



October 22, 2009

President Michael K. Young
University of Utah
201 Presidents Circle Room 201
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

Dear President Young:

On behalf of the nationwide membership of the American Hellenic Institute(AHI), I write to strongly urge you to reconsider allowing the forthcoming so-called “7th Macedonian-North American Conference on Macedonian Studies” to take place on the campus of the University of Utah in Salt Lake City on November 5-9, 2009. By allowing this conference to take place on such a prestigious and publicly funded campus of the University of Utah, you are running the risk of being scrutinized for endorsing a conference whose sole purpose is to promote historical revisionism and distortions with regards to the Greek history of Macedonia.

This can be illustrated by reviewing some of the conference topics and speakers which include such topics as “Alexander the Great and Mythic Homelands” and presenters such as revisionist academics, Professor Emilija Crvenkovska, of the University of Skopje and who is funded by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and professor Loring Danforth who has written a number of revisionist history books that questions Greek historical facts relating to Macedonia from ancient to modern and who adheres to Marshal Tito’s falsehoods and revisionist claims.

While I understand the concept of academic freedom, please be advised that the only speakers included on the panels are those who are promoting the propaganda emanating from FYROM. Under the guise of a university, controversial presentations such as this would be best served to include diverse points of view. Further, I would appreciate knowing who is funding this conference at the University of Utah.

Since antiquity, the name Macedonia has referred to a geographical region, not to a nationality. Macedonia was part of the ancient Hellenic world much like Sparta and Athens. Its population worshipped the same Hellenic Gods, spoke the same Hellenic language and participated in the Olympic Games which, at the time, were open to Greeks only.

When Marshal Tito fashioned the puppet “Socialist Republic of Macedonia” from the southern Yugoslav province of Varsdarska-Banovina in December 1944, he did so to foment disorder in northern Greece in furtherance of his plan to communize the Balkan Peninsula and gain control of the key port city of Thessaloniki. “Macedonian” nationalism was a product of Tito’s fabrications.

In December 1944, the United States vigorously opposed the use of the name "Macedonia" by Tito. Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., in a Circular Airgram(Dec. 26, 1944) stated:

"This Government considers talk of Macedonian 'nation', Macedonian 'Fatherland', or Macedonian 'national consciousness' to be unjustified demagoguery representing no ethnic or political reality, and sees in its present revival a possible cloak for aggressive intentions against Greece." " The approved policy of this Government is to oppose any revival of the Macedonian issues as related to Greece."

Today, FYROM continues to provoke Greece, usurping history which has been Hellenic for thousands of years. Actions over the years such as distortion of geographic maps, naming its airport "Alexander the Great," revisionist textbooks in schools, and inflammatory comments by top government officials, and general hostile propaganda, encourages new generations in FYROM to cultivate hostile sentiments against Greece.

There is no separate "Macedonian" ethnic group. The ancient Macedonians were Greeks, as all historical and archaeological evidence demonstrates. Today, the breakdown of population estimates in the FYROM region vary between 25-40 percent Albanian, up to 10 percent Greek, 10 percent others, and the remainder 40-55 percent are Slavs.

Enclosed, please find a copy of letter to President Barack Obama dated May 18, 2009 and signed by 200 classical scholars, supporting historical truths relating to Macedonia. Please be aware the on-line support for this letter has now grown to 350 scholars.

Does the University of Utah at Salt Lake City wish to be a willing accomplice to distortion of history?

By allowing this conference to occur on your campus, the University of Utah will be aiding and abetting FYROM's irredentist propaganda against Greece and distorting historical truths.

Thank you for your consideration regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Larigakis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nick" being more prominent and the last name "Larigakis" following in a similar style.

Nick Larigakis

Enclosure