

GR 350  
RESTRICTED  
FROM ATHENS 090909Z FEB  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 28 OF 9 FEB 81  
AND TO IMMEDIATE MADRID

RESTRICTED

Greece

DEATH OF FORMER QUEEN FREDERIKA

1. THE ANNOUNCEMENT ON 7 FEBRUARY BY THE GREEK GOVERNMENT THAT THEY HAD ACCEPTED A REQUEST BY THE FORMER QUEEN'S FAMILY TO BURY HER AT THE FAMILY GRAVEYARD AT THE TATOI PALACE OUTSIDE ATHENS GAVE RISE TO SHARP EXCHANGES WITH OPPOSITION PARTY LEADERS. THE ISSUE RECEIVED WIDE PUBLICITY IN THE WEEKEND PRESS AND RADIO UNTIL ECLIPSED BY THE TRAGEDY AT THE PIRAEUS FOOTBALL STADIUM ON SUNDAY EVENING AT WHICH ABOUT 20 PERSONS WERE KILLED.

2. ANNOUNCING PASOK'S OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION, PAPANDEOU SPOKE OF FREDERIKA'S ASSOCIATION WITH "SAD MEMORIES OF POLITICAL ADVENTURES AND DISRUPTIONS IN THE COUNTRY" AND DECLARED IT A SERIOUS POLITICAL MISTAKE TO REVIVE PAST CONFRONTATIONS WHEN BOTH THE COUNTRY AND DEMOCRACY NEEDED QUIET. PAPANDEOU LATER ADDED THAT THE MAJORITY OF GREEKS BELIEVED THE FORMER DYNASTY, PARTICULARLY FREDERIKA, RESPONSIBLE FOR POLITICAL ACTIONS WHICH UNDERMINED POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY AND LED TO THE DICTATORSHIP. BOTH THE EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR COMMUNIST PARTIES PREDICTABLY CONDEMNED THE DECISION LESS EXPECTEDLY, LEADERS OF THE CENTRE PARTIES, INCLUDING MAVROS AND PESMAZOGLOU, HAVE SPOKEN AGAINST IT ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT REVIVED PAST ANTAGONISMS AND RISKED POLITICAL DISTURBANCE.

3. RALLIS HAS DEFENDED THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION WITH DIGNITY ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS. GOVERNMENT SOURCES HAVE ALSO TAKEN THE LINE THAT IT IS THE RIGHT OF EVERY GREEK CITIZEN TO BE BURIED IN HIS COUNTRY AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT HAVE REFUSED PERMISSION.

4. BOTH RALLIS AND PRESIDENT KARAMANLIS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE SENT CONDOLENCES TO FREDERIKA'S FAMILY.

5. THE SPANISH EMBASSY HAVE TOLD US THAT FREDERIKA'S BODY WILL BE FLOWN TO GREECE ON 11 FEBRUARY, ACCOMPANIED BY QUEEN SOFIA AND THAT KING JUAN CARLOS WILL TRAVEL TO GREECE ON 12 FEBRUARY. THEY EXPECT THE FUNERAL TO BE HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY, BUT NEITHER THE EMBASSY NOR THE GREEK M.F.A. HAVE YET BEEN ABLE TO CONFIRM THIS. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, THE FUNERAL WILL BE A PRIVATE FAMILY OCCASION AND THE MILITARY AIRFIELD AT DEKELIA NEAR TATOI WILL BE USED BY VISITING MEMBERS OF THE FORMER QUEEN'S FAMILY.

SUTHERLAND  
LIMITED  
SEI  
NEWS 1)  
PCD  
CONSD

PS  
PS/LRS  
PS/PVS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERLUSON

COPIES TO:  
PS NO10 DOWNING ST,

RESTRICTED