

*Goodbye Anatolia: The Trial of Six
and International Reaction towards Greece*

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Abstract. – Greece was mandated Asia Minor through the 1919 Treaty of Sèvres. On 8 September 1922, the Greek army was forced to abandon the mandated city of Smyrna as the unstoppable Turkish army was advancing. The following day, Turkish forces moved into Smyrna and a huge fire was sparked, killing many. Hundreds of thousands of Greeks residing in Asia Minor attempted to flee the area and return to the mainland. Unfortunately, there was not enough transportation to accommodate all of the people trying to return to Greece and, in addition, the transportation was late. The humiliated Greek army, which had made its way back to the islands of Chios and Lesbos, wanted those directly responsible for the defeat to pay. Towards the end of September, three military elites formed a Revolutionary Committee, which demanded the abdication of King Constantine, the resignation of his government, and those who were responsible for the disaster to be punished. On 28 September, the Revolutionary Committee rounded up six government officials, put them on trial, and executed them for the defeat in Asia Minor. This paper will look at the highly controversial trial, The Trial of Six, and how it affected various countries relations with Greece.

On 9 September 1922, Turkish forces moved into Smyrna, a city mandated to Greece as a result of the Treaty of Sèvres. The previous day, the Greek army abandoned the city and hundreds of thousands of Greeks residing in Asia Minor attempted to flee the area. Unfortunately, there was not enough transportation to accommodate all of the people trying to return to mainland Greece and to add to the problems, the transportation was late. This incident took the lives of many civilians, marked the loss of the

Asia Minor and the *Megali Idea* (the Great Idea), and resulted in the Trial of Six.¹ The Trial of Six, known in Greek as Δίκη των Έξι (*Diki ton Exi*), placed the responsibility of the defeat of Asia Minor on Greece's top officials and affected Greece's foreign relations with numerous countries, most notably Britain, for years following the trial.

The Trial of Six has been seen by Greek historians as a landmark in Modern Greek history. A number of studies in Greek have been conducted on the topic, largely in the context of the population exchange between Greece and Turkey following the demise of the Greek army. The most significant work in Greek on the Trial is Giannes Andrikopoulos' *He demokratia tou Mesopolemous, 1922-1936* and Thanases Diamantopoulos' *Meletes Hellenikes politikes*. Outside of Greek, however, the literature is significantly less. Michael Llewellyn Smith, a British diplomat, has written a book on Greece on Asia Minor from 1919 to 1922. In his book, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor, 1919-1922*, he provides a highly detailed account of what went wrong for the Greeks in Asia Minor and how it ended in catastrophe. The last chapter of the book is dedicated to The Trial; however he fails to provide any analysis of how it affected Greece or foreign relations. Andre Gerolymatos, a professor at Simon Fraser University, has written as much as any historian on the topic. He starts off his book, *Red Acropolis, Black Terror: The Greek Civil War and the Origins of the Soviet-American Rivalry, 1943-1949*, with The Trial. Gerolymatos does not spend a great deal of time on the topic. However, he provides an analytical interpretation of The Trial, and successfully demonstrates how The Trial affected Greece.

In regards to the historiography of how the Trial of Six affected foreign policy towards Greece, the two most notable books are by Frangulis and Cassimatis. The first is a book published in 1926 by the former president of the International Diplomatic Academy in Paris, A. F. Frangulis. In his book, *La Grèce et la Crise Mondiale*, he discusses the trial in depth, and has a chapter dedicated to how other countries viewed the executions and how it affected various countries' foreign policies towards Greece. In addition to this, he also included various newspaper sources from the United Kingdom,

¹ Andre GEROLYMATOS, *Red Acropolis Black Terror: The Greek Civil War and the Origins of the Soviet-American Rivalry, 1943-1949*. New York: Basic Books, 2004: 2-6.

France, and Italy surrounding the highly controversial trial, along with reports from officials from various nations. The other book, *American influence in Greece, 1917-1929*, is significantly more recent than *La Grèce et la Crise Mondiale*. Louis P Cassimatis, a professor at Kent State University, examines how American foreign policy towards Greece changed as a result of the executions. He further looks at how American foreign policy was also shaped by Britain.

