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Will the Tea Party end in tears or laughs?

By Nikos Konstandaras

The spectacle of a small group of American politicians forcing the suspension of the country's government and state, provoking shivers of fear across the planet lest the superpower default on its loans, is both tragic and comical. Aristophanes would have loved the

as well, because it divides it, its leadership is held hostage by extremists and most citizens blame it for the situation. And the protagonists' sole argument is that shutting down the state and defaulting on payments are not as dramatic as their rivals claim.



idea of a group of lawmakers exploiting their position to abolish the state they are sworn to serve. For Greece's ancient tragedians, the vain indifference, the ignorance of dangers caused by our character and actions, was familiar material. So, how goes America? Is it the scene of comedy or tragedy?

If, after all the shouting, the fundamentalists of the Republicans' Tea Party faction give in to the pressure of their more serious colleagues and raise their siege of the state, we will know that what we were watching was a comedy, or, at least, just one more absurd chapter in the evolution of the ever-evolving government system we call democracy. If, however, the self-congratulating, self-declared "rebels" stick to their guns, if the paralysis of the US government leads to a default, the consequences will be unpredictable and most probably tragic for very many people across the globe. We know this version from tragedy and from history – whenever people overestimate their capabilities and underestimate the risks.

The extremist Republicans' reckless position undermines their country, making it appear unable to execute the most basic functions. This self-destruction, however, undermines their own party

They are sailing into the unknown with hope their only compass. That's how the Athenian fleet sailed to Sicily and to its destruction during the Peloponnesian War.

In Greece we care about what will happen in Congress, about how US President Barack Obama will overcome this problem without being forced to back down on healthcare reform – because this is what the fracas is all about: extremist Republicans opposing the idea of millions of poor Americans being entitled to health and medical benefits. We care because a default by the US would be an earthquake of unprecedented magnitude for the global economy, of which Greece is a leaf trembling on the edge of the precipice. We care most of all because a healthy American society and political system are important for the rest of the world. In our age, America is the example. Because democracy is a laboratory in which we must continually seek solutions for problems that arise, we know that if Washington finds a way to overcome the problems raised by political windbags, we will all laugh. If we remain forever hostage to stupidity then tragedy will have no end.

Greek government rules out new measures

Greece's government moved quickly recently to rule out any possibility of further austerity measures after an International Monetary Fund report suggested that Athens would need to find several billion euros more in savings over the next few years.

just become a fiscal laboratory but a laboratory where democratic institutions are being tested," said the PASOK leader. He added that troika officials had become "representatives of European governments, particularly those that have a defining role in developments."



"When the Greek government says it will not take any new measures, it absolutely means it," said Deputy Prime Minister Evangelos Venizelos after an emergency meeting with Prime Minister Antonis Samaras. The two party leaders met a day after the IMF's Fiscal Monitor suggested that Greece would need 6.7 billion euros of measures from 2014 to 2016, which is 2.6 billion euros more than foreseen in the agreement between Athens and its creditors.

Sources said that Samaras and Venizelos were alarmed by the rekindling of the discussion about further measures and wanted to let their domestic and international audience know that they would not countenance further cuts or tax hikes.

"It is self-evident that there cannot be any horizontal fiscal measures," said Finance Minister Yannis Stournaras, who also attended Thursday's meeting. "Of course, we can adopt structural measures [to save money], though."

Speaking later at an event hosted by the European Commission's representation in Athens, Venizelos was critical of the troika and suggested that Germany wielded too much influence among Greece's lenders. "Blood had to be spilt so there could be a realization that Greece has not

However, Greece's lenders also appeared keen to douse any speculation about further measures. A Commission spokesperson in Brussels said that a report by the EU's executive arm, which appeared to favor rises in indirect taxes in Greece, had been "misinterpreted."

IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde also tried to quell fears of imminent cuts to pensions and wages. "If there was a shortfall, if there was a gap as a result of efforts undertaken, then we would sit down with the Greek authorities and we would look at what needs to be done and over what period of time," she said in Washington. "But we are ruling out across-the-board cuts in wages and pensions."

Lagarde said she was confident Greece would achieve a primary surplus this year but did not want to speculate about further funding or measures.

"We cannot prejudge and anticipate what the outcome of tax administration reform is going to be," said the IMF chief. "We cannot pass judgement on how much additional collection there will be as a result. We cannot prejudge how privatizations will pan out."

