

European Communities

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

1980 - 1981

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17 December 1980

DOCUMENT 1-727/80

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mr PANNELLA and Mrs BONINO  
pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of  
Procedure

on the legal and political persecution  
of the Greek newspaper 'AVRIANI'

PE 69.910



## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

### The European Parliament

- whereas the Greek Government clearly seems to wish to exercise control over the press by severely restricting the freedom of independent publications, hence interfering with the freedom of information, by means of the following measures:

1. granting interest-free loans and guarantees (the most recent of which was for 300 million Drachmae) to pro-government publications;
2. publishing the accounts of public undertakings in daily newspapers, at a cost of 750 million Drachmae, except in those less than a year old, hence excluding AVRIANI an independent daily published in Athens;
3. uniform price requirement for all newspapers, even if they run to no more than a few pages, thus discriminating in favour of the stronger papers, which, as a result of government help and advertising, run issues with many pages;
4. controlling the distribution of newspapers through two government agencies which impede the growth of and competition from 'unwelcome' publications; refusal of permission to set up a third, independent distribution agency;
5. failing to reform the press laws passed by the dictatorial regime in 1936; these laws authorize the issuing of warrants for the arrest of the directors of newspapers accused of offences relating to the expression of opinions and for a summary trial held on the same day, thus ruling out any possibility of arranging a defence;
6. sustained attempts to boycott AVRIANI, which has recently denounced a number of scandals involving government figures and their associates;

- whereas:

- AVRIANI has proved itself to be a diligent and accurate source of information that has made a significant contribution to the forces of democracy and the involvement of public opinion in political life;
- its director, Mr G. A. KOURIS, has been arrested many times because of his moralistic crusades and is to face a summary trial on 18 December on trumped-up charges of libel;
- Greece is to become a member of the Community in January 1981, and



the maximum possible freedom of information must be guaranteed throughout the Community,

1. Requests the Council and the Commission to approach the Greek Government with a view to obtaining an immediate end to all attempts to intimidate AVRIANI and its director in particular;
2. Requests the Council and the Commission to ask the Greek Government for assurances that it will grant and uphold absolute freedom of the press and will also repeal the repressive legislation of 1936;
3. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments concerned.

