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EXCLUSIVE: The story behind Washington's pressure on the European Union for an agreement with Greece

The "Omogenia" Newspaper has secured the exclusive story on how Greek-American leader Peter Palivos convinced American leaders, including former U.S. Secretary of State and Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton and President Barack Obama, to pressure the European Union into striking a deal with Greece, which kept Greece in the Eurozone.



In June, 2015 Greece was descending into social, political and economic chaos. Prime Minister Tsipras and European leaders were engaged in stagnant and heated bailout discussions, and many German leaders were openly encouraging a Greek exit from the 19 nation Eurozone. In fact, the European Commission was drafting contingency plans for a Greek exit.

As a result of this crisis, Greece's economy began to decline. Thousands of foreigners cancelled their travel plans to Greece, manufacturing activity decreased, and Greece's 25% unemployment got worse.

In the middle of this crisis, Prime Minister Tsipras decided to default on Greece's \$1.73 Billion payment that was due to the International Monetary Fund, to cancel all bailout negotiations with the European Union, and present

(Continued p. 2)

Refugee crisis: European newspa- pers appeal to leaders in open letter



Europe is facing the worst refugee crisis the world has seen since the Second World War. With the Syrian conflict now in its fifth year, displaced people are increasingly turning to our continent for protection and help. More and

more are dying in their desperate attempts to flee war and persecution. Yet with each passing month Europe has done too little, too late. We are experiencing a refugee catastrophe, but unwillingness to act has also unveiled a serious political crisis.

Despite our troubled past, Europe must now show that it is a united continent built on the principles of solidarity, equality and liberty.

On September 14, ministers of the EU member states will meet in Brussels to negotiate solutions to the crisis. Today, Europe's leading newspapers unite in an appeal by which we urge our leaders to grasp the opportunity and to take decisive action to deal with this humanitarian tragedy and prevent further loss of life.

We call on our political leaders to:

- Establish simple, safe and practical ways for refugees to seek asylum in Europe without risking their lives to come here. This is the best way to eliminate human trafficking and reduce casualties.

- Show solidarity toward the countries at Europe's outer borders, where refugees and migrants first arrive, by funding and organising a safe, dignified and a coordinated reception system at Europe's edges with a fast and fair assessment of applications for asylum.

- Suspend the Dublin agreement which return asylum seekers to their first point of entry, so long as large numbers of refugees continue to arrive in Europe.

- Support a fairer distribution of refugees among EU member states. All European countries must participate in a relocation programme far more ambitious than we have seen so far. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, has suggested that Europe takes responsibility for 200,000 refugees. This should be the starting point of the discussions.

- Increase financial and humanitarian aid to Middle Eastern nations affected by the Syrian conflict. An aid package must cover not only the immediate needs for food, water and medical supplies, but should commit Europe to help rebuild local communities in the long term, thereby offering people in the Middle East hope and opportunities for a safer and better future in their own countries.

- Put increased pressure on other key international players, such as Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United States, to do their utmost to bring the parties in the Syrian conflict together for UN-led peace negotiations.

Our leaders must show courage and insight if they are not to fail this test of our shared European civilization. We need to act, and we need to act now.

NATIONAL HELLENIC FREE PRESS

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6. To install Americanism in the Greek-American community
7. To advance the just causes of Hellenism.
8. To promote the ideals Greece has given to humanity.

Left-wing SYRIZA wins Greek election

Jubilant supporters of Alexis Tsipras's left-wing SYRIZA party cheered, waved party flags and danced Sunday after the party comfortably won Greece's third national vote this year despite a rebellion within his party over his acceptance of a painful third international bailout.

With 44 percent of the vote counted, SYRIZA stood at 35.5 percent, with the conservative New Democracy at 28 percent while the Nazi-inspired Golden Dawn was coming in third with 7.1 percent, followed closely by the once-mighty socialist PASOK party with 6.3 percent. Abstention was high, at nearly 45 percent in an election-weary country with a traditionally high voter turnout.