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Glenview Greek Orthodox church tries to reinstate parish council president

By Lisa Black, Chicago Tribune reporter



A Glenview church is seeking to reinstate its parish council president, who was removed by the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago last week amid controversy involving the Glenview church's pastor.

Chicago church leaders stripped James Gottreich of his council

post at Sts. Peter and Paul Church after he requested that his pastor, the Rev. James Dokos, be placed on temporary leave during Dokos' involvement in a criminal investigation.

The remaining members of the parish council voted late Thursday to ask church leaders in Chicago to reinstate Gottreich, he said. About 50 parishioners were present at the meeting, said Gottreich, who was also in attendance.

The controversy arose after Gottreich wrote on Sept. 18 to Metropolitan Iakovos, the leader of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago, asking that Dokos be placed on temporary leave until a criminal probe is concluded in Milwaukee.

Prosecutors in Milwaukee have confirmed they are looking into how Dokos distributed money from a trust fund set up to benefit the Milwaukee-area Annunciation Church, where he formerly served as pastor, officials said.

Dokos, who has declined to comment, has not been charged with a crime.

Gottreich wrote that to have Dokos serve while "under this cloud is hurting our Parish Life."

Metropolitan Iakovos responded with a five-page letter Sept. 20 that stated that the parish council had been "expressly prohibited" from discussing the matter.

He declined to place Dokos on leave and instead stripped Gottreich of his position on the parish council. Metropolitan Iakovos could not be reached for comment.

The metropolis, which oversees 58 churches in six states, instead released a statement Friday that read: "In accordance with The Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago has the authority to make changes to local parish councils. Additionally, The Regulations prohibit discussion of the dispute and investigation."

Greece still has some way to go to attract investments

A deal signed by Hewlett Packard (HP) earlier this year, gives the US electronics giant the right to use the cargo terminal of Chinese shipping firm Cosco in Piraeus as its distribution center for products heading to other European and Middle Eastern countries.

While its economic outlook has recently improved, Greece is still in dire straits: By the end of this year gross domestic product (GDP) will have declined by 25 percent in cumulative terms and unemployment has already reached more than 27 percent.

It is a well known fact that Greek private investors, who could be the first sponsors of investments, have parked their funds outside Greece and that beyond some individual company decisions (more recently by Hewlett-Packard, software giant SAP and Boehringer Ingelheim pharmaceuticals), foreign investors are similarly reluctant. Many firms have decided, in the recent past, to move their headquarters out of the country or leave altogether – Societe Generale and Carrefour are such examples. In the meantime, the Greek government has been relentlessly stressing that Greece offers good investment prospects. However, calls that are not backed by concrete actions usually tend to fall flat without effect.

The fundamental question that should rather be raised is why investors are staying away from Greece. Simply speaking, decisions on where to allocate funds depend on the answer to two questions. First, are there any promising investment opportunities out there – with different levels of innovation (some investors prefer investments containing more innovation and, therefore, more profit opportunities but also more risk, others prefer less)? Second, to what extent is the business environment in the respective country friendly to investments and to innovation so that the invested funds are protected from problems beyond market-related risks and uncertainties?

Only if both answers are sufficiently

positive, will investments into the economy of any country be attracted from locals and even more so from foreigners. Thus, beyond the direct expected payoffs associated with a given investment opportunity, it is crucial to create an environment that allows business plans to be turned into positive cash flows.

Greece today has a scattered number of innovative companies and certainly a fair amount of further investment opportunities. But most of them lack capital because the environment for innovation and investments was in a bad shape before the economic crisis and still is despite initial reform efforts. For instance, the lack of codification of Greece's legal framework often adds a substantial burden; lengthy procedures erect barriers to entry and, more importantly, obtaining or extending licences or permits, as well as excessive reporting duties stifle business. In addition, cost-effective ways to protect intellectual property rights are lacking.

In 2010, the World Bank's "Ease of Doing Business" report ranked Greece 109th out of 183 countries, far below any other eurozone economy (with Italy the second lowest at 78th). As the European Commission put it at the time, "the business environment suffers from obstacles to starting a business, the little protection given to investors and the difficulty to access finance."

