Para 1 From next Saturday June 2 up until August 2 begins the gradual implementation of the transitional order of the new law for aliens (N2910/20001 - FEK 91/A/-2.5.2001 "Entry and stay of aliens in the Greek state. Acquisition of Greek citizenship by naturalisation and other orders."). It seems the law does not refer at all to EC citizens, nor to any kind of currency-bearing tourist.

Para 2 The proclaimed aim of the government is the systematic (see below for the meaning of this term) integration into the community of one part of the imported labour force - after a tough decade of economic exploitation and ruthless hunting down of "illegal immigrants".

Para 3 A decade stigmatised by ‘random firing of official weapons’, dismemberments in minefields, drownings on the open sea, frostbite in the mountains along the borders, unjust imprisonments, deportations, lynchings, killings over a watermelon etc.

Greek Tradition
Para 4 Perhaps for the first time, Greek society in the main, seems truly ready to accept (and welcome) the alien workers, no longer as a "historical accident" but as a dynamic factor in development and prosperity. An important role in the shaping of the favourable climate has undoubtedly been played by the re-awakening of the union movement, which managed, using the excuse of the social security issue, to convince labour supporters that the immigrants are like us when we were forced to migrate to the factories and mines of rich countries, trying to change our fates.

Para 5 It is positive that in today's consensus the rabble-rousers of xenophobia have been ostracised. The few cries that were heard - after the issuing of the circular by Vasso Papandreou about the implementation of the new law - from the right wing opposition, fell into the void.

Para 6 Monstrous statements like "a national crime", "incalculable religious and national consequences for Greece" ('Adezmeftos Typos' by Rizos and 'Apoyevmatini' 8.5.02) have essentially facilitated the government's passing of the law, creating the impression that the country was moving towards a progressive solution to the immigration issue.

Para 7 The above is the relatively good news. Unfortunately, there is also bad news. Law 2910 does not aim to solve most of the problems of immigrants. It considers both the immigrants themselves and the need that brings them here a problem. It regards them suspiciously from start to finish, putting all those who managed to be found officially acceptable into the labour market compulsorily into the community's "second gear"; "legal" but without many of the rights of the native born, and always ready to be got rid of if it is required by the national interest (in regard to public health, order, national security but also economic circumstances).
Para 8 Regarding the "illegals", whom it seems will continue to make up the overwhelming majority of immigrants, there is no doubt; for them the Greek constitution ceases to exist.

Para 9 Working against them are all the available means of oppression with the addition - as provided by Article 78 - of the special Border Patrol and Immigration Control, which from now on "can be set up chiefly at border prefectures or adjacent prefectures abutting them or on islands found near the sea borders of the country, as well as in any other prefecture where illegal settlement and employment of aliens has increased" (which means everywhere)!

Para 10 We have already seen the results: intensified barbarism and increased profits in the grey zone of the economy of urban centres, the country and resort areas.

Para 11 Inspired it seems by the vision of a powerful Greece, the legislator is working at putting together a complicated state mechanism for control and punishment of the foreign worker – and of all those who do not report him to the authorities, if he does not comply with all the conditions.

Para 12 Even if it is without substance (and therefore probably impracticable) the immigration management plan displays a transparent internal logic which is painstakingly served by Article 18 of the law.

Para 13 Its central idea is the proper and correct entry of working hands into places, positions, and at times which will be decided by the state, as the implementer of the interests of the forces of the market it represents! You have heard right, freedom of movement (geographical and profit-seeking) for capital, but no freedom for the people who work.

Heading Notional System
Para 14 # In Article 19, a notional mechanism is proposed and described for recording the needs of the economy and another parallel mechanism for supplying ‘work permits’ to aliens – exclusively for ‘positions not able to be filled by locals’ in a way which will satisfy Greeks...

End of newspaper page – story continued overleaf

PAGE 2
…from the entire political spectrum. From the extreme right which has put forward the well-known populist argument ‘foreigners are taking our jobs’ - to ‘leftist' nationalists, supporters of a state-run the national economy; these all more or less come together under a common ‘national ideology’, a general umbrella supporting ‘national sovereignty’ against the Others.

Para 15 In this particular case, the Others, economic refugees, are obliged, in accordance with our self-evident national myths, to behave in accordance with the discriminatory regime decided on by the locals. That means we, as the collective identity ‘national boss’, decide the extent of the rights of others, ‘those in our service’.
Para 16 # In the same foundational article the responsibility of permit-giving (work and residence) is transferred to the prefectural and local authorities (always under the watchful eye of Social Security and the Ministry of the Interior), so that under the pretext of decentralisation and democratic process, there will be achieved from now on a wider consensus in ‘operation clean-up’ and in (self) regulation of the local ‘black market’ in labour.

Para 17 Let us suppose that in fact the regional immigration committees, which will be established under presidential decrees, succeed (with the participation of OAED, the police and employers) in measuring their needs per ‘head’ of migrant. From this point onwards begins an unbelievable adventure, searching for them on the international market through the employment offices to be established in Greek consulates.

