

AGENDA

Reformer to Take Over in Greece



Dimitri Messinia/Agence France-Presse

New Greek chief, Costas Simitis.

Greece's Socialist party elected Costas Simitis, an economic reformer, to succeed Andreas Papandreou as the country's prime minister Thursday.

Mr. Simitis, who ran against the interim prime minister, Akis Tsochadzopoulos, won in a runoff election involving 167 deputies from the governing Socialists.

He won with 86 votes, compared with 75 for Mr. Tsochadzopoulos, according to official results.

Mr. Tsochadzopoulos earlier had been expected to carry the election with the help of deputies who had voted in the first round for the two other candidates, Defense Minister Gerassimos Arsenis, who garnered 50 votes, and former Deputy Prime Minister Yannis Charalambopoulos, who won 11.

Mr. Simitis, 60, a former industry minister, stands for rupture with the past and the promise of a new era after Mr. Papandreou's many years in power. (Page 6)

PAGE TWO

In Burundi, Echos of Rwanda

THE AMERICAS

Page 3.

Fresh Volleys in the Budget Battle

ASIA

Page 4.

Suspect Absent? Arrest Her Brother

INTERNATIONAL

Page 12.

Israelis Expect Early Elections

BUSINESS / FINANCE

Page 13.

Signs of a Comeback for IBM

Dow Jones

Up
57.45
5124.35
@ 4P M.

Trib Index

Down
0.03%
131.66
@ 4P M.

The Dollar

	Thurs. @ 4P M.	previous close
New York, DM	1.474	1.4495
Pound	1.5175	1.5447
Yen	105.60	105.285
FF	5.035	4.9625

Opinion Pages 8-9. *Crossword* Page 4.

International Classified

Page 7.

EUROPE

Reformer Takes Reins in Greece From Ailing Leader

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

ATHENS — Former Industry Minister Costas Simitis was elected prime minister of Greece on Thursday.

Mr. Simitis replaces the ailing 76-year-old Andreas Papandreou, who resigned Monday.

A technocrat and economist, he is expected to speed up Greece's economic stabilization program. Mr. Simitis and his cabinet will probably be sworn in on Saturday.

Mr. Simitis received 86 votes to Interior Minister Akis Tsochadzopoulos's 75, while 6 of the 167 deputies in the parliamentary group of the ruling Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok) voted blank.

"All of you showed the will to go ahead into a new age," the 60-year-old Mr. Simitis told the deputies.

His election marks a new age for Greek politics and the end of an era where charismatic leaders such as Mr. Papandreou dominated the po-

litical landscape. "This is not a personal victory, but a victory for the unity of Pasok and the center-left," Mr. Simitis said.

He assured Greeks that tackling the country's economic problems would be one of his first priorities.

"I want to assure the Greek people that we will be a government of continuation and collective operation. The problems of the country need a speedy effort," he said.

He added, "I will strive to im-

plement our program and we will complete our term in office."

The next elections are set for the fall of 1997.

Miltiades Evert, the head of the main opposition party, New Democracy, called on Mr. Simitis to revamp Pasok and rid it of its patronage system.

"I hope that for the good of our parliamentary system that Pasok will modernize itself and put aside all of its old-fashioned and anachro-

nistic elements," Mr. Evert said.

The new cabinet must be confirmed with a confidence vote later this month.

But with 170 Socialist deputies in the 300-seat Parliament, this is considered a formality.

Eliminated in the first round of voting by the parliamentary group were Defense Minister Gerassimos Arsenis, with 50 votes, and former Defense Minister Yannis Charalambopoulos, with 11.

BRIEFLY EUROPE

Welfare Party Rebuffed Again In Talks on Turkish Coalition

ANKARA — The leader of Turkey's Motherland Party, Mesut Yilmaz, rejected Thursday an offer from the pro-Islamic Welfare Party to form a coalition, effectively ending the Welfare Party's hopes of coming to power.

"We told them we were not in a position to give them a positive answer," Mr. Yilmaz said after meeting the Welfare Party's leader, Necmettin Erbakan.

The rejection eases the way for Mr. Yilmaz to form a right-wing coalition with Tansu Ciller, the caretaker prime minister. She has already rejected a coalition with the Welfare Party.

It finished best in elections last month with 158 seats in the 550-member Parliament but does not have the strength to set up a government alone. (Reuters)

EU Wins Support on U.S. Beef

STRASBOURG — The European Parliament unanimously urged the European Union on Thursday to stand firm in a trade dispute with the United States by maintaining a ban on imports of beef treated with hormones.

The EU banned imports of hormone-treated beef in 1988, blocking about \$100 million in U.S. meat imports annually. Last week, U.S. officials announced that they would open a grievance procedure against the EU at the World Trade Organization. (AP)

Juppé Offers Plan for Slums

MARSEILLE — Prime Minister Alain Juppé offered Thursday a low-cost rescue package for France's blighted urban areas, emphasizing tax breaks to lure businesses into slum neighborhoods to create jobs.

His central proposal was to establish 30 "tax-free zones" to attract industry, small business and retailers into the most depressed areas, promising exemption from taxes and welfare payroll deductions until the year 2000.

The plan also envisions 100,000 minimum-wage "urban jobs" over four years for people aged 18 to 25 in community services in troubled neighborhoods, mixing work experience with training.

