressure from the Eight that the German Presidency threatened to raise the issue in the margins of the European Council if the UK continued to stand out alone in favour of five years. The British however had a different plan: ‘our reason for sticking to our position at COREPER yesterday was primarily tactical. We saw no need to be in a hurry to move’.<sup>63</sup> Unfortunately for the Greeks, there was a distinct possibility that the December Ministerial meeting might be cancelled on the grounds that the Community had failed to reach an agreed position on the most important unresolved issue, namely the length of the transitional period over the agricultural dossier.

As the French permanent representative Luc de la Barre de Nanteuil admitted ‘dans ces conditions, la négociation grecque risque de ne pouvoir être conclue d’ici la fin de l’année sur les dossiers les plus importants. Peut-être un autre scénario pourrait-il se concevoir’.<sup>64</sup> To make matters worse, there was an emerging problem of mistrust and suspicion among the Nine. The French and the Germans on one side and Britain with Denmark and Ireland on the other clashed angrily, each accusing the others of showing

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<sup>60</sup> Note by D. Gautier- Sauvagnac, Paris, 10 November 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

<sup>61</sup> Ad hoc Group (Greek accession), Brussels, 24-25-26 November 1978, 3/203/02, UKT 384/51.

<sup>62</sup> Telegram by A. Frydas, Bonn, 11 December 1978, GRGKP 091278.

<sup>63</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 30 November 1978, 3/203/02, UKT 384/51.

<sup>64</sup> Telegram by L. de Nanteuil, Brussels, 6 October 1978, ECEN 1412.

regard only for their disparate national priorities. For the French, the discussion on the transitional period was a reaffirmation of suspected British tactics. Britain would not do anything to assist the Greeks in their attempt to enter, but equally it would not overtly oppose enlargement. Instead it would use its legitimate right as a member state to defend its interest to slow down and if possible, divert the Brussels negotiations. The French analysis was not far from the truth. Already in May of that year, British Foreign Secretary David Owen, having consulted the British ambassadors designated to EEC countries, concluded ‘while we should not go out on a limb to delay Greece’s application, we should not be sorry if other factors caused it to be dealt with relatively slowly’.<sup>65</sup> Actually, for London, the synchronisation of three entries seemed ideal. This partly explained British insistence on a five year transitional period for Greece. The disagreements reached such a critical point that German Permanent representative Helmut Sigrist declared ‘le Royaume Uni devra prendre la responsabilité d’échec de la négociation’.<sup>66</sup>

However, it was not just the British who were being obstructive. The British delegation was certain that as ‘the French and the Germans now seem to be working closely together, they may be trying to cast us in the role of the scapegoats for blocking the negotiations even though our positions happen to coincide with those of the Greeks on most points’.<sup>67</sup> Admittedly, the French having been disappointed with the Italians who generally remained neutral during these discussions and ready to side with the majority, turned their attention to the Germans ‘dans ce contexte, il nous appartient de maintenir d’étroits contacts avec la délégation allemande. Les deux problèmes social et agricole, qui constituent le cœur des négociations, se trouvent en effet liés, d’une part dans le temps puisque les deux devront être réglés vraisemblablement d’ici la fin de l’année dans l’esprit, et d’autre part, les deux délégations concernées ayant besoin du soutien l’une de l’autre’.<sup>68</sup>

As the ninth Ministerial Greece-EEC meeting, planned for 6 December 1978, approached, the Greeks gave no sign of having abandoned their hopes of breaking the back of the negotiations by the end of year, in spite of the disturbing signs as to how difficult this might prove to be. A month earlier, the eighth Ministerial session concerning Greek accession had taken place, under the chairmanship of Klaus von Dohnanyi where apart from a few reservations, Greece had accepted the Community’s

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<sup>65</sup> Record of Community Heads of Mission Conference, London, 10 May 1978, MXE021/1, 220, UKFCO 98/342.

<sup>66</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 30 November 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

<sup>67</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 1 December 1978, UKT 384/51.

<sup>68</sup> Note by D. Gautier-Sauvagnac, Paris, 10 November 1978, AMAE, d/e, 1413.

position on institutions, one of the disputed issues of the Greek accession talks. But Greek Foreign Minister Rallis complained that the Community had failed to give an overall view of its position, especially at the ‘horizontal’ level pertaining to the whole spectrum of negotiations, i.e. the nature and duration of the transitional period as well as agriculture and social policy.<sup>69</sup> The German President justified the delay in preparing the Community’s position on social affairs and agriculture by claiming that this should come as ‘no surprise given the political and economic importance of these matters’.<sup>70</sup> However, the Greeks knew very well that regardless of the duration of the transitional period agreed, the most important thing at that moment was for the Nine to reach a common position that would in turn allow the conduct of Greece-EEC negotiations.<sup>71</sup> This urgency appeared to have been recognised among the Nine who finally, after hours of debate, reached a compromise during a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers on 4 December 1978, two days before the meeting with the Greeks.

Genscher observed that everybody was in agreement with the idea that the basic transitional period should last for five years. The only remaining question was whether the maximum period for individual sectors should be seven or eight years. Despite their concerns over social affairs, the Germans were deeply committed to the Greek accession and desired the *vue d’ensemble* to have been completed before the ninth Ministerial Greece-EEC meeting so the negotiations could at least commence. In a desperate tone, Genscher underlined that ‘les Neuf ne devraient pas faire preuve d’un esprit de ‘petit comtable’ au cours de l’examen des conditions d’adhésion’.<sup>72</sup> In an effort to lead the way, he announced his government’s updated position on free movement of labour. The Germans would accept a transitional period in line with the maximum duration agreed for other dossiers of the negotiations.<sup>73</sup> Showing corresponding flexibility, the British pointed to the possibility of accepting seven years for certain sensitive agricultural products and free movement of labour, as anything much longer would most likely work out to their budgetary disadvantage. Along the same lines was also the position of the Danish and Dutch delegations. The Irish Michael O’Kennedy and the Italian Arnaldo Forlani both spoke up for a classic five year transition period, mentioning the political difficulties which could be caused to Greece if the transitional period were extended

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<sup>69</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 6 November 1978, 3/203/02F, UKT 384/ 51.

<sup>70</sup> Council of Ministers Archives(henceforth ECCMA) CONF-GR/80/78, 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference Greece-EEC, Brussels, 6 November 1978.

<sup>71</sup> Telegram by I. Frydas, Bonn, 2 December 1978, GRGKP/ AGR 1978.

<sup>72</sup> Telegram by J. Folin, Athens, 21 November, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

<sup>73</sup> Note by G. FitzHerbert, London, 1 December 1978, MWE021/3, 424, FCO 30/3882.

beyond five years. Finally, the French, with the support of the Germans, favoured five years as the general rule, with eight years as maximum duration which was also the final compromise.<sup>74</sup> Irrespective of transitional measures, Greece would participate fully in the Community's institutions and in the Community's decision-making process from the date of accession.<sup>75</sup>

## **6.6. Franchir le seuil: the 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting**

The Community's positions on the transitional period, agriculture and social affairs were painfully negotiated and presented to the Greeks late in the afternoon on 6 December 1978. Around 6.00pm, Genscher apologised on behalf of the Community for making the Greeks wait so long: 'but until the last moment we were trying to reach an agreement so as to present the Community's position on transitional period, agriculture and social affairs'.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, the entire morning had been dedicated to an effort by the Nine to finalise the list of products that should fall under the maximum transitional period of eight years.

The Greeks reacted strongly against the Community's papers on the grounds that these were designed entirely to protect the Community's interests while inflicting damage on Greece. George Rallis deemed the Community's offer disappointing and unacceptable. The position of the Nine reflected certainly very much the lowest common denominator. For example, the list of agricultural products for which a long transitional period was proposed included none of interest to the Greeks. In fact, the offer put to Greece was considerably less generous than the Commission's proposal at the end of October which had suggested five years for two thirds of Greek farm products eligible for EEC prices and only a seven year period for olive oil, fats, meat and dairy products. The Council of Ministers however decided to extend the period to eight years for all fruit and vegetables as well as wine while excluding livestock. Therefore the 'exceptions' proposed by the Community regarding the transitional period ended up covering Greece's most important economic sectors as a whole.

Kontogeorgis complained that the exception had weighed more heavily than the rule and added that the omission of live-stock products in the longer period constituted one extra reason for a reduction to a single overall five years period.<sup>77</sup> It is true that the

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<sup>74</sup> Note by U. Stefani, Brussels, 11 December 1978, ECBAC 48/1984 42.

<sup>75</sup> Commission's proposal for transitional period, Brussels, 1 November 1978, MWE021/2, 218, UKFCO 30/3879.

<sup>76</sup> Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 6 December 1978, GRGKP 7879.

<sup>77</sup> Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Brussels, 6 December 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

livestock products had been a bone of contention earlier in the morning between the Irish delegation and the German Presidency. The Irish were adamant in their position that dairy and livestock products should be excluded from the eight year list and included in the classic five year period. Natali however, with the support of Germany and Belgium, argued the exact opposite. In particular ‘en insistant sur le fait, que par souci d’équilibre, la Communauté ne devait pas présenter aux Grecs comme devant relever de la durée maximale les seuls produits qui soulevaient des difficultés pour les Neuf’.<sup>78</sup> However, in face of Irish intransigence and needing something to present to the Greeks, Genscher stepped back and accepted the Irish line.

Genscher, clearly embarrassed by the Community’s unequal offer and, in turn by Greece’s vehement reaction, offered as an excuse that the accession of Greece was taking place at a time when the Community was facing serious economic problems. Hence, there was not as much room for manoeuvre as desired: ‘this did not alter the Community’s intention to contribute to a satisfactory conclusion on the substance of the negotiations on the 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial conference on 20 December 1978’.<sup>79</sup> Rallis replied that Greece would set out its position in detail in a memorandum to the Council and that this would serve as a basis for further talks between Greek and Community ambassadors the following week.<sup>80</sup> However, no one could deny that the meeting had brought about a very serious rift between Greece and the EEC. Natali was believed to have been deeply disappointed by the Council’s proposals, which showed a much tougher attitude than that of the Commission in its original proposal.<sup>81</sup>

## **6.7. The Greeks strike back**

In the immediate aftermath of the meeting, the Greeks were deeply worried. Nevertheless, the delegation’s feeling, which the Commission shared, was that the negotiations were still on course. This would hopefully enable a package to emerge at the tenth Ministerial meeting of 20 December, if everybody worked with determined will. ‘The important thing was to agree on a Community position, even if everybody knew it was quite a long way from the final one. This was done. Now the final phase of the negotiations can get moving’.<sup>82</sup> The Greeks became extremely active on the political and technical level. The Greek government followed up its immediate rejection of the

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<sup>78</sup> Note by L. Natali, Brussels, 7 December 1978, ECBAC 66/1985 212.

<sup>79</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 6 December 1978, , 3/203/02F ,UKT 384/52

<sup>80</sup> *The Financial Times*, 6 December 1978.

<sup>81</sup> *The Financial Times*, 7 December 1978.

<sup>82</sup> Note by C.J. Audland, Brussels, 7 December 1978, ECEN 414.



Community's terms of 6 December with a personal letter from Karamanlis who, in somewhat emotional terms, appealed to all heads of governments for a radical improvement in the Community's offer.<sup>83</sup> Karamanlis, sensing the importance of the upcoming meeting, warned against the dangers of trying to impose upon Greece terms inferior to those accorded in the first enlargement and pointed out that a five year transitional period was the absolute maximum justifiable for any sector. All aspects of the Greek economy, even agriculture, were of such modest dimensions as not being capable of causing an embarrassment worth mentioning.<sup>84</sup> Although there was a tactical element in the publicised letter to appease domestic critics, all evidence pointed to Karamanlis having been genuinely taken aback by the Community's position, in particular by the eight year transitional period suggested for certain agricultural products. The latest Community formula would put Karamanlis, who had virtually staked his political reputation on Greek accession, very much on the spot.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, Greek public and political criticism of the Community's attitude towards Greece had increased since 6 December. For instance, representatives of PASEGES, the major Greek agricultural lobby, in a meeting with Mitsotakis on 11 December 1978 stated that they were against the Community's proposals and if the government accepted them, the majority of producers would turn against EEC entry and in turn against the Greek government.<sup>86</sup> To make matters worse, a number of politicians of the centre, including Pasmazoglou who was well informed and had been previously close to the government on EEC issues, had in mid-December joined those criticising Karamanlis' handling of the accession negotiations.<sup>87</sup>

At the same time however, the Greek negotiating team focused extensively on the technical aspects. This included the submission of an *aide-mémoire* on the three issues in contention on 12 December 1978, namely the transitional period and safeguard clauses in general, and in particular the transitional period regarding agriculture and thirdly regarding social affairs. The Greeks agreed with the basic transitional period of five years but were entirely against the exceptions in the agricultural and social sector that provided for eight years. On the safeguard clauses, in particular, there were two major problems. The Athens government, while accepting the Community's proposal for a mutual safeguard mechanism during transition, like article 135 of the 1972 Act of Accession,

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<sup>83</sup> Letter by K. Karamanlis, Athens, 7 December 1978, GRKaramanlis, vol 10, 25.

<sup>84</sup> *Hellenews*, 21 December 1978.

<sup>85</sup> Progress Report on Enlargement, London, 23 November 1978, MXE021/1, 392, UKFCO 98/344.

<sup>86</sup> Note by K. Mitsotakis, Athens, 11 December 1978, GRGKP 091278.