After the Greek defeat in Asia Minor, a number of men in the military took refuge on the islands of Chios and Lesbos. As a sense of betrayal began to form amongst the majority of officers within the Greek Army and Navy over the defeat, two colonels, Nikolaos Plastiras, Stylianos Gonatas, and a Captain, Dimitrios Phocas, formed a “Revolutionary Committee” on 24 September 1922. The Revolutionary Committee was supported by General Theodoros Pangalos, and demanded the abdication of King Constantine, the resignation of his government, and those who were directly responsible for the disaster to be punished. In addition to this, the Revolutionary Committee wanted to strengthen the Greek army in Thrace in order to stop the Allies to transfer Eastern Thrace to Turkey.²

Two days later, an aircraft dropped pamphlets, which were signed by Gontas, over downtown Athens, demanding the abdication of King Constantine. The King, who had just received a second demand in five years to abdicate the throne, decided to leave Greece. Upon his departure, he urged royalist supporters to not be upset.³ On 30 October, he officially went into exile with his family in Palermo, Sicily.⁴ In the same afternoon a group of anti-royalist generals, constituting a provisional revolutionary committee, set up headquarters in the offices of the newspaper *Eleftheron Bima* (the Open Forum). The following day, the revolutionary forces, which were comprised of 12,000 troops, made their way to Athens. Hours later, the Revolutionary Committee had entered and assumed control of Athens.⁵

² Georgia EGLEZOU. *The Greek Media in World War I and Its Aftermath: The Athenian Press on the Asia Minor Crisis*. International library of war studies, Vol. 12 (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2009), 185.

³ Louis P CASSIMATIS. *American influence in Greece, 1917-1929* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1988), 80.

⁴ GEROLYMATOS, 17.

⁵ CASSIMATIS, 80.

On 28 September, the day after the Revolutionary Committee took control over Athens, leading royalist supporters who took part in the planning of the Anatolia campaign were arrested: Petros Protopapadakis, then prime minister; Dimitrios Gounaris, the former prime minister and then minister of justice; Georgios Baltatzis, the foreign minister; Nikolaios Stratos, the minister of the interior and intermediary prime minister between Gounaris and Protopapadakis; Nikolaios Theotokis, the minister of war; and General Hatzianestis, the commander of the Greek armies during the Greco-Turkish war.⁶ These once prominent figures in Greek society had become the most hated men in the country. This event of shifting loyalties, however, was not new to this event, but rather a widespread phenomenon in Greek politics in the nineteenth and early-twentieth century.

One of the first acts of the Revolutionary Committee was to send a telegram to Venizelos; a popular politician who was responsible for having Asia Minor mandated to Greece at the Paris Peace Conferences in 1919. Venizelos, who was residing in Paris at the time, was asked by the Revolutionary Committee to help their case abroad with the Allied powers. Venizelos accepted their request and spoke with ministers in Paris and London, preparing a position for Greece in the Lausanne peace conferences.⁷

The trial took place from 13 November until 27 November. The Attorney General for the case was A. Georgiadis, and the defendants were given four lawyers; S. Sotiriadis, K. Tsoukalas, A. Papaligouras, and A. Romanos. On the first day, the court heard appeals from several of the defendants, all of which were rejected. The postponement of the trial by Gounaris, who was suffering from typhus, was also rejected. Throughout the trial it appeared that there was overwhelming proof against the defendants, in order to justify the trial. Among the witnesses against the defendants were the General Chief of the army in Asia Minor, Papoulas Anastasius, Lieutenant Colonel Miltiades Koimisis, and former minister Phokion Negris. It was not until the very end that defense witnesses took the stand.⁸

⁶ John LAUGHLAND. *A History of political trials: from Charles I to Saddam Hussein*. Oxford, 2008, 59.

⁷ Michael LLEWELLYN SMITH. *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor, 1919-1922* (Ann Arbor: the University of Michigan Press, 1998), 316.

⁸ A. F. FRANGULIS. *La Grève et La Crise Mondiale*, Vol 2 (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1926), 513-521.

