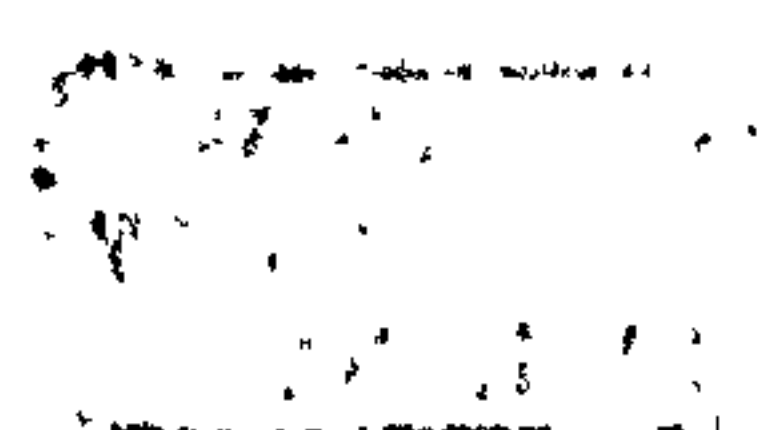


**THE ROLE OF BRITAIN IN GREEK POLITICS AND MILITARY
OPERATIONS: 1947-1952**

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Abstract

This thesis examines Anglo-Greek relations during 1947-1952; the era of the Greek civil war from the British announcement to withdraw aid from Greece until the end of the civil war and Greece's entry into NATO. A comprehensive treatment of the crisis of the civil war focuses on British imperial defence, the politics and society of Greece and bilateral relations as formulated by Cold War needs. During the rift between the Right and the Left in Greece, the main issue addressed by this work is the continuation of British influence in Greek affairs and the extension of British interest in bolstering the anti-Communist fight of the Greek government. In 1947 Britain, being itself on the verge of economic collapse, opted to discontinue financial support to the Greek right-wing government, which boosted the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947. In the wake of American interference in Greece, Anglo-Greek relations remained close and intense, as the Greek governments maintained their trust in the British. For the British, Greece remained a destitute country, in need of assistance to defeat the communists.

This study emphasises the diplomatic and military co-operation between the British, the American and the Greek governments in trying to defeat the communist forces, while attention is given to the policy and aims of the Greek Communist Party. The communist attempts to take over power along with the policies of the Greek governments and their allies are examined, with particular emphasis on the counterinsurgency operations of the Greek government developed from 1947 until the final defeat of the communist forces in 1949. The British role in these operations is considered to be important and influential in training and equipping the Greek armed forces.

In the first post-civil war period of 1950-1952, the main issues examined are the attempts made by the Greek governments and the allies to establish a strong democratic cabinet and to strengthen the security of Greece within the context of international Cold War policies. Due to anti-Communist perceptions, precipitated by the Korean War, Greece became a *quasi* NATO member in 1950 and full member in 1952, which brought the withdrawal of the British Military Mission from Greece.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AMAG	American Mission for Aid to Greece
AMFOGE	American Mission for Observing Greek Elections
ASEA	Supreme National Defence Council-Ανώτατο Συμβούλιο Εθνικής Αμυνας
BLO	British Liaison Officer
BLU	British Liaison Units
BMM	British Military Mission
CAB	Cabinet Papers
CIGS	Commander of Imperial General Staff
COS	Chiefs of Staff
DA	Democratic Army- Δημοκρατικός Στρατός
EAM	National Liberation Front-Εθνικό Απελευθερωτικό Μέτωπο
EDA	United Democratic Left-Ενωμένη Δημοκρατική Αριστερά
EDES	National Republican Greek League-Εθνικός Δημοκρατικός Ελληνικός Σύνδεσμος
ELAS	National Popular Liberation Army-Εθνικός Λαϊκός Απελευθερωτικός Στρατός
EPE	National Political Union-Εθνική Πολιτική Ένωση
EPEK	National Progressive Union of the Centre- Εθνική Προοδευτική Ένωση Κέντρου
FO	Foreign Office
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
GES	General Staff-Γενικό Επιτελείο Στρατού
GES/DIS	General Staff /Directorate of History of the Army- Γενικό Επιτελείο Στρατού /Διεύθυνση Ιστορίας Στρατού (GES/DIS in the text stands for the published sources of the General Staff/Directorate of History of the Army. ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ is used in the text to illustrate the primary sources of

the General Staff/ Directorate of History of the Army)