<sup>87</sup> Note by I. Sutherland, Athens, 14 December 1978, WSG014/1, 123, UKFCO 9/2734.

rejected it in the case of the industrial customs union. This would constitute a step backwards given that the general safeguard clause of the Association agreement had expired in 1970. However, the Community considered the lack of a general safeguard clause in the Association agreement an anomaly, while developments in the trade of sensitive products between Greece and Community had recently shown that the absence of a general reciprocal safeguard clause could be detrimental to the Community. The prime example of this were Greek textile exports to EEC which were not covered by the protective MFA, leading France, Italy and Britain to furiously protest against elevated Greeks exports.<sup>88</sup>

The other major issue was the Nine's inclusion in the general safeguard clause offer of an emergency procedure in the event of serious economic difficulties. More specifically, as regards agriculture there was a clause that stipulated that 'in case a member state underwent serious disruption as result of the trade with Greece, the Commission would be obligated to decide on the request for application of appropriate measures by a member state within 24 hours of receipt of the request and to make the measures decided upon immediately applicable'.<sup>89</sup> The Nine had spent many hours discussing this issue before presenting it to Greece. The French in particular were obsessed with the inclusion of this emergency provision, as they felt 'que le régime prévu à l'article 135 du précédent traité d'adhésion était trop lourd à manier et par conséquent, incapable de résoudre les problèmes de caractère immédiat, que nous pourrions activer au cours de la période transitoire'.<sup>90</sup> The Greeks were, as expected, vehemently opposed, as for them the safeguard mechanisms should be for the sole benefit of the new member.<sup>91</sup>

On agriculture and social affairs, the Greeks reiterated that they would not accept the Community position regarding the transitional period. On social affairs, Greece felt bound to remind the Community once again that the free movement of labour constituted a fundamental principle of the Treaty of Rome 'elle [la Grèce] critique également le fait que la Communauté a prévu de payer les prestations familiales durant la période de transition sur la base de principe du pays de résidence (système français) et non sur celle de principe du pays d'emploi (système appliqué par les huit autres États membres de la CEE)'.<sup>92</sup> On agriculture, the Greeks pointed to three injustices. In fact, Athens hugely capitalised on the Commission's report of October 1978 following the

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<sup>88</sup> *The Economist*, 1 July 1978.

<sup>89</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 6 December 1978, ECCAM CONF-GR/111/78.

<sup>90</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 30 November 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

<sup>91</sup> Note on state of Greek negotiations, Brussels, 18 December 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

<sup>92</sup> Note on state of Greek negotiations, Brussels, 18 December 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

detailed sectoral discussions in September, which had concluded that there was no problem in Greece applying the Community arrangements for the common organisation of agricultural markets. Therefore the first Greek assumption was that in terms of infrastructure, there was no justification for applying a transitional period at all. The lack of structural weaknesses reduced the problem of transition, therefore to one of price and aid harmonisation.

The Greeks rejected the Community's proposed maximum duration for specific agricultural products and accused the Community of prioritising the Nine's budgetary concerns to the detriment of Greece's needs. On olive oil and tobacco for example the difference between prices was not sufficiently large to warrant progressive alignment over a period of eight years. Thus, the sole purpose of granting Community aid broken up over an eight year period was to ease the burden on the Community budget.<sup>93</sup> On olive oil especially, Theodoropoulos had pointed out to Genscher 'que dans cette affaire, la Communauté n'avait pour seul but que de soulager le budget communautaire. Or, le paiement des aides communautaires en 5 ans au lieu de 7 ans ne correspondait qu'une différence de 10 millions de dollars par un an pour le budget. Ceci était dérisoire par rapport aux difficultés politiques qui seraient provoqués en Grèce par une période de 7 ans'.<sup>94</sup>

The Greek side also elaborated their position on sugar and cotton. On sugar it had emerged that Greek prices were higher than the Community prices. Consequently, there was no problem requiring a transitional period for the rapprochement of prices. The Community proposed that a basic quota for sugar production should be established for Greece on the basis of the average of production over the last 5 years. This would give Greece the right to produce a quantity of approximately 248000 tons of sugar per annum, whereas its production the previous two years had averaged 300000 tons pa. It ought to be observed that this production just covered the needs of Greek consumption. Against this backdrop, the Greeks accused the Community of forcing the country to import sugar to cover their needs. The only solution was to correct the basis of calculation of the quota in a way that permitted Greece to produce at least as much as at present.

The final reason for the outright rejection of the Community's proposal on the part of the Greeks can be explained by the evolution of the negotiations up to that point. As shown in chapter five, Greece had made concessions in other areas of the

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<sup>93</sup> Greek Memorandum on Agriculture, Brussels, 12 December 1978, ECBAC 66/1985 105.

<sup>94</sup> Telegram by J. Folin, Athens, 14 November 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

negotiations and had abandoned many of its initial demands in exchange for having its requests in the agriculture sector partly accepted. In the words of Rallis, 'having in the course of the negotiations agreed, at the request of its future partners, to shorten or even forgo completely a whole series of transitional measures necessary to it... Greece expects to be granted free access to the Community market for its agricultural products, with the minimum of barriers'.<sup>95</sup> For instance, Greece agreed to carry out extensive liberalisation by abolishing quantitative restrictions on more than 100 products vis-à-vis the Community and third countries, with progressive liberalisation arrangements for only 14 products. As regards external relations, Greece would have to grant more new preferences than it would receive, since so many of the Community's preferential agreements were non-reciprocal. Therefore, the removal of external protection was bound to cause problems of adaptation and further worsen the already burdened Greek trade balance in the industrial sector with the EEC. The Greeks felt that all these decisions had been to the advantage of the Community. The only reason they went along with it was the prospect of a better treatment over dossiers critical for Greece's economy and its domestic public opinion, such as agriculture.

Fortunately for Greece, the Germans turned out to be very strong and reliable partners, most importantly on the sidelines. In the interval between the ninth and tenth Ministerial meetings, the German representatives were in constant consultation with the Greeks and the Commission in order to hammer out compromise formulae. A case in point was the secret meeting of 12 December 1978 where Kontogeorgis, in the presence of Stathatos, the Greek ambassador to the EEC, met with von Dohnanyi. The Germans had asked to consult the Greeks before the tenth Ministerial Greece-EEC meeting took place in order to minimise the possibilities of a breakdown of the talks. Indeed, the Greeks were presented unofficially - as there was no consent from other member states (the Germans stressed this point repeatedly) - with the first broad reactions of the Nine to the revised Greek proposals submitted days before. The aim was to illustrate to the Greek team the huge gap that still existed between the two sides as well as to look for any signs of flexibility. They stressed to the Greeks that it would be impossible for the Nine to accept a uniform maximum duration of five years. There would certainly be some dossiers with such duration, but for other sectors at least seven years would be required. Regarding article 135 on safeguard clauses, the Germans insisted that it would have to be applied across the board. In practice, von Dohnanyi advised, 'the safeguard

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<sup>95</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference Greece-EEC, Brussels, 8 November 1978, ECCMA CONF-GR/81/78.

clause would prove to be at least as useful to the Greeks as to the existing EEC. Germany also defended its position on free movement of workers, namely to request a transitional period equal to the longest transitional period decided for other sectors. When asked what the correlation was between social and agricultural affairs which were in general marked by the longest proposed transitional arrangements, the Germans replied that for reasons of domestic politics, they could not accept a shorter period. On agriculture, the Germans foresaw flexibility regarding the number of products for which the maximum transitional period would be needed. On sugar, it would be difficult to change the Community's view, but after Kontogeorgis explained the Greek position, the Germans encouraged the Greeks to negotiate further.<sup>96</sup>

The Commission's reaction was equally effective. Natali kept in constant contact with the Greek negotiating team, guiding them through this difficult time and playing the role of the honest broker ready to offer compromise solutions and advice. Thus, for example, Natali explained to Kontogeorgis on several occasions that if each side maintained its position there would be no progress in the negotiations. In this respect, it was vital that Greece show some signs of flexibility especially on its stances regarding the maximum duration of the transitional period, for which Greece had been reluctant to move beyond five years.<sup>97</sup> On 14 December after a rather long session within COREPER, Natali broke the bad news to the Greeks: 'if Greece sticks to its position as expressed in the memorandum, the Ministerial meeting will limit itself to a simple expression of disagreement and there will be no progress and this because if they won't have prepared adjustments beforehand, they won't be in a position to negotiate'.<sup>98</sup> Immediately, Kontogeorgis called Karamanlis explaining the seriousness of the situation. Towards the end of an intense one-hour discussion, Kontogeorgis underlined to the Greek Prime Minister that this was not about Greece anymore and despite valid arguments, the Nine could not help thinking about the next Iberian enlargement. Karamanlis, as pragmatic as always, decided to increase the period of transition to six years as a sign of flexibility: 'we had insisted on a five year transitional period for political and psychological reasons'.<sup>99</sup> However, he understood the Community's need not to create precedents and it was for this reason that he would accept an extended transitional period, but only for tomatoes and free movement of labour. Parallel to this, he drew

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<sup>96</sup> Telegram by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 13 December 1978, GRGKP 091278.

<sup>97</sup> Telegram by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 14 December 1978, GRGKP 091278.

<sup>98</sup> Telegram by L.de Nanteuil, Brussels, 18 December 1978, FRAMAE, d/e, 1413.

<sup>99</sup> Telephone Conversation between Karamanlis and Kontogeorgis, Brussels, 15 December 1978, GRGKP 091278.

attention to what he regarded as the most important element of the negotiations, the budgetary issue. It was imperative that Greece gained the status of net beneficiary from the first day of accession.<sup>100</sup> Kontogeorgis informed the Greek team about the new state of affairs, but along with Karamanlis decided not to reveal this position until the Ministerial meeting on 20 December, for fear of the Community asking for more compromises.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, at the Deputies' meeting on 15 December, the Greeks stood pat, offering no compromise.

Similarly, Roland de Kergorlay, deputy director of external relations directorate and in charge of the *ad hoc* group for Greek accession reported to the Nine's permanent representatives on the Greek problems, in order to convince them to adapt a more reasonable line.<sup>102</sup> He pointed to the domestic constraints that characterised Karamanlis' European policy and underlined the Greek Prime Minister's political predicament. The current Greek government had heavily invested in the European option and therefore it was imperative, as Theodoropoulos had confessed to him earlier, to show 'son opinion que l'entrée dans la CEE se traduise, dès le début de l'adhésion par des bénéfices concrets et substantiels. Athènes veut donc être en mesure de prouver que les revenus seront augmentés et que les perspectives seraient immédiatement améliorées'.<sup>103</sup> Therefore, the major concern for Athens was to primarily sell the EEC accession as a beneficial policy, and thus avoid arrangements in the agricultural and social sector that could be judged as detrimental to Greece.

## **6.8. The moment of truth**

Crucially, on the eve of tenth Ministerial Greece-EEC meeting, the most important divisive points had not yet been settled. The Nine, following the appeal by Prime Minister Karamanlis and the latest Greek memoranda, had held several talks at the COREPER level, but there was still no agreement on an improved Community offer to Greece on agriculture, social affairs and the length of transitional measures.<sup>104</sup> As a result, the Community, in the early morning of the 20 December 1978, tabled a new document that in essence left the substance of the EEC's position unaltered. Rallis asked for a suspension until 12.00 pm. When they came back, the Greeks rejected the offer in blunt terms. They deemed the transition of eight years along with the list of exceptions from

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<sup>100</sup>Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Brussels, 19 December 1978, 3/203/02, UKT 384/124.

<sup>101</sup> Telephone Conversation between Karamanlis and Kontogeorgis, Brussels, 15 December 1978, GRGKP 091278.

<sup>102</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 14 December 1978, 3/203/02, UKT 384/124.

<sup>103</sup> Note by R. de Kergorlay, Brussels, 13 December 1978, ECBAC 48/1984 45.

<sup>104</sup> *Agence Europe*, 18-19 December 1978.

basic transition as too long while the treatment of the social affairs question was considered deeply discriminatory.

With the Nine paralysed by internal disagreements, movement could only come from Athens. It was here where the information flow and advice provided by Commission and the German Presidency bore some fruit. The Greeks were to a large extent prepared for this Community stance and as shown above had already devised a new strategy that had secured Karamanlis' consent. Wasting no time, and in a spirit of mutual understanding, Kontogeorgis offered a symbolic extension of the transitional period to six years in respect to tomato paste and peaches. This was a fundamental concession which provided a better prospect for compromise. It was fundamental primarily because it was a clear sign of Greece's readiness to negotiate and breach its hitherto solid stance on five years. Secondly, there were objective problems in both specialised products as the difference between the Greek and Community prices was such to fully justify a six-year transitional period.<sup>105</sup> However, Kontogeorgis added that 'this should be understood on the basis that the same transitional period should apply to livestock and dairy products as in the proposals of the Commission'. This underlined the necessity of balancing Greek sacrifices on the issue of maximum transition with similar sacrifices from the Community in the beef and dairy sectors. Similarly, the Greeks stated that they were willing to accept a transitional period of six years on social affairs with the precondition that Greek workers enjoy upon accession and at all times during the transitional period a right of preference over all workers coming from third countries. Besides these concessions, the Greek Minister asked for the immediate application of the CAP mechanism on tobacco, two years transition for olive oil and the inclusion of cotton in annex II of the Treaty of Accession.

