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## Putting the party above the country

By Costas Iordanidis

The case of Sabiha Suleiman, the Roma activist whose candidacy for the European Parliament was announced by SYRIZA only to be withdrawn shortly afterward, is an illustration of the leftist opposition party's inexperience and immaturity.

In an effort to justify the unjustifiable, SYRIZA's champions argued that the left is ideologically opposed to any form of "nationalism" and that Suleiman, through her efforts to assimilate Roma children into Greek society, is a nationalist. This is exactly the kind of ideological argument that puts off any conservative Greeks from even considering the left.

The crux of the matter is that this particular candidate was opposed by a section of the Muslim minority in Thrace and as such – in one sense at least – served no purpose to the opposition party's efforts to win that vote.

Coalition partners New Democracy and PASOK were quick to score points on the back of SYRIZA's repeated bungling, accusing the opposition party of setting its standards very low. Neither, of course, took the initiative to offer Suleiman a spot on their candidate lists. They obviously thought they couldn't afford the loss of votes either.

The consequence of this ludicrous policy is that the initiative eventually rested in the hands of the Turkish Consulate in Komotini and so for the first time

we are seeing the emergence of an independent minority ticket for the European elections, which may extend to national elections in the future as well.

Of course, the Muslims of Thrace are not a homogenous group led by the Turkish consular authorities, as some ignoramuses contend. These Greeks who follow the Muslim faith are not Turkish agents; far from it.

But a ballot of 42 candidates who will be elected by preferential voting – a measure introduced this year – could also include a number of different trends, including Muslims outside of Thrace, or representatives of groups seeking to enshrine their minority status even though it is not foreseen by the law. It will be interesting to see how Turkey plans to play its cards over the next few days.

The fact is that a string of errors in the past has resulted in one more now. The direct effect of this has been a stronger role for the Turkish Consulate and a greater risk that Thrace will lose some of its sovereignty.

And all of this is happening at a time when the coalition and the opposition are purportedly fighting for Greece's salvation. But when they start undermining the very things they are supposed to be fighting for, then it is clear that something is terribly awry. Surely the country is more important than any party.



## Gov't freezes controversial coastline bill

The government on Tuesday essentially froze a controversial bill designed to lift restrictions on construction along the country's coastline following vehement protests from across the political spectrum, including objections by junior coalition partner PASOK and environmental protection groups.

State Minister Dimitris Stamatis, a close aide to Prime Minister Antonis Samaras, issued a statement declaring that the government would "shape its final position" on the bill after the upcoming local authority and European Parliament elections as the premier wanted public consultation on the draft bill to be "exhaustive."

## *Kurdistan, a new, country emerging;*

By Charles J. Mouratides, CHI Executive Director

The first really new Eastern Mediterranean state in over 60 years will be a game changer when it is established as an independent nation. It will dramatically impact that part of the world because it will be mostly Muslim but non-Arab, West-friendly, and anti- Jihadist.

The rise of the state of Kurdistan's from ashes – literally – has already begun. It is the only happening that can be described as "Spring" in the murderous civil wars that are raging in the Middle East.

Western diplomacy and guns torpedoed Kurdistan's establishment early in the 20th century when Syria and Iraq were arbitrarily constituted so that Britain and France can have worthy colonies. Armenia, was left out, too, while Turkey, mother of genocide, was awarded as a new state (1923.)

A Kurdish Institute/ Paris, map shows (shaded) areas where Kurds are the overwhelming majority. Kurdistan straddles the borders (interrupted line) of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. Kurdish enclaves are also shown spread throughout the area. Other maps by Kurd nationalists show Kurdistan reaching the Mediterranean at the point where Syria meets Turkey, and the Persian Gulf at the southern end.

But the Kurds, mountain people without a country, reach back to pre-historic times as inhabitants of the same land. Despite Western power promises and an agreed scenario in the Treaty of Sevres (1920) that home of the Kurds was eventually split among Turkey, Syria and Iraq. Before the decade was over, Iran took its portion of Kurdish people and land under the Shah.

For more than 2500 years, the Kurds have been struggling to secure themselves on their land. In the past two centuries, especially since 1920, every decade has witnessed armed Kurdish struggle for an independent country, against Arabs, Turks, Iraqis, Iranians and Syrians.

The British and other European imperial powers sealed Kurds' national fate in the 20th century when they, President Wilson, and the founder of modern Turkey Kemal Ataturk, double-crossed the Kurds in the League of Nations.

