

# Greek confessions repudiated

From MARIO MODIANO

Athens, April 5

Six of the nine accused who gave evidence today at the Athens sedition trial revoked statements that they had made to the police, implying that these had been obtained under duress.

Quite unexpectedly, the five uniformed judges of the special military court and even the Crown prosecutor did not question this attitude and seemed tacitly to accept the repudiations. They refrained from pressing questions whenever a defendant said: "I beg you not to refer to my police statement. I would rather not say why."

One of the defendants, Theoharis Papamargaris, aged 33, a London-trained economist, said that his only involvement in the case was that he had translated into English some texts critical of the Greek Government's economic policies.

When the Crown prosecutor, Major Liapis, reminded him that in his police statement he had declared repentance for his anti-Government activities, he said: "Please do not insist on that statement." The prosecutor remarked: "I understand the reason. I can imagine what you have been through."

All but one of the nine who gave evidence today denied that they were either communists or members of the "Democratic Defence" organization.

One said he was in the dock for having given 50 drachmas (about 14s.) to another defendant, which the indictment described as "financing a subversive organization".

A young woman said that she had made copies of two procla-

mations and had repaired a duplicating machine at the request of another defendant.

A student, who said that his statement to the police had been written by others and signed by himself at a time when "I was in a frightful condition, unable even to think", said that Professor Karayorgas, the principal defendant, had given him four stink-bombs to employ at Government-sponsored student meetings. He had not used them.

Another student told the court that he had scattered leaflets which read, "Democracy will win" and "Long live freedom".

Demosthenes Konaris, a lawyer, stated that he had been brought up to cherish the ideals of freedom and human dignity. He was therefore absolutely opposed to the present Greek regime. He had been initiated into the principles of the "Democratic Defence" while in London in January, 1968, by Mr. George Yannopoulos, a lecturer at a British university.

When he had returned to Athens he had made contact with members of the organization and had had long discussions on what could be done to restore democracy in Greece. He had no connexion with the organization's bomb activities.

When the Crown Prosecutor quoted extensively from his confession, Mr. Konaris questioned the accuracy of the statement, saying: "My police statement must be disregarded. Only what I have testified here is true."

The court, which is trying 34 intellectuals on charges of sedition and bomb explosions, adjourned until tomorrow.