HCDeb	House of Commons Debates
HQ	Headquarters
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JUSMAG	Joint United States Military Advisory Group
JUSMAPG	Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group Greece
IDEA	Sacred Bond of Greek Officers-Ιερός Δεσμός Ελλήνων Αξιωματικών
IS	Internal Security
KKE	Greek Communist Party-Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδας
LEK	Populist Unity Party- Λαϊκό Ενωτικό Κόμμα
LOK	Commandos Units -Λόχοι Ορεινών Καταδρομών
MAD	Units of Pursuit Detachments- Μονάδες Αποσπασμάτων Διώξεως
MAY	Units of Rural Defence-Μονάδες Ασφαλείας Υπαίθρου
MEA	Units of National Guard Defence-Μονάδες Εθνικής Αμυνας
MEDO	Middle East Defence Organisation
NA	National Army-Εθνικός Στρατός
NEA	Office of the Near East and African Affairs
NSC	National Security Council
PDG	Provisional Democratic Government- Προσωρινή Δημοκρατική Κυβέρνηση
PEEA	Political Committee of National Liberation- Πολιτική Επιτροπή Εθνικής Απελευθέρωσης
PRO	Public Record Office
SACME	Supreme Allied Commander Middle East
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SHDM	Headquarters of Epirus and Western Macedonia- Στρατηγείο Ηπείρου και Δυτικής Μακεδονίας

UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCOB	United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans
USAGG	United States Army Group Greece
WO	War Office
YIA	Service of Historical Archive (Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs) -Υπηρεσία Ιστορικού Αρχείου (Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών)

Note on Transliteration

The transliteration of Greek characters is based on an attempt to balance the literal and spelling elements as well as please the eye. Greek names have been rendered in the simplest or most familiar manner, often following the modern and commonly seen orthography in contemporary English texts. It is assumed, however, that this modern version of names and regional place names would serve the articulation and aesthetics of the Greek language as well. Conventions such as *ph* or *kh* have been simplified to *f* and *h* for reasons of convenience to the non-Greek reader. So Sophoules and Zakhariades have been given as Sofoulis and Zahariadis.

Chronological Table

1940

Italy declares war on Greece (28 October).

1941

Prime Minister I. Metaxas dies (26 January). Germans invade Greece (6 April). British troops land in Greece but too weak to oppose German invasion (21 April). Armistice between the Greek forces and the Germans signed by Gen. George Tsolakoglou (23 April). Athens falls to the Germans (27 April). King George and cabinet headed by Premier Tsouderos went from Crete to Cairo (May). German airborne invasion of Crete (20 May). Allied evacuation of Crete (1 June). KKE forms EAM (27 September).

1942

KKE forms ELAS (10 April). Col Eddie Myers and British SOE team arrives in Greece. BMM established (September). Zervas forms EDES (September). Konstantine Logothetopoulos replaces Gen. George Tsolakoglou as PM of Greek collaborationist government (December).

1943

Ioannis Rallis becomes PM of Greek collaborationist government (April). Operation Animals-support of Allied invasion of Sicily (July). Cairo Conference (9 August). Italy surrenders to Allies. Italian army in Greece begins surrender to Germans and strengthen ELAS and EDES (September). Clashes between the resistant movements start (12 October) 'first round'.