At last, today, the law of unintended consequences in the latest Iraq and Syria wars has allowed the Kurds to raise their heads and take control of the land that is morally, historically, and legally theirs.

The Kurds today administer their autonomous, oil rich region under northern Iraq. A popularly elected government and an 111-member elected parliament govern that part of Kurdistan and its 5 million people.

A parallel situation is developing for 1.5 million Kurds in adjacent north Syria, from which President Assad's government withdrew its army during the endless civil war. The official Kurdish establishment of an autonomous region in northern Syria, too, is a foregone conclusion. Even an unexpected, overwhelming victory by Assad would not block that conclusion.

Thus, a Kurdish unified or federated state is emerging before our eyes out of lands occupied by Syria and Iraq. At least parts of southeastern Turkey (15 to 20 million Kurds) and northwestern Iran (7 million) may eventually seek to join the Kurdish state. True, the Kurds have their own internal divisions, but the dream for an independent nation can be a strong motivating force for unity.

Assisting in this drive for unity is the Kurds' strong ethnic identity and culture. Even though they were nomadic, roaming tribes for centuries, Kurds today prefer democratic political institutions. Women in many Kurdish societies attend schools, and serve in the army and the police.

Although mostly Sunni Muslims (except in Iran where 60% are Shia) the Kurds' distinct language, customs, and Indo-European lineage distinguish them from their neighbors. A millennial-old armed resistance to Arabization keeps them apart, too. Brutal government programs that prohibit use of Kurdish language, costumes, education and culture – not to mention massacred villages — have failed in forcing assimilation of Kurds into the culture of any of the four states under which they live. In Turkey and Iran, Kurds are continuously in armed resistance against their oppressors.

Despite the existence of internal conflicts between religious and secular Kurds, tribal relations with Jewish minorities had been good over the centuries. In the 20th relations with Israel remained low key but friendly. In the past 10 years, reports surfaced that Israeli commandos helped train the Kurds even as Turkey and Iran were threatening invasions into northern Iraq.

It's a matter of time before the Kurds progress from the formation of the first two autonomous regions to the establishment of an independent state. Russia has supported Kurdish initiatives in the past and has already demonstrated its interest in forging good relations.



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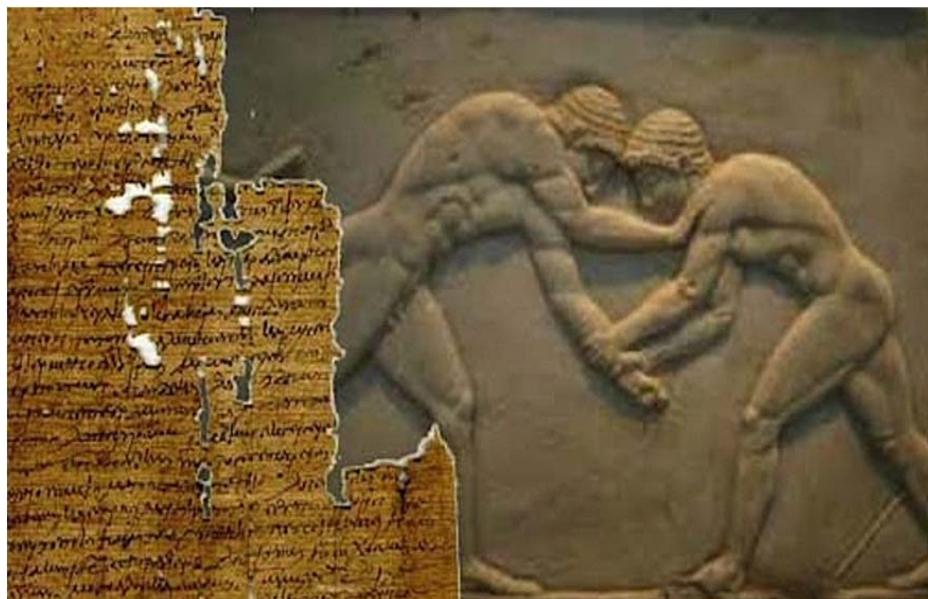


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## Ancient Greeks Fixed Matches 1,700 Years Ago

by Konstantinos Menzel

British historians at the King's College in London have recently deciphered a delicate Greek papyrus that was discovered more than a century ago, which shows that the outcome of a wrestling match between two teenagers was predetermined.