Although SYRIZA was projected as falling short of an absolute majority in the 300-member parliament, Tsipras was expected to form a coalition government with relative ease. His former coalition partner, the small nationalist Independent Greeks, was set to win just above the 3 percent threshold to enter parliament, while centrist parties have indicated they would agree to a coalition to ensure repeat elections aren't necessary.

New Democracy head Vangelis Meimarakis conceded defeat and called for a government to be formed quickly. "The election result appears to be forming comprehensively with SYRIZA and Mr. Tsipras coming first," Meimarakis said. "I congratulate him and call on him to form the government that is necessary, and bring the (proposal) to parliament."

A total of eight parties appeared set to win parliamentary seats. The new anti-bailout Popular Unity party, formed by rebel SYRIZA members who objected to Tsipras's agreement to a third bailout for Greece, was projected to fall just shy of the 3 percent parliamentary threshold.

A tired-looking Tsipras was hugged by party supporters as he arrived at SYRIZA headquarters, waving to the crowd gathered outside. "What a result! It's hard to describe. Tsipras will fight for the people – for Greece and for Europe," said Maria Nixa, a 58-year-old private company employee celebrating outside SYRIZA's main election campaign booth in central Athens. It is the third time this year Greeks have voted, after January elections that brought Tsipras to power on an anti-bailout platform, and a July referendum he called urging voters to reject creditor reform proposals.

The 41-year-old former prime minister triggered the election by resigning in August, barely seven months into his four-year term, after facing the SYRIZA rebellion over his policy U-turn in accepting the spending cuts and tax hikes stipulated by the bailout.

SYRIZA member and former energy minister Panos Skourletis applauded the result. "It is the first time a party brings in a tough bailout deal and is rewarded," he said on private Alpha television. "Until now, the electorate was clearly anti-bailout." Former Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos said stability lay ahead for Greece. "I think we will be the (first) party," he said on Star television. "I can't say that it will be a government for four years, but I can say that it is very unlikely that there will be elections in the next 12 months."

Tsipras has argued he had no choice but to accept the demands of European creditors for more tax hikes and spending cuts in return for Greece's third rescue, a three-year package worth 86 billion euros (\$97 billion). Without it, Greece – which has relied on international rescue loans since 2010 – faced bankruptcy and a potentially disastrous exit from Europe's joint currency.

Tsipras had called on Greeks to give the next government a strong mandate that will allow it to govern for a full four-year term and to "continue with the same decisiveness, the same self-denial to fight the battles for the defense of our peoples rights, not only in Europe but this time within the country too."

EXCLUSIVE: The story behind Washington's pressure on the European Union for an agreement with Greece

(From p. 1)

a referendum to the Greek voters on July 5, 2015 regarding whether the nation should accept or reject the European Union's bailout and austerity offer.

These unprecedented decisions sent 'shock waves' all over the world and resulted in Greece becoming the first nation to default on a IMF payment since Zimbabwe defaulted in 2001.

Prime Minister Tsipras' decision also surprised Greece's citizens, angered the European Union, concerned Washington D.C., and sent world stock markets downwards. Why? Because Prime Minister Tsipras concluded that a national referendum would give him more negotiating leverage with the European Union. On July 5, 2015 the Greek voters supported Prime Minister's position by rejecting the European Union's most recent bailout offer.

The affects of the Prime Minister Tsipras' decisions, and the subsequent referendum vote, were the imposition of capital controls all over Greece (where Greek citizens and businesses could only withdraw a small amount of money each week), fuel shortages, and international condemnation. For the first time in many years, Greece appeared internationally isolated. German Chancellor Merkel openly declared that she "did not trust Mr. Tsipras".

In this chaotic environment, Greek-American leaders met in Las Vegas, Nevada with Attorney Peter Palivos, who has a personal friendship with President Bill Clinton, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and U.S. Senator Harry Reid. The discussion focused on getting some pro-Greek declarations from respected American leaders. At this meeting, Attorney Palivos urged all participants to begin a pro-Greek campaign at the local, national and international levels. Attorney Palivos' statement was "we all have to be united for Greece and we must all help the Greek people".

