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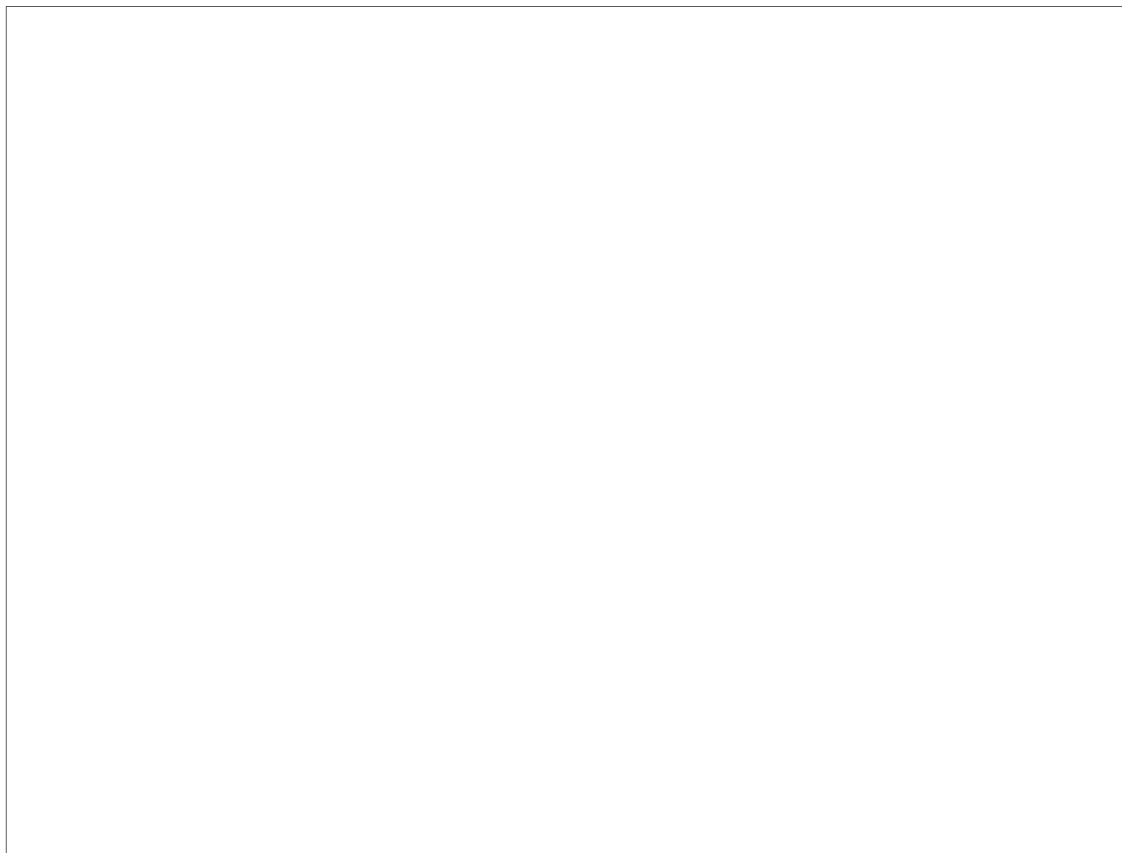
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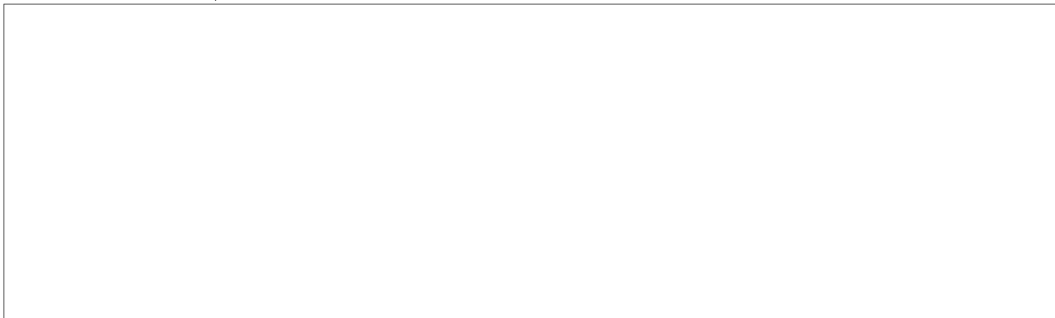
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SC No. 00180/73
28 July 1973

