

MEMORANDUM TO THE AMBASSADOR OF GERMANY MR.ANDREA KINDL

On April 6,1941,Germany invaded Greece.The occupation lasted until October 1944 and had the following consequences for our country and its people:

-The seizure and confiscation of food resulted in 300.000 deaths during the winter of 1941-1942 while another 300.000 died until the end of the occupation from starvation,diseases,massacres and executions.The population of Greece was reduced by 13.5%.

-The German armed forces destroyed 1770 towns and villages with 131 holocausts.The following six holocausts are mentioned indicatively:

1.The holocaust of Kalavrita (13 December 1943).The German armed forces executed 1460 civilians(males between 12-90 years old) and destroyed the town.

2.The holocaust of Distomo (10 June 1944).The German armed forces massacred 117 women,111 men and 53 children.The Swedish professor Sture Linner participated in the Red Cross Delegation in Greece ,drove a truck bringing food to Distomo on June 14.He describes that he entered "a village in flames,empty of life,utterly destroyed.Genitals cut and put in the mouths of the corpses.Women with cut breasts and crushed genitals..."

3.The holocaust of Vianno (14-16 September 1943) The German armed Forces killed 461 inhabitants,burned 10 villages and destroyed 980 houses.

4.The holocaust of Kommeno(16 August 1943).The German armed forces massacred 317 inhabitants that included 97 children and 119 women.

5.The holocaust of Kandanos(3 June 1941) .The German armed forces executed 300 men and razed to the ground the village.

6.The holocaust of Anogia (August 13,1944). The German armed forces destroyed 940 houses and killed 24 elderly and disabled persons.The destruction lasted 22 days.

A.These atrocities constitute the first debt of Germany towards Greece.It concerns compensations for the victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity and were awarded to Greece by the Paris Conference of 1946.The Hellenic Interparliamentary Committee estimated in 2016 that the debt for this compensation amounts to 107 billion euros without interest.With an interest of 3% this amount becomes today one trillion euros.In this estimate the 115 million marks given by the German government to certain categories of victims have been taken into consideration.

B.The second German debt towards Greece concerns war reparations for the destruction of the infrastructure of the country by the German armed forces.In particular the road and rail network were destroyed,ports,civil aviation ,the isthmus of Corinth,74% of commercial ships,95% of passenger ships were also destroyed.The Paris Conference of 1946 decided to

award reparations of 6.7 billion USD in 1938 values. This amount today with interest amounts to 595 billion euro. Germany has paid to Greece the amount of 20 million dollars.

C. The third German debt concerns the payment of the occupation loans on the basis of an intergovernmental conventional loan agreement. The total amount due is between 100 and 506 billion euro.

D. The fourth German debt concerns the return to Greece of the stolen cultural treasures. In 1946 a list describing 8.500 archaeological treasures and 460 paintings that were stolen by the German armed forces after having looted 87 archaeological sites was handed over to the German government. These items were never returned and are being displayed in German museums and private collections. These items must be definitely returned.

Mr. Ambassador,

There is no excuse for the continuing refusal of Germany to fulfill its obligations towards Greece. Germany has even invoked the 2+4 Treaty concerning the reunification of the two Germanies (Moscow 1990) by stating that this Treaty has totally resolved the issue of reparations. However the Scientific Committee of the Bundestag in a report published in 2019 admits that Greece has never resigned from its claims towards Germany. As far as the 2+4 Treaty is concerned the report mentions that "Reparations are not mentioned in the text of the Treaty. Greece, as a third country that did not participate in the negotiations of this Treaty, should have agreed in writing on the undesirable consequences that affected it."

We who are gathered here today in front of the German Embassy, request that Germany honors its debt towards Greece from the occupation and return the cultural treasures that were stolen. If not, then Germany will continue to be deprived of the moral authority to raise similar issues against states who might be committing similar crimes. The payment of German reparations to Greece could constitute a means for preserving peace since the future generations will realize that whoever violates the law is called upon to compensate and indemnify for the damage created. This idea is also mentioned by Homer in the Iliad three thousand years ago. (Rhapsody Γ, stanzas 455-461).

THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROTEST MEETING OUTSIDE OF THE GERMAN EMBASSY

6 APRIL 2024