The ancient Greek contract, which was discovered in the Egyptian city of Oxyrynchus, home to a large Greek-speaking population in antiquity and the source of most of these papyri, is dating from 267 AD and was made between the father of a wrestler called Nicantinous and the trainers of his rival, Demetrius. The two men were set to wrestle in the final of the 138th "Great Antinoeia," which were a series of games held during a religious festival in ancient Egypt.

The contract says that Demetrius' wrestler must "when competing in the competition, fall three times and yield" and in turn he would be rewarded with "three thousand eight hundred drachmas of old silver coinage."

The ancient bribe also contained a clause that Demetrius would still get his money if the judges picked up on the fact the match was fixed and refused to grant Nicantinous victory, while Nicantinous' father also arranged that if Demetrius would back out of the deal and win, his trainers would have to pay a larger sum to his son.

"If you were confident you would win, normally you would go for it. If you were not sure however, maybe you were cutting your risk by saying, 'At least I get the bribe'," professor Dominic Rathbone, who translated the ancient papyrus, told Live Science, and added, "Ancient people made such bribes to reduce their losses as the training of athletes was expensive and there were no prizes for runner-ups."

In a fair match, ancient wrestlers fought to throw each other to the ground three times, using a number of holds and throws, some of which reportedly resembled body slams seen in modern professional wrestler.

## OBSCENE SALARIES

*THE WORK ETHIC WE INHERITED GROWING UP HAS FALLEN  
PREY TO THE 'WELFARE' SYSTEM*

The Cato Institute released an updated 2013 study (original study in 1955) showing that welfare benefits pay more than a minimum wage job in 33 states and the District of Columbia.

Even worse, welfare pays more than \$15 per hour in 13 states. According to the study, welfare benefits have increased faster than minimum wage. It's now more profitable to sit at home than it is to earn an honest day's pay. Hawaii is the biggest offender, where welfare recipients earn \$29.13 per hour, or a \$60,590 yearly salary, all for doing nothing.]

Here is the list of the states where the pre-tax equivalent "salary" that welfare recipients receive is higher than having a job

:1. Hawaii : \$60,590. District of Columbia : \$50,820. Massachusetts : \$50,540. Connecticut : \$44,370. New York : \$43,700. New Jersey : \$43,450. Rhode Island : \$43,330. Vermont : \$42,350. New Hampshire : \$39,750. Maryland : \$38,160. California : \$37,160. Oregon : \$34,300. Wyoming : \$32,620. Nevada : \$29,820. Minnesota : \$29,350. Delaware : \$29,220. Washington : \$28,840. North Dakota : \$28,830. Pennsylvania : \$28,670. New Mexico : \$27,900. Montana : \$26,930. South Dakota : \$26,610. Kansas : \$26,490. Michigan : \$26,430. Alaska : \$26,400. Ohio : \$26,200. North Carolina : \$25,760. West Virginia : \$24,900. Alabama : \$23,310. Indiana : \$22,900. Missouri : \$22,800. Oklahoma : \$22,480. Louisiana : \$22,250. South Carolina : \$21,910.

As a point of reference the average Middle Class annual income today is \$50,000, down from \$54,000 at the beginning of the Great Recession. Hawaii, DC, and Massachusetts pay more in welfare than the average working folks earn there. Is it any wonder that they stay home rather than look for a job?.

Time for a drastic change. America is virtually bankrupt. Are we Nuts or what? How do we un-do this type of stupidity on the part of Americans? This is crazy!

(Continue on p. 3)



# Commissioner Spyropoulos Speaks To Students At Earth Day Events

**Chicago, IL** – As millions of people around the world recognize Earth Day, Chicagoans are getting informed and involved. Chicago City Colleges organized events at their Truman College and Harold Washington College campuses, and



invited Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos to talk to approximately 200 students about the importance of protecting our drinking water, as well as how MWRD invests in sustainability.



“It was refreshing to see so many students engaged in Earth Day activities and genuinely wanting to make a difference. Each of us can do a small part that will make a huge impact on the planet. At MWRD, every single day is Earth Day. We are continually looking for ways to protect the environment and be good stewards of our natural resources”, said Commissioner Spyropoulos.

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District is an award-winning special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management. MWRD’s mission is to protect the health and safety of the public, the quality of the water supply source (Lake Michigan) and protect businesses and homes from flood damages.