In the general discussion that followed from the new Greek proposal, Genscher argued that the Community was obliged to offer Karamanlis enough concessions to enable him to sell an agreement to the Greek public. Predictably the Irish, although they completely understood the Greek predicament, rejected the inclusion of dairy and livestock in the maximum transition period explaining: 'we also had our own public opinion to worry about and that it should not be too difficult to find other concessions in the general package that might not be as important to any delegation as beef is to us'.<sup>106</sup> The Commission supported the Chair on grounds of balance and inflation effects in Greece - which were expected to be around 14% price rise in food and 20% rise in

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<sup>105</sup> George Kontogeorgis, GRFMA, vol 2, 115.

<sup>106</sup> Telegram by H. Swift, Brussels, 21 December 1978, IRDOT/2009/135/479.

cost of living. The Nine deliberated at lunch but without success. France, Italy and the Netherlands argued for their items to be included in the maximum duration list while Britain and Denmark asked for the list be kept as short as possible. On the length of maximum duration, Denmark, Britain, Belgium and Germany made the point that the longer the list, the shorter should be the period. Germany could have supported six years as maximum period provided there was derogation for free movement of people throughout that time. They had understood that Athens' insistence on the progressive implementation of the free movement of workers mainly stemmed from a concern about public opinion at home, and fear that any exemption from such an important Community policy for a long transitional period would be exploited by the opposition.

In a short and equally fruitless Council discussion after lunch, the German Presidency maintained beef and dairy products in its review of the overall position. The Irish Permanent representative Brendan Dillon pointed a finger at the Germans and the French, arguing that 'sacrifices should be made by member states which demanded Greek concessions, not by us who had not requested any.' Ironically, however, the blow which doomed the lunch discussions was delivered by the Italians. For it was only when the Italian Permanent Representative Eugenio Plaja, who had replaced Forlani, lost his temper that the meeting degenerated into a verbal brawl with the Italians insisting that 'it was high time that the northern agriculture make sacrifices equal to those being asked of the South'.<sup>107</sup> Genscher said Plaja's comment was tantamount to a request for postponement of negotiations while Dohnanyi accused the Italians of trying to pursue their own agenda through Greek accession. Admittedly, the Italian reaction had more to do with the remaining unauthorised proposals of the Mediterranean reform of May 1978 than with the actual Greek negotiations. The Italians were mostly satisfied with the agricultural reform package, but were still expecting further structural measures to be granted in their favour. Accusing the Italians of such practices was hypocritical on the part of the Germans given that on the family allowances questions, they were similarly trying to change the Community's policy through Greek accession from an employment to a resident principle.<sup>108</sup> Both attitudes thus revealed that the Community functioned with a complex series of implicit trade-offs. In fact, the main source of delay in reaching a common position did not have much to do with the Greek requests or strategies but was rather due to the fact that the prospect of Greek accession exacerbated existing

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<sup>107</sup> Telegram by H. Swift, Brussels, 21 December 1978, IRDOT/2009/135/479.

<sup>108</sup> See chapter seven.



problems inside the Community, which were in turn further aggravated by the worsening international economic situation.

It was a fractious and disgruntled group of EEC ministers that prepared to meet with the Greeks in the afternoon with no delegation ready to compromise on the list of sensitive products. An hour before the meeting and confronted with the real possibility of an immediate breakdown, the Commission made a dramatic appeal to the Nine to reconsider their positions. As a political compromise that reflected existing realities and responded to the Greek concessions, the Commission proposed a transitional period of seven years for tomatoes, peaches, olive oil, cucumbers, and oranges while it defended the inclusion of cotton to articles 39-46 of the Treaty and the possibility of aid in the production of Greek raisins. Apart from the initial French reluctance to move before the shape of the final package was visible, member states agreed that the eight year maximum period should be reduced. Indeed most favoured seven years. In practice, the Nine seemed to agree to a basic transitional period of five years and a special duration of seven years for tomatoes, peaches, olive oil (at Italian request), cucumbers (at Dutch request), oranges and fresh grapes. Plaja wanted other citrus products included while Pierre Bernard-Reymond, French secretary for European affairs was in favour of wine, but the Commission rejected both requests as unjustified. Bernard-Reymond insisted on retaining fresh grapes. Although the Greek prices were higher than Community prices, grapes were an important product in the electoral district of the new French Foreign Minister. Cotton turned out to be a rather divisive issue. The Germans initially were reluctant to subsidise Greek cotton. But again with the Commission's guidance, the German objections were dropped. Already in September, Gundelach had maintained that if no help was given to Greek cotton growers, for which the necessary support was limited, the Greeks might turn to other forms of production which could be much more expensive for the Community. And since the EEC was short of cotton, such a policy would not produce cotton mountains but would aid an important crop that accounted for 5% of Greek farm output.<sup>109</sup>

The meeting resumed again at 7:30pm, when the Council tabled the newly agreed fallback position. The revised text was not enough to please the Greeks. Rallis was very pessimistic. The Community amendments, he insisted, highlighted the huge remaining gap between the two sides, especially concerning the list of agricultural products under the maximum transitional period. Making a specific reference to oranges, he expressed

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<sup>109</sup> *The Economist*, 1 July 1978.

amazement that while the Community imported annually 1500000 oranges from third countries, Greece with only 50000 oranges, i.e. nearly 3% of EEC imports would be penalised to such an extent. Whether from a Greek or a Community perspective, the problem that lay at the heart of the list of products for which the EC sought a maximum transition period, was budgetary. In other words, the disagreements were not mainly focused on specific products but on its broader budgetary implications. For instance, the Community's insistence on a seven year transitional period for olive oil was to a large extent dictated by budgetary concerns stemming from the implications of excessive production in the aftermath of Greek accession. But this was not the only reason. In fact, the Greek production of olive oil was minimal compared to overall Community production but the immediate application of CAP mechanisms and in particular, the extension of the Community aid regime to Greek olive oil growers meant a burden on expenditure that the Nine were not willing to pay in times of such economic hardship.<sup>110</sup> And to make matters worse, Spain and Portugal were queuing up to accede. Therefore, every decision for Greece, despite assurances to the contrary, did create a precedent that could not be ignored.

In the face of the Nine's intransigence, the Greeks threatened to walk out of the negotiations. It was into this highly uncertain situation that the German presidency so dramatically intervened and was able to make all the difference. The Germans at that point could have argued the case that the great complexity of the outstanding matters necessitated the breaking off of the negotiations and their postponement until the beginning of 1979. The British in private had suggested this to the Germans. However, Genscher, dedicated to the cause of the Greek entry and with the support of Natali, recalled the many previous Community negotiations which had appeared to hover between triumph and disaster before being successfully resolved. He suggested to the Greeks that 'a new discussion was necessary and abandonment of the floor did not make sense at this point of time... Portugal and Spain were catching up on them in the timetables and possible resumption of the Greek talks in January following a December failure would not make life easier for them'.<sup>111</sup> The possible 'globalisation' of the negotiations brought to life Greece's and in particular Karamanlis' worst nightmare. They had worked very hard the previous two years to avoid precisely this scenario, as they knew that a possible link with the other applicants would result in an indefinite

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<sup>110</sup> Rosemary Fennell, *The Common Agricultural Policy of the European Community* (Oxford, 1987), 168-169.

<sup>111</sup> Telegram by H. Sigrist, Brussels, 21 December 1978, Doc. 396, FRGAAPD 1978, 1904 - 1906.

postponement of the Greek demand for entry with unknown political repercussions for the country.<sup>112</sup>

In the meantime, the German chair reported the Greek reactions back to the Council, painting a rather bleak picture. Genscher in a dramatic tone stressed that ‘il fallait faire le maximum pour aboutir. Sinon, le gouvernement hellénique serait dans une situation difficile vis-à-vis de son opinion publique’.<sup>113</sup> Against this backdrop, he asked for the Council’s approval to informally negotiate with the Greeks in search of a compromise. Indeed, in the interval between the two halves of this vital Ministerial meeting, there was intense discussion, both within each member state and vitally, between the various Community delegations. Of particular importance were a series of secret talks held between the Germans and the French. If the French contemplated giving some ground over the list of products for which the maximum transition period was sought, the rest would find it hard to resist. For exactly this reason, the Germans tried their best to find a formula that would address the French anxieties. At that point, the French admitted that they were mostly preoccupied with how to deal with price harmonisation and in particular with the accession compensatory amounts (ACA). ACA, despite their terminological similarity to monetary compensatory amounts, fulfilled an entirely different function. They had been used since the previous Act of Accession as the basic ‘transitional mechanism to cover difference between agricultural price levels in new member states and agricultural price levels in the other member states, until these prices were co-ordinated’.<sup>114</sup> The French were requesting a very strict programme of price alignment through the AMA for the cheaper fruits and vegetables from Greece in order to avoid any market distortion and ensure that prices remained firm in the Community market. This issue had dominated discussions mostly at technical level, but the French delegates at the very last minute brought it up during the Council meeting, to the surprise of most member states and mainly Greece.

Around 1.00am, a breakthrough looked close when France implied that a substantial shortening of the Community list was possible if the Greeks fully accepted the Community’s position on ACA on fruit and vegetables. Otherwise, ‘faute d’accord sur le mécanismes de compensation, le paquet d’ensemble deviendrait excessivement déséquilibré et ne pourrait donc être accepté’.<sup>115</sup> Although the Greeks were still insisting

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<sup>112</sup> See chapter four.

<sup>113</sup> Note by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 21 December 1978, GRGKP 091278.

<sup>114</sup> J.A. Usher, *Legal Aspects of Agriculture in the European Community* (Oxford, 1988), 121.

<sup>115</sup> Telegram by L. de Nanteuil, Brussels, 21 December 1978, FRAMAE,d/e, 1413.

on an interpretative clause being added to the ACA text (underlining the need not to put Greek products at disadvantage), they understood that this was a golden opportunity that should not go amiss. Another reason for Greece's flexibility was the low level of the country's comprehension of technical subjects like ACA and the fact that the French had suddenly sprung it on them.<sup>116</sup> No sooner had the French hinted to the Germans that they would be willing to accept the ACA provisions than the Netherlands was prevailed upon to omit cucumbers, Italy to excise olive oil and oranges and France to dispense with fresh grapes. The Germans however refused to respond to appeals to be more forthcoming on the right of families to work and on family allowances.

At 2.45am, the Council expected to resume discussing two more Greek requests for cotton and sugar, but Genscher returned accompanied by the Greeks. Both sides, to the bewilderment of the other members, declared that agreement had already been reached following negotiations largely between the Greeks, the Presidency and the Commission. The German Presidency's pressure on other members to concede on points of importance to them was widely resented and the final package did not have Council endorsement in all respects. It had become evident over the past few weeks that the German tactics were to induce the Greeks to accept minimal movement in the social affairs chapter by offering sweeteners in agricultural sectors, at the expense of France and Italy. Indeed, the German Presidency had extensively bargained with the Greeks. For the Greeks the reduction of the transitional period for olive oil from eight years to five years was considered a victory. They gained through this as much as they lost with the prolongation of the transitional period for tomatoes and peaches from five to seven years. However, on social affairs there were no big changes in the latest Community proposal. Dohnanyi said he could envisage some progression in the right of families to work while he accepted equal treatment for Greek workers 'within an appropriate delay'.<sup>117</sup>

## **6.9. Conclusion**

Though a number of difficult points remained open— notably the detailed provision for Greece's EEC budget contribution and several social questions, statements by both sides left no doubt that the back of the twenty-four month negotiations had been broken. The Greeks were extremely satisfied. The Governor of the Bank of Greece, Xenophon Zolotas, stated: 'the Greece-EEC agreement constitutes a decisive turning

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<sup>116</sup> Telegram by H. Sigrist, Brussels, 21 December 1978, Doc. 396, FRGAAPD 1978, 1907.

<sup>117</sup> 10th Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 20-21 December 1978, 108/91, UKPREM 16/ 2037.

point in the country's economic and political future. I believe that the conditions under which the agreement was concluded are very satisfactory considering that during the negotiations, the Nine did not have only Greece in mind but also Spain and Portugal'.<sup>118</sup> Equally, the international press depicted the Ministerial meeting as a Greek success. The *Financial Times* wrote: 'though bargaining positions softened as the night wore on, the biggest concessions were made by the Community. Despite strong initial reservations by France and Italy who were concerned about the impact of EEC enlargement on their Mediterranean farmers, Greece obtained most of what it sought on agriculture'.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, 'this week's negotiations have settled both issues (social and agriculture) on terms that are much more favourable to the Greeks than those which Germans, French and Italians were originally prepared to offer'.<sup>120</sup>

Indeed, if one considers the initial positions of the Nine in early December, the outcome of the tenth Ministerial meeting was a vindication of the Greek efforts. Despite claiming the opposite, the Nine never ceased to examine the Greek case in the context of the upcoming Iberian enlargement. They were consciously aware of the fact the Greek accession would set precedents and it was this fact which accentuated the rather modest issues surrounding the Greek application. The realisation of the above on the part of Karamanlis was crucial in the period of discussion between the two ministerial meetings in December. The Greek Prime Minister rightfully concluded that notwithstanding the value of the political and economic arguments presented by the Greek side, the Community could not escape the realities of further enlargement and the perils it represented. The Nine needed to save face and present to their domestic public opinion a strong stance in support of national interests and at the same time of enlargement. The Greek government's flexibility in this sense provided the perfect prescription to the problem without endangering Greece's interests. It succeeded in avoiding any polarisation of the positions while allowing the Nine to have tangible results to report back home.

