



Protest letters about education problems faced by Greek children in Germany

Problems relating to the premises housing the Greek Elementary School in Wuppertal are adding to the problems facing the education of Greek children in Northern Rhine Westphalia and those created by the unfortunate purchase of a building in Dusseldorf with the aim of accommodating the Greek elementary school in that city. During a lesson on August 25 in the second grade of the Greek Elementary School in Wuppertal, the overhead light and pieces of the ceiling fell in the classroom.

A few days later, on September 9, a 3-member team from the School Buildings Organisation came from Athens to check the damage and to decide whether the building was habitable. The examination showed that – at the very least – the premises presented many serious problems. Letters have been written on the issue to bring the matter to the attention of the Greek Education ministry.

Fox film studio head Gianopulos in Athens

"If we can create talent, we can create the best movies as well," Fox Filmed Entertainment co-chairman and CEO Jim Gianopulos stated Monday in a press conference in Athens.

He pointed out that Greece can develop a more robust film industry by releasing quality pictures with a strong Greek identity that can become box office hits both in the domestic and international markets.

He also underlined that it is difficult for American films to be shot entirely in Greece and the European Union, in general, because of the high production costs.

Later in the evening, Gianopulos will give a lecture at Athens' Megaron Hall on the subject of "Hellenism and Hollywood: From Aristotle to Alexander (Payne)", while on Tuesday morning he will participate in a roundtable discussion at the Greek Film Archive Foundation.

Gianopulos, a Greek-American, attended a roundtable discussion at Thessaloniki's John Cassavetes Theater on Sunday, held within the framework of the city's 50th International Film Festival (TIFF).

His visit to Thessaloniki and Athens comes within the framework of the Fulbright Program "Great Ideas" incentive, underway in cooperation with the US embassy and with the support of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

"Ajami" wins Golden Alexander at 50th Thessaloniki International Film Festival

The 50th Thessaloniki International Film Festival came to an end on Sunday night with the closing ceremony and the presentation of awards.

The top prize, the Golden Alexander for Best Feature-Length Film, was awarded to the Israeli-German production "Ajami" ("Crossroads of life") by Scandar Copti and Yaron Shani. The award was presented by German film director Werner Herzog who, it was announced during the Festival, will also be the president of the critics committee at the 60th Berlin Film Festival. The award is accompanied by a cash prize of 40,000 euros.

The special Jury award, the Silver Alexander (25,000 euros), went to the Romanian film "Medal



of Honor" by Calin Netzer, while its leading actor Victor Rebengiuc received the Best Actor Award.

The Best Director Award was presented to Rigoberto Perezcano of Mexico for his film "Norteadó" ("Northless").

Copti and Shani also shared the Best Screenplay Award with Tudor

Voican for "Medal of Honor".

The Best Actress Award went to Ruth Nirere for her performance in the Belgian-French film *Le jour ou Dieu est parti en voyage* ("The Day God Walked Away").

Lastly, the Artistic Achievement Award went to the film "Saraméul Chatseumnida" ("Missing Person") by Seo Lee of S. Korea. The International Thessaloniki Film Festival has, since 1992, striven to present the most innovative independent films from around the world, and has evolved into one of the Balkans' primary showcases for the work of new and emerging filmmakers.

The films competing in this year's Festival will be screened over the next two weeks in 17 cities throughout Greece.

Xenophon frustrated in Scientology pursuit

THE Church of Scientology is denying claims of a cover-up by Nick Xenophon, while the senator remains frustrated in his call for a parliamentary inquiry into the religion.

Yesterday Stephen McBride, whose Scientologist brother committed suicide two years ago, travelled to Canberra to plead with the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, to order an investigation of the church.

A coroner's inquiry into his 2007 death found that Edward McBride had taken out a \$20,000 loan to pay for his Scientology courses. In the days before he died, the Defence Force officer was contacted by church members 19 times. And against the wishes of police, the church sent files on Mr McBride to the US where they remain out of reach.

"The bombardment of 19 telephone messages backed him into a corner with no room to breathe," Mr McBride said.

"We've been through hell the last



two years - please don't let my brother's death be in vain." But Senator Xenophon and the Greens have so far been unsuccessful in their calls for an inquiry.

The Opposition has signalled it would not support an inquiry, and it is understood the Government is cool on the idea.

"It doesn't seem the numbers are there yet, but I will continue to build my case," Senator Xenophon said.

One concern for the Government is the senator's call to challenge Scientology's tax-exempt status because it is a religion. The Government would be wary of prescribing what religions are acceptable.



Landmark Book on Greeks of Australia to be Presented in Sydney

A landmark text in Greek and English on the Greeks of Australia is to be presented at Sydney University this December. The book is a republication of the book 'Life in Australia's first published in 1916, the first book published in Greek in the country. It is an invaluable chronicle of the part played by Greeks in Australia's history and culture but also a unique source of facts on issues such as Australia's climate, the Aborigines, and the gold rush, to name a few. The republication is the culmination of copious efforts by Aggelos Notaras, James Prineas and George Poulos. In it the author of the book also admits that it would have been easier to explore the South Pole than to determine the identity of the first Greeks to arrive in Australia.