(from p. 2)  
Salary of retired US Presidents \$180,000 FOR LIFE.  
Salary of House/Senate....\$174,000 FOR LIFE This is stupid.  
Salary of Speaker of the House ....\$223,500 FOR LIFE! This is really stupid.  
Salary of Majority/Minority Leader \$193,400 FOR LIFE!Ditto last line.  
Average Salary of a teacher .. \$40,065  
Average Salary of Soldier DEPLOYED IN AFGHANISTAN .. \$38,000 Think about this. Nancy Pelosi will retire as a Congress Person at \$174,000 Dollars a year for LIFE. She retired as SPEAKER at \$223,500 a year. PLUS she will receive an additional \$193,400 a year as Minority Leader. That’s \$803,700 dollars a year for LIFE including FREE medicalwhich is not available to us .... the taxpayersShe is just one of the hundreds of Senators and Congress that float in and out every year!I think we found where the cuts should be made!

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## Samaras gears up to present growth plan soon

Prime Minister Antonis Samaras continued an election road trip that will take him around the country with a visit to the island of Lesbos on Tuesday. After speaking to a female audience in Lamia, central Greece, on Monday, Samaras spoke about agriculture at an olive mill on Lesbos addressed an audience of seniors in western Athens an appearance on Corfu for a culture-related presentation... The speeches reflected New Democracy’s attempt to incorporate a wide range of themes and appeal to a broad cross-section of society.



## Construction firms take fresh interest in projects in Greece

The country’s major construction groups are gradually turning their attention back to the local market as they look forward to big project contracts with the Greek state, including Crete’s new airport at Kastelli, Iraklio, as well as smaller projects concerning highways. At the same time they have been strengthened by contracts that have recently been secured abroad and which form a major part of their activity. Sector officials say that most companies are turning toward the Greek market as profit margins at home are much bigger than abroad, where the cost of borrowing remains particularly high despite Greece’s successful return to the bond market. They add that the need to complete works on major highways within the next 18 months dictates where the construction firms’ priorities should lie and that they will have to accelerate their activity in this direction.