Similarly, the Commission played an extremely helpful hand. Indeed, in the second half of 1978, the Commission emerged as one of the most important actors in the concluding stages of the negotiations. There were three reasons for this. Firstly, this period of substantive talks proved the perfect testing ground for the Commission to exploit its negotiating skills in bridging the divide between the member states with its

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<sup>118</sup> Statement by X. Zolotas, Athens, 20 December 1978, ECBAC 66/1985 219.

<sup>119</sup> *The Financial Times*, 22 December 1978.

<sup>120</sup> *The Financial Times*, 30 December 1978.

unrivalled knowledge of the *acquis*. At the negotiating table, the Commission defended the Nine's interests while simultaneously protecting the *acquis*. The Nine and even the French, who traditionally had been suspicious of the Commission, could rely on its vital support on important aspects pertaining to enlargement such as agriculture. The German Presidency relied heavily on the Commission's negotiators, rendering the latter its most reliable ally along with the French. Indeed, Genscher publicly thanked the Commission and especially Natali, the Commissioner for External relations disclosing that it was his proposals at the very early hours of 20 December 1978 that formed the basis of compromise and final agreement.<sup>121</sup>

The executive institution of the EEC turned out to be equally vital for the Greeks. In contrast to the previous years of mutual mistrust and dominant apprehension underlying the Commission's relations with Athens, the final months of the accession talks revealed a complete change of attitude on both sides. The second reason therefore for the effectiveness of the Commission was the volte-face in the Commission's approach to enlargement and its relations with Greece. The Commission, under Jenkins' Presidency, came to accept that the second enlargement had become a fact of Community life with the two Iberian applicants in the waiting room. Most importantly however the Commission proved capable of playing the politics of enlargement. In his September visit to Athens, Jenkins approached Karamanlis in a completely different way than previous Presidents had done. Exploiting his experience from the British applications, he was able to relate to the Greek case and to offer advice, avoiding the strictly technocratic language of the Commission that had so alienated Karamanlis in the past. At the same time however, the Commission capitalised on its unique knowledge of the *acquis* and the previous experience of enlargement in assisting the Greeks. It was partly due to the Commission's influence that Greece's discourse began to change. Although the political motive was still the most prominent, the Greeks with the help of the Commissioners started to acknowledge the importance of the technical matters and the need to better prepare themselves in responding to the Community's demands. This development played a huge role in minimising the resistance of some of the members who in the past had used this lack of preparedness on the part of Greece as ammunition to further elongate the accession talks. Finally, the close consultation on the margins of the Ministerial meetings proved crucial for the successful conclusion of the negotiations. Had it not been for the Commission urging both sides to show flexibility, there was a

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<sup>121</sup> Minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Brussels, 20 December 1978, GRGKP 7879.

major chance that the negotiation could have been postponed into January 1979 with unknown consequences for the future of the Greek application.

Equally important was Franco-German cooperation on the Greek issue. Both sides completely coordinated their positions in quest for a compromise, making very difficult for the rest not to follow during the tenth Ministerial meeting. To be sure, at times, this close contact served primarily the promotion of their national agendas, namely the protection of sensitive Mediterranean agricultural products for France and the restriction of free movement of labour for Germany. But, it would be fallacious to underestimate the strong political will they shared in making Greece the EEC's tenth member

In an effort to simplify a rather complex episode, several aspects might be omitted. Explanations that focus on one actor alone such as Karamanlis' determination or a Commission-centred analysis or a purely Franco-German explanation risk missing out those vital contextual elements that contributed to breaking successfully the back of the Greek-EEC negotiations. In the end, without France's political willingness to finally compromise and to avoid strong-arm tactics, without Bonn's ongoing determination to advance the goal of enlargement, or without the British decision not to increase the pressure and to limit its brinkmanship, it is highly questionable whether the Commission's mediation alone and Greece's determination to enter the Community at any cost could have sufficed. That said, this does not mean that the Greek strategy of flexibility or the Commission's contribution were not vital.

The tenth Ministerial meeting seemed to validate the so called 'Community cycle according to which major decision tend to be taken all together in great marathon sessions of the Council of Ministers in December of each year'.<sup>122</sup> However, this was not the end of the negotiations. The budgetary issue, among others, had to be settled before ultimate success could be claimed.

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<sup>122</sup> David Coombes, *Politics and Bureaucracy in the European Community* (London, 1970), 286.

## Chapter 7: The Final Months (January – May 1979)

### 7.1. Introduction

The Germans were extremely satisfied with their EEC Presidency pointing at the outcome of the December Ministerial meeting. The Greeks, for their part, had announced to their public that 21 December 1978 would be remembered as a historic moment while the international press greeted Greece's entry to the EEC. However, the records show that the Council of 21 December 1978 broke up in an atmosphere of acrimony and confusion. Luc de Nanteuil, the French permanent representative, reporting back to Paris explicitly noted that: 'manifestement, résolue à conclure la Présidence n'a pas hésité à recourir à des procédures expéditives, essayant même de fabriquer avec la délégation hellénique et la Commission un compromis sans laisser au Conseil la possibilité de l'examiner. Bernard-Reymond [the lead French negotiator] a dû à plusieurs reprises remettre les choses en ordre et rappeler à la présidence qu'une position engageant la CEE ne pouvait être présentée à la délégation hellénique sans que le Conseil en eut, au préalable, délibéré'.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly, the December meetings had resolved major divisive issues in the negotiations and Greece was indeed promised to have its Treaty of Accession signed in the summer of 1979. Nonetheless, since the meeting ended without any prior discussion of the final compromise agreement *à Neuf* and because there was as yet no single text but only a very general oral report from the German chair, there would be recriminations and disputes over the text. Most importantly however, agreement was still pending on budgetary questions, the issue of family allowances, the right of establishment, transport and fisheries. Therefore, in spite of the German foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher boasting of 'breaking the back of negotiations', his state secretary, Klaus von Dohnanyi acknowledged that 'the stone is still rough-cut and will need further polishing'.<sup>2</sup> This chapter will examine the difficulties that arose during the final four months leading to the signature of the Treaty of Accession on 28 May 1979. Despite the political declarations to the contrary, this final period, which coincided with the French presidency of the EEC was not smooth sailing, but witnessed hard bargaining on both sides as vital issues were at stake. In particular, the following analysis will look at how the

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<sup>1</sup> Telegram by L. de Nanteuil, Brussels, 21 December 1978, FRAMAE, 1413.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram by H. Swift, Brussels, 21 December 1978, IRDOT/2009/135/479.



Community progressively resolved the pending issue of the budget and addressed the several controversial aspects in the social affairs chapter.

## **7.2. The Budgetary Question**

The outstanding question of Greece's contribution to the Community's budget dominated the final months of the negotiations with the EEC. It was special for two reasons. Firstly and in contrast to the first enlargement, Greece's accession was to occur at a time when the Community's system of 'own resources' was in full operation. The EEC therefore could not implement the transitional arrangements provided for the previous entrants.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, however, it was imperative that the terms of Greek membership did not distort the system that attributed to the Community budget all levies on agricultural products and duties on industrial goods imported into the EEC, plus a small portion, not to exceed 1% of national receipts of value-added tax.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, the peculiar functioning of the 'own resources' system meant that many of the budgetary issues relating to levies and duties overlapped with issues already negotiated under the agricultural, customs union and external relations chapters.<sup>5</sup> In other words, it was impossible to conclude on the budget before achieving agreements in these sectors and subsequently, these agreements tended to have a major impact on the budgetary arrangements for Greece. That is why the Commission had correctly predicted that the budget would be the last dossier to be concluded.

Besides its special nature, the budget was equally crucial for both the Community as a whole and naturally the applicant. Although the budgetary arrangements for Greece were unlikely in themselves to cause insurmountable problems to the Community given the economic size of the latter compared to the new member state, nonetheless, as in other instances during the negotiations, these arrangements could create precedents for the upcoming Iberian negotiations. The fact that the budget issue was examined against a backdrop of deep economic recession only exacerbated the situation. Finally, some member states, Britain in particular, were already extremely apprehensive about the workings of the Community's budget and had expressed their reluctance to bear more of the burden that would naturally come with enlargement.

For Greece, the situation was even worse. The Community proposals formulated at the end of 1978 on agriculture and external relations, if translated into action, meant

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<sup>3</sup> Tsalicoglou, *Negotiating*, 70

<sup>4</sup> Desmond Dinan, *Ever Closer Union. An Introduction to European Integration* (London, 2010), 44.

<sup>5</sup> Tsalicoglou, *Negotiating*, 71

that there was a high likelihood that the financial balance would show a debit for Greece. In other words, Greece could end up as a net contributor to the Community budget during the first few years after accession or at least during the first year. This would be detrimental for the Greek government whose constant theme had been that the people, especially the farmers, would derive benefits from the first year of accession. On 2 January 1979, the Greek Foreign Minister George Rallis sent his French counterpart Jean François-Poncet a letter underlining his government's desire and need to seek net benefit from day one of accession. The letter argued that this was imperative because of the psychological and political importance of Greece being seen to benefit immediately from accession especially against the background of the \$2 billion deficit Greece faced in its trade with the Community in 1978.<sup>6</sup> Both the Commission and the German Presidency had understood the gravity of the issue but had known that to reach a conclusion at the December session was impossible.

The Commission had calculated that the total resources to be paid into the Community budget by Greece would amount to between 330 and 360 million European units of account (EUA) after the running-in period, namely when all the existing financial instruments were functioning 100%.<sup>7</sup> The same calculation revealed that expenditure in favour of Greece under the General budget should total between 750 and 800 million EUA. During the transitional period however the actual expenditure would be appreciably lower. There were several reasons for this situation. For instance, the application of the transitional measures or temporary derogations agreed during the negotiations on certain Community policies would influence the level of financial flows received in Greece. Even in the case of structural funds, where there was no transitional provision, Greece would benefit from these funds only progressively and only once the Greek government had established the structures required to set these financial payments in motion. This was likely to take some time. Moreover, the progressive adoption, in a number of stages, of the common agricultural price levels meant that the payments from the FEOGA Guarantee section would likewise reach their full level only progressively.

Against this backdrop, the Commission strove to find a balance between the need to guarantee Greece the status of a net beneficiary from the first year of accession and the desire to limit extra financial burdens on the Community's already overextended budget. In its communication to the Council of Foreign Ministers on 15 November

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<sup>6</sup> Telegram by J.M. Sutherland, Athens, 22 January 1979, MXW020/308/1, 24, UKFCO 98/455.

<sup>7</sup> Instead of unit of account, the Community had changed to European unit of account before adopting the European Currency Unit in 1981.

1978, the Commission proposed that the Greeks pay in full their duty and levy receipts but hand over a progressively increasing proportion of the third element of own resources - the GNP/VAT share. This transitional mechanism would last five years. Also the implementation by Greece of the sixth directive concerning a uniform basis of VAT assessment would be subject to a temporary derogation for a period of three years. During this time, Greece would pay its annual VAT contribution to the budget on the basis of the ratio of its gross national product to the sum of the gross national products of the member states.<sup>8</sup>

In initial discussions at *ad hoc* working group level in Brussels, British representatives vehemently rejected the Commission's proposal as too generous and suggested an alternative approach. They proposed that the Greeks should pay over their VAT contribution in full from the start, subject only to a 'safety net' which would provide for them to be reimbursed if in any given year they were net contributors to the budget. It is true that the situation was only likely to arise in the first and possibly the second year. After that the Greeks would benefit substantially from the normal working of the budget. However, the British suggestion did not find favour with the other member states, which opted for the Commission's approach despite the fact that it would amount to an additional transfer of 270 million EUA over and above the increasingly substantial net budgetary receipts that the Greeks would obtain as the transition progressed. The Eight disliked the principle of calculating the profit and loss of a member state on the Budget as they felt it might open up a Pandora's Box, which was of course *precisely* what the British intended. The Commission system, while perhaps mechanical, was not open to negotiation in contrast to the British solution that would lead to annual negotiations to decide whether Greece was in deficit or not. The Germans expressed astonishment at the British ideas that there should not be a five year transitional period for Greece on the budget. Adding to this, the French Presidency suggested that the absence of transitional measures on the budget would be against the spirit of the December compromise. The British idea that Greece should receive a guarantee not to become an immediate net contributor was both too little and too much; too little because it would give Greece something only in the first year; too much because no other member state had received such a guarantee, which was contrary to the philosophy of own resources. The French Presidency concluded that the Commission's

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<sup>8</sup> Telegram by D. Maitland, Brussels, 12 February 1979, MXE020/358/1, 92, UKFCO 98/456.

proposals offered the advantage of being simple and automatic in their application.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the Commission's solution would demand of the Greeks a level of payment which would rise only gradually which would in practice ensure that they would not be net contributors at any stage of the transitional period. This in turn was consistent with the principle that the Greeks as a less prosperous member state should not make any net budgetary contribution.<sup>10</sup>

There were three major reasons that explain British policy towards Greece's budgetary issue. Firstly, Britain's disproportionate net contribution to the budget had been a highly contested issue during the British entry negotiations of 1971 and was the main subject in the renegotiation of the terms of entry in 1974.<sup>11</sup> After the 1975 referendum, the budget issue lay dormant for a number of years. But, as Michael Butler who, as Head of the Integration Department in the Foreign Office was deeply involved with the 1975 renegotiation argues, 'it was clear that it would come back to the negotiating table at the end of the transitional period in 1979 when Britain would have to pay its full 'own resources' contribution following a seven years transitional period'.<sup>12</sup> A discussion about a possible addition to the net burden on the UK had already emerged in November 1978, when British Foreign Secretary David Owen addressed the House of Commons: 'I do not believe that it will be for the benefit of this house or our country for us to debate the issue of enlargement without facing up to the blunt economic facts. One of them is that the applicants, especially Greece and Portugal, are likely to receive more from the Community budget that they put in, and this will mean an increase in our contribution'.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, Britain had entered an intense electoral period and the governing Labour party could not afford to show any weakness in the EEC negotiating arena especially on the budgetary issue. It did not make for good politics that 'Britain, the third poorest member of the Community was the second largest contributor after Germany'.<sup>14</sup> Thirdly, the British were not just hostile to a system because they would pay more. They also had a vested interest in setting a precedent for a system grounded in the notion of a *juste retour* – i.e. the idea that there should be a rough equivalence between the

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<sup>9</sup> Telegram by D. Maitland, Brussels, 21 February 1979, MXE020/358/1, 131, UKFCO 98/458.

