

shooting vs shooting

DYING FOR THE TRUTH

a documentary by **Nikos Megrelis**

ODEON & FALIRO HOUSE PRODUCTIONS
present a documentary by
CL PRODUCTIONS, FILM IN MIND PRODUCTIONS
in co-production with
NEO MINIMA, GREEK FILM CENTER & ERT
DYING FOR THE TRUTH
concept by NIKOS MEGRELIS
directed by EIRINI VACHLIOTI
script adaptation by GIANNIS MAROUDAS



FALIRO HOUSE PRODUCTIONS



NEO MINIMA



with the support of International Federation of Journalists



**“One dead journalist,
every 5 days ...”**



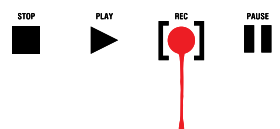
The war in Iraq has been the bloodiest war in history for media professionals. From the beginning of the invasion in 2003 until March 2008, more than 270 deaths have been reported and many more men and women have suffered injuries. In comparison, during the twenty-year war in Vietnam, 63 journalists were killed.

The film – documentary “Dying for the Truth”, presents a group of astonishing stories from the war in Iraq; it follows a journalist’s journey in today’s Baghdad and narrates the story of a mother who seeks an answer to the question of why her son was killed when his only weapon was his camera.

“Dying for the Truth” reveals unknown sides to the facts, the responsibilities of governments, the atrocities committed by fanatic islamic factions, while simultaneously displaying unique examples of courage, altruism and humanity that stood out amidst the horrors of war.

