

ΕΥΓΚΛΟΝΙΣΤΙΚΗ ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΗ

# «Είδα να θάβουν ζωντανό ένα παιδί»

ΙΕΡΕΑΣ ΜΙΛΑΕΙ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΘΡΓΙΟ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΑΞΙΝΟΠΗΜΑΤΩΝ ΣΤΗΝ ΚΥΠΡΟ



Ο χαιρετισμός του Μακαρίου

ΤΟ ΑΝΤΙΣΤΟΙΧΟΝ  
ΓΙΩΡΓΟΥ ΑΓΑΠΗ

## SENSATIONAL DISCLOSURES BY A PRIEST

“How Greeks killed each other  
during 15 July 1974 coup in Cyprus”

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***'I swear to God  
that they buried this youth  
while he was still alive'***

A Greek Cypriot priest, Papatsestos of Nicosia, is reported to have **made sensational disclosures** to an Athens newspaper, 'Ta Nea', about Greek Cypriots **'killed and buried like dogs'** during the Sampson coup in Cyprus in the Summer of 1974.

Papatsestos, who is described as a well-known priest in charge of the Nicosia Greek cemetery, is reported to have told a correspondent of 'Ta Nea' that truck loads of dead Greek Cypriots were hastily buried in mass **graves without any record and without any attempt to identify the bodies.**

***'But the most horrible experience of my life was seeing a wounded young Greek Cypriot buried alive',***

Papatsestos is quoted declaring. He is also quoted admitting that dead Turks were buried in the Greek cemetery.

The following are the highlights of Papatsestos's interview with the correspondent of 'Ta Nea', which was reproduced in all the local Greek newspapers on 28 February, 1976 :

**PAPATSESTOS :** Two days after the coup, on 17 July, I witnessed something which has perhaps never been witnessed by any mortal before : I saw a young Greek Cypriot buried alive! That was when two Junta officers came to my house and ordered me to accompany them to the cemetery. I thought they were going to kill me, but they said they only wanted me for burying some dead people.

In the cemetery there were two open graves and two bodies lying beside them. I went to see if I could recognize them. One was dead. But the other, a curly haired, fair complexioned 18-year-old youth was moving. Startled, I turned back and shouted : **'But Officer, this man is alive!'**

**'Shut up you dirty priest, or I will shut you up for good',** the officer retorted. Then the youth was pushed into the open grave which was filled with earth. ***'I swear to God that they buried this youth while he was still alive'.***

***'Here people were buried  
like dogs by the Junta'***

Pointing at the cemetery, Papatsestos said : 'Here people were buried like dogs by the Junta. There were also bodies which had been dumped outside the cemetery. They were not identified, and not claimed. As a priest my conscience is troubled, but they were holding a pistol to my head at the time.

I remember the day they first came to me. They said : 'Father', we have some dead bodies which we want you to bury'. "With pleasure", I replied and asked how many bodies they had. 77 they said. An hour later a lorry arrived and I heard someone order : 'Dump them outside'. They were the dead bodies ; they were all put in one common grave, without waiting for identification by their relatives. The Junta men produced some small crosses, (seven only!) wrote some names on them and put them on the grave.

The Junta men scornfully called 'muskos supporters', persons loyal to Makarios, and wanted to bury them 'like dogs', in a sheep-fold outside the cemetery. And that is what they did in the end. They dug two graves with excavators — one inside and the other outside the cemetery. They buried their own dead (27) inside the cemetery and others (50) outside.

TA NEA : Further, about the young man buried alive, could he have been saved?

PAPATSESTOS : Of course he could have been saved. He had a wound in the right leg. I went to the hospital and asked a doctor there, if a dead man could move. The doctor laughed, I could not. But I was not the one who had buried him alive.

TA NEA : Could you recognize any of the Junta men?

PAPATSESTOS : They had all come from Greece for the coup. They were looting, and they even broke into my house. They entered houses on the pretext of searching for deserters but actually stole valuable articles from them.

***'All of them  
to the last man,  
must be killed tonight!'***

TA NEA : Have you witnessed any other atrocities?

PAPATSESTOS : I listened to telephone conversations between Junta men. In one case they were talking about the people resisting at Kaimakli suburb, and saying : **'Shoot them all, have no mercy at all!'** I also noticed that in the hospital they were giving polluted water to the sick.

TA NEA : Father, could you swear that you have not secretly buried dead Turks in the cemetery?