Around 10:30 A.M on 29 November, the families of the condemned six men came to say their farewells at Averoff prison. An unwilling monk, who protested that he could not grant the men their last rites on the grounds that they were responsible for the destruction of churches and the deaths of many church officials, was forced to perform the last ritual of their lives. Twenty-five minutes later the men were put in two trucks, which were accompanied by a handful of gendarmes, made their way down the main street in Athens. These streets were lined with military men, who stood for hours out in the rain hoping for a chance to see the men responsible for the defeat in Asia Minor.⁹ As Andre Gerolymatos, and other historians have argued, this was necessary to stop a major revolution from occurring. “If most Athenians nursed a secret to be spared the army demanded a human sacrifice.”¹⁰

While the military wanted various officials to be punished, it appears that there was quite a bit of opposition by civilians against the trials and executions around the world. On December 3 the New York Times published several articles on governmental opposition and public disapproval from Greece and other nations. One article, from England, states that the civilians were so irate over the executions that they had raised the British flag. In late November and early December, the British flag was raised on the island of Corfu as a result of resentment over the Greek executions.¹¹ This event demonstrates that civilians were, at the moment, more aligned with the policies of the United Kingdom rather than Greece. Other articles state that the King of Italy, in addition to the French government, was in disbelief over the trial and the possible execution of Prince Andrew. According to this article, the French Government had stated it was “prepared to do everything in its power to aid in any attempt to prevent further executions.”¹² On 3 December, the Chicago Tribune published an article on how foreign Greeks disapproved of the situation. According to the article, many Greek citizens who were residing in Italy had plans to organize battalions and return to

⁹ GEROLYMATOS, 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *The New York Times*, 3 December 1922, 4.

¹² *Ibid.*

Greece in an attempt to start immediate action against the rebels who had executed six of Greece's most influential people.¹³

Three days following the executions, Prince Andrew, brother of King Constantine, stood trial for his involvement in the failure of the Asia Minor campaign. Andrew was the commander of the second Corps in Asia Minor, and was accused of having ordered his men to retreat and not control the Turks. The United Kingdom and Spain were particularly upset over this trial, due to the fact that Prince Andrew was related to British and Spanish monarchs.¹⁴ Britain put considerable amount of pressure on Venizelos at the peace conference in Lausanne. He was found guilty but he was later exonerated due to lacking military experience and was banished from Greece. The prince and his family, including his son, who would later become Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh, were evacuated on the British cruiser, H.M.S *Calyпсо*. Two defendants at the trial received a sentence of life imprisonment.¹⁵

It has been argued by a number of historians that if British and French Foreign Ministers to Greece, Francis Oswald Lindley and Jean Jules Jusserand, had not intervened in Greece, a large number of royalists, supporters of King Constantine, would have been executed without trial by the Revolutionary Committee upon their arrival in Athens on 27 September. Furthermore, these two ministers managed to persuade the Revolutionary Committee to hold a trial for the accused, rather than shooting them on the spot.¹⁶

Throughout Europe and North America, there were major oppositions to the trial and the execution of the six men. This as seen through the thousands of newspaper articles on the topic. For two solid months, the events that were unfolding in Greece in late 1922 were seen on the front page of newspapers in the west. This in itself is significant, for it shows just how controversial this event was. These newspaper documents show the

¹³ "Greeks to Raise Fascisti Army." *The Chicago Tribune* Co, 3 December 1922, 1.

¹⁴ "Prince Andrew Exiled From Greece By Military Court." *The New York Times*, 3 December 1922, 1.

¹⁵ GEROLYMATOS, 17.

¹⁶ CASSIMATIS, 81.

respective nations views towards the incidents and what civilians and officials thought about the situation.

When the executions on the Trial of Six occurred, the western world was flabbergasted. The Washington Post dedicated a large portion of the newspaper to the incident. In one article, the writer draws parallels from the Revolutionary Committee to France's Reign of Terror under Robespierre. The article argues that justification for the execution of Gounaris and his colleagues on the basis that they knowingly concealed the danger involved in the return of King Constantine from the people is ill-founded. Gounaris came to power in Greece due to support from the civilian population and that "every voter knew that the repudiation of M. Venizelos meant the return of King Constantine with all its consequence. In this act the whole nation was knowingly the accomplice of M. Gounaris and the other ministers just executed."¹⁷

Throughout the Trial of Six, the world was particularly interested in other nations' responses to the event. Italy's views towards Greece were one nation that frequently appeared in newspapers, mainly in the United States and the United Kingdom. On 30 November *The Washington Post* published another article around the Pope's disapproval of the executions. In the article it states that the Vatican was protesting the Greek government as a result of the execution of former Greek ministers. As a result of the executions, Pope Pius ordered the Papal Nuncio, Maglione, in Berne to ask Venizelos at the peace talks in Lausanne to stop further executions of former public officials in Greece. In addition to this funeral services were held in Rome for the men that were executed.¹⁸ Maglione arrived in Lausanne two days later to speak with Venizelos.¹⁹

Another nation whose response to the trial was frequently seen in newspapers in Europe and North American was the United Kingdom, due to the fact that the United Kingdom was more active than any other nation in voicing their concerns. Since 20 November, the United Kingdom was doing everything they could to save the accused and began to break there

¹⁷ "The Terror in Athens." *The Washington Post*, 30 November 1922, 6.