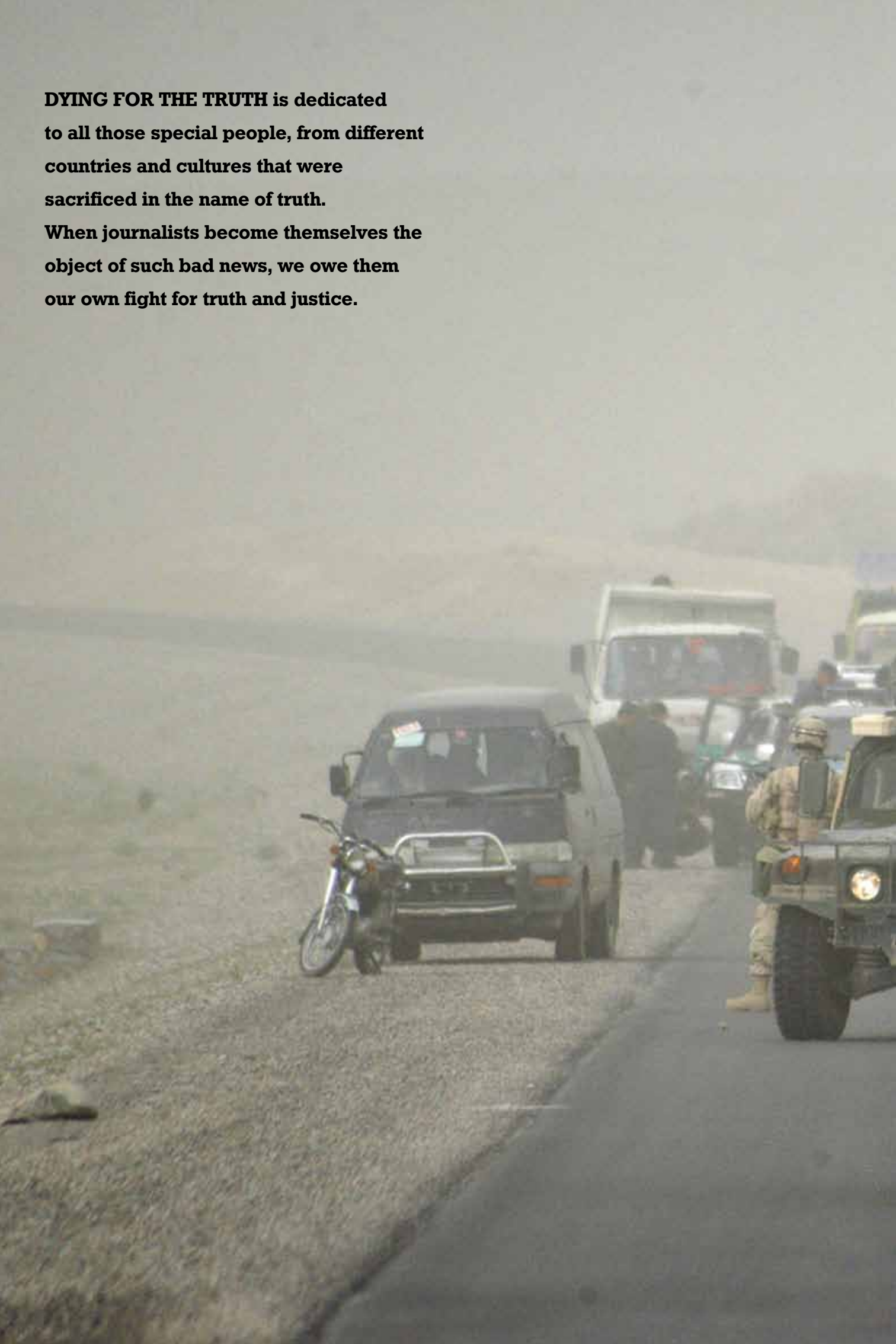


- **Why was it that fundamental human rights were so fiercely abused in Iraq?**
- **Why are journalists being targeted from both combating sides?**
- **How is journalism being used as a means of propaganda?**
- **What is the ultimate cost of objective journalism?**



DYING FOR THE TRUTH is dedicated
to all those special people, from different
countries and cultures that were
sacrificed in the name of truth.

When journalists become themselves the
object of such bad news, we owe them
our own fight for truth and justice.





The Stories

A day in life and death of a reporter

April 8 2003, Palestine hotel, Baghdad

Jose Couso & Taras Protsyuk

It is the 21st day of the invasion in Iraq.

The American forces invade Baghdad.

At 11:59 an American tank hits the Palestine, the hotel in which all foreign correspondents and media workers are gathered.

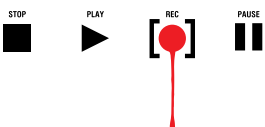
The bombshell kills Spanish cameraman of Telecinco, **Jose Couso**, 37 years old and 35 year old Ukrainian cameraman of Reuters, **Taras Protsyuk**, while three more journalists are injured. The official American statement mentions that the tank responded to fire it received from the Palestine hotel – a story that is contradicted by many eye-witnesses. In any case, the American forces had to be aware of the fact that the Palestine hotel was the headquarters of journalists. The American authorities refused to carry out independent investigations on the matter and as a result none of the people responsible were brought to trial.



April 8 2003, "Al-Jazeera", Baghdad

Tareq Ayyoub

On the same day, a little earlier in the morning, American aircrafts bomb the Al-Jazeera offices in Baghdad, despite the fact that its coordinates were known to the Americans. The Palestinian correspondent, journalist of the Jordan Times, **Tareq Ayyoub**, is killed, while many of his colleagues are injured. Al-Jazeera accused the American forces for deliberate criminal action; the British Daily Mirror published a memo from a Blair – Bush meeting, where the latter is said to have suggested bombing Al-Jazeera in Qatar.



October 30 2004, “Al-Arabiya”, Baghdad

7 dead

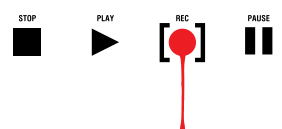
A vehicle packed with explosives below the offices of “Al-Arabiya” news channel takes the lives of 7 people, 5 of which were news station personnel. The next day, an unknown until that point terrorist group, the “Jihad Martyrs Brigades of Iraq”, claimed responsibility for the attack through an internet post. The statement accused the television station for cooperating with the Americans and their allies, and threatened to kidnap and slaughter any journalists cooperating with the enemy.



August 20 2004, Al-Najaf

Enzo Baldoni

On August 20, Italian journalist **Enzo Baldoni**, 56, correspondent for magazine *Diario* and his guide, Ghareeb, disappear as they return from Najaf, while on a humanitarian mission. A few days later, the “Islamic Army of Iraq” assumes responsibility for Baldoni’s abduction and requests the retreat of Italian soldiers from the area. The Berlusconi government does not accept the ultimatum. Enzo’s daughter and friends try to publicly demonstrate that Baldoni has been a conscious pacifist and volunteer of the Red Cross. On August 26, his captors send a video to Al-Jazeera broadcasting his death, which the station did not air out of respect for his family.