1944

ELAS, EDES, BMM meet at Plaka Bridge in Epirus to settle peace between themselves (12 February). 'Plaka Agreement' ends 'first round' (29 February). EAM forms PEEA (10 March). Mutiny in the Greek forces in the Middle East begins (31 March). Army insurgent in M. East suppressed (23 April). Lebanon Conference (17-20 May). George Papandreou becomes PM of the Government of National Unity. Soviet mission to guerrillas under Col. Popov (28 July). EAM agrees to join government in exile (August). Greek government moved to Italy (September). 'Caserta Agreement' (26 September). Churchill-Stalin 'Percentage Agreement' (9 October). Germans evacuate Athens (12 October). Greek Government and British return to Greece (17 October). The 'second round' begins (November). EAM ministers resign from the government over the issue of demobilisation of ELAS (2 December). Bloody KKE-EAM demonstration in Athens, 'December Events' (3 December). Outbreak of civil war, British army support Papandreou (December). Churchill flies to Athens (25 December). Archbishop Damaskinos appointed Regent (31 December).

1945

Plastiras becomes Prime Minister (11 January). Yalta Conference (4-11 February). 'Varkiza Agreement', end of 'second round', 'third round' begins (12 February). Plastiras resigns (April). Voulgaris takes over to resign in October. Zahariadis returns from Dachaou and reassumes leadership of the KKE (May). Velouhiotis murdered (16 June). Regent Premier for a few days, succeeded by Kanellopoulos (November) and Sofoulis (November 1945- March 1946). Preparation for elections.

1946

Second Plenum of Central Committee of the KKE, second phase of the 'third round' begins (12 February). General Election-KKE, EAM and Left abstained (31 March). Tsaldaris becomes PM. 'White Terror' intensifies. Marcos Vafeiadis organises the Communist military forces in the mountains (July). Plebiscite results in return of King George II to Greece from London (1 September). KKE forms the 'Democratic Army of Greece' under Marcos (28 October). Allied Mission for the Observation of the Greek Elections (AMFOGE) arrived in Athens (27 November).

1947

Fall of Tsaldaris government, Maximos forms cabinet (2 January). KKE decides to form a conventional military force (February). British government notifies the Truman administration that its aid to Greece would cease on 31 March 1947 (24 February). Greek government formally requests United States support (3 March). 'Truman Doctrine' (12 March). King George II dies (1 April), succeeded by his brother Paul (22 April). Operation Terminus to clear Roumeli south and north (9 April). USAAG established (14 April). UN Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents renders its report to the UN Security Council (27 June). Third Plenum of the KKE (12-15 September). Sofoulis forms new cabinet (7 September). Creation of Cominform (5 October). UNSCOB establishes its headquarters at Salonika (1 December). KKE forms Provisional Democratic Government (24 December). Battle of Konitsa begins (25 December). KKE outlawed (28 December). JUSMAPG established (31 December).

1948

Battle of Konitsa ends (1 January). Stalin expresses desire to Yugoslavs to end rebellion in Greece (9-10 February). Re-organisation of the NA and the DA (February). Lt. Gen. James Van Fleet arrives in Greece as Commander of the Joint US Military Advisory and Planning Group (24 February). Operation Dawn (15 April -3 May). Tito-Stalin break and expulsion of Yugoslavia from Cominform (28 June). Strasbourg Congress of French Communist Party (June). Increase of American assistance to the national forces. Enlargement of the NA. BMM operations. Operation Crown to clear Grammos (20 June - 21 August). Operation Vitsi (August - October). DA reorganisation along conventional lines intensifies (15 November). Papagos becomes Field Marshal (October).

1949

General Papagos reassumes command of the national forces (21 January). Fifth Plenum of KKE Central Committee (30 January). DA mop-up in Peloponnese (April-June). Further enlargement of the NA. Allied equipment against the DA. Operation Rocket in south-central Greece (25 April -31 July). PM Sofoulis dies (24 June), succeeded by Diomidis. KKE sides with Moscow against Tito. Yugoslavia closes its border with Greece (11 September). Operation Torch A in Grammos (5-10 August). Torch B in Vitsi (10-16 August). Torch C in Grammos (24-31 August). Hoxha announces disarmament and detention of DA defenders in Albania (26 August). End of civil war (16 October).