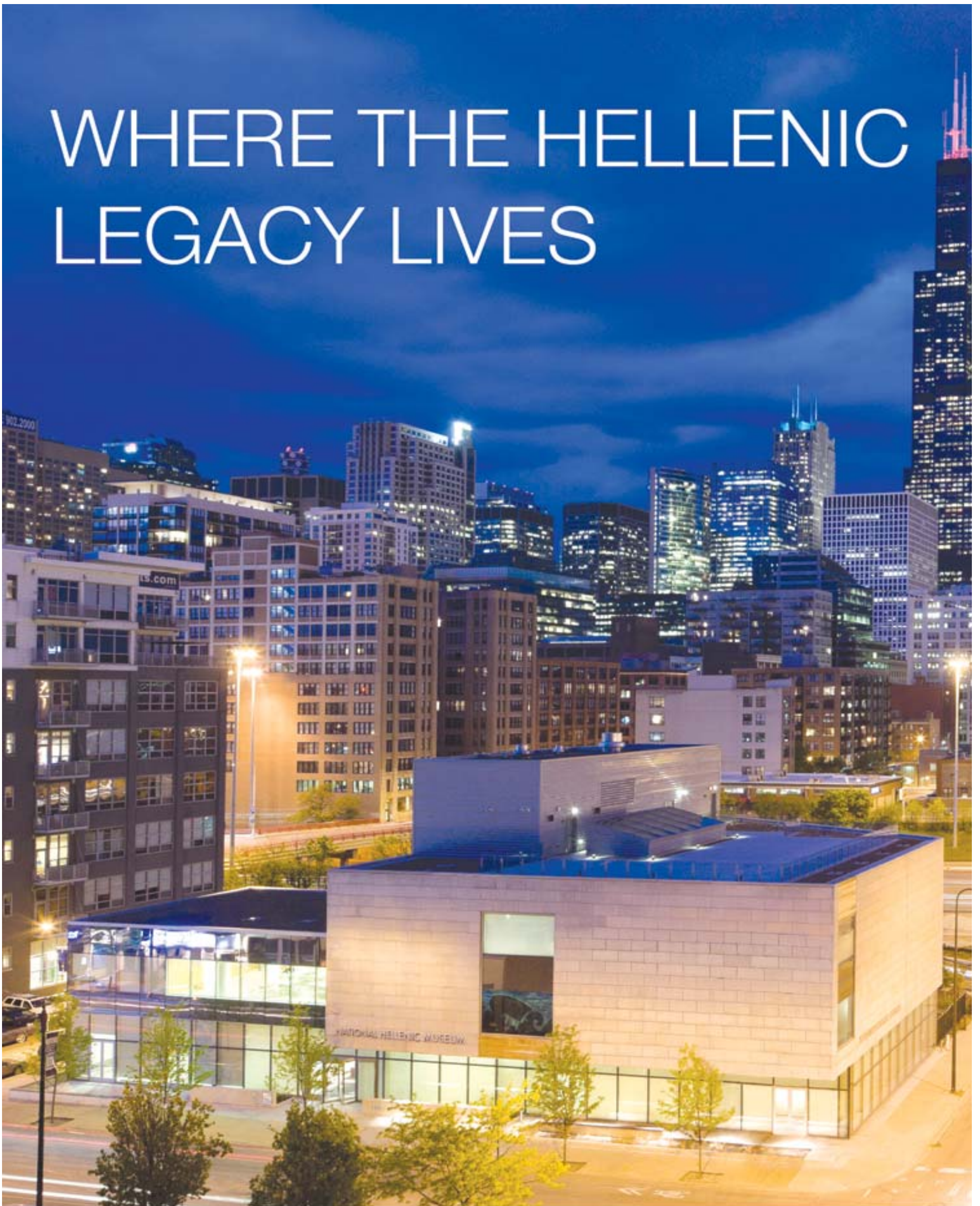


## Targeting the thousands of uninsured vehicles

Some 700,000 uninsured vehicles are on Greece’s roads according to the latest data compiled after the records of the ministries of Finance and Transport and the Hellenic Association of Insurance Companies were cross-checked. Locating the vehicles and fining their owners is among the top priorities of the General Secretariat for Public Revenues as it tries to contain the loss of state revenues. Cross-checking is now taking place constantly and in real time as insurers have to inform the association about every new contract signed. The secretariat will have its task made easier by the activation of a law that provides for fines up to 750 euros for the owners.Private cars without insurance number some 250,000, while the respective figure is 320,000 for motorcycles of all sizes, 120,000 for trucks, and 1,800 for taxis. According to the law insurance coverage is compulsory for all vehicles.



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People in this HAA gala photo: Demetri Maroutsos, Nina Drakoulis, Irene Maroutsos, George Maroutsos, Peter Maroutsos (co-chair) and Betty Maroutsos (co-chair).



The editor’s blossoming pear tree announcing that it is finally Spring Time.

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# NO WORDS NEEDED

Hillary Clinton: “What difference does it make”.....5 words.  
Pythagoras’ Theorem: .....24 words.  
Lord’s Prayer: ..... 66 words.  
Archimedes’ Principle: .....67 words.  
Ten Commandments: .....179 words.  
Gettysburg Address: .....286 words.  
US Declaration of Independence : .....1,300 words.  
US Constitution with all 27 Amendments: .....7,818 words.  
EU Regulations on the Sale of CABBAGES: .....26,911 words

## 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 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 & everyone does it



Greece’s state budget showed a primary surplus of more than 1 billion euros in the first four months of the year despite the considerable shortfall in budget revenues.Data released on Tuesday by Alternate Finance Minister Christos Staikouras showed that the primary surplus in the January-April period amounted to 1.05 billion euros, or 0.6 percent of gross domestic product, against a primary deficit of 306 million euros (or 0.2 percent of GDP) in the same period last year.

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# It’s An Old Age After All!

A couple in their nineties are both having problems remembering things. During a checkup, the doctor tells them that they’re physically okay, but they might want to start writing things down to help them remember ..Later that night, while watching TV, the old man gets up from his chair. ‘Want anything while I’m in the kitchen?’ he asks. ‘Will



you get me a bowl of ice cream?”Sure..”Don’t you think you should write it down so you can remember it?’ she asks.‘No, I can remember it..”Well, I’d like some strawberries on top, too. Maybe you should write it down, so as not to forget it?’He says, ‘I can remember that. You want a bowl of ice cream with strawberries.”I’d also like whipped cream. I’m certain you’ll forget that, write it down?’ she asks.Irritated, he says, ‘I don’t need to write it down, I can remember it! Ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream - I got it, for goodness sake!’Then he toddles into the kitchen. After about 20 minutes, The old man returns from the kitchen and hands his wife a plate of bacon and eggs. She stares at the plate for a moment. ‘Where’s my toast ?’