<sup>10</sup> Letter by J. Barnett, London, 1 March 1979, MWE021/1, 19, UKFCO 30/4131.

<sup>11</sup> For more details, see: Aoife Collins, 'The Cabinet Office'; Melanie Pine, *Harold Wilson and Europe: Pursuing Britain's Membership of the European Community* (London, 2007); Simon Z. Young, *Terms of Entry. Britain's Negotiations with the European Community 1970-1972* (London, 1973); Christopher Lord, *British Entry to the European Community under the Heath Government of 1970-1974* (Dartmouth, 1993); David Hannay (ed.), *Britain's entry to the European Community*; most recent: Furby, 'The Revival and Success of Britain's Second Application'.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Butler, *Europe: More than a Continent* (London, 1986), 94.

<sup>13</sup> Telegram by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 14 March 1979, GRFMA, vol 2, Doc 72.

<sup>14</sup> John W. Young, *Britain and the European Unity, 1945-1999* (London, 2000), 121.

amount of a country received from the Community and the amount that they paid into Community coffers. Were their solution adopted for Greece rather than that of the Commission, it would greatly strengthen the UK's hand when their own case came up for review. For precisely this reason the French and the others were vehemently against such a system being adopted for Greece. Helping the Greeks out for a couple of years would cost very little. Establishing a principle that might result in substantial sums being paid out to the British for years on end would be a much more daunting proposition.

In the meantime, Natali, as Vice-president of the EEC Commission, visited Athens from 8 to 10 February 1979 in order to hold discussions with Karamanlis, Mitsotakis and Kontogeorgis on the remaining chapters of the negotiations, especially the budgetary issue. Upon his departure, Natali informed the press that 'my conclusions are positive, our efforts have noted progress and I can say with certainty that the ministerial meeting at the end of March will prove conclusive', thus enabling the act of accession to be signed before June.<sup>15</sup> On the same occasion, Kontogeorgis confirmed that Greece's contribution to the Community budget had been one of the main subjects discussed and that it was agreed that 'in any case, as of the first year of her admission Greece would see a positive result from the budget'.<sup>16</sup> However, at a Community briefing some days later, Natali indicated that his exchanges with the Greeks on the budget had been considerably more difficult than suggested by these public statements. The Commission's revised calculations had shown that in the first year of membership the Greek contribution and its receipts would be in approximate balance at about 300 million EUA. In order to ensure that Greece was a net beneficiary, the Commission had therefore proposed that the Greeks should pay over only 10% of the VAT/GNP equivalent the first year of accession. This would provide them with a net benefit of 80 million EUA. But during his meetings with Kontogeorgis and Mitsotakis, the Greeks had contested the Commission's calculations, maintaining that their contribution would, in fact, be higher, at 373 million EUA and their receipts much lower at only 169 million EUA. The result was that Greece would be a net contributor to the extent of 204 million EUA – far too much to be compensated for by the Commission's proposed solution. The main reason behind these discrepancies was that the Commission had foreseen in its calculations a serious drop in Greece's imports of meat from third countries in favour of the Community, which in

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<sup>15</sup> Natali's visit to Athens, Athens, 13 February 1979, ECBAC 66/1985 194.

<sup>16</sup> Telegram by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 26 February 1979, GRGKP 478/279.

turn would mean a diminution in the payment of agricultural levies to the budget.<sup>17</sup> The Greeks questioned the likelihood of this happening so rapidly.

Staying firm on its calculations, Athens asked to pay only 5% of VAT/GNP in the first year while demanding some of the agricultural provisions agreed at the tenth Ministerial meeting on 20-21 December 1978 be re-examined from a budgetary angle.<sup>18</sup> In particular, the Greeks requested that Community regulation and support (premia) for Greek tobacco be applied from the first day of accession instead of being phased in over the five year transitional period. They also asked for a progressive payment of levies on maize imports. On maize, the problem arose because initially the Greeks were badly advised to agree to have the maize levies imposed in full from day one, and thus hand over the levy receipts to the Community budget right from the start of the transition period. In such case, the 'shock' in terms of increased feed costs would be fairly dramatic and would possibly lead to a considerable disruption of the Greek livestock industry which in turn would lead to demands for expensive remedial measures.<sup>19</sup> According to Andreas Andreopoulos, the director-general in the Greek Ministry of Coordination, 'since national subsidies will be phased out over five years, the Greek authorities will have to bear a double charge: the budgetary cost of the subsidy and the payment to Brussels of all levies on imports from maize'.<sup>20</sup> Finally, in contrast to the December compromise, the Greeks also asked for a four year transitional period for olive oil instead of five years.

Karamanlis summed this up by suggesting to Natali that, in the first year, Greece should be a net beneficiary to the tune of double the Commission's figures, i.e. 160 million EUA. If necessary, this should be achieved at the expense of the second year's receipts. According to the French ambassador to Athens, Jacques de Folin reporting to Paris on Karamanlis' arguments, 'il était indispensable que la Grèce puisse montrer à ses agriculteurs que l'adhésion était une bonne affaire pour eux, faute de quoi les paysans Grecs déserteraient la nouvelle démocratie pour rejoindre Papandreou'.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, it was a domestic political imperative for Karamanlis to be able to demonstrate to Greek public opinion that membership would bring major advantages from the outset. As Tsalicoglou has noted: 'if the entry negotiations had been concluded with the balance remaining

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<sup>17</sup> Telegram by G. Rallis, Athens, 6 March 1979, GRFMA, vol 2, Doc. 70, 345.

<sup>18</sup> See chapter six.

<sup>19</sup> Minutes of Cabinet, Rome, 4 January 1979, FRAMAE,d/e, 1803.

<sup>20</sup> Telegram by J.M. Sutherland, Athens, 19 February 1979, MWE021/1, 10, UKFCO 30/4131.

<sup>21</sup> Telegram by J.Folin, Athens, 10 February 1979, FRAMAE, d/e, 1390.

negative, the political, let alone economic, repercussions for Greece would have been serious'.<sup>22</sup>

The Commission officials were surprised upon hearing the Greek suggestion. De Kergolay asserted that there was no way possible to offer the Greeks what they had proposed, as already the existing mechanism designed by the Commission just ensured the 80 million EUA.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, they had gone a long way to meet Greek wishes with a proposal which would have allowed Athens to contribute in the first year, only 10% of the GNP/VAT share of own resources, increasing gradually to 90% in the last year of transition. Extending the tobacco regime to Greece from the first day, would cost the EEC considerably whereas the decision to phase in Community contribution would represent a saving of about 170-190 million EUA over the five years.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the Irish had sought, and received confirmation from the Commission that there would be no further proposals to cover maize and tobacco.<sup>25</sup> The French, who had taken over the EEC Presidency from the Germans in January 1979, approached the Greeks in an attempt to relax tensions. In early March 1979 Jacques de Folin explained in depth to Kontogeorgis the impasse looming over the budget issue. In light of these developments, the Greeks, following an intense cabinet meeting, decided to scale back the demand made by Karamanlis for a net positive balance for Greece in the first year after accession from 160 million EUA to 100 million EUA.<sup>26</sup> However, even this reduced demand, was considerably more than the 80 million EUA likely to be available under the Commission's proposals.<sup>27</sup>

To make matters worse, the Nine had not yet agreed on a formula for the Greek budgetary contribution following the British opposition to the Commission's proposal. The meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers on 6 March 1979 was a case in point. For Britain, it proved another occasion to register its dissatisfaction over the budgetary issue. When François-Poncet enquired whether the UK remained opposed to the Commission's approach of progressive contributions over five years, Owen initially defended his position, arguing that the Greeks were bound to benefit considerably from the budget, except possibly in the first year: 'there was no need for especially generous

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<sup>22</sup> Tsalicoglou, *Negotiating*, 73.

<sup>23</sup> Note by G. Kontogeorgis, Athens, 8 February 1979, GRGKP 041978.

<sup>24</sup> Note by M. Ring, London, 18 January 1979, MXE020/358/1, 27, UKFCO 98/455.

<sup>25</sup> Note by C.J. Baker, London, 27 February 1979, 3/203/02, UKT 384/125.

<sup>26</sup> Minutes of Cabinet, Athens, 1 March 1979, GRGKP 010579.

<sup>27</sup> Letter by G. Kontogeorgis, Athens, 7 March 1979, GRGKP 010579.

transitional arrangements. We therefore continue to favour the safety net approach'.<sup>28</sup> However, the Germans and French pressed for a more generous policy and vehemently criticised the British for failing to honour their political commitment in favour of enlargement.<sup>29</sup> In particular, they wondered how they would justify the prolongation of negotiations to the Greek people, who were under the impression that agreement had been successfully reached last December.<sup>30</sup> To add weight to his argument, François-Poncet presented to the Nine a letter addressed to him by Karamanlis where, the latter pleaded his case 'car il serait extrêmement difficile pour mon gouvernement de soumettre au parlement un accord qui ne démontrerait pas clairement les avantages immédiats que l'adhésion pourrait offrir à la Grèce. Bien au contraire, je voudrais être en mesure de présenter au peuple grec un accord qui refléterait la solidarité et la sympathie des peuples européens à l'égard du peuple grec'.<sup>31</sup>

There was some British resistance, but after the Italians, who had been quiet up until that moment, decided to side with those in favour of a transitional arrangement, even Owen had to give way, understanding the political imperatives of the Greek case. He accepted the system of progressive contributions in contrast to the British alternative of a safety net but ensured that the Community's proposal was considerably amended from the Commission's initial proposal. Causing much gritting of teeth in Athens, the EEC proposed that Greece contribute 25% of GNP/VAT in the first year rising to 90% in the final year. This was much harsher than the Greek suggestion of a 5% contribution the first year or even the Commission's suggestion of 10%.<sup>32</sup> Even worse for the EEC as a whole, the British Foreign Secretary made it clear that his country was not prepared to accept indefinitely fresh charges on the Community budget as long as the overall impact of the budgetary arrangements on the UK was so unsatisfactory.<sup>33</sup> Therefore he qualified his assent by making it plain at the same time that it was conditional on the improvement of Britain's budgetary position. Although this did not directly affect Greece, it was a sign of the troubles lying ahead for the Spanish and Portuguese applications. Britain simply would not accept a further burden on its finances. Thatcher's famous 'I want my money back' campaign definitely had its roots in the 1970s.

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<sup>28</sup> Telegram by D. Maitland, Brussels, 7 March 1979, MXE020/358/1, 182, UKFCO 98/459.

<sup>29</sup> Minutes of Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs) Brussels, 6 March 1979, FRSGCI 2000295/05.

<sup>30</sup> Telegram by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 8 March 1979, GRGKP 010579.

<sup>31</sup> Telegram by J. Folin, Athens, 19 March 1979, FRAMAE 1803.

<sup>32</sup> Telegram by S. Stathatos, Brussels, 8 March 1979, GRGKP 010579.

<sup>33</sup> Telegram by D. Maitland, Brussels, 7 March 1979, MXE020/358/1, 182, UKFCO 98/459.



### 7.3. Social Affairs Chapter

The meeting of Foreign Ministers on 6 March however did not only deal with British obstructionism over the budgetary issue. There were several open fronts regarding social policy. The Greeks had accepted a derogation from the fundamental Community principle of free movement for the transitional period of seven years but were looking to be compensated in the realm of family allowances and other aspects of social policy. It was here that German anxieties had by early 1979 degenerated into a time-consuming dispute. The compromise reached on 20 and 21 December 1978 had provided for a Community mechanism that would gradually allow access for members of the families of Greek workers regularly employed in one of the current member states after an undefined transitional period. The Germans proposed a period of five years, whereas the rest preferred three years. Similarly, on family allowances the German Permanent Representative Helmut Sigrist, who had stepped in for Genscher, insisted on a five year transitional period.<sup>34</sup> The Italian, Dutch, British and Danish delegations insisted that it would be extremely difficult to present the Greeks with such an arrangement. The Commission fully agreed.<sup>35</sup>

The Germans however were adamant in their opposition and were also keen, mainly because of political sensitivity over 'guest workers' to have a joint declaration on free movement appended to the Greek Act of Accession identical to that contained in the first Accession Treaty. This stated that in the event of difficulties arising out of the granting of free movement, member states reserved the right to bring the matter before the institutions of the Community. The Germans furthermore wished to add a unilateral declaration asserting the right to take safeguard measures in order 'to maintain public order and security'. Other member states, including the UK, were unenthusiastic about the German proposal, arguing that the situation had been very different in the case of the first enlargement, when full free movement of workers was granted immediately whereas in the Greek case, there would be a seven year transitional period.<sup>36</sup> Sigrist also wanted a German entry into the minutes of the meeting that the application of the employment principle to family allowances paid to Greek workers should not prejudice a future unified solution.<sup>37</sup> Clearly, the Germans wanted to establish a new Community law

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<sup>34</sup> Note on Social Policy, Brussels, 2 March 1979, MXE020/358/1, UKFCO 98/459.