February 20, 2005 Mosul

Raeda Wazzan

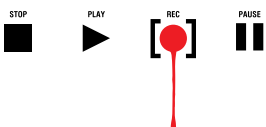
On February 20, 2005, armed men covered in hoods, abduct the 35-year-old **Raeda Wazzan** in Mosul, a newscaster for Iraq's state television channel, Al-Iraqiya, along with her ten-year-old son. Three days later, the abductors set her son free and two days later, on February 25, Wazzan's body is found in a street of Mosul, shot in the head. According to her husband, Raeda had received many death threats, demanding that she quit her job.



February 4 – March 4, 2005

Giuliana Sgrena

On February 2005 an Islamist organization abducts Italian journalist of newspaper Il Manifesto, **Giuliana Sgrena** (57), while she's covering a story about the deadly civilian attacks by the Americans in Fallujah. Following secret negotiations between the Italian government and the terrorists, Giuliana is released, after a month of being held hostage. On the way to Baghdad's airport, the car carrying the Italians is hit by a hail of fire from an American checkpoint. Giuliana and the driver are injured and **Nicola Calipari** (52), the agent who had negotiated her release, is killed. The occurrence led to a diplomatic incident between Italy and the USA, but none of those responsible were brought to justice.



Linked stories

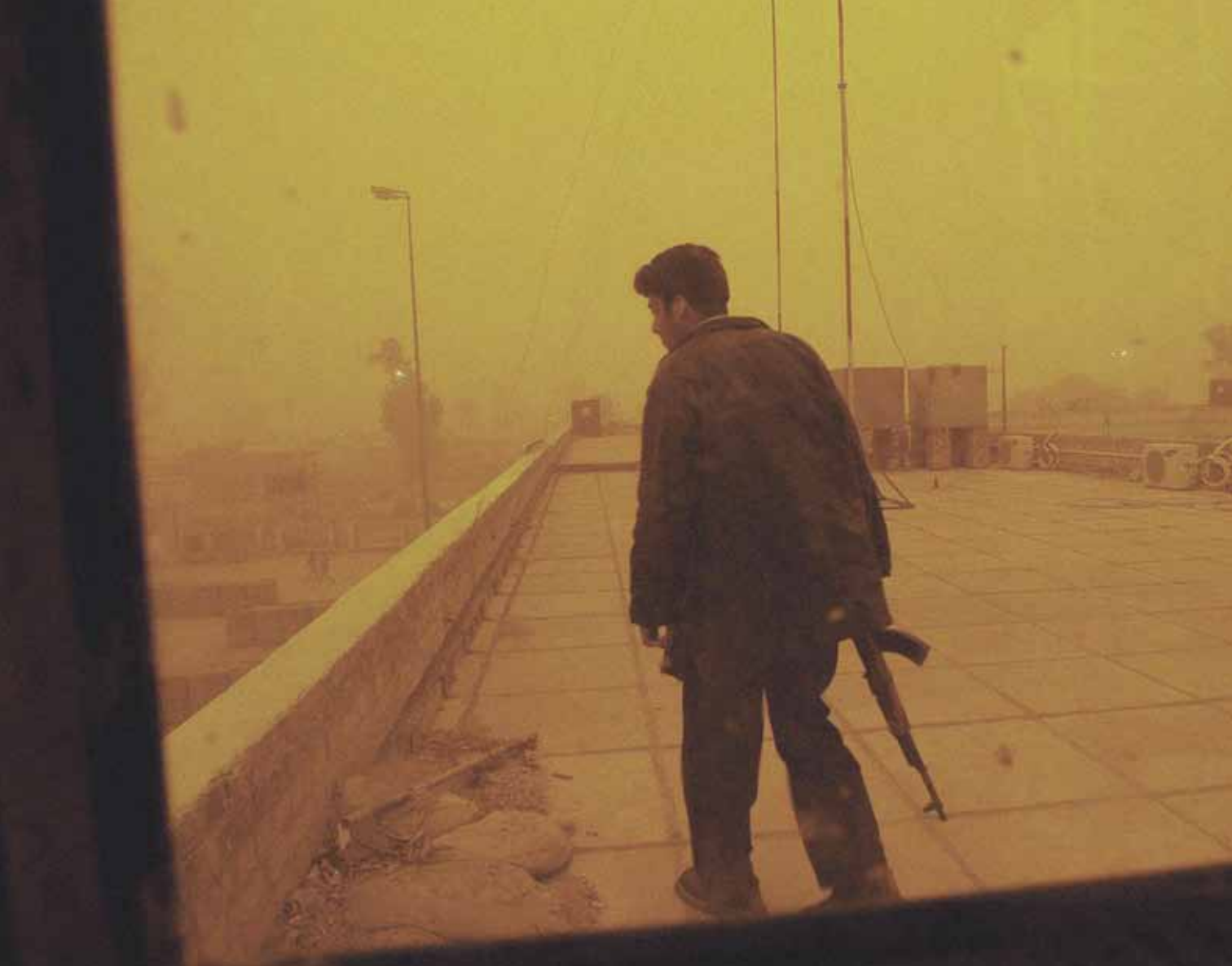
March 22, 2003 marked the first dead journalists in Iraq. **Terence Lloyd** (51), an experienced British journalist, was killed by allies' shots, finding himself in a crossfire, while he was covering the events close to Basra for Channel ITN. Among his colleagues, Belgian cameraman **Daniel Demoustier** is injured, while French cameraman **Frederic Nerac**, is still missing. Their Lebanese interpreter, **Hussein Osman**, was also killed during the incident. ITN's chief editor, David Mannion, speaks about the guilt he still feels about this tragedy. In 2006 the English court addressed the incident as "unlawful killing" and opened the road for indicting the US army, who refused to cooperate with the investigation.

