

Attic Chronicle by Phocion

The mad house

The addresses of 49 dignitaries on peace and disarmament were really quite incidental to the occasion.

The Athens Conference for Peace and Disarmament on Jan. 31, sponsored and organized by Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou, was an exquisite occasion for the first notable fashion show displayed by the upwardly mobile, ambitious, and status-conscious ladies of Greece's new Socialist society.

Ladies whose soft fingers were once, in the distant past, testimonials of conscientious housewives who lacked washing machines, showed up at the "peace conference" with exotic coiffures, oil-dripping layers of eye makeup, long rows of cultured pearls hanging heavily from their necks, donned in garments which are supposed to be taken as "creations" and prepared to receive lavish compliments, admiring looks but—most of all—very much prepared for that much sought after and much dreamt of "unexpected," whatever the "unexpected" might be in the dreams of upwardly mobile ladies of Athenian society nowadays.

Professor Georgii Arbatov, basking in the Attic sun in the style inaugurated by Russian Ambassador Igor Andropov, was seen mingling graciously among the ladies, following Prof. John Kenneth Galbraith's clues for the proper execution of hand kissing. Wicked tongues insisted that Galbraith himself was trying to imitate Pierre Elliot Trudeau's hand-kissing style. More wicked tongues insisted that hand-kissing was the least of Trudeau's talents. Most wicked tongues intimated that Trudeau was more "unexpected" than the upwardly mobile

Athenian ladies dared hope.

Incidental to the grand social occasion was the presence of 49 notables from around the world brought to town by the enterprising Greek prime minister, acting like a proud, newly elected Boy Scout troop leader under the approving eyes of his wife Margaret, née Chadd, daughter of a founder of the Communist Party of Minnesota and ambadress of the Mondale machine in Greece. Our 49 notables droned for a few hours as the crowd around them buzzed incessantly, displaying a profusion of social graces.

When their task was mercifully over and the speeches ended, a joint communiqué was given to the press:

"We the participants of the Athens Conference for the Initiative of the Five Continents met today, Jan. 31, 1985 and exchanged views in the context of the New Delhi declaration regarding the best possible means and methods by which the Peace Initiative of the Five Continents will most productively realize its objectives. . . ."

"For this purpose we shall spare no effort in mobilizing the peoples of the world against the threat of nuclear holocaust. . . ."

The society ladies were most impressed with the charming wit of Georgii Arbatov, trying so meticulously to accustom himself to Mediterranean climes as to have earned the ladies' verdict that he is a very cute Russian indeed. Olof Palme also made a certain impression on the well-coiffured gathering, eager to learn if the Swedish premier ever was upset by his wife's tryst with Andreas.

Prime Minister Papandreou's press aide praised the "Latin Americans, precisely for their spontaneous and explosive temperament." Argentina's President Raul Alfonsín, representing the "temperamental Latin Americans," reciprocated: "I believe that Andreas Papandreou is the soul, the moving force behind this international movement for peace."

Andreas Papandreou, striking a momentary, uncharacteristically thoughtful pose, mused to himself, wondering how impressed Ambassador Igor Andropov might be with all this. The entire jamboree, for Andreas, was simply a little preparation to set the tone for his upcoming state visit to Moscow next week. Did Igor like it? Would Igor approve? It was for his ears, for his approval that Andreas had declared during the proceedings that Greece would unilaterally enforce a "Balkan Nuclear-Free Zone," that he would "remove the American nuclear warheads," regardless of what Bulgaria would do. Would Igor appreciate this?

Andreas idly observed other men around kissing *hands*. "I should have their luck," he mused, as he imagined the Russian's sizable posterior looming high above his head. Reportedly, Ambassador Andropov had turned his back to the Athens Peace Conference proceedings. He was preoccupied with more important tasks. He is an important link in the chain of command which is assigned to launch a terrorist bloodbath against Western Europe. He must make sure that what the conference participants pledged, i.e., "to spare no effort to mobilize the peoples. . . ." be fulfilled.

The next day, Feb. 2, the KGB launched a new bloodbath in West Germany, with the murder of Ernst Zimmerman.