Para 18 With the central figure of the consul, whom it is assumed will be in constant communication with prospective employers in Greece and with all new procedures (local and central), procedures are proposed for conditional approval of the immigrant, so complex and time-consuming that they are guaranteed to only ever be applied selectively.

Para 19 Suffice it to say that the Greek boss, submitting his application to the prefecture for the importation of certain aliens (which he has selected through the official channels) he is obliged to submit a franked bank cheque of a sum at least equal to three months’ wages for an unskilled worker to cover the costs of settlement or deportation to the country of origin.

Para 20 Moreover, however, even if the immigrant manages to get the conditional approval and his work permit reaches the consul office from some prefecture and so subsequently guarantees – if the consul and the border authorities wish it (Article 7) – a visa, again its not clear if he will manage to get legal status.

Para 21 # Upon reaching Greece, he has to embark on a new procedure to get a residence permit, 2 months before his entry permit into the country expires. (Article 21) His application to the local council and the shire comes with so many requirements … it is a virtually impossible task.

Para 22 We will let the recent memo from the Interior Ministry speak for itself: “1. A copy of his passport with a valid entry authorisation. Attention. Entry authorisation must be for a specific job. 2. Two colour photographs. 3. A receipt for fees paid, according to specifications of Article 71 of the law, supplied by the Office of State Revenue. 4. A validated photocopy of work permit supplied by the appropriate office of the local government and prefectural authority. 5. A validated photocopy of the contract for the specific job. In this case, the appropriate office will have received a copy of the work permit from the prefecture. 6. Verification for Social Security that he is insured by for work accident cover. The insurer can be public or private. 7. Health certificate issued by a Greek State Medical Centre, which will ensure that he is not suffering from any illness which is threat to public health. Attention. Expenses will be carried by the alien. 8. Simple declaration by the alien in which he will give his residential address. If the declaration is false then the sanctions of Article 54 Para 4 of this law will apply. Once the file arrives at your department it is essential firstly to correspond with the area Police
Command to ask about this particular alien, whether there is any relevant record concerning public order and security in the country (…) Once this communication with the Police has occurred, it is compulsory to invite him to an interview before the Immigration Committee (…) After the interview, and after the relevant minutes have been written, the responsible department will issue the draft decision without being obliged to follow the recommendation of the Immigration Committee. The residence permit is issued by decision of the General Secretary for the region for a period of one year and on… the completion of tax requirements of the alien (Article 22).

Para 23. At this point, we suggest that you each do this test: Imagine arriving poor in a foreign country where nobody speaks your language. In a country where the state authority is not known for its anti-bureaucratic spirit, its wealth or its humanity. You are dead tired from working for a demanding boss who has the law and security services on his side. You live in substandard accommodation, you try to save money to send to your relatives back home. And you have to face the never ending struggle dictated by the law – so that you can hope for a better tomorrow. You probably won’t make it. You probably won’t find the necessary lawyers, investors/ backers and friends to support you. You’ll pack up and with head hanging you’ll leave. Or if you have the guts, you’ll work illegally, until someone, perhaps even your own boss, turns you in.

Page 3

Heading Modern Slavery

Para 24 The new law divides migrants into categories according to strict classification criteria. Artists and athletes are facilitated for obvious reasons; investors, business executives, members of company boards of directors with proven usefulness to “our national economy” go through a different process, away from the plebs.

Para 25 In a certain section (Article 37 Para 4 e d g & d) the Foreign Ministry has the right to legalise (without the sadistic processes we described earlier) ‘alien academics who have been specially recognised in research and in their field’, also ‘alien professionals in new technologies, particularly information technology’. See how a “powerful Greece” will now import brains following the tradition of imperialist countries.

Para 26 *Key to the new law is Article 24 regarding seasonal work by aliens. This is where in the immediate future the attention of the state and the joint interests of the agriculture industry will be concentrated. This is how a system of extreme exploitation of aliens will be instituted.

Para 27 We do not have the space to deal with the section on deportation, detention and unlawful sanctions. We note only Articles 50 and 53, which, contrary to other European countries, criminalise illegal entry and residence (punished by at least 3 months imprisonment and a fine of 500,000 dr). In Articles 51 and 54, the mask falls: the newly emerging social consensus and humanism has been criminalised.

Para 28 From now on, public services, the legal face of state justice, self-determination, social welfare and social security organisations “must not give their services to aliens who do not have entry or residence permits or generally cannot prove they are legal residents”. The same obligation is imposed on hospitals and clinics, except if the ‘illegal alien’ is near death or under-age. Anyone there who dares to help immigrants without
papers ‘will be severely punished according to the penal code for dereliction of duty’ (Article 51).

**Para 29** # 3 months imprisonment and fines of 500,000 up to 1,000,000 dr. are foreseen (Article 54) for all who help and do not give illegal immigrants up. It is forbidden to rent them homes, to help them live, to offer them hospitality. If someone reports us as hindering police investigations into locating, arresting and deporting illegal immigrants, the penalties increase. Especially for hoteliers and managers of hospital and clinic managers, who are obliged to inform the police of admission or release of ALL aliens (with or without papers) who go through their establishments. … We wonder if the newly established and much advertised independent authorities for Privacy of Information, Human Rights and the Council for Refugees have read this law….