Some advances have been reported over the last two years. In 2013, according to the World Bank's "Doing Business" report, Greece rose to 78th place. Some of the recent improvements noted were in the following categories: protecting investors, paying taxes, trading across borders and resolving insolvency. However, entry barriers are still very high for new firms in Greece, its ranking is far below average with respect to "starting a business" (146th place) "enforcing contracts" (78th) and – despite some improvements – with respect to "protecting investors" (117th), thus hindering inof Labor (IZA) in Bonn.

PICTURES OF THE WORLD



The wreck of the Costa Concordia cruise ship could be loaded aboard a colossal salvage vessel after a deal was struck with a Dutch company. The Dockwise Vanguard, capable of picking up oil rigs, has been recruited as an option to move the ship. The vessel can sink under the Concordia then rise up to lift it clear of the water before sailing it to be scrapped.



Nick Sloane, the South African Salvage Master who has led the operation for the Titan-Micoperi consortium, stands in front of the shipwreck in the days leading up to the parbuckling. Little did he know then that the successful parbuckling would earn him rockstar status. Ok maybe he knew.



The US, UK and France, along with the UN, have condemned the brief abduction of Libya’s PM and pledged their support for its transition to democracy. US Secretary of State John Kerry called the act "thuggery", while UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon urged all Libyans to respect the rule of law. Ali Zeidan was abducted from a Tripoli hotel and held for several hours by armed militiamen.



Pakistani schoolgirl and campaigner Malala Yousafzai, who was shot in the head by the Taliban, has won the EU's Sakharov human rights prize. The 16-year-old activist was shot a year ago for campaigning for better rights for girls. The Sakharov Prize for free speech is awarded by the European Parliament annually in memory of Soviet physicist and dissident Andrei Sakharov.

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Pappas Says Homeowners Have Two Years to Redeem Taxes on 15,000 Properties Sold at Annual Tax Sale

CHICAGO - Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas announced today that the unpaid taxes on more than 15,000 properties were sold at the Annual Tax Sale, recovering over \$60 million in previously uncollected revenue.

“The money from property taxes is essential to operate local municipalities,” said Pappas. “But the downturn in the economy has taken a toll on Cook County families and some are unable to pay. We want to make sure property owners whose taxes have been sold are treated fairly and are aware of every opportunity to pay their taxes so they are able to keep their homes.”

The Annual Tax Sale is an auction of unpaid taxes that the Treasurer’s Office is required to conduct by state law. This year’s Sale of delinquent taxes, from Tax Year 2011, was held August 5-12. A total of 51,560 Property Index Numbers (PINs) were available for auction, 16,711 of which were purchased by tax buyers.

Most of the money recovered from the Sale will be used by 2,200 taxing agencies and local governments across Cook County to pay for schools, police and fire protection and other community purposes, Pappas said.

Homeowners whose delinquent taxes are sold have up to two years to redeem – pay their bill with interest, fees and penalties. Owners of commercial and industrial properties may have less than two years to redeem. Once the redemption period expires, the buyer can begin legal action in court to obtain the title to the property.

Taxpayers can learn if their taxes were purchased and how to redeem their taxes from tax buyers by contacting the Clerk’s Office at www.cookcountyclerk.com or calling 312.603.5656.

Something for Seniors to do.....

To keep those “aging” brain cells active!

1. Johnny’s mother had three children. The first child was named April. The second child was named May... What was the third child’s name? 2. There is a clerk at the butcher shop, he is five feet ten inches tall and he wears size 13 sneakers... What does he weigh? 3. Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world? 4. How much dirt is there in a hole... that measures two feet by three feet by four feet? 5. What word in the English Language... is always spelled incorrectly? 6. Billy was born on December 28th, yet his birthday is always in the summer... How is this possible? 7. In California, you cannot take a picture of a man with a wooden leg... Why not? 8. What was the President’s Name... in 1975? 9. If you were running a race... and you passed the person in 2nd place, what place would you be in now? 10. Which is correct to say... “The yolk of the egg are white” or “The yolk of the egg is white”? 11. If a farmer has 5 haystacks in one field and 4 haystacks in the other field... how many haystacks would he have if he combined them all in another field? Here are the Answers. 1. Johnny’s mother had three children. The first child was named April. The second child was named May. What was the third child’s name? Answer: Johnny of course 2. There is a clerk at the butcher shop, he is five feet ten inches tall, and he wears size 13 sneakers. What does he weigh? Answer: Meat. 3. Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world? Answer: Mt. Everest; it just wasn’t discovered yet. [You’re not very good at this are you?] 4. How much dirt is there in a hole that measures two feet by three feet by four feet? Answer: There is no dirt in a hole. 5. What word in the English Language is always spelled incorrectly? Answer: Incorrectly 6. Billy was born on December 28th, yet his birthday is always in the summer. How is this possible? Answer: Billy lives in the Southern Hemisphere. 7. In California, you cannot take a picture of a man with a wooden leg. Why not? Answer: You can’t take pictures with a wooden leg. You need a camera to take pictures. 8. What was the President’s Name in 1975? Answer: Same as is it now - Barack Obama [Oh, come on...] 9. If you were running a race, and you passed the person in 2nd place, what place would you be in now? Answer: You would be in 2nd. Well, you passed the person in second place, not first. 10. Which is correct to say, “The yolk of the egg are white” or “The yolk of the egg is white”? Answer: Neither, the yolk of the egg is yellow! [Duh] 11. If a farmer has 5 haystacks in one field and 4 haystacks in the other field, how many haystacks would he have if he combined them all in another field? Answer: One. If he combines all of his haystacks, they all become one big one.