¹⁸ "Pope Orders Protest Made Against Greek Executions." *The Washington Post*, 1 December 1922, 1.

¹⁹ "Vatican Seeks to stop Execution." *The New York Times*, 3 December 1922, 4.

relations with Greece. So much so that the Prime Minister of Greece complained to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Lloyd George, that Greece had been abandoned by her.²⁰ Also since this date, Sir Francis Lindley, British ambassador to Greece, was pushed by Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, George Curzon, to go as far to state that if men were to be executed in Greece, the British Government would consider it a judicial murder and as a result, would be forced to review its diplomatic relations with Greece. As Smith stated, “Curzon had instructed Lindley to make it clear to the Greeks that such a movement would be viewed by Britain with the greatest disappointment and could only have disastrous results.”²¹

On 21 November, the opening day of the Peace Conference in Lausanne, Lord Curzon met with Venizelos and urged him to intervene and save the lives of the accused. While at the talks, Curzon learned from cables from Lindley that the Revolutionary Committee did in fact have intentions to execute the men. As a result, Curzon sent Admiral Lord Gerald Talbot, a personal friend of Venizelos, to intervene. While Talbot was making his way to Greece, the Trial of the Six was coming to a close. The Revolutionary Committee sped up the rate of the speed of the trial in order to avoid outside pressures, such as from Talbot, which the leaders would have been informed about his intended arrival.²² As stated in the *New York Times*, “the fact that the trial has been accelerated is interpreted to mean that the revolutionary authorities wish to have judgment rendered before any outside influence can be brought to bear.”²³ On Monday November 27, the Revolutionary Committee swore an oath before the newly instated King George II. Gontas became the Prime Minister and Pangalos was instated as the new Minister of War. During that afternoon, Lindley made a final plea to dissuade the heads of state from their plans. According to reports, strong words were exchanged between the British and Greek governments.²⁴

²⁰ “Télégraphie d’Athènes au *Times*” en A. F. Frangulis. *La Grèce et La Crise Mondiale*, Vol 2 (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1926), 461.

²¹ SMITH, 263.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ “Prince Andrew Exiled From Greece By Military Court.” *The New York Times*, 3 December 1922, 1.

²⁴ SMITH, 326.

While Lord Curzon was busy negotiating peace talks with France, Italy, and Turkey in Lausanne on 28 November, he was informed that the men were going to be executed the next day. During tea break, Curzon spoke with Venizelos about the decision and Venizelos was apparently moved by his words, so much so that he wrote a message to Athens stating that while he was “careful to avoid intervening in the internal affairs of [Greece], nevertheless I regard it as my duty to affirm that the impression created will indeed be as Lord Curzon present it and to draw our attention to the fact that my position here will become extremely difficult.”²⁵ The message arrived too late to make the Revolutionary Committee to re-examine the case. In response to the executions, the British government relocated the British Ambassador to Greece, Lindley, to Oslo. Out of protest towards the Gontas government, the United Kingdom did not appoint the next ambassador to Greece, Sir Milne Cheetham, until after Gontas resigned and the Second Hellenic Republic was formed under Alexandros Papanastasiou in March 1924.²⁶

When it came time for Prince Andrew’s trial, the British were doing whatever they could to save the monarch; the British were willing to negotiate due to the fact that Prince Andrew was a blood relation to the British Monarchy. Around noon on Tuesday 28 November, Talbot went to the British embassy in Athens to have a series of long and secret talks with Plastiras and other Greek diplomats. In these talks, Plastiras promised that the Prince would not be executed but would however, be banned from Greece. Talbot was told that he could take the Prince and his family to safety in the H.M.S. *Calyпсо*. After the Prince and Princess were evacuated, Talbot returned to Athens to meet with four officials; Plastiras, Pangalos, Gontas, and Rentis, to stop further executions. At the time of the meeting, journalists Vlachos and Kampanis, Papoulas, General Constantinopoulos, and Constantinopoulos’ assistant were also facing possible executions. Needless to say, after the meetings the five people were released.²⁷

Lindley believed that that these executions would not have occurred if Venizelos had intervened. Eleftherios Venizelos was a distinguished Gre-

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 329.