An elderly couple had dinner at another couple’s house, and after eating, the wives left the table and went into the kitchen.The two gentlemen were talking, and one said, ‘Last night we went out to a new restaurant and it was really great, I would recommend it very highly.’The other man said, ‘What is the name of the restaurant?’The first man thought and thought and finally said, ‘What is the name of that flower you give to someone you love?You know, he one that’s red and has thorns.”Do you mean a rose?”Yes, that’s the one,’ replied the man. He then turned towards the kitchen and yelled, ‘Rose, what’s the name of that restaurant we went to last night?

’Hospital regulations require a wheel chair for patients being discharged. However, while working as a student nurse, I found one elderly gentleman already dressed and sitting on the bed with a suitcase at his feet, who insisted he didn’t need my help to leave the hospital.After a chat about rules being rules, he reluctantly let me wheel him to the elevator. On the way down I asked him if his wife was meeting him.‘I don’t know,’ he said. ‘She’s still upstairs in the bathroom changing out of her hospital gown.’

A senior citizen said to his eighty-year old buddy:’So I hear you’re getting married?”Yep!”Do I know her?”Nope!”This woman, is she good looking?”Not really.”Is she a good cook?”Naw, she can’t cook too well.”Does she have lots of money?”Nope! Poor as a church mouse.”Well, then, is she good in bed?”I don’t know.”Why in the world do you want to marry her then?”Because she can still drive!’

Three old guys are out walking. First one says, ‘Windy, isn’t it?’Second one says, ‘No, it’s Thursday!’Third one says, ‘So am I. Let’s go get a beer!’

A man was telling his neighbour, ‘I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me four thousand dollars, but it’s state of the art. It’s perfect.”Really,’ answered the neighbour. ‘What kind is it?”Twelve thirty.’

Morris, an 82 year-old man, went to the doctor to get a physical. A few days later, the doctor saw Morris walking down the street with a gorgeous young woman on his arm. A couple of days later, the doctor spoke to Morris and said, ‘You’re really doing great, aren’t you?’Morris replied, ‘Just doing what you said, Doc: ‘Get a hot mamma and be cheerful.”The doctor said, ‘I didn’t say that. I said, ‘You’ve got a heart murmur; be careful.’

One more. . .A little old man shuffled slowly into an ice cream parlor and pulled himself slowly, painfully, up onto a stool. After catching his breath, he ordered a banana split.The waitress asked kindly, ‘Crushed nuts?”No,’ he replied, ‘Arthritis.’

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# NEWS FROM GREECE

## Stricter rules for owners of foreign-plated vehicles

The Finance Ministry has introduced a new measure to curb the illegal use of luxury cars with foreign plates by Greek citizens.

Deputy Minister Giorgos Mavraganis signed on Tuesday a decision setting new rules for the circulation of cars by people whose residence is in Greece but who have a vehicle registered with a company in another member-state of the European Union.

According to the decision, Greek residents will from now on be able to use their foreign-plated vehicles in the country only if they are employed by a company based in another EU country where the vehicle is registered. To prove their employment status they must produce a translated job contract.

In the case of entrepreneurs, they will need to prove that their company is active through official documents, such as those showing social security payments.

The decision came after the Financial Crimes Squad (SDOE) identified numerous cases of luxury cars registered with Bulgarian companies circulating freely in Greece whose drivers are exempt from road tax, luxury tax and the corresponding income tax.

## Funding for unregistered entities to be stopped

Some 500 private legal entities are to stop receiving public funding from Thursday after having failed to submit their details in time for a census being carried out by the government.

Some 900 of these non-profit bodies, which operate with taxpayers' money, have so far registered their details. They employ around 32,000 people. Uncertainty surrounds those working in the 500 entities that did not register in time as it is not clear where their wages will be paid from.

The housekeeping regarding the private legal entities was one of the government's commitments to the troika and was mentioned in the European Commission's report on the Greek adjustment program last week. The general secretary for administrative reform, Dimitris Stefanos, has sent a circular to all ministries reminding that funding to all such bodies that fall within their remit must stop if they

have not been included in the census by late Wednesday.

From Thursday on wages of employees at the registered bodies will be paid from a central system for public sector salaries, which means those workers will be subject to the changes adopted in the new pay scale for civil servants to be introduced in January.