Following the Las Vegas meeting, Attorney Palivos spoke to the Hillary Clinton Presidential campaign and U.S. Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid. During these discussions, Mr. Palivos reminded everyone of the strong Greek-American relations that exist, Greece's historic loyalty to the United States, the over 1,000,000 Greek-American citizens that support Greece, and of the Greek people's suffering during these difficult times. Significantly, Mr. Palivos asked for Secretary of State Clinton to make a pro-Greek statement "because too many Greek people, including the poor, disabled and young, are suffering as a result of this economic crisis. This suffering has resulted in over 11,000 Greeks committing suicides. Greece must remain in the European Union because a Euroexit will make this suffering much worse. Therefore, by alleviating this terrible suffering, we may be able to save only one innocent young person from committing suicide, and if we only accomplish this, then we will have succeeded".

On July 6, 2015 U.S. Senator Reid contacted John Podesta, who is former chief of staff for President Clinton and Hillary Clinton's current Presidential campaign advisor, regarding Attorney Palivos' request. As a result of that Podesta-Reid discussion, it was agreed that Secretary Clinton, who is a philo-Hellene, would soon make a pro-Greek statement.

On July 7, 2015 during a campaign stop in Iowa City, Iowa, Secretary Clinton urged European leaders to "exert every effort" to forge a bailout deal that would keep Greece in the Eurozone because "it is imperative that there be an agreement worked out with Greece". Mrs. Clinton also emphasized that Greece is a NATO ally and member of the European Union. The United States has a great, active, successful Greek-American community. So I want to see a resolution".

After Secretary Clinton's pro-Greek statement, President Obama and his administration also made several pro-Greek statements and urged European leaders to reach an agreement with Greece. Following the Clinton and Obama declarations, an 86 Billion euros (\$94 Billion) emergency bailout agreement was reached between Greece and the European Union on July 15, 2015.

On August 24, 2015 Attorney Palivos was invited to a private dinner in Henderson, Nevada that was attended by U.S. President Obama and Senator Reid. At that dinner, Mr. Palivos thanked President Obama for his support of Greece and the Greek people, and asked him "to continue supporting the Greek people during these difficult times". In response, President Obama thanked Mr. Palivos for his kind words and stated "I have always supported the people of Greece and I will continue to support the Greek people. Throughout history, the Greek people have always been resilient and brave, so they will overcome this crisis as well".

When Attorney Palivos was asked about his crucial role in securing the support of President Obama, Secretary Clinton, and Senator Reid, he responded "I have very humble beginnings from Nestani, Arcadia and only did what any good Greek would have done. Times are very difficult for most of the Greek people, and we all must set aside our political differences and unite so we can give strength to our Greek brothers and sisters. Meanwhile, the real gratitude and credit must be given to President Obama, Secretary Clinton and Senator Reid, who are all great leaders and friends of our community. Our community is very fortunate to have these great leaders as our friends".

*Greece’s conservative party head
concedes election*



The head of Greece’s conservative New Democracy party, Vangelis Meimarakis, has conceded the country’s early election, congratulating former Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and calling for government to be quickly formed.

Early returns with 24 percent of the vote counted showed Tsipras’ left-wing SYRIZA party with 35.3 percent, ahead of New Democracy’s 28.1 percent.

“The election result appears to be forming comprehensively with SYRIZA and Mr Tsipras coming first,” Meimarakis said. “I congratulate him and call on him to form the government that is necessary, and bring the (proposal) to parliament.”