IMPOSSIBILITIES IN THE WORLD 1) You can’t count your hair. 2) You can’t wash your eyes with soap. 3) You can’t breathe through your nose when your tongue is out. Put your tongue back in your mouth, you silly person. **Ten (10) Things I know about you.** 1) You are reading this. 2) You are human. 3) You can’t say the letter “P” without separating your lips. 4) You just attempted to do it. 6) You are laughing at yourself. 7) You have a smile on your face and you skipped No. 5. 8) You just checked to see if there is a No. 5. 9) You laugh at this because you are a fun loving person and everyone does it too. 10) You are probably going to send this to see who else falls for it.



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The mountains are part of the Zhangye Danxia Landform Geological Park in China. Layers of different colored sandstone and minerals were pressed together over 24 million years and then buckled up by tectonic plates, according to the Telegraph.



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Samaras, Anastasiades discuss Cyprus reunification talks, hydrocarbon exploitation

The resumption of peace talks between Greek and Turkish Cypriots and the future of the trilateral relationship with Israel were at the center of discussions in Athens on Friday between Prime Minister Antonis Samaras and Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades.



The Greek premier reiterated calls for a “bizonal, bicomunal, federal state with a single international voice, a single sovereignty and a single citizenship,” while

Anastasiades called for a “new impetus” in upcoming negotiations but warned that Turkish Cypriots appear reluctant to issue a joint statement on the need for a single sovereign state.

He reportedly informed Greek officials that a joint statement is a precondition

before talks with Turkish Cypriot leader Dervis Eroglu. Anastasiades also urged Brussels and Ankara to become more involved in negotiations. The Cypriot leader also reiterated Nicosia’s long-standing demand for the return of Varosha, a no-go zone since the 1974 Turkish invasion, as a confidence-building measure. “The return of the fenced-off area... will restore the Greek Cypriots’ trust in Turkey... and will bring the two communities together in the reconstruction of what has been a ghost town for 39 years,” he said. The two leaders also discussed ways of exploiting hydrocarbon reserves in the exclusive economic zone of Israel and Cyprus, namely alternative pipeline projects and the island’s planned liquefaction plant (LNG).

Greece completes first major privatization since bailout

A Czech-Greek fund completed its acquisition of a controlling stake in Greece’s betting monopoly OPAP on Friday, marking the country’s first major privatisation under its international bailout plan.

Emma Delta, controlled by Czech investor Jiri Smejck and Greek businessman George Melissanidis, paid 622 million euros (\$841 million) for a 33 percent stake in OPAP. The fund will pay an additional 3 million euros a year for the next 10 years.

Selling state assets is a key condition of Greece’s 240 billion-euro bailout and the government is aiming to raise 1.6 billion euros from privatizations this year.

“This transaction marks the completion of the biggest privatization since the start of the privatization scheme,” privatization agency HRADF said in a statement.

The deal with Emma Delta was clinched in May but it took several months of contractual wrangling for the acquisition to be sealed.

OPAP, one of Europe’s biggest listed betting firms, with gross gaming revenues of 1.3 billion euros last year, holds a monopoly in sports betting and in lotteries until 2020 and 2030 respectively.