## DNA from bank heist points to fugitive terrorist Nikos Maziotis

Citing the results of forensic tests, police indicated on Tuesday that Nikos Maziotis, the self-professed leader of the guerrilla group Revolutionary Struggle who has been at large since July 2012, took part in a violent robbery last month in Achaia, in the Peloponnese.

In a statement, police said the DNA found on a bullet casing retrieved from the street outside the branch of Piraeus Bank in the village of Kleitoria, Achaia, matched that found in Maziotis's home in Kalyvia, east of Athens, in two hide-outs linked to Revolutionary Struggle in the Athens neighborhood of Kypseli and in a car believed to have been rented by the 42-year-old.

Police sources said they have not identified the second gunman in the Kleitoria robbery, which left a police officer with gunshot wounds.

Police stopped short of confirming that the DNA on the bullet casing is that of Maziotis as the latter refused to give a DNA sample on his arrest in April 2010. Maziotis and his girlfriend, Panayiota Roupas, have been missing since July 2012 after violating the terms of their conditional release following the completion of the maximum 18 months in pre-trial custody. A bounty of 1 million euros is out on each of their heads.

Authorities have intensified efforts to trace Maziotis since Revolutionary Struggle claimed responsibility last week for a car bomb explosion outside the offices of the Bank of Greece in central Athens earlier this month.

## Greece gunslinger Mitroglou ready to fire

Greece will rely on Kostas Mitroglou to fire them into the knockout stage of the World Cup finals and after a slow start to his international career, and now at Fulham, the striker wants to show his true worth in Brazil.

Known as 'Mitrogoal' and 'Pistolero' (gunslinger) by Greek fans for his gun-toting goal celebrations as well as his strike rate, the forward left Olympiakos Piraeus for Fulham in January for 12 million pounds (\$20 million).

Mitroglou has made just one start and one substitute appearance for Fulham (as at April 24) and was not training with the first team because of concerns over a nagging knee injury and his fitness levels.

Magath said in early April: «If you buy a player like Mitroglou, you are not just thinking about having him for a few weeks but for the long term, so it is not a mistake.

The 26-year-old was born in Greece but grew up in Germany after his family moved there when he was a boy. He had a spell as a youngster at MSV Duisburg before moving to Borussia Moenchengladbach where his flair for goals gained him a spot in the first team as a teenager. After a season he moved back to Greece with Olympiakos.

As well as an impressive strike rate, Mitroglou also showed maturity in leading the Greek champions' attack and it will be fascinating to see how he eventually adapts to life in the Premier League if he gets the chance.

Somewhat media-shy, Mitroglou hit the headlines by becoming the first Greek to score a Champions League hat-trick with a treble for Olympiakos at Anderlecht in October.

He scored 21 goals in 23 appearances for club and country this season before joining Fulham. Though not the fastest of forwards, Mitroglou's key attributes are his intelligent movement off the ball, physical strength and a powerful shot from long range.

The forward was not a favorite of former Greece coach Otto Rehhagel and even the first few years under current boss Fernando Santos were difficult.

But any doubts about his ability to lead the Greek attack disappeared in the first half of the season, especially after Mitroglou scored three goals in a two-leg playoff victory over Romania that sealed Greece's ticket to Brazil.



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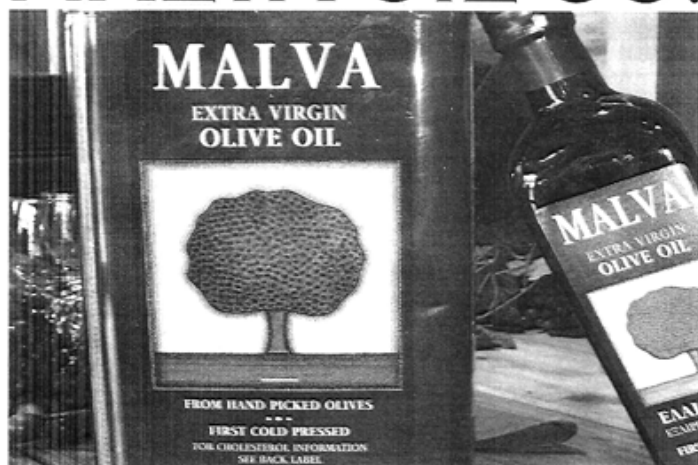
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