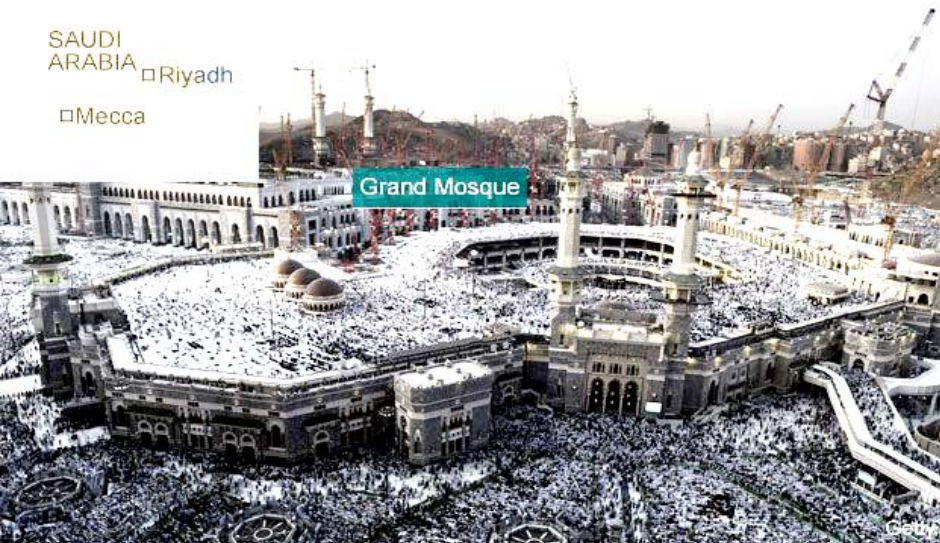
Early results and exit poll projections showed SYRIZA was falling short of an outright majority, meaning it will need coalition partners to form a government. During the campaign, Meimarakis had said his party would join SYRIZA in a national unity government – something Tsipras has repeatedly ruled out.

*Mecca crane collapse: 87
dead in Saudi Arabia*

At least 87 people died and more than 200 people were injured when a crane collapsed in the Muslim holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

The huge red crane crashed into a part of the Grand Mosque - the largest in the world - that was filled with worshippers at the time.

The head of Saudi Arabia's civil defence said strong winds and heavy rains had caused the collapse. Mecca is currently preparing for the annual



Muslim Hajj pilgrimage. Hundreds of thousands of people are expected to arrive in the Saudi ity from all over the world later this month. It happened at a time when many worshippers were there for Friday prayers.

*The cold war nuke that fried
satellites*



On 10 September 1962 an extraordinary memo passed across the desk of British prime minister Harold Macmillan. The confidential document detailed the events leading up to the failure of the UK’s first satellite, Ariel-1.

This spacecraft – a joint venture with the United States – had been launched in April that year to investigate the Earth’s upper atmosphere and study the effects of X-ray radiation from the Sun. This scientific satellite had performed faultlessly until transmissions ceased suddenly on 13 July.

The satellite failed four days after the US detonated a 1.4 megaton nuclear warhead, in an experiment known as Starfish Prime, high in the atmosphere 400 kilometres (250 miles) above the Pacific Ocean.

The explosion – the world’s most powerful high altitude nuclear test – created an electromagnetic pulse (EMP) strong enough to disrupt global radio communications and even blow out streetlights on the ground in Hawaii. It also created a new (temporary) radiation belt around the Earth and it was this that did for Ariel-1.



In an increasingly crowded world, will we still be able to find respite from one another?

Sometimes it’s difficult to fathom that the world could actually become even more crowded than it is today – especially when elbowing through a teeming Delhi market, hustling across a frenetic Tokyo street crossing or sharing breathing space with sweaty strangers crammed into a London Tube train. Yet our claustrophobia-inducing numbers are only set to grow.



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Markets see minimal election risk to Greek bailout programme

Whatever the outcome of Greece’s election on Sunday, seen as too close to call between Alexis Tsipras’ Syriza leftists and Vangelis Meimarakis’ New Democracy conservatives, markets appear confident its bailout will not hit the buffers.

Under the country’s third, 86 billion euro (\$98 billion) rescue brokered in August, the winner will need to oversee deep economic reforms, a recapitalisation of the country’s big four banks and the unwinding of capital controls imposed in late June to prevent the collapse of the financial system.