<sup>35</sup> Telegram by L. De Nanteuil, Brussels, 7 March 1979, FRSGCI 2000295/02.

<sup>36</sup> Brief on Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), London, 2 March 1979, MXE020/358/1, 174, FCO 98/459.

<sup>37</sup> See chapter six.

through the back-door of the Greek negotiations and also prevent the Greek case from setting a precedent in this respect.

In a highly restricted session of COREPER on 8 March 1979, the Commission reported that the Greeks could not accept the budgetary proposal for a 25% contribution to the VAT/GNP element of the budget in the first year *together* with a five year transitional period for family allowances. Greek views about the discrimination against Greek workers were particularly strong. For the Greeks, family allowances had indeed become a problem of politics and honour, not of finance.<sup>38</sup> Specifically, the Greeks were appalled at Germany's insistence on implementing the residence principle during the transitional period. In Nanteuil's words : 'il est clair que l'application à la Grèce seule, par nos huit partenaires, du principe du pays de résidence créera une discrimination qui n'est pas justifiable. En prenant l'exemple de l'Allemagne, on aboutit à la situation suivante : un travailleur italien, employé en RFA, dont la famille réside en Italie, reçoit les allocations familiales allemandes (pays d'emploi) tandis qu'un travailleur grec, employé en RFA dont la famille réside en Grèce continuera à recevoir les allocations familiales grecques (pays de résidence)'.<sup>39</sup> The Germans responded that the discriminatory effects against Greece could be avoided by applying the residence principle to the rest of Community nationals. They were trying to use enlargement to impose the principle of residence in the Community's general policy of family allowances. This further angered the British, who were not prepared to make extra concessions in the budgetary chapter of the Greek negotiations while being reprimanded by the Germans for their alleged lack of goodwill. And with the Germans so defiant, the common Community position vital for any finalisation in April became an even more elusive goal.

All of the reasons discussed above contributed significantly to aggravate Greek fears of a possible impasse. To make matters worse, negotiations for Spain's entry into the European Community had officially began on 5 February 1979, while in January a new oil crisis had erupted.<sup>40</sup> Bearing all these in mind, it is not surprising that alarm bells rang in the Greek team. On 22 March 1979, Karamanlis sent the head of the Greek negotiating team, Byron Theodoropoulos and Kontogeorgis urgently to Brussels in order to put pressure on the Nine for a fruitful conclusion at the eleventh ministerial meeting, scheduled for 3 April 1979.<sup>41</sup> Besides the intense activity in Brussels, the Greeks also

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<sup>38</sup> Meeting of COREPER, Brussels, 8 March 1979, MXE020/358/1, 194, UKFCO 98/460.

<sup>39</sup> Telegram by L. de Nanteuil, Brussels, 19 March 1979, FRAMAE 1803.

<sup>40</sup> MacLennan, *Spain and the process of European Integration*, 159.

<sup>41</sup> Telegram by Y. Omnes, Athens, 22 March 1979, FRAMAE 1803.

focused their attention on Britain. Athens had identified the latter as the main brake on the Community's willingness to be more generous in the budget. Indicatively, the Greek ambassador to Britain Stavros Roussos, in a meeting with Frank Judd, Minister of State for the FCO, pleaded the Greek case for a smaller budget contribution than the 25% agreed as the Community's initial position. His line was almost identical to that taken by Rallis, who admitted to the British ambassador in Athens, Ian Sutherland, 'qu'il ne pourrait pas signer un "mauvais" accord. Il avait pris cette position en tant que défenseur des intérêts helléniques et pour ne pas exposer le gouvernement aux critiques de l'opposition'.<sup>42</sup> The Greek Foreign Minister believed that the amount involved for the UK and for the Community as a whole was minimal compared to the political consequences for the Greek government. He mentioned that he had been warned by the French Presidency on 21 March that if agreement could not be reached at the ministerial meeting on 3 April, the Community timetable was such as to put at serious risk the possibility of concluding the accession agreement in the timescale envisaged thus far.<sup>43</sup>

#### **7.4. The 11<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting**

Faced with a seemingly unbreakable deadlock that threatened to undermine the concluding stages of the enlargement process, the Nine gathered in Luxembourg to try to finalise their positions before meeting with the Greeks for the eleventh Ministerial meeting. Two major questions were yet to be settled, namely family allowances and Greece's contribution to the budget during the transitional period. All the Foreign Ministers acknowledged Greece's political predicament and agreed on the importance of presenting the immediate benefits of accession to the EEC to the Greek people.<sup>44</sup> François-Poncet opened the discussion, arguing that 'le meilleur argument des Grecs est véritablement politique. Il est exact qu'un accord médiocre - c'est-à-dire n'apportant pas à Athènes des bénéfices visibles et immédiats - sera pris pour cible par l'opposition. Personne ne sait ici au juste ce que seront les effets de l'adhésion à moyen ou à long terme. Le gouvernement hellénique est légitimement préoccupé de faire au moins un bon départ. Un solde budgétaire positif incontestable paraît le moyen à la fois le plus simple et le moins contestable par l'opposition de montrer à l'opinion les avantages de l'adhésion'.<sup>45</sup> The rest agreed but no one was prepared to move beyond the ceiling of 80

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<sup>42</sup> Aide-Memoire, Athens, 22 March 1979, MXE020/358/1, UKFCO 98/461.no page number

<sup>43</sup> Telegram by J.M. Sutherland, Athens, 23 March 1979, FCO 98/461.

<sup>44</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs), Luxembourg, 3 April 1979, FRSGCI 2000295/05.

<sup>45</sup> Telegram by Y. Omnes, Athens, 22 March 1979, FRSGCI 2000295/05.

million EUA benefit for the first year of accession. Britain, in particular with German, Dutch, Danish and Italian support, emphasised that the total cost to the Community of the budgetary arrangements for Greece was the essential element.

During this attempt to coordinate once again the Community's position, the French, as holders of the Presidency, kept in constant communication with both the Greeks and the Commission and acted upon the urgent need to reach a compromise. The French confirmed to the Greek delegates the Community's position that all the agricultural levies collected by Greece pursuant to the common agricultural policy would have to be paid in full to the Community as from the date of accession. Consequently the Nine were unable to agree to the Greek delegation's request for a transitional period for the payment to the Community's budget of the revenue accruing from the levy on maize imported to Greece. Instead the Greeks would be forced to rely upon the staggered introduction of the GNP/VAT contributions agreed amongst the Nine the previous month. With a view to allaying the concern of the Greeks, the Community promised to reduce Greece's GNP/VAT contribution to the 'own resources' system. These GNP/VAT contributions were envisaged to start with 25% and reach 90% during the transitional period but with no possibility of moving below these figures.

The Greek negotiators were worried that this arrangement did not guarantee their country the status of a net beneficiary, especially for the first year after accession. They were confronted with the choice of either returning to Athens with terms that were unlikely to gain popular or even parliamentary approval or postponing final decisions in the hope of a more favourable deal in the future, which however ran the risk of embroiling the Greek membership talks with the Portuguese and Spanish entry negotiations. The French, however, remained optimistic and, with the aid of the Commission, came up with a new formula that reflected their definite will to see Greece succeed. The revamped plan involved agricultural concessions instead of a diminution of the budgetary contribution. After discussion with the Greeks, François-Poncet reported back to the Nine that the Greeks needed to have a firm figure for the production aid to be given in the first year after accession for dried figs, raisins and cotton. They also were in need of aid for olive oil from the date of accession, because Greek elections would take place in 1981. Otherwise the government would be criticised severely. All of these were seen as essential factors for a compromise. François-Poncet convinced the Community to accept the above arrangement on the condition that the VAT contribution was increased to 30% in the first year. Therefore the increase in the budget

contribution would be counterbalanced by a quantification of the aid to be received in the first year for cotton and figs and raisins, and the bringing forward of the first slice of producer aids for olive oil to 1 January 1981, without however reducing the five-year transitional period for olive oil. Moreover, this support for olive oil would apply to the crop of 1980 - namely, the one harvested before accession. This had the additional advantage of spreading the benefit over the widest possible area of Greek society: the olive was the country's one ubiquitous tree, common to the mainland and islands. Therefore all that would mean 80 million EUA benefit for Greece during the first year of accession.<sup>46</sup> Most importantly however, the Karamanlis government could present this plan as a victory for Greek agriculture. The agreement on these agricultural products, described by EEC sources in Athens as the single most important concession made to Greece during the whole negotiations, transformed the projected first-year net loss into an estimated net gain of \$110 million. According to the assessments made by Kontogeorgis 'as things now stand' the net benefit from 1986 onwards would be in the region of \$675 million a year.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to these measures, the Nine were also able to find a solution on social policy that would be acceptable to the Greeks. The other Eight put pressure on the Germans to agree that Greek migrant workers should be allowed to draw family allowances at the same rate as other member states' workers after the shortest possible transition. After a lot of back and forth and calls to Hans Apel, the German Finance Minister, von Dohnanyi eventually accepted a three year transitional period for family allowances.<sup>48</sup> On the residence principle, the Germans in face of the Eight's intransigence settled for a unilateral declaration to be included in the minutes of the eleventh Ministerial meeting – a declaration, moreover, which the Commission immediately sought to counter. According to the French, the Commission's own unilateral statement 'a essentiellement pour objet de contredire la déclaration allemande en précisant que le recours à la notion d'ordre public pour limiter la libre circulation ne peut valoir que pour des cas individuels. L'objet de cette procédure compliquée est de donner aux Grecs connaissance de l'existence de ces déclarations, mais sans en révéler officiellement le contenu. Procéder autrement reviendrait à démonter qu'il n'y a pas de position commune du Conseil sur la libre circulation'.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting Greece-EEC, Luxembourg, 3 April 1979, GRCKP 138A

<sup>47</sup> *The Financial Times*, 19 September 1979.

<sup>48</sup> Note by U. Stefani, Brussels, 6 April 1979, ECBAC 48/1984 45.

<sup>49</sup> Telegram by L. De Nanteuil, Brussels, 30 March 1979, FRAMAE,d/e, 1803.

To further sweeten the deal for the Greeks, François-Poncet announced to the Council that the signature would take place in Athens and that no objections would be allowed to be raised.<sup>50</sup> This constituted a break with tradition, since in the past Brussels had been regarded as the only place where accession treaties could be signed. Theodoropoulos had confirmed early on in January 1979 that the Greek government would like the ceremony to take place in Athens. This would be symbolically appropriate and was expected to have a considerable impact on Greek public opinion. The Association agreement of 1961 had also been signed in Athens. To further support his argument, he pointed out that the signature of the earlier accession treaties should not be considered a precedent for Brussels in that four states were acceding at the same time, and it would clearly have been impossible to sign in the capital of one or of all.<sup>51</sup>

The French were favourably inclined towards the Greek request, the Germans, Italians, Irish and Danes were definitely in favour, the Benelux countries were against and the UK position was reserved. Indeed, at the Ministerial lunch at the Foreign Affairs Council on 6 February 1979, Gaston Thorn argued that 'Greece was joining the Community and that it was not the Community which was joining Greece' - therefore the right place for the ceremony would be Brussels'.<sup>52</sup> The Belgians feared that breaking Brussels' monopoly on such ceremonies would weaken this city's increasingly strong credentials to be regarded as the capital of the Community. On the other hand, the British along with the Irish wanted to be careful not to unwittingly complicate relations with Turkey with a great EEC jamboree in Greece. They feared that the Turks might read something into the gesture which was not there.<sup>53</sup> However in the end all agreed with the wider political argument that 'la signature dans cette capitale aurait une résonance psychologique très favorable'.<sup>54</sup>

All of these decisions were presented to the Greek delegation at the eleventh and final Ministerial Greece-EEC meeting on 3 April 1979 which only lasted half an hour. Besides agreement on the basic problems of budget and family allowances, a number of other issues were settled, including the right of establishment, transport as well as fisheries chapters. The question of fisheries, in contrast to the Spanish case, was settled fairly painlessly with the Greeks being told that since they had no traditional activity in

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<sup>50</sup> Telegram by D. Maitland, Brussels, 5 April 1979, MXE020/358/1, 308, UKFCO 98/462.

<sup>51</sup> Telegram by I.M. Sutherland, Athens, 4 January 1979, MXE020/358/1, 8, UKFCO 98/455.

<sup>52</sup> Meeting of Council of Ministers(Foreign Affairs), Brussels, 6 February 1979, MXE020/358/1, 90, UKFCO 98/456.

<sup>53</sup> Record of conversation between Judd and Roussos, London, 12 February 1979, MWE021/1, 8, UKFCO 30/4131.