1950

Alexandros Diomidis caretaker government dissolves. John Theotokis caretaker government (6 January). Nicolaos Plastiras and Emmanuel Tsouderos create EPEK (14 January). Elections (5 March). Coalition government of the Centre (12 March). Sofocles Venizelos government (22 March). Plastiras government (15 April). Korean War (26 June). Plastiras government resigns (19 September). Venizelos-Papandreou government (21-23 September). Venizelos-Tsaldaris-Papandreou takes the oath (13 September). New cabinet Venizelos-Papandreou (3 November).

1951

Creation of Populist Unity Party -LEK (6 January). Papagos resigns from the position of the C-in-C (29 May). Papagos sets up Greek Rally (6 July). General election (9 September). EPEK-Liberals form government (18 September). NATO admits Greece and Turkey (20 September). Anglo-Iranian Oil conflict (October). New Plastiras-Venizelos government (27 October). Churchill government (27 October). New Greek constitution (21 December).

1952

Accession of Greece and Turkey into NATO as full members (18.2). American intervention towards simple majority electoral system (14 March). The Parliament votes for simple majority (12 September). The Parliament dissolves, new elections (10 October). Caretaker government Dimitris Kiousopoulos (11 October). Eisenhower wins the elections (2 November). General elections-Greek Rally wins (16 November).

Introduction

This work is a study of Anglo-Greek relations during the period 1947-1952. The thesis surveys British policy during the resistance years and the immediate post-war period. Its main focus, however, is the climax of the civil war and the post-civil war years. The post-civil war period ended when Greece joined NATO in 1952; the thesis too terminates at that pivotal moment.

The aims of this study are threefold. Firstly, to examine British policy towards Greece during the crucial years of 1947-1952. Secondly, to understand the Greek domestic developments which influenced policy-making. Thirdly, to analyse Greek foreign policy and the demands Greece made on Britain. The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to a better understanding of both British and Greek foreign policies. The study also aims at providing a framework for the understanding of diplomatic and military developments in civil war and post-civil war Greece.

Most works on Anglo-Greek relations have suggested that the relationship disintegrated after 1947.¹ This thesis demonstrates that bilateral relations remained close throughout the whole period under examination. A combination of Greek and British sources are deployed to support this argument. One of the most important aspects of this thesis is the variety of sources upon which it is built. On the Greek side, the records of the Service of Historical Archive of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Υπηρεσία Ιστορικού Αρχείου, YIA) and the General Staff/ Directorate of History of the Army

¹ According to the traditionalist historians of Greece, after 1947 the United States took over the fight against the Soviet Union's plan for global domination. See: St. Xydis, *Greece and the Great Powers 1944-1947* (Thessalokini, 1963). Revisionist historians of Greece emphasise the financial limitations of Britain, which led to British withdrawal and American involvement in Greece. D. Eudes, *The Kapetaniots* (London, 1972). Other historians of Greece stress that 1947 signified 'the changing of the guard from Britain to the United States' in Greece. Th. Veremis, *The Military in Greek Politics* (London, 1997), p. 151. Vlavianos argues that Britain decided 'to end its own military and financial support to Greece' in February 1947. H. Vlavianos, *Greece, 1941-1949* (Oxford, 1992), p. 236.

(Γενικό Επιτελείο Στρατού/Διεύθυνση Ιστορίας Στρατού, ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ) are used for the first time. These records were released under Greece's fifty-year rule just as research for this thesis began. When combined with the more familiar British primary sources these records furnish insights into both diplomatic and military relations. Thus, the thesis contains the first detailed analytical coverage of the battles of 1947-1949 and the operations of the British Military Mission in Greece. In particular, new light is shed on Greek counter-insurgency operations carried out with British and American support. The interrelation of diplomatic and military components is an important element in determining relations, which is underplayed by the existing literature.

