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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 September 1980

*Dear Michael,*

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO GREECE

As requested, I enclose copies of the uncleared drafts of the speech which the Prime Minister is to make at Mr Rallis's dinner for her in Athens on 22 September, and of the statement to the press on arrival at Athens. *Those for Belgrade will follow as soon as possible.*

I would be helpful if you could give us comments, or instructions, *f*or redrafting by mid-morning on 11 September so that we can include final drafts of the speech and statement as annexes to the briefs which we are due to send to Cabinet Office on 12 September.

You may wish to discuss the drafts direct with Timothy Daunt (233 4031).

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*Yours ever  
S J Gomersall.*

S J Gomersall

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10 Downing Street

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## STATEMENT TO PRESS ON ARRIVAL

It is with very real pleasure that I am making the first visit to Greece by a British Prime Minister since Mr Macmillan came here in 1958. The interval has been far too long, given the very close ties between our two countries and the multitude of interests which we have in common. [There is little need to speak of our mutual friendship: it] is legendary. That it continues is shown by the warm welcome I have just received. I have come in the hope of strengthening it still further and showing the importance which I attach to Greece and to Greece's friendship for Britain on the eve of your entry to the European Community.

My visit is at the invitation of your Prime Minister. Mr Karamanlis invited me when he came to London last year and Mr Rallis was good enough to renew the invitation. The main business of the visit will be the talks with him and his colleagues and a meeting with President Karamanlis. These will be talks between friends, particularly useful in preparing the way for a close and harmonious working partnership in the European Community.

European affairs and [the effects of] Greece's accession on 1 January will, of course, be one of the important subjects we shall want to discuss while I am in Athens. I shall be stressing my Government's firm commitment to the Community and I shall be looking forward to hearing what ideas your Government has for improving and strengthening it.

I hope also to discuss with Mr Rallis other international and regional issues of concern to us all in the West and to the NATO alliance in particular. I shall, for example, want to learn your Government's views on the

/implications

implications of recent events in Poland and Russian actions in Afghanistan. I hope that Mr Rallis will bring me up-to-date over the questions of renewed Greek participation in the military structure of NATO.

We shall, of course, be reviewing the full range of relations between our two countries. And I shall want to see what possibilities exist for strengthening our trading links and how British and Greek industry - and consumers - are likely to benefit from the changes which will follow from Greece's accession to the European Community.

DRAFT SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT MR RALLIS'S OFFICIAL  
DINNER ON 22 SEPTEMBER

To come to Greece for the first time is a moving experience. To come as Prime Minister of an allied country, and as a friend, to the sort of welcome which I have received is doubly so. I am grateful to you Mr Prime Minister, to your Government and to the Greek people for your overwhelming hospitality and friendship.

Greek civilisation has been an inspiration to the whole of Europe; but Greece is also a modern European nation to whose establishment and progress my countrymen have made a great contribution, from the Philhellenes of the War of Independence - I need only mention Byron - to those new Philhellenes who fought alongside Greeks in the mountains in the last war.

We have much in common. We are both of us outward looking nations and trading nations. We understand, both of us, the sea and ships. Our combined experience in these and other fields can be of value to the family of European nations and can influence the development of European policies.

[ We in Britain have watched with admiration your recovery from a difficult, [arduous] period of seven years of military rule. ] We have welcomed your accession to the European Communities from the start because we support the strengthening and enriching of a Europe of free and democratic countries. The basic principle of the Community must be liberty, and that is something you hold dear.

We look forward to closer and transformed political and commercial links with Greece as a result of your membership of the Communities. I say political because the European

Communities are not just an economic grouping but a profoundly exciting political experiment. The political cooperation which is a feature of the activities of the Nine is something of importance and growing success. More and more, Europe is learning to speak with one voice on the great issues of our time.

The accession of Greece on 1 January 1981 will not only enrich the Community, it will bring the specific benefits of your particular knowledge and experience of the Balkan peninsula and its affairs, and your particular angle of vision towards the Middle East.