But he will almost certainly do so at the head of a coalition government, which means a supposedly watertight agreement will be subject to horse-trading, both domestically and between Greece and its international creditors.

“Irrespective of which parties end up forming a coalition, Greece is most likely to head towards a period of relative political stability,” said Unicredit analyst Tullia Bucco in a report.

“The new government will fulfil the commitments undertaken with its lenders, having understood that the country ‘would not be saved at any cost’ as EU Commission President (Jean-Claude) Juncker recently said.”

Recent trends in Greek financial markets suggest that is a popular view.

After a three-day run-up, Greek equities, were down 1.4 percent mid-session on Friday - roughly in line with broader European markets - with bank shares down 3.1 percent.

The yield on benchmark 10-year Greek government bonds was down 18 basis points at 8.26 percent. When campaigning for the election began in late August, it was around 9.2 percent.

No shortage of partners...

The government will be led by either Syriza or New Democracy, but Tsipras and Meimarakis’ deep mutual mistrust of each others’ political views means there is little chance it will feature both.

Given that there will be no shortage of parties supporting Greece’s euro zone membership for both to pick from, the likelihood of an initial outcome that is bailout-negative is slight.

Blood pressure treatment 'can reduce heart disease risk

Image copyright Getty Images Image caption The current recommendation for blood pressure in healthy adults is 140/80

New research has shown that aggressive treatment of high blood pressure can significantly reduce risks of heart disease and death in people over 50.



The US National Institutes of Health (NIH) study found the risk of heart disease fell by about 30% when subjects were asked to lower blood pressure beyond current recommendations.

The results were so conclusive that the NIH ended

the study a year early. Experts have disagreed on how to control blood pressure as people age. "More intensive management of high blood pressure in people 50 years and older can save lives and reduce cardiovascular complications such as heart attacks," said Dr. Gary Gibbons, director of the NIH's National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, which sponsored the study.

The current standard for systolic blood pressure - the greater of the two numbers that measure blood pressure - is 140mmHg. The diastolic standard is 80mmHg.

Leading factor in deaths

However, researchers in the study adjusted participants' medication so their systolic pressure became 120mmHg, achieving big reductions in heart attacks, heart failures and strokes. Systolic blood pressure is measured when the heart muscle is working. Diastolic blood pressure is measured when the heart muscle is resting and refilling with blood.

It is too early to know if the study will change the current guidelines. Researchers advised people to discuss any changes to their blood pressure with their doctors. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), high blood pressure can cause heart disease and stroke, which are two of the leading causes of death in the US.

About 70 million adults in the US - or one in three Americans - have high blood pressure, the CDC says.

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NEWS FROM GREECE

Plans for a single set of taxation rate

The Finance Ministry is planning a tax-free limit of 12,000 euros for annual incomes and a single set of tax rates to apply to salaries, pensions and incomes from property rentals for next



year

In the negotiations with the technical experts of the country's creditors, officials of the interim government have submitted various proposals that are being jointly discussed so the new government to emerge from next Sunday's election can complete the prior actions faster and the new tax bill can be voted in Parliament within October.

The new single set of tax rates will also incorporate the solidarity levy, which will also be incorporated into the rates for the self-employed. A top ministry official said that the amount of the solidarity levy which is currently calculated separately will be spread among taxpayers through the tax brackets starting from the top income groups. He added that there are various scenarios being discussed, not only regarding the level of the tax-free limit but also to which taxpayers it will apply.

One idea is for the tax-free limit of 12,000 euros per year to concern only those with incomes up to that amount, while the rest will be taxed from the first euro.

Instability deprived country of 1 bln euros in tourism takings

Greece would have benefited from



an additional 1 billion euros from tourism this year had it not been for all the speculation about its possible exit from the eurozone and the consequences of the capital controls after the July referendum was called, according to Yiannis Retsos, the head of the Hellenic Federation of Hoteliers.

Retsos added that the sector proved resilient enough to withstand the political and economic instability and the serious problems that enterprises faced at the height of the tourism season.

