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Greek Defendant Calls Blasts 'Cry of Agony' by Populace

ATHENS, April 6 (UPI).—A retired Greek general today described the recent bomb explosions in Athens as "a cry of agony of a suppressed people" and told a court trying him and 33 others for sedition that the present Greek regime is a danger to world peace.

Gen. George Iordanidis, 67, a former staff member at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), testified in his own defense at the trial of 34 persons accused of plotting to overthrow the regime.

"Violence creates violence and a people that does not react when oppressed is morally dead," the retired general said.

Gen. Iordanidis, one of the principal defendants in the trial, which has brought some of Greece's top scientists and politicians to the dock, said the "spreading of totalitarian regimes throughout the world leads toward a nuclear catastrophe."

"It is a great, happy event that what occurred here in April, 1967, was not repeated in Europe," he said. "The maintenance of a totalitarian regime in our country undoubtedly constitutes a threat to world peace."

The prosecution has accused all 34 of belonging to a group called "Democratic Defense" and, through the group, of plotting to overthrow the regime of Premier George Papadopoulos. The prosecution also alleged the group had Communist connections.

Gen. Iordanidis, who along with



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George Iordanidis

the others could be sentenced to death if convicted, denied such links and said he did "not think any Soviet organization is opposed to the present regime in Greece."

His testimony came in the second day of statements by the defendants on their own behalf. Nine defendants testified yesterday and all but one denied membership or any connection with Democratic Defense.

Among the other main defendants yet to testify on their own behalf are Profs. Dionyssios Karageorgas and Alexandros Mangakis.

The prosecution has alleged they actually set off bomb explosions in Athens and has marshaled most of its evidence against them.

American Named by Greeks Denies Anti-Junta Activity

By Frank Dorsey

PARIS, April 6. — American schoolteacher Allan Wenger, who was accused at the current Athens political trial of operating a printing plant for rebels against the Greek junta and trying to burn down a government building, denied today that he had engaged in any anti-regime activities in Greece.

The nearest he came to political activity while in Greece, he said, was singing "We Shall Overcome" at an American folk-music festival.

Mr. Wenger, 31, and his wife were both schoolteachers in the United States when they married four years ago. He taught Negro and Puerto Rican children in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. Before that he had been a social worker.

Taught in Athens

"We both wanted to see more of the world," he explained, "so as soon as we were married we applied to several foreign schools, and the best offer came from the American College in Athens."

The "college" is a boys' high school. Mr. Wenger was hired as an English teacher.

"It's a rich kids' school," he explained. "It's been there since the 1920s, and a lot of government officials' sons go there, including sons of the present junta. We also have lots of poor boys on scholarships—the king that come in from the islands and have never owned a pair of shoes."

Mr. Wenger said he organized a folk-singing tour through the province sponsored by the United States Information Service. He also organized a theater society and gave English-language plays in Athens in which both he and his wife acted. The proceeds went for scholarships.

"I used to sing civil-rights and freedom songs," Mr. Wenger said, "and people would come back-stage and say how much they appreciated them."

He thinks this is what the military regime holds against him.

Friend of Foes

Mr. Wenger also admits being a friend of several Greeks who have been tried and of others who have fled into exile. He says he never made any secret of his dislike for the military regime.

"In our first two years," he explained, "we fell in love with Greece. I learned to speak the language pretty well. We were real Byronic Hellenists."

"Then came the coup, and the next two years were tragic. We had friends who were put in jail and tortured. Real tortures, like beating on the feet and pretended executions, not just ordinary police brutality."

"We were told our phone had probably been tapped. We were warned not to visit a friend of ours, a girl who had just gotten



Allan Wenger

out of jail. She was home alone, sick, and everyone was afraid to go near her because they said her house was watched.

"We went anyway, and then we began worrying about that might happen to us. Our baby was a month old, and what good is life when you can't even call on your friends?"

So they decided to leave Greece, he said, and got out in June, 1969.

10 Months Later

"The mysterious thing," Mr. Wenger said, "is that all of a sudden our names should come up in this trial ten months later. I think they are just trying to discredit everybody abroad they think might harm them. Like Jules Dassin. We're lucky they mentioned him at the same time they did us. Most of the newspaper stories talked about Dassin and ignored us."

Mr. Wenger thinks the adverse publicity may have harmed his career. He is teaching but declined to say where for fear the institution that now employs him might dislike being named in such a connection.

Since leaving Greece, Mr. Wenger says, he had not engaged in any activities hostile to the Greek government "except to say what I thought about it at parties—things like that."

Mr. Wenger also wrote a letter to the International Herald Tribune, which was printed in the Letters column on Dec. 27, 1969, in which he expressed the opinion that "the people of the proud nation of Greece will not allow itself to be tortured and ostracized by a clique of mediocre albeit cunning ex-soldiers whose methods and ideology are so antithetical to the aspirations of the country it so ineptly is trying to rule."

"I think," Mr. Wenger said, "they have a list of people who do things like writing that letter, and they just worked down it until they came to me."