In addition to the newly available Greek government archives, memoirs, monographs and Greek newspapers from various political backgrounds have also been consulted. The analysis of British policy is based upon official British papers and documents regarding Greece. Research has been conducted on documents from the Foreign Office, the War Office, the Ministry of Air, the Admiralty, the Ministry of Defence, the Treasury and the Cabinet. The papers of Anthony Eden, Winston Churchill, Brigadier Godfrey Pennington Hobbs, General Harold English Pyman, Admiral Robert Kirk Dickson and Admiral William Halford Selby regarding Greece have also been consulted, the last four for the first time in this context. British parliamentary debates and press records have also been used. One of the most difficult challenges in studying both the public and official documents of the period is the critical evaluation of their unspoken assumptions. An attempt has been made to examine and evaluate sources from all sides of the polarised political debate in and on Greece in order to cut through the prejudices and propaganda which bedevils the proper study of this subject.

The chronological definition of the subject is straightforward: February 1947 marked the British note to the Americans announcing British intention to withdraw aid

from Greece. In March 1947 the American government announced that it intended to keep Greece within the western sphere. In February 1952 Greece joined NATO and began its integration into the system of western collective security. In the same year the acute political instability that had haunted Greece since 1944 was brought to an end by the election of a strong conservative government. It was in 1952 that the British Military Mission concluded its activities in Greece.

The evolution of the Greek civil war and the impact it had in both Britain and Greece is examined. Special attention is paid to conflicting interests and attitudes. At various times, on the British side, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Office, the Treasury and the War Office had differing policies towards Greece. The issue of the timing of the withdrawal of British troops from Greece constituted a typical example of friction. Within American circles, there was often a considerable variance between the views of the President and the State Department; as the case was over the dispatch of American army to Greece. The Greek Communist Party (KKE) followed a series of conflicting policies. Whilst members of the KKE were serving in governments of national unity, the KKE Politburo was planning military operations to topple those governments. On the Greek government side, personal ambitions, party friction, power politics and international Cold War developments each played a role in a process of making and dissolving governments. An understanding of these internal differences is essential to an explanation of how policy was developed and of the difficulties in its implementation.

In these years intervention was the central issue in Greek history. Both the Greek government and the Greek communists called for foreign intervention. The former was privileged in that its allies were ready to fight communism. The latter was less fortunate. Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria provided limited source of assistance. The Kremlin

was not interested in the fight of the Greek Communist Party (KKE).² Intervention was also the constant theme of Anglo-Greek relations.³ What the Greek Communist Party denounced as ‘monarcho-fascist intervention’⁴ was also the central pillar of both Churchill and Labour’s Cold War policy. Intervention was instrumental in furthering Britain’s two main objectives in Greece: the security of routes to and from the Middle East and the containment of Communism.⁵ Yet intervention has all too often been interpreted as the sole determinant in developments in Greece.⁶ The form and degree of British intervention oscillated in the post-war.⁷ It was constant neither in form nor in intensity. Intervention was a complex phenomenon.

Not only do many accounts of Anglo-Greek relations fail to take the complexity of intervention into account but also they fail to note that foreign intervention was far from being the sole determinant of developments in Greece. The very fact that intervention occurred unevenly in time, location and form gave Greek participants in the

² Chiclet claims that Stalin used the KKE as his Cold War strategy. Ch. Chiclet, *Les Communistes Grecs dans la Guerre-Histoire du Parti Communiste de Grèce de 1941 à 1949* (Paris, 1987). Iatrides, on the contrary although a left-wing sympathiser, puts the blame on the KKE itself for the way it has interpreted Soviet policy. Iatrides, ‘Perceptions of Soviet Involvement in the Greek Civil War 1945-1949’, in L. Baerentzen, J. O. Iatrides, O. L. Smith (eds.), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War* (Copenhagen, 1987), pp. 225-248; Similarly, in O. Smith, ‘The Greek Communist Party, 1945-1949’, in D. Close (ed), *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 129-155. A detailed account of the KKE’s policy is of P. J. Stavrakis, *Moscow and Communists, 1944-1949* (London, 1989).