PAPATSESTOS : Only about 10. We did not know who they were and where they were found.

TA NEA : How many bodies did you bury during the coup?

PAPATSESTOS : 127. Fifty of them were collected from the streets and they were buried outside the cemetery ; the other 77 were buried inside.

TA NEA : If the Turkish invasion had not taken place, would more Greek Cypriots have been killed in the coup?

PAPATSESTOS : Oh yes, many more. They wanted to kill me too. It is rather a hard thing to say, but it is true that the Turkish intervention saved us from a merciless internecine war. They had prepared a list of all Makarios supporters and they would have slaughtered them all.

TA NEA : Now, father tell me sincerely, were people brutally killed in those days?

PAPATSESTOS : Yes, my son. Massacres were committed outside Kykko Monastery and in Limassol. I heard with my own ears the order :

**'All of them to the last man, must be killed tonight!'**

Those who have witnessed these crimes are afraid to speak. As a matter of fact most of them are Grivas supporters and they will never speak.

Finally, Papatsestos is reported to have declared that he would tell his story and worries to the Greek Premier, Mr. Constantine Karamanlis, because Makarios has done nothing about them.

## Comment;

### ***'The young Greek Cypriot buried alive in the Nicosia cemetery'***

It will no doubt be recalled that Papatsestos first told his story to Makarios when the latter visited the Nicosia cemetery soon after his return to Cyprus in December, 1974. The local Greek newspapers gave prominence (13 December, 1974) to Papatsestos's disclosure to Makarios that —

***"There are five big graves (7ftx20ft, each) in and around the Greek cemetery in Nicosia in which bodies of soldiers, policemen and civilians (some seriously wounded but still alive) were dumped like old sacks!"***

The local Greek press dropped the subject discreetly the next day and Makarios made no attempt to pursue the matter of ***'the young Greek Cypriot buried alive in the Nicosia cemetery'***.

However, similar disclosures about the murders committed during the coup continued to come from other sources. More recently, on 22 November 1975, to be exact, the editor of the local Greek daily 'Haravghi', Mr. Costas Partassides, disclosed in an article in his paper that —

***"Innocent Turkish Cypriot women and children, together with thousands of democratic elements among the Greek Community, were wantonly killed by EOKA hordes during the coup."***

Mr. Partassides also bitterly complained that persons responsible for these terrible crimes were free and continued to intimidate the people with impunity. But Mr. Partassides' disclosures and complaints also failed to move the Greek Cypriot authorities to make a formal statement on the subject or to take action against known culprits.

The Greek Cypriot authorities' silence and inaction about the murders and atrocities committed during the coup, are quite incompatible with the noisy propaganda they are making about missing Greek Cypriots who are claimed to have disappeared during the Turkish Peace Operation between 20th July and 16th August, 1974. Despite formal assurances from the highest level, that no Greek Cypriot is detained as a P.O.W, or under any other pretext, in Turkey or within the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus, the Greek Cypriot authorities are encouraging the families and relatives of the missing persons to believe that these persons are alive and being kept in some secret 'work camp' in Turkey or in Cyprus. **Which is, a wicked and immoral lie.**

The Greek Cypriot authorities' ostensibly conflicting behaviour on the issue of Greeks claimed by eye witnesses to have been murdered during the coup, and those merely alleged to have disappeared during the Turkish Peace Operation, may confuse the foreign observer. But there is actually a logical connection between the two patterns. The issue of missing persons is, in fact, only a smoke screen for covering the terrifying cost in human life during the Sampson coup.

The Greek Cypriot authorities have never officially announced the number of names of the persons killed during the coup. But considering Makarios's statement in the U.N. Security Council a few days after the coup, calling for **'immediate intervention to end the tragedy'** because the **'number of losses is great'** and, also, taking into account the casualty figures quoted (in thousands) in the foreign press, as supplied by eye-witnesses—including Greek Cypriots feeling from the vengeance of the coup leaders — it can be safely assumed that most of the Greek Cypriot casualties occurred during the Sampson coup. The Greek Cypriot leaders know this to be true but they do not dare admit it to their community. So, they have artificially created a missing persons problem to create the impression that the Turks are responsible for Greek losses.

In the final analysis, however, disclosures like those of Papatsestos, Mr. Costas Partassides and others, indicate where the Greek Community — and the whole world, for that matter — will have to look for the missing Greek Cypriots.

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