Mr Prime Minister, despite difficulties, it is right to speak of a European success story. Who would have dreamed in 1945 when Europe lay in ruins after the most devastating war in history that 35 years later the economic weight of this group of nations would be so vast: 17% of total world trade compared with the 14% of the USA and 2% of the Soviet Union. And who would have guessed that these nations would be able swiftly to put aside the struggle of centuries in order to form a community which could make that weight felt, for purposes of peace and prosperity, in the world at large?

But if we look outside Western Europe we see a world more dangerous and unsettled than perhaps at any moment since the 1940s. We see a power - the Soviet Union - which, whatever one's analysis of Soviet reasons and intentions, has in fact expanded its area of control, through the invasion of Afghanistan, in an intolerable way - intolerable not just to the West but to Islamic countries and many of the non-aligned. We see also instability in Iran and in the Middle East and other parts of the world.

/Individually

Individually and together with our partners we have ways of making our views known and influence felt. But of course we need more than that. If peace is to be preserved, we need an effective defensive alliance. It exists. In NATO we have an alliance that has served us well in preserving the peace of Europe. It provides a framework within which each of us can plan his defence, and together meet the challenges we face. So it is all the more disturbing to the friends of Greece that problems remain unsolved which weaken the cohesion of the Alliance at its southern flank. I attach a high importance to the Greek Government's

X We, like you, have a keen and direct interest in the stability of the Eastern Mediterranean and I know that you will welcome, as I do, the resumption of inter-communal talks in Nicosia under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. It is only if both communities can find a way of living together that harmony can be restored to that unhappy island, and I hope that you share my concern that the difficult decisions will be taken so that a satisfactory compromise solution can be reached,

visible menace to the balance of forces between east and west. I welcome that determination and I firmly believe that Britain has an important part of <sup>to</sup> play in its realisation - both in supplying equipment and by encouraging closer bilateral cooperation between our armed forces and yours.

/We

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And let me add this. Your determination that your armed forces should be equipped with modern, effective armaments must be saluted in a world in which the Soviet Union's massive increase in military strength is now a visible menace to the balance of forces between east and west. I welcome that determination and I firmly believe that Britain has an important part of <sup>to</sup> play in its realisation - both in supplying equipment and by encouraging closer bilateral cooperation between our armed forces and yours.

/We

We in Britain have always been drawn by the magnetic cultural force of Greece. We have not been so aware until recent years of Greece as a modern, expanding market economy in which Britain has a large contribution to make. But we are putting that right. The presence here this year of two large delegations, one from the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the other from the City of London, proves that. We believe that Britain can make a major contribution to your economic development in such fields as transport, electronics, port development, hospitals; and through the provision of financial services and consultancy. [Possible reference to coal-fired power station if contract signed during visit]

Of course, there are opportunities in the other direction too - opportunities for example for your agricultural products. Two of my colleagues, Mr Nott and Mr Walker, will be coming here soon. Their visits will help to identify the opportunities and promote our mutual trade.

Mr Prime Minister, it should not be forgotten that the Greek historians and geographers of the ancient world were among the first, literally, to put Britain on the map of Europe. From the world<sup>k</sup> of Ptolemy in Alexandria, about 140 AD, we can derive the first reasonably accurate map of Britain: to Strabo and Diodorus Siculus, writing not long after the Roman invasion, we owe some of our very earliest information about the customs and the characteristics of the British isles. Both writers remark upon the simple, even barbarian, manners of the inhabitants, and upon the inclemency of the British climate. 'Their weather' says Strabo 'is more rainy than snowy; and on the days of clear sky fog prevails so long a time that throughout a whole day

/the sun



the sun is to be seen for only three or four hours round about midday'. As you will know, the British way of life has changed for the better since Strabo wrote; and it is a most welcome surprise to learn that our weather seems to have improved too.

Since those far-off times, our two nations have learnt a great deal more about one another. Now in our turn we welcome you to the European Community, and look forward eagerly to a long and fruitful cooperation and to the development of ever closer ties of understanding and friendship between our peoples.

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