According to the Association of Hellenic Tourism Enterprises (SETE), Greece is likely to end this year with a record 26 million tourism arrivals from abroad and over 14.5 billion euros in direct revenues, adding an extra percentage point to gross domestic prod-

uct and bolstering local communities.

Retsos explained that the considerable increase in arrivals by road from Southeast Europe and elsewhere, as well as the increase in the number of flights to Athens, played a major role. Consequently, he added, the improvement of infrastructure and services at foreign tourists' entry points on the borders should become a priority.

The hoteliers' president also noted that another attraction for foreign markets has been the pricing policy of Greek hotels in recent years. Due to that, he estimated that hotel revenues will not follow the rising course of the country's tourism revenues, as hotels responded to the capital controls at the peak of the season with discounts and offers to keep demand for August and September going.

Based on the latest data on incoming tourism that SETE published this week, international air arrivals in the first eight months of the year increased by 6.3 percent from last year to reach 11.7 million. In August alone arrivals grew by 4.6 percent, reaching almost 3 million.

Retsos estimated that Greek tourism will retain its growth momentum in 2016. However, he pointed out that in order for this to happen, stability must return to the political and economic environment and problems such as the refugee crisis must be brought under control. On the value-added tax hikes, Retsos said that Greek hotels

Refugees blocked in Turkey inch towards Greek border



Several hundred migrants who were blocked by police in northwest Turkey from crossing a land border to Greece this week drew a few kilometres closer to their destination Friday after the authorities briefly opened the route.

There were jubilant scenes as the crowd of mostly Syrian refugees who have been camping at the side of the road outside the city of Edirne for four days, began to advance towards the border.

Chanting and whistling, faces wreathed in smiles, the refugees surged forward after the riot police that stood between them and the last leg of their journey to the EU turned on their heels and led the group down the road.

Many parents carried children in their arms or riding on

their shoulders.

"We will walk peacefully, we don't want to fight," Mohammed, one of the refugees' representatives told AFP by telephone as they set off.

"Let us in!" read a slogan scrawled on one refugees T-shirt in an appeal directed at European leaders.

But less than two hours after their dash to the border began it was abruptly halted at the entrance to Edirne, where police with riot shields and helmets again fanned out across the road.

Situated around 10 kilometres (six miles) from the Greek border and 20 kilometres (12 miles) from the Bulgarian frontier, Edirne has become a new rallying point for migrants trying to reach Europe.

Encouraged by the Crossing no more social media campaign, which called for migrants to be allowed to travel safely overland to Greece rather than risk their lives at sea, up to 1,000 refugees flocked to the city earlier this week.

But on Tuesday police sealed off the main road leading to the city of 170,000 from the east and closed off the bus station, preventing migrants arriving from other Turkish cities by bus from continuing their journey westwards.

On Wednesday, provincial governor Dursun Ali Sahin had warned the migrants would be sent back to refugee camps in southern Turkey. But there was no sign of any attempt to forcibly remove them.

On Friday, he appealed for Europe to show more solidarity with those fleeing conflict and misery in the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

"If a country issues an invitation to the refugees, we will send them on our own planes and buses. But no country has pledged to accept them," he lamented.

Turkish aid

Many of the refugees seeking to leave Turkey have been living in the country for months, sometimes years, after fleeing the bloody civil war in Syria across the two countries' 911-kilometre border.

Turkey has taken in an estimated two million Syrians, around 260,000 of whom live in refugee camps.

On a visit to Ankara Friday the foreign minister of Luxembourg, whose country currently holds the EU presidency, said the bloc was preparing a "substantial" aid package for Turkey to help it meet the refugees' needs.

"It's not that we want to buy Turkey off for blocking the route to those who want to come to Europe," Jean Asselborn said. "It's about providing support on the one hand, and, on the other hand, avoiding the anarchy were seeing at borders where asylum seekers are entering."

Europe's best hope for Greece?

It wasn't so long ago that Alexis Tsipras was describing the International Monetary Fund as "criminal" and demanding that Germany pay war reparations to Greece. That he is now Europe's favored candidate for prime minister of Greece is a paradox that should reassure no one.