³ For a left-wing account on foreign intervention in Greece see: H. Richter, *British Intervention in Greece: From Varkiza to Civil War. February 1945 to August 1946* (London, 1985); B. Kontis, *Anglo-American Policy and the Greek problem 1945-1949-Η Αγγλο-Αμερικανική Πολιτική και το Ελληνικό Πρόβλημα* (Thessaloniki, 1984); J. O. Iatrides, ‘Britain, the United States, and Greece, 1945-1949’, in D. H. Close, (ed.), *The Greek Civil War, 1943-1950* (London, 1993); J. O. Iatrides, ‘Civil War, 1945-1949: National and International Aspects’, in J. O. Iatrides (ed), *Greece in 1940s*, pp. 195-219; J. Iatrides, ‘Britain, the United States and Greece’, in D. Close (ed), *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 190-213. For non pro-KKE accounts: L. Stavrianos, *Greece: American Dilemma and Opportunity* (Chicago, 1952); L. S. Wittner, *American Intervention in Greece 1943-1949* (New York, 1982). Hereafter cited as *American Intervention*. A. Nachmani, ‘Civil War and Foreign Intervention in Greece: 1946-1949’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 25 (1990), pp. 489-522; R. Ovendale, ‘Britain, the United States and the European Cold War, 1945-1948’, *History* 67 (1987), pp. 217-236.

⁴ *KKE Official Documents -Επίσημα Κείμενα*, vol. 6 (Athens, 1987).

⁵ F. Northedge, *British Foreign Policy* (London, 1962); E. Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin*, vol. II (London, 1967); T. Howarth, *Prospects and Reality. Great Britain 1945-1955* (London, 1985).

⁶ For a right-wing view see Xydis, *Greece and the Great Powers*. For the left-wing orthodoxy, *History of the KKE 1918-1949-Δοκίμιο Ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ* (Athens, 1996).

⁷ On the contrary, historian Eudes interprets the civil war as a monolithic political and social conflict with no change of character throughout. Eudes, *Les Kapetanios. La guerre civile grecque de 1943-1949* (Paris, 1970).

post-war events a wide degree of latitude. This study is based on the perception that Greek political forces were responsible for developments in Greece. Quite often, however, accounts of Greek relations with a foreign power are based on a series of *a priori*, over-simplified value judgements, whose purpose is to condemn or exonerate the policy of a great power or one of the Greek political parties. Although the literature on the period of the occupation and the civil war is extensive, the great majority of these studies are violently prejudiced and disappointingly unwilling to comprehend the interests or rationale of the 'other' side.⁸ These conspiracy or one-sided accounts ascribe primary responsibility for developments in Greece to the foreign factor – thus turning Greek internal forces into powerless puppets. Developments in Greece, to a large extent, should be explained on the basis of power relations within Greece itself. In other words, at various points, such as the outbreak of the civil war or the prolonged political instability of 1950-1952, the conflicting Greek forces are to be blamed. Consequently, internal politics must also be taken into account whenever foreign intervention is judged.

The interpretation of the Greek civil war and foreign involvement has been a matter of dispute between the schools of thought from 1950s onwards. The excesses of the Cold War led both right-wing and left-wing traditionalist historians of Greece to argue that Stalin instigated the KKE insurgency as part of his plan for global domination. The role of the foreign powers has been emphasised, as well as American predominance after March 1947. Traditionalist historians of the Right of Greece tended to focus on the KKE and the 'bandit' war and sought to blame the civil war on the threat