On February 5 2007, the abduction of La Repubblica's Italian journalist, **Daniele Mastrogiacomo**, and his two Afghan guides by the Taliban takes place, as they believe them to be British spies. Mastrogiacomo describes the conditions of his hostage, the secret negotiations of terrorists with the Italian government, the execution of his colleagues and his final release.

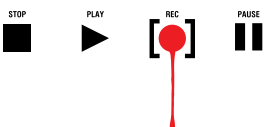
Reuters sound engineer, Nael al-Shyoukhi, narrates how his Palestinian colleague, veteran cameraman **Mazen Dana** (43), also known as "the lion of Hebron" was killed before him by fire shot from an American tank, on August 17 2003, outside the Abu-Ghabi prison in Iraq.

The President of the Iraqi Journalists **Shibab al-Timimi** (75) was assassinated on February 23, 2008. Al-Timimi was shot on a central street of Baghdad, along with his son who was injured during the attack.





The documentary's research is based on archive material, presentation of previously unreleased documents, interviews with eye-witnesses and people in "key" positions. Filming takes place in three continents and extends from Great Britain, Italy, Spain and Poland, to Iraq and the Middle Eastern countries on the one hand, and the American Pentagon and the USA on the other.



COLLABORATORS

Concept: NIKOS MEGRELIS

Director: EIRINI VACHLIOTI

Script Adaption: GIANNIS MAROUDAS

**Producers: CHRISTOS KOSTANTAKOPOULOS,
MANOS KREZIAS, KOSTAS LABROPOULOS,
DIONISIS SAMIOTIS**

**Journalists: NIKOS POLITIS, DORI RALLI,
ELENI VARVITSIOTI**

PRODUCTION COMPANIES

ODEON S.A.

FALIRO HOUSE PRODUCTIONS

CL PRODUCTIONS

FILM IN MIND PRODUCTIONS

NEO MINIMA, GREEK FILM CENTER, ERT S.A.

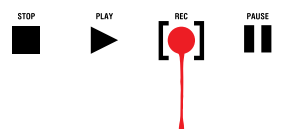
WITH THE SUPPORT OF IFJ



Nikos C. Megrelis

Journalist

Born in 1957, Nikos Megrelis, a well-recognized Greek journalist, has built a long career in Greek television as an editor in chief, diplomatic and political editor-analyst and anchorman of current affairs programs in the major Greek television networks Mega, Antenna and NET. He has also produced numerous documentaries on Chile, Cuba, the neo-nazi phenomenon in Greece and Europe, and the murder of Swedish Prime Minister Olaf Palme among others. In 2002 he was awarded the prestigious Greek prize of the Botsis Foundation, “for quality in television programming”. He has been also awarded the European prize Euro Comenius 2003, for his television documentary on the Prestige shipwreck and the environmental disaster it caused on the coast of Spain. In 2007 received the K. KALLIGAS award from the European Journalists Association, honoured “for his professional ethics and European orientation in journalism.” In 2004, Nikos Megrelis was elected to the Executive Committee of the International Federation of Journalists (www.ifj.org) and was re-elected at the Moscow Congress in 2007.



DYING FOR THE TRUTH

STOP



PLAY



REC



PAUSE