Whoever wins Sunday's parlia-

mentary elections in Greece, the result will be unsatisfying unless both Greek and European leaders can get with a simple, straightforward program: No more muddling though. Either Greeks accept the painful reforms necessary to keep the country in the euro – or they reject them, return to their currency and take full control of their economy.

That's not the choice Greeks will face this weekend. Tsipras and the leader of the establishment New Democracy Party, Evangelos Meimarakis, both offer qualified support for the bailout, and seem eager to change the subject. In a televised debate Monday night, the two men quarreled over which had the more feckless record.

In a less polarized political environment – and a more healthy democracy – one option might be to form a coalition between the two main parties, so they could take joint responsibility for making the bailout work. Meimarakis has made just such a proposal, but Tsipras has ruled out the idea. Regrettably, he's probably right: Such a deal could empower fringe parties, such as the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn, by making them sole champions for opposition to the bailout.

The calculation being made in Berlin and Paris is that if Tsipras's SYRIZA party were to lose Sunday's vote, it would return to the opposition and abandon its (already lukewarm) support of the bailout. Far better, the thinking goes, to leave Tsipras in charge – of the country and the bailout. Even in opposition, Meimarakis's party is likely to still support the bailout.

It's a convoluted rationale that suggests how the debt crisis has distorted Greek democracy.

It may well be that a Tsipras victory is the most desirable outcome for Europe, offering the best hope for a period of stability. If so, it is a faint hope. The result that Greece and Europe need most is clarity about their future.

Business deals being put off until the political dust settles



A number of entrepreneurs are expecting the country to start to return to normal after tomorrow's general election, at which point they intend to proceed with business deals that had been agreed before being put on ice.

For instance, the acquisition of food products firm Nikas by an investment consortium featuring Greek food firm Chipita and Impala Invest BV from the Netherlands is reported to be in its last stage and should be completed soon. By the end of the year, Nireus Aquaculture is expected to see the restructuring process of its loans completed, while the agreement for the absorption of the Veropoulos supermarket chain by rival retailer Sklavenitis is going to proceed only after the full recapitalization of the country's

Στην ιερά μνήμη



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Και φτιάξαν τ'ονομά σου
Απ'τους ανθούς ξεχώρισε
Ολόδροσο ζουμούλι
Και πέταξε και έφτιαξε
Την άδολη καρδιά σου

Χαμογελάς α! τί χαρά
Μου φεύγουν όλοι οι πόννοι
Και στην φτωχή μου την καρδιά
Φτερώνει μαργαρίτα
Πεντάφυλλη. Την ξεφυλλώ
Βρίσκω, Θεέ μου μ'αγαπάς
Τι λες Μαρίτσα μου, λέει αλήθεια;

Δημοσθένης Φωτόπουλος

Tsipras: Europe's best hope for Greece?

It wasn't so long ago that Alexis Tsipras was describing the International Monetary Fund as "criminal" and demanding that Germany pay war reparations to Greece. That he is now Europe's favored candidate for prime minister of Greece is a paradox that should reassure no one.

Whoever wins Sunday's parliamentary elections in Greece, the result will be unsatisfying unless both Greek and European leaders can get with a simple, straightforward program: No more muddling though. Either Greeks accept the painful reforms necessary to keep the country in the euro – or they reject them, return to their currency and take full control of their economy.

That's not the choice Greeks will face this weekend. Tsipras and the leader of the establishment New Democracy Party, Evangelos Meimarakis, both offer qualified support for the bailout, and seem eager to change the subject. In a televised debate Monday night, the two men quarreled over which had the more feckless record.

In a less polarized political environment – and a more healthy democracy – one option might be to form a coalition between the two main parties, so they could take joint responsibility for making the bailout work. Meimarakis has made just such a proposal, but Tsipras has ruled out the idea. Regrettably, he's probably right: Such a deal could empower fringe parties, such as the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn, by making them sole champions for opposition to the bailout.

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