

THE CELEBRATION OF 28TH OCTOBER 1940 AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Saturday, 15th/28th October 2017, the national celebration of 28th October 1940 was observed by the Patriarchate with a Doxology at the Catholicon of the All-holy Church of the Resurrection.

This Doxology was a means of thanksgiving to God for His help to our nation in its fight for freedom from the German Nazi Occupation in 1940, and a prayer for the repose of the souls of our ancestors who fought bravely and died in this fight for freedom.

The Doxology was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with co-celebrants Hagiotaphite Archbishops, Hieromonks and Hierodeacons, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos and the participation of many pilgrims from Greece, Serbia, Russia, Estonia, Bulgaria and locals from the Greek-Orthodox and Arab-speaking congregation of Jerusalem.

After the Doxology the Patriarchal Hagiotaphite entourage returned to the Patriarchate. There, His Beatitude addressed the guests as follows:

Your Excellency Consul General of Greece Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos,

Reverend Fathers and Brothers,

Noble Christians and pilgrims,

Today's national anniversary of 28th October 1940, is a great and marvelous work that the right hand of the Lord has accomplished in our days. For this reason, clergy and the

people came down to the All-holy Church of the Resurrection, where we praised in thanksgiving doxology our God and Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In addition, we prayed for the repose of the souls of all those who battled heroically and died like martyrs for the nation and the Country.

Undeniably the sacrificial battle of the Greeks was a battle for the defense of the natural and sacred moral values which rule the Greek-Christian spirit of the Greek soul.

This very Greek-Christian spirit is encompassed and projected by this anniversary of 28th October 1940. For this reason the narrative of the epic feats of 1940 should not be considered of minor importance to the brilliant historic commemoration of Hellenism in general and of the Greeks in particular.

It is also noteworthy that the racist ideology of Nazism and Fascism which was applied in practice during the Second World War in 1940, was the greatest insult of our century against the person and consequently against his Creator, namely God. Nowadays, the insult of Nazism is being demonstrated in a new form, that of Globalization, and the so-called new order, or new era.

Wars, disorder, regional disputes and conflicts are succeeding one another, religious fanaticism cultivates violence and terrorism and the deification of mammon under the pretext of financial dominance militates the peaceful co-existence of the peoples and their countries. And the leaders of this century connive social concerns and remain oblivious and indifferent.

The anniversary of 28th October calls all of us into spiritual alertness, namely the preservation and protection of the moral values of the most sacred consignment of our fathers and

brothers who sacrificed their lives for the sake of their religion and for their country.

Concluding let us cry aloud

Viva 28th October 1940!

Viva the pious nation of the Romans!

Viva Hellas!

Viva our Hagiotaphite Brotherhood!"

The Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos also addressed the people as follows;

Your Beatitude,

Most Reverend Archbishops,

Reverend Fathers,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Today is a day of honour, memory and responsibility for our Nation. We celebrate one of the most glorious pages of our contemporary history.

The historic NO to the fascist deadline of 28th October 1940 against the unconditional surrender of Greece and bestowal of its national sovereignty, symbolizes one grandiose unanimous decision of a people, who despite the recent hardship it endured, did not hesitate to raise itself once again and defend its freedom and national honour.

That NO revealed in the outmost categorical way the deep historic consciousness of the Greeks, the strong common realization of their glorious course through the centuries, the unsubstantiated consignment of their ancestors who have encouraged all along their love for their country, the strength the self-denial and the great feeling of pride, with

which they would rush to defend what is Holy and Sacred. The NO was precisely the denial of the Greeks to forget their history and live as an insignificant and subordinate nation.

The great historic event that we celebrate today underlined also the moral height and the strong feeling of righteousness of the Greeks. Due to this unmistakable guide they did not hesitate, not even for an instant, to oppose themselves against the exceedingly greater powers, who wanted to impose on the Greeks the arbitrary law of the powerful ones. The feeling of righteousness shielded the Greeks, who knowing only too well how to fight the righteous fights and being dominated by high morals, despite their small numbers, they defeated the bigger crowd that represented Nazism and Fascism.

Today the Greeks all over the world, honour those who fell and fought in the battlefields in Pindos, Macedonia, Crete, and elsewhere, in the years 1940-41. We honour those who contributed to the National Resistance and those who continued fighting against the intruders in the battlefields of World War II, in the Middle East and Europe, aground, in the air and at sea. We do not forget the thousands of innocent victims during the possession of the Nazis.

The active contribution of the Greek expatriates was crucial as well as precious on the heroic national movement that started with the NO of 28th October 1940, as it has likewise been for any other national movement. The same can be said for the contribution of those who volunteered in the Hellenic armed forces in order to defend the Greek territories and of those who fought alongside the allied troops, defending the ideals of freedom and conducing to the final victory and the liberation of the Country. The significant assistance of the expatriate Greeks in the Middle East and especially of the Jerusalem Hellenism has been chronicled historically, and Greece is always proud and grateful to them.

In the coiling effort of all the forces of the Nation, with

the aim of its moral and spiritual revival as well as its durability amidst many adversities, the Jerusalem Patriarchate, the Mother of Churches, has always been a special point or reference, a long term bastion of Orthodoxy and of the ecumenical values of Hellenism.

Today's anniversary is finally a day of responsibility; it urges us to consider the meaning of 28th October 1940 and its major symbolism for Hellenism today. The NO was expressed by people who fought because, just like today's Greeks, they wanted to live peacefully, free, with dignity and social righteousness. This was materialized thanks to the unbridled unity and togetherness the Greeks displayed, the patriotism, the national pride, their persistence and endurance.

It is a great responsibility for all of us to realize this message, to keep the spirit of 1940 alive, to be inspired by it and convey it to the generations to come.

Viva 28th October 1940! Viva Hellas!

From Secretariat-General

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