

# t delays #EU disowns envoy's views

l, pilots work to rule

ffic controllers blamed the n, which regulates traffic at ports. When flights are slightly ol reportedly puts them into a ay for another flight.

so left from Piraeus for the with more than 25,000 passen- ships for Crete and the Aegean 00 passengers are expected to s of the Aegean, Crete and the Saronic Gulf, off Athens. No rted at the harbor.



## Brussels seeks to calm Greek anger over report from Turkey

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) - European Union officials struggled yesterday to minimize the impact of a leaked report by the EU's former envoy to Turkey which has provoked outrage in Greece.

"This was an informal, personal view," said European Commission spokesman Nigel Gardner. "It has no bearing whatsoever on the nature of our position."

Greek anger was prompted by a report written by Michael Lake at the end of his seven-year mission as the European Commission's representative in Turkey. Lake reportedly took a pro-Turkish stance over Cyprus while criticizing Greece for undermining the Union's interests in the region. EU Foreign Affairs Commissioner Hans van den Broek called Greek Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos to "ensure that there was no misunderstanding about the nature of the report," said a statement from the Commission, the EU's executive body. Gardner said the Commission was investigating how Lake's report was leaked to Greek newspapers.

Greek diplomats said Athens was considering lodging a formal complaint to seek disciplinary action against Lake, who has since been posted to the EU's mission in Budapest, Hungary.

"It is not possible for Commission officials...to operate against the Commission, promoting the interests of a particular country..." Greek government spokesman Dimitris Reppas said Thursday.

[Yesterday, Reppas told reporters that the Greek government would send a letter to Commission President Jacques Santer, asking for specific details so that it could decide on how it would deal with the issue.]

Greeks were particularly offended by Lake's alleged criticism of Greece's 1981 entry into the EU, which he reportedly described as creating a regional imbalance working against the West's strategic and economic interests. The Athens daily

Ethnos accused Lake of being "a Turkish agent within the Commission."

Greece was also stung by Lake's reported comments on the divided island of Cyprus.

"Are we ready to put Cyprus' interests before Turkey? Which of the two is more important for our long-term strategy and economic interests?" Lake's report was quoted as saying. The EU opened membership talks in March with Cyprus that could see the island joining the 15-nation Union by the middle of the next decade. That decision infuriated Turkey because the talks do not include the breakaway Turkish-Cypriot government in the north of the island, and because Turkey itself was excluded from a list of potential EU members.

## Cypriots protest to UN about theft of the gods

Persephone, Klotho go missing

NICOSIA (AP) - Greek Cypriots protested to the United Nations yesterday about the theft of two statues of Greek gods from a historic site in the Turkish-occupied part of the island.

"You have to take immediate action and you must cease tolerating Turkish barbarity," the protesters said in an open telegram to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and the ambassadors in Nicosia of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

The letter followed reports in newspapers on the Turkish-Cypriot side of the divided island that two marble statues, each weighing more than a ton, had been stolen from a stadium in the ancient Greek city of Salamis on the outskirts of the modern port of Famagusta, east Cyprus. The letter was written by the displaced town council of Famagusta, which has continued to meet in southern Cyprus ever since the town's 50,000 Greek-Cypriot inhabitants fled before advancing Turkish troops during the invasion of 1974. Turkish Cypriot newspapers said the statues were found buried in the sand near the stadium in what appeared to be a bid to hide them before the thieves could smuggle them off the island.

[The statues were of the goddess Persephone and the fate Klotho, the Athens News Agency reported from Nicosia. They were second century B.C. Roman copies of Hellenistic statues, it said.]

Turkish-Cypriot editors wondered how the heavy statues could have been removed. They criticized the authorities for failing to guard the ancient site adequately. The Cypriot government has repeatedly accused the Turkish-Cypriot authorities of turning a blind eye to the looting and destruction of antiquities.

## ates and Kosovo

MENTARY

G.de LASTIC

uring the dismemberment of U.S. is worried that it is los- pments since the influence ers on whom the Americans ing or not, those responsible to regain their influence by among the rebels, and draw- negotiations.

vic may have believed that n Croatia and Bosnia, before ton Agreement, would have

secured America's tolerance on the issue of Kosovo. He was greatly deceived.

To the contrary, the complete expulsion of Serbs from their age old homelands in Croatia and the steady consolidation of American influence even among the Bosnian Serbs render Milosevic a less and less significant factor in the implementation of the Dayton accord. In some American circles it is even said that developments in Kosovo may be useful as a lever to overthrow the Serb leader.

The Americans have experienced NATO's military blows on the Serbs in Bosnia that forced Milosevic to an unconditional surrender. Washington is tempted to repeat the last success in Kosovo. Zero hour is approaching for Serbia.