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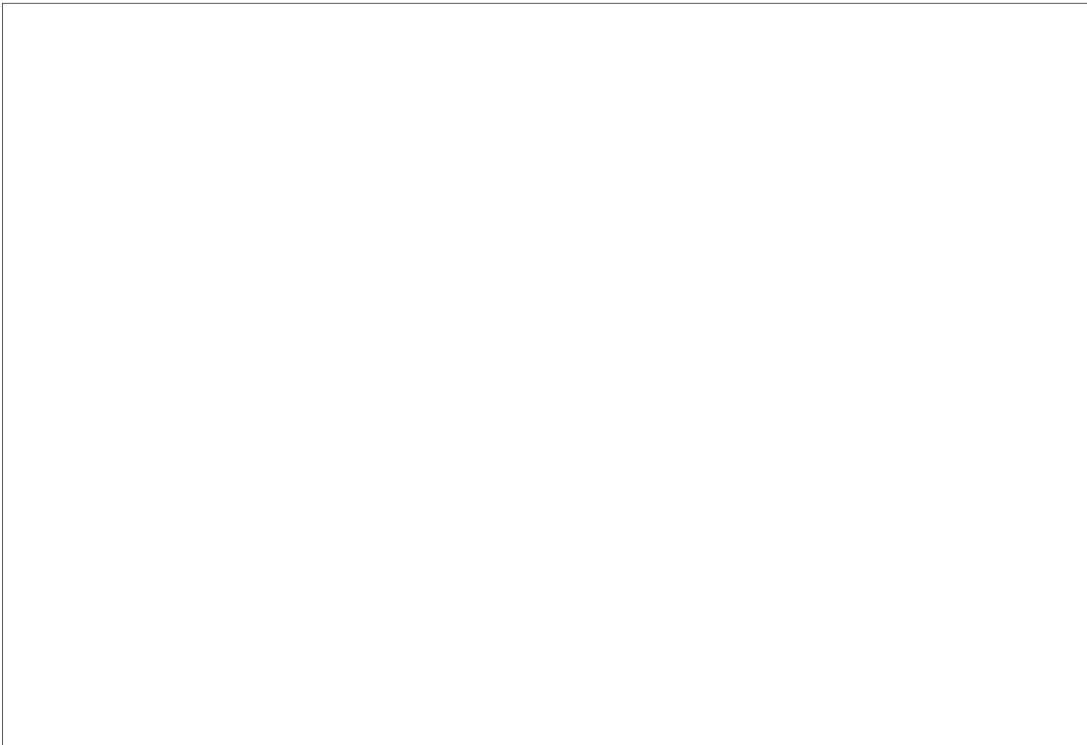
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GREECE: In address on eve of plebiscite Papadopoulos warns he will deal harshly with dissenters. (Page 4)



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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

GREECE: George Papadopoulos addressed a resentful, but probably resigned, Greek electorate yesterday, capping a heavy-handed campaign intended to assure ratification of a new republic with himself at its head.

Papadopoulos, increasingly estranged from his fellow officers in recent days, warned that he would deal harshly with divisions in the country. He promised that, if elected president of the new republic through a "yes" vote in tomorrow's plebiscite, he would:

- allow the formation of political parties,
- lift martial law and restore full individual freedoms,
- refrain from engaging in partisan politics as president, and
- implement the entire constitution and all laws of the country.

Papadopoulos promised, however, that the revolution--presumably his government--would continue even in the unlikely event that the republic were voted down.

Meanwhile, reports of unrest in the military continue. The US Defense Attaché in Athens characterizes the mood of the military as tense. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] recently warned Papadopoulos that many right-wing army officers are apprehensive about the course he has embarked upon. At heart, these officers are worried that Papadopoulos as president will usurp their own personal power, although their warning to Papadopoulos was that the displacement of the military regime by a republic would weaken the nation and disrupt its alliances.

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(The plebiscite could provide the issue Papadopoulos' military critics have been waiting for to move against him. They have been signaling their disaffection with increasing urgency, but they may have waited too long. The junta leader appears confident that they will not risk splitting the armed forces in a last-minute effort to block this step to supreme power.

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