9 Σεπτεμβρίου 2009

What happened on 6-7 September 1955? (With photographic documents)

Ξένες γλώσσες / In English



Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I of Constantinople inside the ruins of the destroyed Orthodox church of Saint Constantine, Istanbul.

Supporting the views of Democratic Party, Istanbul Express Newspaper was owned by Mithat Perin, editorial director of that time was Gökşin Sipahioğlu. “Our father Atatürk’s house has been bombed” made the headline of the newspaper’s second issue. On 6 September 1955 290,000 issues were printed, exceeding the usual newspaper circulation of 20,000 papers by far. Members of the Cyprus Turkish Association started to distribute the issue all over Istanbul to agitate the people.

Due to reports from eyewitnesses, the riot started from a place in Pangaltı, nowadays the location of Ramada Hotel owned by a Greek citizen. In 1955 this was the place of popular localities such as the ‘Haylayf’ pastry shop. The riot started with attacking Haylayf pastry shop at 7.00 pm. From here the attacks spread all over Istanbul and all over the country.

Years later journalist Fatih Güllapoğlu interviewed retired general Sabri Yirmibeşoğlu about the Istanbul Riots. Yirmibeşoğlu described the attacks by saying “It was an excellent special warfare operation and it reached its goal.” In those days the Greek authorities announced that the bombings in Thessaloniki were a provocation organized by the Turkish state. Oktay Engin, scholarship student at the Thessaloniki Faculty of Law and agent of the National Intelligence Agency (MİT), and Hasan Uçar, tipstaff of the consulate in Thessaloniki, were arrested in regards with this event. After some time in detention Engin and Uçar were released because of the immunity of consular officials. Later on, Engin was appointed to important tasks in MİT, progressed quickly through the different administrative levels of the state and was promoted to the Governorship of Nevşehir in 1992.

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