

**GREECE TIES WITH PLO**

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- On the heels of the recent announcement that the new Socialist government of Greece headed by Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu has invited Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat to pay an official visit to Athens and that it intends to upgrade the PLO's information office there, Israel, in a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry here expressed its "astonishment" at the move and indicated hope that the Greek government would reconsider the move. Government circles however were not in point of fact surprised at Papandreu's move indicating they had

expected it since the new Greek Premier has been consistent and outspoken in his support for a PLO role in any Mideast solution. The Israeli statement recalled the Jewish people's long standing support for "Greece's struggle for freedom and political independence."

In his invitation, Papandreu asked Arafat to Athens "at your earliest convenience so that we may have a fruitful and personal exchange of views on matters of mutual interest, including the upgrading of your office here." A Greek government spokesman said no parallel gesture would be made for the Israeli diplomatic mission. "nor was such ever con-

sidered." Arafat immediately announced his acceptance "with great appreciation" and noted that Papandreu's letter to him had "included official recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people." The prior Greek government led by the National Democratic Party (conservative) had always declined to extend this far reaching recognition. Israel and Greece have never had full diplomatic ties. As a gesture to the Arabs, Greece has always kept the ties at the level of "diplomatic representatives."

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