Other investors in Emma Delta include Czech-based KKCG, Italy’s Lottomatica, Greek businessman Christos Copelouzou, Russia’s ICT Group and Slovakia’s J&T Finance.

NATIONAL HELLENIC MUSEUM’S KOUZINA EVENT: GREEK FOOD HOLDS TO- GETHER GREEK CULTURE

The celebration of Greek flavors



CHICAGO, IL – On Thursday, September 19, 2013, the National Hellenic Museum hosted 6TH annual Kouzina food and wine tasting event. Guests celebrated the flavors of Greece with 14 top chefs who prepared Greek inspired dishes, premium Greek wines, author Charles Blackstone with wife, Alpina Singh, presented his new book, *Vintage Attraction*, about Santorini and Greek wines, and 11 businesses participated in the Museum’s Taste of Greek Chicago. All proceeds from the Kouzina event supported the National Hellenic Museum’s educational and cultural programs. “I’m so impressed by the enthusiasm and outpouring support of the Museum that I feel more Greek here tonight than I did the other day in Athens,” states Aris Kefalogiannis, CEO of GAEA S.A.

Connie Mourtoupalas, President of the National Hellenic Museum, Peter Parthenis, Vice-Chairman of the National Hellenic Museum and Founder of Grecian Delight Foods, Inc., John Theoharis, President of Greektown Chamber of Commerce and Kouzina 2013 Chair, and Aris Kefalogiannis, CEO of GAEA S.A., spoke of how Greek food holds together Greek culture. They reminded the guests that in times like these, it is important to support the Greek community, Greektown, and the National Hellenic Museum.

Kouzina Chefs

Kouzina Chef Chair John Gatsos of Tavern On Rush was joined by the following chefs: Louie Alexakis - Avli Estiatorio, Tino Almaraz - Rosewood, Jaymes Berry - GAEA Corporate Chef, Jaymes Berry - GAEA Corporate Chef, Georgios Bournas - Psistaria Greek Taverna, Luca Corazzina - 312 Chicago, Nick Curtis - Kanela Breakfast Club, Justin Frankenberg - Phil Stefani Signature Events, Joe Farina - Rosebud Restaurants, Frank Georgacopoulos - Meli Café, Lonnie Liming - prasino, Victorio Padilla - Tuscany Chicago, Doug Psaltis - RPM Italian, David Schneider - Taxim, and Armando Vasquez - La Scarola.

Kouzina Guests

There were many supportive well-known Greek Americans that attended Kouzina: Anna Davlantes, co-anchor of *Good Day Chicago* on FOX 32 News, Alison Victoria, DIY Network’s *Kitchen Crashers*, and Jane Monzures, host of *Living Healthy Chicago* on WGN-TV. In attendance were Mr. Aris Kefalogiannis, CEO of GAEA S.A. (Kouzina Platinum sponsor), Mr. Peter Parthenis, CEO of Grecian Delight (Kouzina Silver Sponsor), and Ms. Grigoria Kamaterou the new Director of The Greek National Tourism Organization in the United States and Canada (Kouzina Bronze Sponsor). Other guests included the Honorable Ioanna Efthymiadou, Consul General of Greece, Mr. Christos Lelempsis, Trade Commissioner of Greece, National Hellenic Museum Board of Trustees that attended include, Peter Parthenis, Alex Gianaras, Stephanie A. Vlahakis, and Bill J. Vranas.

Taste of Greek Chicago

The 11 businesses that represented Chicago’s Greektown and featured their special delicacies: 9 Muses, Athena Restaurant, Donna’s Carrot Cake Company, Greek Islands, Homer’s Ice Cream, Opa Estiatorio, Pan Hellenic Pastry Shop, Parthenon Restaurant, Roditys Restaurant, Spectrum Sports Bar, and Sweet Connections Bakery.

Sponsors

Kouzina sponsors include international brands, GAEA SA and FAGE USA at the Platinum level, Chicago-based Grecian Delight at the Silver level, and The Greek National Tourism Organization at the Bronze Level. Kouzina is held under the Aegis of the Hellenic Ministry of Rural Development and Food. Find out about our Sponsorship and advertising opportunities.

About the Museum

The National Hellenic Museum is America’s only national institution to document and present the legacy of Greek Americans and their contributions to the American mosaic, while celebrating their rich Greek history and culture and the profound impact of their Hellenic heritage upon the world.