²⁶ “Foreign Office, February 15, 1924” *London Gazette*, 29 February 1924.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 330.

ek revolutionary who served as Prime Minister of Greece from 1910 to 1920 and from 1928 to 1932. He represented Greece in the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and was seen as responsible for the outcome in the Treaty of Sèvres. Venizelos was a national hero and seen as “the maker of modern Greece” who had helped to bring the Megali Idea to life, which stretched over five continents.²⁸ There are a number of articles and books written about just how influential and well respected in Greece. In 1920, Vincent J. Seligman wrote a book on Venizelos and paints a good portrait of the man. In his book he states that Greece would not be the country it was without Venizelos. “For in a country which, as far as the public men are concerned, has a good many liabilities, and indeed may almost be said to be bankrupt, Venizelos is the one great national asset.”²⁹ In 1922, Venizelos was still a well respected Greek and had a lot of supporters, including General Pangalos. As a result, Venizelos could have had a huge role in preventing the executions. Lindley was one of the many British officials that Venizelos could have stopped the executions if he had wanted to.³⁰ This in itself would have damaged British foreign relations with Greece.

Over the two months of trials, the Revolutionary Committee, with a lack of government approval from Britain, turned to the American legislation. On 22 October, the government staged a public demonstration outside of the American embassy and presented the American ambassador to Greece, Jefferson Caffery, with a decree that stated that Greek citizens were in support of the revolution that was unfolding and furthermore wanted the abdication of King Constantine.³¹ It was also declared that Greece, in her time of need, should be supported by her friends and Allies. Caffery informed the State Department and suggested that the recognition of the new regime would opportune moment for the United States to enhance her influence in the Hellenic peninsula. As much as the United States would have liked to have had more influence in the Near East, this was not the way to do

²⁸ J. W. DUFFIELD. “Venizelos, Maker of Modern Greece” *The New York Times*, 30 October 1921.

²⁹ Vincent J. SELIGMAN. *The Victory of Venizelos* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1920), 185.

³⁰ SMITH, 329.

³¹ CASSIMATIS, 81.

it. For, if the United States decided to recognize the new Greek government, she would be risking her relationship with the United Kingdom. As Cassimatis states in his book *American Influence in Greece*, “a unilateral action by the United States at this critical point in time would have been a direct affront to Great Britain, upon whom the United States depended [on] for support [in] its policy in the western Hemisphere.”³²

As Greece’s foreign relations with the United Kingdom and France became strained, Plastiras looked to the United States’ State Department for help. The reason for why Plastiras turned to the United States was due to American relief organizations that were providing aid to the hundreds of thousands of people who were displaced by the defeat in Asia Minor. In a letter from Plastiras to Caffery, he wrote how Greece appreciated the aid the United States was giving to Greece and how every step would be taken to make sure the six men accused with the military defeat received a fair trial. Following a request made from the Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes, Caffery sent a letter back to Plastiras stating that if the executions took place, American aid for the refugees would stop.³³ Needless to say the executions took place and like the United Kingdom, removed their ambassador to Greece for two years. This was later reinforced when the United States Government issued a public statement the day following the executions, which stated the “indefinite postponement of American relations with the Government of Athens.”³⁴

The United Kingdom was not the only nation to change their foreign policy towards Greece after the executions; she was accompanied by nearly all of the European states in her condemnations. On 30 November *The New York Times* published an article stating that “Europe’s in horror... practically every legation in Athens, it is said, urged the Revolutionary Committee to try the prisoners before the ordinary courts and not by court-martial, point out that extreme measures were certain to alienate foreign sympathy from Greece in her present misfortune.”³⁵ In addition to this, Italian

³² CASSIMATIS, 82.

³³ CASSIMATIS, 83.

³⁴ FRANGULIS, 579.

³⁵ “Cabinet Restrains Ruler: George Tried to Prevent Executions of Greek Ex-Premiers.” *The New York Times*, 30 November 1922, 1.

Deputy Robert Galli wrote a letter to the Greek government wrote in protest, “whenever it may appear, strike out my name in sign of mourning, and my God, who gives men liberty and justice, not visit upon Greece this crime, which in the light of our civilization appears more horrible, more savage.”³⁶ Even the foreign ministers of Yugoslavia and Romania sent strong letters to the Greek government from the start of the trial and after the executions.³⁷ As one can see, the trial of six was a highly controversial topic which affected Greece’s relations with western nations.