<sup>54</sup> Telegram by L. De Nanteuil, Brussels, 7 February 1979, FRSGCI 2000295/03.

the North Atlantic they were unlikely to be granted any Community quotas for this area - once quotas were actually decided under the emergent Common Fisheries policy. Therefore, Greek fishing was unimportant economically to the Community and the Greeks easily accepted the *acquis* on fish. As far as transport was concerned, Greece's geographical position meant that road hauliers must either cross by sea or pass through the territory of Yugoslavia and in some cases Austria as well. Transit through the territory of a third state raised problems concerning the application of a number of Community acts. Thus, the Community agreed to open up negotiations with the two transit countries after the signing of the accession.<sup>55</sup> The next and final step was the drafting of the instruments of accession. These were closely modelled on the texts drawn up at the time of the UK's accession.<sup>56</sup>

## 7.5. Conclusion

Finally, on 28 May 1979, the Treaty of Accession between Greece and the European Economic Community was signed in Athens, sealing the end of a long and arduous period of negotiations that had lasted more than three years. The ceremony was attended by the French President, the Prime Ministers of Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and Ireland and Foreign Ministers from all member states except Denmark and Italy, which were represented by the Minister of Agriculture and Under-secretary of Foreign Affairs respectively. In his capacity as President of the Council of Ministers, François-Poncet, acted as master of ceremonies.<sup>57</sup> After a few words of welcome by Karamanlis, the first speech at the ceremony was made by the French Foreign Minister. Like Roy Jenkins, the President of the Commission who spoke after him, François-Poncet referred in flattering terms to the Greek Prime Minister's role in taking Greece into the EEC and referred to Greece's long road to EEC membership.<sup>58</sup> The Greek accession negotiations, which began in July 1976, had effectively been finalised at the eleventh Ministerial meeting which immediately followed the Foreign Affairs Council on 3 April. With two minor exceptions (the formulae for Greek participation in the European Assembly and the European Investment Bank Management Committee), the few remaining points were settled a few days later at a meeting of Deputies. Greece was therefore all set to join the Community on 1 January 1981.

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<sup>55</sup> Letter by R. K. Gardiner, Brussels, 24 January 1979, MWE020/358/1, 126, UKFCO 98/458.

<sup>56</sup> Note by M.A. Arthur, London, 5 April 1979, MXE020/358/1, 315, UKFCO 98/462.

<sup>57</sup> Telegram by B. Cluzel, Paris, 28 May 1979, FRAMAE, d/e, 1803.

<sup>58</sup> Talk of J. Francois-Poncet, Athens, 28 May 1979, ECEN 1610.

The tenth Ministerial meeting of 20-21 December 1978 has rightfully been considered the moment when the Community and Greece managed to break the back of the negotiations. The Nine had offered a compromise that clinched the deal on the most difficult of the outstanding bargaining problems. However, two sizeable questions had been left to be tackled in the early months of 1979: the arrangements for Greece's contributions to the Community budget and the precise provisions of the social affairs chapter. These final months of the negotiations followed to a great extent the same pattern as the previous years of negotiations. The Greek requests opened up old wounds within the Community and as a result, the Nine spent considerably more time talking to each other than to the Greeks. Indicatively, the most serious obstacle to the finalisation of negotiations with Greece throughout February and March 1979 was the ongoing row amongst the Community partners on Greece's budgetary contribution. The budget issue brought to the fore ongoing British anxieties about its own contribution. It had nothing to do with the Greek case per se; but proved a testing ground for possible changes ahead. The same applied to the Germans and their attitudes towards the family allowances issue. Their obstructionism had its roots in what they perceived as a malfunctioning of existing Community policies and this realisation led them to view enlargement as a golden opportunity to change them. Ultimately, Greece's flexibility in changing its negotiating positions as well as the strong political will of the Nine to go ahead with Greece's accession helped overcome these obstacles.

To this end, the French Presidency was crucial. Indeed, the most important actor for the Greeks during this last period of negotiations turned out to be France. As François-Poncet noted in his memoirs 'le Président de la République tenait à ce que cet événement intervienne pendant notre présidence de la Communauté. Il estimait que c'était à la République française qu'il appartenait d'ouvrir à la Grèce « éternelle » les portes de l'Europe'.<sup>59</sup> As the Greek talks came full circle, it was quite fitting for the French to become as supportive at the end, as they had been in the beginning. The French had been Greece's staunchest supporters during the country's initial steps towards EEC membership. They had played a pivotal role in overturning the lukewarm Commission's Opinion and had fiercely advanced the Greek cause during the transition year towards democracy (1974-1976). However, domestic electoral politics and the general economic downturn weakened Giscard's resolve to pursue enlargement, rendering 1977 and 1978 difficult years. Nonetheless, in the early months of 1979, the

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<sup>59</sup> Jean François-Poncet, *37, quai d'Orsay. Mémoires pour aujourd'hui et pour demain* (Paris, 2008), 156.



French, capitalising on their role as EEC Presidency holders, worked hard to meet Greek demands, to persuade the rest of the Community to accord as generous as possible terms to Greece and to ensure that all was set up for Greece to join the Community in 1981.

## Thesis Conclusions

This thesis had as its main aim to examine Greece's path to EEC membership in order to shed new light on the Community's second enlargement. In what follows, I will draw together the elements of my investigation that constitute its added value along two main lines. The first section revisits the role of Greece in the negotiations with the EEC, suggesting further layers of complexity that have escaped most observers. The second section highlights on what grounds and with what methods the Community and its institutions as a whole responded to the challenges posed by the Greek candidature. The merits of this Community-centred approach are threefold. New conclusions can be drawn firstly with regards to the behaviour of the major member states and the Commission during the Greek accession talks; secondly to the mechanics of the enlargement process; and, finally, to the Community's evolution in the second half of the 1970s against the background of the perennial dilemma of widening versus deepening and of Cold War realities.

Traditionally, Greece or rather Karamanlis has tended to be portrayed as the overwhelmingly resolute actor in the successful completion of enlargement. Two very influential studies by Tsoukalis and Tsalicoglou have identified Karamanlis' Europeanism and his ability to establish trust with heads of EEC governments via his numerous bilateral meetings and constant communication as crucial to the success of Greece's bid to join the Community. Both arguments have long remained undisputed. My detailed multi-archival examination of these years suggests, however, that these elements alone are not enough to explain why the Nine conceded to Greek entry as *swiftly* as they did. Indeed, Karamanlis' most important achievement was his successful accomplishment of a specific, albeit delicate, balancing act: convincing on the one hand the Nine that a failure to meet Greece's EEC demands would undermine his government's position which would imperil the country's democratisation process and, in turn, its future foreign policy orientation while on the other reaffirming his allegiance to the West.

In a period of general political unrest in southern Europe and of intense anti-Americanism - dominating the domestic Greek scene to an extent that had led to the country's withdrawal from NATO's military command - the threat of a forced reassessment of Greece's traditional foreign policy commitments was admittedly made even more credible. However, this constitutes only a part of the Greek Prime Minister's strategy. In contrast to the literature that solely focuses on this aspect and, thus, concludes that Karamanlis pursued the EEC option as a substitute for US influence and

security, this thesis has demonstrated that while the Greek Premier was deeply disappointed with American behaviour during the Cyprus debacle, he was still very pragmatically aware of the Cold War realities. Indeed, in his private encounters with the Europeans, as registered in chapters one and two, Karamanlis quickly realised that Greece's partial withdrawal from NATO coupled with the domestic anti-Americanism if taken to the extreme could impede, rather than encourage, the country's road towards EEC membership. The Nine were willing to support Greece's demand for entry as a way to stabilise the country's newly established democracy and secure its Western orientation as long as this support was not interpreted as encouraging anti-NATO and anti-USA sentiments and behaviour. In practice, Karamanlis' ability to evoke anti-Americanism as a serious domestic constraint *forcing* him to partially withdraw from the military command of NATO and thus leaving him with EEC membership as the only available option, while at the same time privately reaffirming his Cold War allegiances to both the Europeans and the Americans, made for the perfect combination; it convinced the Nine of the necessity to say 'yes' while assuaging their fears of his country's potential neutralism.

The Greek arguments, albeit sufficient enough to convince the Nine to positively respond to the EEC membership request, did not guarantee the translation of this declared political will into a swift accession to the Community. The usual accounts on the Greek enlargement note that Karamanlis overcame the accession hurdles by putting emphasis on speed and flexibility at the expense of defending the country's policy positions. This does have some grounding in reality. The Greeks had done their homework on the first round of enlargement and aimed to steer clear of the stalemate that British rigidity had created in 1961-1963 in favour of the greater flexibility demonstrated by UK negotiators in 1970-1972. Besides the British experience, the threat of so-called 'globalisation' with the Iberian applications further strengthened Karamanlis' conviction on the need for speed.

My Community-based approach has illustrated, however, that there was a limit to how far this Greek flexibility by itself could lead to the successful completion of their negotiations. Indeed, too much flexibility and speed were seen by the Nine as a sign of the country's lack of preparation and desire to gloss over the issues. During 1977, the official rationale behind the Commission's and the Nine's reluctance to open up the substantive phase of the negotiations was the complete lack of information provided by the Greeks. Initially, Athens believed that this argument was simply being used as a

smoke-screen to delay the Greek negotiations in order to pair them up with the Iberian applications. But while this suspicion may not have been entirely unfounded, the unfolding of enlargement as an institutional process showed that details mattered and the Greek government's enthusiasm was not always matched by its diligence in preparing for negotiating sessions, thus delaying any substantial progress.<sup>1</sup>

In this context, a major turning point that has been overlooked in existing accounts is the complete volte-face of the Greek negotiating team in preparing its positions at the end of 1977 and in 1978. To that extent, tribute is owed to that small group of dedicated Greek negotiators who not only were deeply committed to the cause of the country's European accession, but whose hard work and attention to detail proved crucial in stripping the Community of any excuses for procrastination in the critical period at the end of 1977 when the fear of 'globalisation' was still looming large.<sup>2</sup>

The approach adopted by Greece and its leader did then play a fundamental role in determining the timing and the evolution of the application process, but it hardly tells us the whole story. Rather, this thesis has sought to present a more balanced view of the enlargement, in which attention is focused as much upon the attitudes of the Nine in Brussels as it is upon the Greek strategy. In a hybrid Community such as that of the 1970s and with the enlargement negotiations being conducted on the basis of article 237 allocating to the member states rather than to the Community the key task of negotiating with the applicants, no survey can explain patterns of behaviour in Brussels without casting light on the attitudes and approaches of the key member states *and* the European Commission. Looking at these actors together can tear down common misconceptions or, indeed, confirm existing beliefs about the Nine's behaviour during the second enlargement.

Contrary to the established view that France was the staunchest supporter of the Greek case, this thesis has shown that it was Germany that proved the driving force behind the second enlargement, at least during the crucial phase of the actual negotiations in 1977 and 1978. Bonn's position is crucial not only because it was the paymaster of Europe but also because it served as the middle man between Europe and America, at least during the critical period of the Ford Presidency.<sup>3</sup> For Germany, it was the larger political and security issues that tipped the balance in favour of enlargement.

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter four.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter five.

<sup>3</sup> Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *Germany, America and Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy* (New Haven and London, 1989), 358.

Politically, Schmidt's government feared that a rejection of Greece's application would endanger Karamanlis' position (domestically) and consequently affect the country's foreign policy orientation. Already Germany was deeply concerned that continuous political unrest in southern Europe would threaten the politico-military security of the southern flank of the Community and NATO.<sup>4</sup> This conviction led them to unequivocally support the Greek enlargement not only rhetorically but also practically once the serious bargaining began. It was Germany's mediatory role during several crises and of course their EEC Presidency in 1978 that proved vital in the completion of the Greek negotiations. There were of course moments, especially in negotiations over the social dossier, when the Germans were ungenerous in their demands towards the Greeks, largely because of political sensitivity towards the prospect of rising unemployment in the country at a time of recession. However, the Germans believed that the political case for supporting the new democracies in Southern Europe overrode the economic and institutional difficulties involved in the enlargement process. To this end, they were strongly supported by the Dutch, whose actions have also so far been unjustly overlooked. Willing to deploy political muscle and in full cooperation with Germany, the Netherlands were pivotal in overcoming the lukewarm Commission's Opinion in February 1976, in officially opening up the negotiations with Greece during their EEC Presidency in the latter half of 1976, and in intervening in favour of beginning the substantive phase in early 1978 succeeding the utter stagnation that had characterised the previous year.

The importance of the German and Dutch activity does not lessen the significance of French support in the Greek case. Studies that have ignored the Brussels negotiations have concluded that France was the ultimate champion of Greek accession, pointing to the personal relationship between Karamanlis and Giscard as the key factor behind Greek success. This too is not entirely wrong. Giscard was consistently in favour of Greek membership and as a traditional Philhellene politician had an emotional commitment to the restoration of democracy in Greece that went well beyond the immediate political needs of the EEC at the time. He 'was determined to elevate Greece to full membership, in part as an expression of cultural affirmation and elite identity'.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, Paris was crucial in Karamanlis' efforts for democratisation as well as during

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<sup>4</sup> Christian Deubner, 'West German Attitudes', in Seers, Dudley & Vaitos, Constantine (eds.), *The Second Enlargement of the EEC. The Integration of Unequal Partners* (New York, 1982), 43-56.