The Museum is located in a 40,000-square-foot, three-story, eco-friendly building which is home to interactive exhibits, children’s education center, research library, oral history center, museum store, special events hall, and rooftop terrace.

For more information, visit <http://www.nationalhellenicmuseum.org> or call 312-655-1234. Follow NHM on Facebook and Twitter!

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NEWS FROM GREECE

MPs debate stopping funding, lifting immunity of Golden Dawn

MPs agreed on Thursday on the need to suspend state funding to parties such as ultra-right Golden Dawn whose senior representatives are implicated in criminal activities, though there was debate on the conditions under which such a ban should be applied.

The matter is to be resolved next Thursday in Parliament's plenary session, a day after MPs are to vote on whether or not to lift the immunity of seven Golden Dawn MPs so they can be charged in connection with an ongoing judicial probe into whether the party operated as a criminal organization and for various other offenses. Parliament's ethics committee Thursday indicated that it was in favor of lifting the immunity of GD deputies Ilias Panagiotaros, Ilias Kasidiaris, Chrysovalantis Alexopoulos, Giorgos Germentis, Panagiotis Iliopoulos, Efstathios Boukouras and Eleni Zaroulia. The first two MPs were among six arrested at the end of last month as part of a government crackdown on the ultra-right Golden Dawn in the wake of a prosecutor's report describing the party as a criminal organization.

As regards the issue of state funding, a legislative amendment proposed by the government foresees a ban being imposed when a party leader or at least one-tenth of the party's deputies are charged with felo-

nies. The main left-wing opposition SYRIZA has proposed a less strict formula according to which funding would be suspended when a party's leader or at least half of its political council are convicted of membership of a criminal organization and then again only subject to the ban being approved by an "enhanced" majority of 180 in the 300-seat Parliament.

Despite growth in tourism, unemployment keeps rising

A day after reports by the IMF suggesting the need for new measures and by Parliament's budget office on the unsustainability of the debt, more bad news on the course of Greek economy emerged on Thursday, as unemployment continued to grow, exports shrank and industrial output continued its decline.

Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) data showed that seasonally adjusted unemployment climbed to 27.6 percent in July, up from 27.5 percent in June, while in the 15-to-24 age group the jobless rate came to 55.1 percent. The rise, mean-

while, came at the height of the tourism season which had been particularly good for Greece this year.

August witnessed a 7.2 percent decline in industrial output compared to the same month in 2012, when the index had shown a 2.1 yearly increase from 2011. ELSTAT data also revealed a 5.7 percent decrease in exports in August compared with a year earlier, amounting to 2.08 billion euros, down from 2.21 billion in August 2012. Imports also fell by 5.1 percent year-on-year to 3.91 billion euros.

There is some good news, however, as the budget continued to produce a primary surplus in September, according to figures for the first nine months of the year presented by Alternate Finance Minister Christos Staikouras on Thursday. These showed a surplus of 1.1 billion euros plus the 1.5 billion euros in Greek bond profits that eurozone central banks have returned to Athens.

Prime Minister Antonis Samaras meets with Google Executive Chairman Eric Schmidt in the context of the latter's visit in Greece to address a seminar on start-ups at the Athens Concert Hall.

Prime Minister Antonis Samaras held meetings on Thursday with the chairmen of two of the world's biggest companies,

ZTE Corporation and Google, as part of an ongoing bid to attract more foreign direct investment to the country.

ZTE Chairman Hou Weigui formally informed the prime minister of the Chinese company's intention to create between 400 and 600 jobs at the port of Piraeus through the firm's investments. He announced that ZTE will use Piraeus as the main transit center for its products in Europe, just as US company Hewlett Packard also decided a few months ago.

However, most of the new jobs will come from the creation of a repairs and returns center for the company's fixed telephony products, which is scheduled for completion by the end of 2014. Hou also informed the government that ZTE is planning to turn its Greek base into its central customer service point for the whole of Europe.

Representatives of the Chinese technological firm submitted a summary of the business plan for the two investments ZTE is planning for in Piraeus to the prime minister as well as to Development Minister Costis Hatzidakis and his deputy, Notis Mitarakis, who were present at the meeting.

"Mr Samaras is very supportive of the projects we intend to implement. We believe they will also help the country's economy and offer 400 to 600 new jobs," said Hou on his way out of the PM's office. "We are confident we will achieve a very good r

ZTE is one of the five biggest telecommunication equipment companies in the world, with a client base of more than 500 telecom providers around the globe and a presence in 140 countries.