The only major exception for a Western nation barely changing its foreign policy towards Greece is France, who kept her embassy fully intact in Athens. However, France’s unwillingness to impose harsh measures on Greece is not seen by French civilians. Many newspapers around France expressed their condolences towards the six men, who in their minds, were wrongfully convicted. In the prominent French newspaper, *Journal des Debates*, published the following letter “let us be sincere with ourselves. If a European court-martial had condemned and shot William II and his accomplices, would we have protested? Then how can we reproach the Greeks with having done that which we have demanded should have been done with the criminals of Germany?”³⁸ Through French newspaper clippings, it seems that the French public would have liked to of seen a change in France’s foreign policy towards Greece as a result of the executions.

There are a number of reasons for why a number of nations held a hard stance towards Greece, such as internal politics and the new notions of “international community” and “international interventions.” Most of the Western World had been greatly affected by the events of the First World War. Britain, France, and Italy had experienced high civilian and military casualties and were also, in addition to the United States, having economic difficulties. As a result, there was a significant amount of dissatisfaction with political governments following the First World War that governments feared of their demise. By having a strict foreign policy towards the Revolution

³⁶ “Italians are Indignant: Deputy Returns Greek Decorations—Press condemns killings.” *The New York Times*, 30 November 1922, 2.

³⁷ “Warnings To Greece; Rumania and Jugoslavia Take Steps to Protect Royalty.” *The New York Times*, 3 December 1922.

³⁸ CASSIMATIS, 86.

Community these governments were not only fighting against the executions of men in a foreign country, but were also making a political statement at home. Furthermore, the United Kingdom had even more reason to respond to the executions over other nations. Before 1914, the majority of Europe was ruled by monarchs who were related to King George V. By the end of the War, however, a significant number of monarchies fell. In March 1919, King George V instructed Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Lisle Strutt to escort the former Emperor Charles I of Austria and his family to Switzerland.³⁹ When Prince Andrew was in danger, King George V only naturally put pressure on the British government to try and prevent the execution of Prince Andrew and other politicians.

The ideas of an “international community” and “international intervention” originated with President Woodrow Wilson’s infamous Fourteen Points, in which on the final point stated the need for “a general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.” Woodrow’s points were presented at the Paris Peace Conference and, a mere six days after the Treaty of Versailles came into effect, the League of Nations was created as a result. By the end of 1919, 49 nations, excluding most notably the United States, had joined the League.⁴⁰ Through all of these nations voicing their opinions against Greece, who was a member of the League, they were reinforcing the ideals of the League and more importantly, acting as an “international community” that was determined to keep peace.

In early 2008, the grand-son of Protopapadakis asked for a retrial for the Trial of Six before the Criminal Court of Athens on the grounds that new evidence had emerged. The court voted three to two in favour of reopening the case. However, they gave the final to the Court of Cassation, the Supreme Court of Greece. On 20 December 2009, the case went under review in the Court of Cassation. On 20 October 2010, three out of five judges voted that the six men were innocent. The one piece of evidence that was highly influential in the outcome of the trial was a letter written by Ve-

³⁹ “Archduke Otto Von Habsburg.” *The Daily Telegraph*. 4 July 2011.

⁴⁰ F. S. NORTHEDGE. *The League of Nations: Its Life and Times, 1920-1946* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1986), 35-36.

nizelos, then Prime Minister, in 1929 to the leader of the opposition, Tsaldaris. The letter states that the men who were tried and executed in 1922 were not responsible for leading their country to catastrophe in Asia Minor. Venizelos later added that these six men would have wanted to see Greece succeed in the campaign, and that what the Greek government did was illegal.⁴¹

The executions of six Greek politicians as a result to the loss of Anatolia shocked citizens and governments in the West. This is seen through the thousands of articles on the subject that made the front page of newspapers; from Belgrade to London, from Toronto to New York. It affected foreign relations and the way Western nations, with the notable exception of France, viewed and interacted with Greece. The Trial of Six was such a major event in Greek history that it is still popping up in newspapers and faced a retrial eighty-eight years after the incident occurred.



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⁴¹ “Athooi oi ‘upaitioi’ tis Mikrasiatikis Katastrophis?” *News Time*, 26 June 2010.

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