<sup>5</sup> James Pettifer, 'Greek Polity and the European Community, 1974-1993', Carabott, Philip(ed.), *Greece and Europe in the Modern Period: Aspects of a Troubled Relationship* (London, 1995), 100.

the period of Athens' EEC application. This emerged clearly in France's role in the Council's decision to overrule the Commission's Opinion and accept Greece. Similarly, the fact that the negotiations were successfully concluded under the French EEC Presidency of 1979 combined with images all over the press of Giscard emotionally embracing Karamanlis in Athens during the signing ceremony further strengthened the argument that France had been *le parrain* of Greece on its road into the EEC. Jenkins commented on this in his memoirs in rather ironic tone, saying 'He [Giscard] sat beaming in the seat nearest the rostrum, looking like the mother of the bride'.<sup>6</sup>

However, around the Brussels negotiating table during the difficult period of 1977 and 1978, the French pro-Greek rhetoric did not translate into practical support. In spite of championing the Greek cause, Paris led the way towards a 'global' approach encompassing the three prospective new members in 1977, thus gravely impeding Greece's chances of a swift accession. In their defence, when the French said initially 'yes' to Greece, they did not expect such a swift application from the Iberian countries.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the timetable for accession of the ex-dictatorships seeking membership had acquired a momentum which the Community had not foreseen. As a consequence of the influx of applications, especially the Spanish one, France's stance towards enlargement had hardened, particularly in the run-up to French elections of 1978. Paris' strategic interests played second fiddle to obsessive tactical manoeuvring at home. Giscard was in a bind electorally and hence in a position where he had to avoid any overtures in Brussels vis-à-vis the Greeks for which he could be punished domestically. This resulted in a systematically rigid and well-rehearsed French obstructionist position on agriculture and the duration of the transitional period, the most important dossiers for Athens. In the end, the French made concessions to the Greeks only when it was decided to postpone any Community reforms until the period of the Iberian negotiations and when they realised that the Germans would only support the French position provided it did not undermine the *finalité politique* of enlargement.

Italy on the other hand, despite having more to lose from the entry of Greek agricultural products to the Community, was less reticent than the French in Brussels. In times of deep crisis and impending impasse in the Greek-EEC talks, Rome tended to follow the majority and avoid behaving in a *non communautaire* fashion. This conciliatory stance, which was mainly directed by political considerations, in no way confirms Italy's reputation as a weak negotiator unable to defend its national interests since the Italians,

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<sup>6</sup> Jenkins, *European Diary*, 452.

<sup>7</sup> Chapter four.

even without following the French policy of complete obstructionism, proved rather effective in moving towards their goal of reforming the CAP policy in favour of their Mediterranean agricultural products.

The British, the last of the four Big Powers in the Community, were overall agnostic on Greek membership except when it threatened the delicate Greco-Turkish balance. The British attached great importance to NATO and the stability of its southern flank and were especially worried about the Turkish reaction to possible Greek accession, as it would upset the balance that the EEC maintained towards the two countries. This Turkish preoccupation mostly explains the rather reticent British behaviour towards Greek enlargement. Episodes such as the Commission Opinion's reference to the Greek-Turkish disputes – very much the work of the British Commissioner and his Foreign Office entourage - and the British role in the delays in the talks during 1978 were a product of the UK's obsession with Turkey's future rather than an expression of anti-Greek sentiment as used to be thought by the Athens government.

Finally, the detailed study of the Greek negotiations offers the opportunity to assess and analyse the role of the Commission in the enlargement negotiations, a rather neglected actor in the enlargement process. The enlargement question tested the Commission's skills as negotiator, mediator, power broker and bridge builder during the second round of enlargement. In 1975 and 1976, as had been the case in earlier debates on enlargement, the Commission's self-perception as the guarantor of the Community accounted for the majority view that enlargement was a potential nuisance capable of disrupting the workings of the EEC. This was more than evident in the publication of its lukewarm Opinion on Greece. However, the Council of Ministers' vocal rebuff of the Commission's Opinion in February 1976 provided a sharp reminder of the limits of the latter's power. The Commission, haunted by the constant fear of failure, was initially hesitant to re-take the initiative and in the first half of the 1977 concealed its widespread mistrust towards Greek accession behind neutral language. In reality, it was seeking to satisfy those member states which for political reasons had also chosen to hide their apprehension about the second enlargement. However, following French and Italian suggestions for the 'globalisation' of the negotiations, the Commission was able to exert more influence, albeit without much success. Most of the Commission's suggestions on improving the Community's workings before further accession took place were rejected as unwise and potentially counterproductive by the Nine. The Natali report constitutes a

prime example of this tendency.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, in 1976 the Commission had started on the wrong footing with the Greeks. Its Opinion had left a negative mark in Athens, with the Greeks constantly suspecting the Commission of being an unfriendly partner.

The Commission's track record was not only beset with disappointments, however. Early 1978 saw the full amendment of the Brussels institution's relations with Greece, a development that has been neglected in most analyses but played a huge part in the successful conclusion of the negotiations. This change in the relationship was due to two reasons. Firstly, the Commission under Jenkins became much more political and diplomatic in dealing with Greece. Jenkins took a personal interest in the enlargement process and during 1978 became one of Karamanlis' most valuable advisors. Secondly, by 1978 with Portugal and Spain being official candidates, the Commission accepted that further widening would become a reality for the EEC for the years to come and thereafter worked exclusively towards facilitating such a process while protecting the Community. Indeed, the Commission's unique knowledge of the *acquis* carried the negotiations forward by identifying compromises and making unfavourable deals more acceptable to the Nine and Greece. Natali and Gundelach in particular made intensive efforts to patch up what was seen in Brussels as a very serious rift between Greece and the Nine during the December 1978 meetings. This thesis, therefore, disputes the tendency to interpret the Community's development with exclusive reference to the larger member states, since the files on the Greek application bring out vividly the highly distinctive and important role played by the Commission.

A further reason why a Community-centred approach to Greece's accession merits historical attention is that it allows for a critical examination of the EEC's evolution during this round of enlargement. In terms of the decision-making mechanisms, the Community did not change, let alone improve during the Greek enlargement. The same applied to most of the policies of the Nine from social policy to the budgetary issue. Even the 'Mediterranean package' of 1978, which in some ways foreshadowed the structural reforms of the 1980s, ultimately reflected the degree of stability and embedded flexibility that have tended to characterise CAP reforms.<sup>9</sup> Admittedly, Greece was too small in terms of economy, population and trade to pose serious problems and thus create an impetus for Community internal reform. Another reason however that impeded the Community's institutional development and paradoxically contributed to Greece's swift accession was the prospect of impending Iberian entry. The imminence of a third,

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<sup>8</sup> See chapter four.

<sup>9</sup> See chapter five.



larger round of southern enlargement talks provided leeway for powers such as France, Britain and Italy to postpone any demands they may have had in the Greek case until the subsequent enlargement, which was becoming a proximate reality and involved even bigger actors, thus better justifying the alteration of Community policies.<sup>10</sup>

The same lack of change can also be seen in the very mechanics of EEC enlargement. Despite the Nine's promise in 1977 to 'bear the lessons of the first enlargement and the peculiarities of the second in mind' they only truly exercised the first part of this pledge. Indeed, if one looks at Greece's accession negotiations, it could easily be concluded that the Community's enlargement policy did not evolve. The Nine remained committed to the same accession doctrine that responded more to the logic of protecting the current member states' interests than the applicant's actual capacity to adapt to the *acquis*. This is perhaps to be expected of a process where a minority (the applicant) seeks to join a majority (the EEC). A handful of proposals were tabled regarding ways to improve the enlargement method in the late 1970s, but they all failed to flourish. In this context, the enlargement policy failed to change. The persistence of this specific accession doctrine confirmed however this thesis' claim of the importance of looking at the Community and not just at the applicant. The true bargaining of the accession talks does not take place between the applicant and the Community but rather among the member states. In particular, throughout chapters four, five, six and seven of the thesis, it became evident that the most obvious obstacle in Greek-EEC talks was the Community's constraints on a recasting of its own previous bargains, especially in the areas of agricultural and social policy, independently of whether Greece was ready or not to join.

Despite the lack of concrete measures, and the persistence of old practices, this thesis concludes that during the Greek accession, the Community did evolve in three ways. Firstly, the prospect of the Greek enlargement saw the emergence within the Community of a new sense of utility of enlargement. The thesis fully agrees with Thomas' argument that the development of the EEC's political dimension as a promoter of democracy did not start 'with the drafting of a treaty or the crafting of a court opinion regarding the proper exercise of authority within the new community's borders'<sup>11</sup> but was gradually and commonly articulated through several processes of which enlargement was perhaps the most important. The so called Birkelbach report in 1962 laid the ground for

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<sup>10</sup> See chapter five and seven.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel Thomas, 'Constitutionalisation through Enlargement: the contested origins of the EU's democratic identity', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 13: 8 (2006), 1190-1210.

the introduction of democratic values within the EU's *acquis politique* but these were only brought to the top of the Community's agenda through the process of enlargement, especially towards Greece. In a period when the Community was attempting to establish a European identity, the second enlargement involving the newly emerged Greek democracy and the debate it generated significantly affected the EEC's self perception as promoter of democracy. And, once this justification was given, it created expectations for future conduct and became a reference point for subsequent enlargements.

Secondly, this thesis has shown that preparing for Greek entry gave rise to an unprecedented set of ideas on how to improve the enlargement process in order to respond to the needs of dependent applicants who cannot aspire to a rapid full membership but without rebuffing them politically. These ideas did not flourish in the 1970s as the Cold War imperatives were too urgent; the Community was still inexperienced in handling such candidates and, generally, in a period of crisis the Community tends to protect and salvage what it knows best before venturing on to new policies. However this does not strip the study of Greek talks of the historical value of their contribution to the Community's evolution. Indeed, during the second enlargement, the EEC experimented with the possibility of a pre-accession period - now a common feature in the accession process - in order to maintain enlargement firmly on the EEC agenda without diluting the Community while providing the applicant with the needed breathing space to align with the *acquis*. In early 1977, the idea of a 'troika' was introduced in order to flank each EEC Presidency with two Vice-Presidencies.<sup>12</sup> In similar terms, the 'fresco' of 1978 proposed the use of a solidarity fund prior to accession in order to address the gap between existing and aspiring members. It is perhaps an indicator of a learning process originating in 1978 that this formula resembles the one adapted for Western Balkans through the Stabilisation and Association proposals aiming to prepare the candidate for eventual accession. Moreover, the important *Declaration on Democracy* of April 1978 that was incorporated in the *acquis* in the context of the second enlargement explicitly refers to what later became one of the three Copenhagen criteria. The conditions for membership and the procedures for accession have developed greatly over the interval between 1973 and 2011 and probably will continue doing so as enlargement is likely to remain central to the European agenda for some time to come. This evolution, started with the Greek accession as it was the first time that the Community had to take into account the changing nature of the prospective members

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<sup>12</sup> See chapter four.

from long-established democratic and market economies to recently democratised and economically disadvantaged states.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, and most importantly, the Greek accession talks constituted an episode during the course of which the Community discovered its power as a stabilising factor in a Cold War crisis. Few of the European Community's policies have seen their importance increase as spectacularly over the past three decades as enlargement. More recently, practitioners and commentators have praised enlargement as the EU's most powerful foreign-policy tool.<sup>14</sup> However, this was hardly taken for granted in the 1970s. In giving the green light to Greece's bid for membership, the Nine set out on a path that would eventually lead to far-reaching changes in the whole nature of the Community as an international actor. Thirty years later, it is perhaps hard to recapture how genuine the danger seemed of instability in Greece and possible war with Turkey coupled with fears of spreading the contagion to neighbouring Spain and Italy. Yet in the mid-1970s this sense of crisis was very real indeed. The highly important political decision to accept Greece and support Karamanlis in the midst of an intense crisis, apart from leading to the Community's second enlargement, added to the EEC's collective weight on the world stage. In contrast to the failed attempts to engage effectively into the Middle Eastern peace process, the Europeans were able to play a successful role in their own backyard, in other words in the Greek affair. This role, in full agreement with the Americans and buttressing the US's military role, consisted in offering economic and political support to the newly-established Karamanlis government. Moreover in contrast to Portugal, the Greek case witnessed the further improvement of transatlantic relations. During the crisis in Greece, governments on both sides of the Atlantic realised the extent of their limitations in their capacity to intervene successfully in the region.<sup>15</sup> The lack of the necessary foreign policy instruments on the part of the Community and the intense anti-Americanism that dominated the Greek scene left no room for individual and separate policies. In combination, however, the United States and Europe could play a significant part in addressing the instabilities of the region.

A truthful assessment of the allegedly 'dismal decade' experienced by the European Community cannot therefore escape the examination of the interplay between international, European and domestic factors. The story of the Greek enlargement, based

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<sup>13</sup> Allan F. Tatham, *Enlargement of the European Union* (Netherlands, 2009), 475.

<sup>14</sup> Ulrich Sedelmeier, 'Enlargement. From Rules for Accession to a Policy Towards Europe', in Wallace, Helen et al (eds.), *Policy-Making in the European Union*, (Oxford, 2010), 403.

<sup>15</sup> Antonio Varsori, 'The EC/EU and the US (1957-2006)', in Deighton, Anne & Bossuat, Gerard, *The EC/EU A World Security Actor* (Brussels, 2007), 35.

on an analysis of this complex interplay, will hopefully offer a further contribution to the re-consideration of the term ‘eurosclerosis’ as an apt characterisation of the 1970s. Alongside the creation of the European Council, the direct elections of the EP, the activity of the Court of Justice and the inauguration of the EMS, Greece’s accession to the European Community can be rightfully added to the growing list of factors indicating that this decade was in fact the testing ground for new departures.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Richard Griffiths, ‘A Dismal Decade? European Integration in the 1970s’ in Desmond Dinan, *Origins and Evolution of the European Union* (Oxford, 2006), 169-190; Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, ‘Filling the EEC leadership vacuum? The creation of the European Council in 1974’, *Cold War History*, 10:3 (2010), 315-339; Morten Rasmussen, ‘The Study of the EC Court of Justice and Community Law as a new Research Field’, in Laursen, Johnny (ed.), *From Crisis to New Dynamics: the European Community 1973-1983* (forthcoming); Varsori & Migani (eds.), *Europe in the International Arena*.

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### **Interviews**

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