Samaras also met with the executive chairman of Google, Eric Schmidt, in the context of the latter's visit in Greece to address a seminar of the US Internet company on start-ups at the Athens Concert Hall.

Potential lay-offs at Nemea spark response from head archaeologist

The possible dismissal of seven temporary guards from the archaeological site of Ancient Nemea as part of government plans to streamline the Greek civil service, may force the closure of the site, Dr. Stephen G. Miller, director of Nemea excavations, has warned.

In an open letter addressed to the general public recently, Miller lamented the consequences of such a decision, citing Nemea's importance to ancient Greek culture and the modern Greek tourism industry.

"The firing of seven guards would leave active only three permanent guards, which would not even be sufficient to leave the site and museum open to the public. This means that visitors will now find it closed," wrote Miller.

In antiquity, the sanctuary at Nemea hosted ancient Greek athletics and poetry competitions once every four years, rotating with Delphi, Isthmia and, most famously, Olympia. Today the site attracts more than 50,000 visitors a year.

Miller, a University of California archaeologist who first began digging at Nemea in 1973, is responsible for uncovering much of what remains of the ancient sanctuary and stadium. He has also spearheaded the Society for the Revival of the Nemean Games, a movement intended to resurrect the competitive and egalitarian spirit of ancient Greek athletics.

The decision to cut back on security comes at a time when Greece's understaffed museums have become increasingly vulnerable to thieves and the illegal antiquities trade.

"If this [the lay-offs] happens, I will look at myself in the mirror and realize how mindless, how deluded I was. I will have wasted my entire life's work," Miller wrote.



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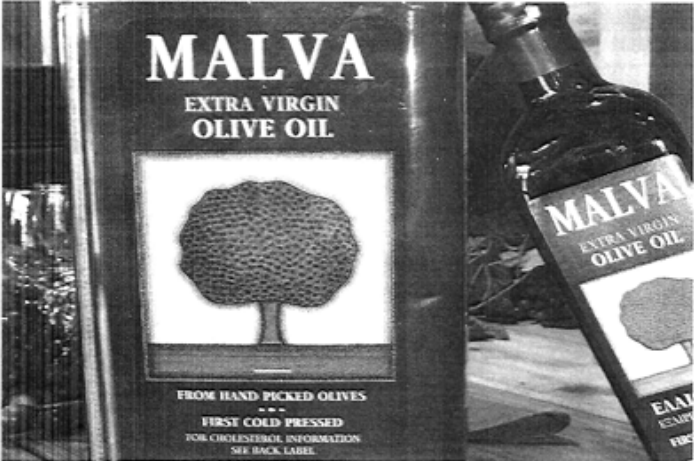
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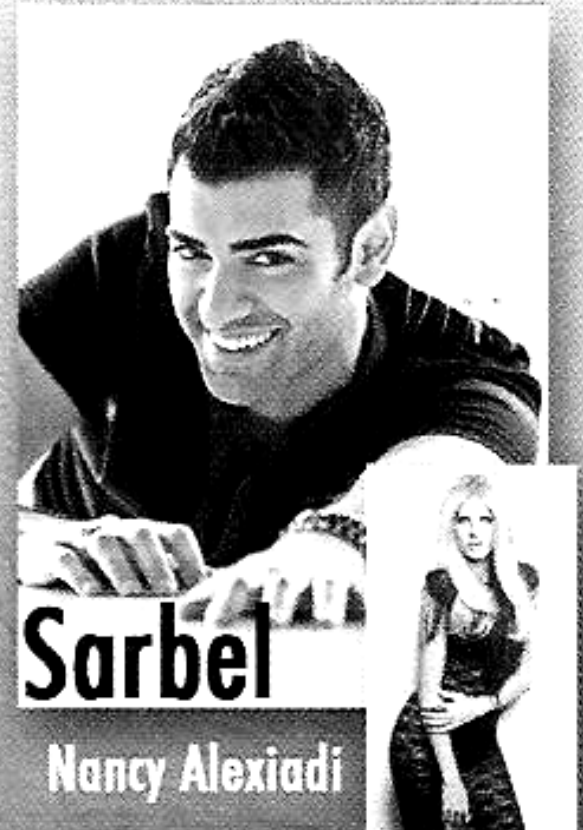


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