The government will hire 1,000 more policemen and reassign a further 3,000 to duty in high-rise suburbs, establish special job-training centers for juvenile delinquents and increase the number of army conscripts doing community service to 10,000. (Reuters)

Primakov to Make His Debut

MOSCOW — Foreign Minister Yevgeni Primakov will confer with his French counterpart, Hervé de Charette, next week in his first official meeting with a Western foreign minister.

The visit is scheduled Monday and Tuesday in Moscow, the Interfax news agency said Thursday. The ministers will discuss European security issues and conflicts in the Middle East and Balkans. (AP)



European Union events scheduled for Friday:

BONN: Speech by the European Commission president, Jacques Santer, on "Agenda 2000."

PALERMO: Emma Bonino, the consumer affairs commissioner, takes part in Telecom Italy conference.

DUBLIN: Pdraig Flynn, the social affairs commissioner, speaks on social policy. Sources: Agence Europe, AFP

Papandreou's Powerful Wife Is Suddenly Vulnerable

By Celestine Bohlen
New York Times Service

ATHENS — With her husband confined to a hospital bed, and her rivals competing for the power he relinquished only two days ago, Dimitra Liani-Papandreou, the 40-year-old wife of former Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou, is feeling alone and exposed.

Not as exposed, perhaps, as she was last year when photographs from her youth, showing her cavorting nude on a beach with companions of both sexes, appeared regularly on the front page of an Athens newspaper — salvos in an all-out campaign to keep her from inheriting any of her 76-year-old husband's political influence.

But Mimi, as she is known to headline writers here, is not one to give up without a fight. In back-to-back interviews this week, the former flight attendant, Mr. Papandreou's third wife, has gone on the offensive, calling her husband's resignation a "crime" and her critics "small and cowardly."

She accused members of her husband's family of ganging up on her, even pilfering copies of the old photographs from her house.

In the second interview, which was to

come out Thursday but was excerpted in other newspapers Wednesday, she admitted to a self-destructive bent, which she described as her "kamikaze psychology."

"I've been through so many things that I don't really care about anything," she said. "What are they going to do to me? Burn me? Let them. Put me in jail? Let them."

In fact, according to some here, Mrs. Liani-Papandreou may be as vulnerable as she fears. The issue is not her past sex life, a subject now regarded here as old hat, but other questions, including the financing of the couple's new multimillion-dollar villa.

Whatever else happens, many here have concluded that Mrs. Liani-Papandreou's short-lived political career is finished. Appointed chief of staff by her husband, she wielded considerable power, controlling access to the prime minister's office.

But her ambitions for a political post of her own, either as a member of Parliament or as a minister, seem to have been put to rest with the letter of resignation the ailing Mr. Papandreou signed Monday evening.

Mr. Papandreou, who ran the governing Panhellenic Socialist Movement with an iron fist until his hospitalization with pneumonia in November, is expected to stay on as leader

of the party until its next congress, now scheduled for the summer.

But without the power of his state office, and given the precarious state of his health, Mrs. Liani-Papandreou's role has been reduced, as one commentator put it, to that of a lonely figure "in the last act of an ancient tragedy."

The two met in 1986 on an airplane and their affair soon became public, long before Mr. Papandreou divorced his American wife, Margaret.

They married in 1989 but the relationship cut into the popularity of Mr. Papandreou and contributed to his defeat at the polls that same year.

After his political comeback in 1993, his wife again became an issue, and a liability for her already frail husband.

"She made all political life in the country look ridiculous," said her archfoe, George Kouris, publisher of the newspaper Avriani, which began printing the compromising pictures last summer.

"Nothing was happening without her approval. We had a stupid woman governing the country under the name of Papandreou."

As the campaign against her picked up

steam last fall, Mrs. Liani-Papandreou, defended by her ever-loyal husband, resisted the attacks, going on television with a 70-minute interview in which she said she saw nothing wrong with swimming in the nude. But when her husband was first hospitalized and put on life support systems at the Onassis Heart Center outside Athens, her hold began to slip.

"Politicians from the party stopped being scared by Mimi as soon as he went into the hospital, where different rules applied," said Mr. Kouris, who not long ago was a good friend and ardent supporter of Mr. Papandreou.

At one point during Mr. Papandreou's recent illness, she came down with hepatitis B, which restricted her access to his bedside.

Now as Greece moves into the post-Papandreou era, with his successor expected to be elected Thursday, his wife, never popular among voters here, may end up being the scapegoat for future scandals.

"Many scandals will come out as soon as there is a new prime minister," Mr. Kouris said, "and everything that is bad in the country will be put on Mimi, and that will be unfair."

Germans Arrest Serbian Suspect

Agence France-Presse

KARLSRUHE, Germany — A 34-year-old Serb suspected of taking part in genocide in Bosnia has been arrested in Munich, the federal court in Karlsruhe said Thursday.

The man, who was arrested on Tuesday, was not identified, but the court said he had been living in Germany since March 1993 and had been a member of a Serbian militia.

He is suspected of involvement in the killings of Muslims in the villages of Djedjevo and Trnovace in 1992. A total of 27 civilians were killed by Bosnian Serbian soldiers in the two towns.



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