

For Greece: More Tyranny

The drastic new press law in Greece will surprise only those who had remained innocent enough to believe that the ruling colonels intended at some distant date to keep their promises to restore freedom and democracy in that unhappy land. There cannot be many such left after the latest bizarre round of zigging and zagging that began Oct. 3.

On that date, the junta announced with fanfare that it was lifting press censorship after enforcing it strictly from the first hours of the military coup in April, 1967. Simultaneously, with this supposed restoration of freedom, however, newspaper editors were handed a long list of forbidden subjects, the effect of which was to keep severe censorship fully in effect.

Now comes the new code of 101 articles designed to "cleanse and discipline" the press. Under the code, an editor convicted of inciting sedition—as the junta defines it—could be given a term ranging from five years to life.

An article deemed likely to jolt public confidence in the economy could bring six months' imprisonment and a fine of more than \$3,000. Even an article or cartoon believed to have rekindled political passions could mean jail and a fine.

As usual, it remained for the regime's crack-barrel philosopher, Brigadier Patakos, to relate this Draconian measure to the junta's plans for a new Greece. Asked why it was so severe, he replied: "Severity is the mother of justice and freedom."

In fact, the offspring of the press law can only be tyranny, the end product of nearly every action the bewildered colonels have taken in their clumsy attempts to enforce order, insulate themselves from criticism, and postpone their inevitable day of reckoning at the hands of the Greek people.