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*SOURCE Documentary.

The following is a translation of an article from the 19 July 1952 issue of Vima quoting a letter written by John Panopoulos, until recently Director of Police in the Ministry of the Interior.¹ The information is disseminated both for its own inherent interest, and to report on Panopoulos' activities in the matter.

"Vima, 19 July 1952, page 1:

"THE TURMOIL IN THE SECURITY CORPS

UNIFICATION OF THE POLICE WILL FAVOR COMMUNISM

LETTER OF MR. JOHN PANOPOULOS

"From John Panopoulos, Chief of City Police [sic] and until a short time ago General Director of the Ministry of Interior, we have received the following interesting letter on the question recently raised regarding the unification of the City Police with the Gendarmerie.

"Mr. Director,

"From a detailed investigation which I conducted I have ascertained that the public agitation on the subject of the unification of the two Security Corps is caused exclusively and solely by interested circles, who have been seized by a mania for disbanding the City Police, that is, through unifying them with the Gendarmerie. This mania has recently been aggravated by their mistaken notion that today, thanks to the turmoil in the Corps of City Police provoked by various administrative errors, suitable conditions have been created for putting their plans into action.

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"Regardless of the fact that the turmoil provoked in the Corps of the City Police bears testimony to the presence of moral soundness among its officers, the value of an institution is not judged by the failures of certain of its representatives or by the mistaken method used by the central service in coping with them, but by other factors which I do not think it necessary to explain here.

"In all branches of the state's organization errors are committed by employees, and particularly serious were those errors which provoked the recent uproar in the City Police. But no one ever thought of abolishing the services to which these employees belong. If, paradoxically, things had been otherwise, then many government services (among them the Gendarmerie), wherein many untoward things have happened and continue to happen, would have to be abolished. Fortunately, however, things are not the way these circles think. Most important of all, not all the officers of the Gendarmerie (that worthy Corps!), regardless of their theoretical views about the police system most advantageous to the state, share in these bizarre ideas.

"Nevertheless, since the public agitation which these few people have created is exceedingly dangerous to public security, I feel it necessary to tell them the following:

"First: The institution of the City Police is the creation of the greatest of the statesmen of modern Greece. For this institution to be abolished, it is necessary that a statesman greater than Eleftherios Venizelos govern the country, when he will replace the City Police with another more perfect institution, or it is necessary that the country be governed by a man who thinks that he surpasses Eleftherios Venizelos in greatness. Unfortunately I have no hope that the first is happening, and fortunately I have little fear that the second is occurring. In any case, the few men who are working for the abolition of the institution of the City Police do not appear to be destined by Divine Providence to play either of these two roles.

"Second: The institution of the City Police was the conclusion to which Eleftherios Venizelos came approximately thirty years ago, because the Gendarmerie-- as a result of its composition and its other duties--was not in a position to cope with organized crime in the large cities. If this conclusion was correct then, when the Communist movement hardly existed in our country, consider how correct it is today when the Communist revolution is fully developed!

"Third: The movement to unify the City Police with the Gendarmerie, meaning the real abolition of the City Police, regardless of its seriousness, constitutes (particularly at this moment) a clear element of fellow-traveling with Communism. If it is true, as it certainly is, that our Nation is in a state of war with Communism, then the threat of abolishing the City Police, already engaged in this war, removes from the men fighting against the enemy the most important factor in the desired victory, namely, their morale. While we have many examples to prove that many struggles have been won by morale only, we do not have any examples of a struggle won without morale. Therefore let those who are talking about the abolition of the City Police, even if they are only fooling, take into consideration the fact that the morale of the fighters, of all fighters, and consequently of the police, is astonishingly sensitive and can be adversely affected even by nonsense, and the battle can be lost and Communism can win. Then, instead of the unification of the Gendarmerie and the City Police, merely the corpses of the men and of the two Corps will be "united" in some

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wells (where they will have been thrown). This result will come with the inevitability of a law of physics, and those who are fooling about the unification of the two Security Corps will not be able to prevent it.

"Fourth: In that national front extending over the whole country against Communism the principal battle of the many being fought was long ago undertaken and waged by the City Police in the plain of Attica. For in the plain of Attica, where the City Police have concentrated nine-tenths of their strength, Communism has located its mind, heart, and soul. If we lose the principal battle in this place, we have lost indeed--even if we win all the other secondary battles in the rest of the country.

"Fifth: The unification of the two Security Corps is favored by men who are very suspect from a nationalist point of view. It is precisely those men who characterized the recent trial of the spies as a plot of the police (or, if you prefer, of the 'Super-police'!) against the democratic innocence of the Belogiannis. The game of these suspect men is being played willy-nilly by all those who strive with even the slightest effort for this unification. They must beware--the responsibilities which they are taking on their shoulders are tremendous.

"Respectfully,

[sgd] J. PANOPOULOS"

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25X1 1. [redacted] Comment: For details of Panopoulos' discharge from office, see [redacted]

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