

## Attic Chronicle by Phocion

### Power complex in a leaderless land

*Venial incompetence is ruling over a crumbling nation, and ruling by default.*

**T**his Andreas Papandreou, one of my bêtes noires at the moment, merits a certain psychological scanning for the instruction of Greek nationals, yes, but, more to the point, of leaders in other lands which share Greece's plight, namely, national impotence in the face of cataclysmic world developments, lands compressed between the relentless expansion of Byzantine Imperial Russia and an American policy ranging from at best the banality of thoughtless anti-communism to the State Department's outright immorality.

Andreas Papandreou is pathologically attached to power as the sole means of ego gratification. When out of power, as he was until 1981, he has always behaved like a murderously enraged Oedipal rebel against his image of parental authority. As a child of five years he was abandoned by a philandering father to the care of a divorced mother, beginning that career of Oedipal rage. When, 14 years later, he left for the United States, he had hardly lived with his father.

When in the 1960s he joined his father's parliamentary government, he adopted the principal role of agent provocateur, under management of then Secretary of the Army Cyrus Vance, in bringing down his father's government and destroying the old man's party. In the years of political exile and later of parliamentary opposition, he organized with Libyan money and State Department guidance an extremist movement, the PASOK, which managed to outflank from the left the traditional Communist Par-

ty and to ultimately win power in 1981. Virtually at the instant he achieved power he started distancing himself from his movement's cadre organization, and the former Jacobin rebel displayed the public image of an imperial proconsul. In his private life he fully agrees with Kissinger's notorious dictum that "political power is an aphrodisiac," of which he avails himself liberally.

Thus endowed with the inner masochistic world of a Caliban, groveling to those with power over him and tyrannizing his inferiors, Andreas Papandreou is now, at age 65, about to face his life's "moment of truth." The nation he leads is confronted simultaneously with the three fundamental crises typical of the Eastern Mediterranean region:

- A national-security crisis of major proportions stemming from mounting Russian pressure throughout the Balkans as U.S. power has been confined to support for Turkey, Greece's traditional rival.

- An economic crisis compounded by a late-February demand from the International Monetary Fund for further massive austerity measures on penalty of complete cutoff from international loans.

- A large-scale radicalization which has swollen the rank-and-file organizations of the conservative opposition and triggered an anti-Papandreou revolt in the ranks of his ruling PASOK.

Papandreou's own party bosses are charging him for having failed to stem the conservative tide; they demand

further radical socialist measures from the government. Papandreou the prime minister, i.e., the man who enjoys the trimmings of power, knows that the conservative backlash is caused by the wave of disaffection against those very measures which his party demands more of. When he tried to oppose the IMF-dictated policies of his IMF-controlled economics czar "Gerry" Arsenis, the Minister of IMF Austerity created a factional alliance with the radical extreme left of PASOK against the prime minister. When on Feb. 29 Papandreou addressed the PASOK's parliamentary fraction to appeal for party solidarity in parliament, the majority of parliamentarians, after accusing him of "bossism," "rule by inertia," and "arrogance of power," demonstrated their sentiments by boycotting that day's session.

On that day, Papandreou made the following assessment of his situation: "My conservative opposition is going through the most profound transformation of its life. Its rank and file is creating, for the first time, massive base organizations. But its leadership is truly decomposing." His assessment was in fact correct. The Political Council of the conservative New Democracy party, made up of political figures of the tame, royalist 1950s, is by habit looking to the United States for what to do next. Washington is maintaining a perplexed silence, trying to cope with its own inner crisis. The swelling grass-roots nationalist movement is, for the time being, in the hands of about 70 or 80 bitterly competing caucuses of retired officers, priests, policemen, and ideologues of the 1945-49 civil war years.

Power-hungry incompetence is ruling over a crumbling nation, and ruling by default, given that nation's apparent inability to produce leaders free of the "power complex," Andreas's curse.