⁸ For a right-wing view see Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*; Xydis, *Greece and the Great Powers*. In these accounts it is claimed that the KKE was preparing a revolution by the occupation years. From the opposite perspective is Psyroukis who puts the blame of the Greek civil war on Britain and the United States. N. Psyroukis, *History of Contemporary Greece, 1940-1967- Ιστορία της Σύγχρονης Ελλάδας, 1940-1967* (Athens, 1970); Richter writes that 'the civil war did not come as a result of the decision or the acts of the KKE, it was rather the outcome of a process set in motion by the terrorist acts of the extreme right'. H.

of 'EAM-Bulgarians'. The Left denounced the 'white terror' measures applied by the Greek government to defeat the Communists or British and American 'monarch-fascist' policy-makers.⁹ A serious drawback of this school of thought is the lack of academic proof in their accounts. British back to the 'white terror' was also the main argument of the revisionist historians of Greece developed during the 1970s.¹⁰

By the 1980s, however, some historians of Greece had reached a more critical analysis of the Greek government, the role of the allies and the Left. John Iatrides underlined both the KKE's commitment to revolution as well as the provocative effect of the 'white terror'. David Close stressed the responsibility of the Right, which gave rise to an apparatus of terror and repression, whilst praising the decisive role of British and American intervention.¹¹ According to these historians, the civil war resulted from a domestic struggle for power aggravated by Cold War conflict.

These accounts were based upon American and British primary sources. Unavoidably, however, they suffered from a lack of primary sources drawn from the archives of either the Greek government or the Greek Communist Party. For instance, the British determination to maintain Greece within its sphere of influence is very well examined by Procopis Papastratis. The author provides a scholarly account of British policy in Greece and British strategies to contain the Communist threat. However, the

Richter, 'Varkiza Agreement and the Origins of the Greek Civil War', in J. O. Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s* (London, 1981), p. 179.

⁹ Among the right-wing historians see: E. Averoff, *By Fire and Axe-Φωτιά και Τσεκούρι* (Athens, 1974); D. Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat* (London, 1956). For an account of left-wing historians see: the publications of the Greek Communist Party; J. Meynaud, *Les Forces Politiques En Grèce* (Etudes De Science Politique, 1965). White terror is the term used by the Left to define the government measures to defeat the communists.

¹⁰ Eudes, *The Kapetanios* (London, 1972); O. L. Smith, 'Self Defence and Communist Policy 1945-1947', in L. Baerentzen, J. O. Iatrides, O. L. Smith (eds.), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War* (Copenhagen, 1987), pp. 159-179; N. Alivizatos, 'The "Emergency Regime" and Civil Liberties, 1946-1949', in Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 220-228; Iatrides, 'Civil War 1945-1949', in H. O. L. Smith, 'Self Defence and Communist Policy 1945-1947', in L. Baerentzen, J. O. Iatrides, O. L. Smith (eds.), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War* (Copenhagen, 1987), pp. 159-179. H. Fleischer, *Crown and Swastika: Greece under Occupation and Resistance-Στέμμα και Σβάστικα: Η Ελλάδα κατά την Κατοχή και Αντίσταση*, vols. 1-2, (Athens, 1988, 1995).

author relies mainly on Foreign Office documents to analyse British and Greek policy.¹²

The 'December Events' and the 'Varkiza Agreement' are analysed in great detail by Heinz Richter. The author's interpretation is based on Foreign Office files, Greek newspapers and KKE official publications. The author condemns British policy makers 'Tories as well as Labourites' for the prolongation of the civil war because they did not prevent the Greek government from 'white terror' practises.¹³ George Alexander's study of British policy in Greece takes the opposite view. Alexander provides a thorough analysis of British policy and its struggle to contain communists' attempts to take over power. Like Richter, however, Alexander's primary sources on decision-making are almost exclusively Foreign Office documents. As a result, his analysis is limited mainly to the British point of view.¹⁴ Lawrence Wittner's important study, *American Intervention in Greece, 1943-1949* (New York, 1982), is based mainly on American governmental sources and British Foreign Office documents. Wittner thoroughly examined American policy regarding Greece on the eve of the Cold. He himself acknowledges, however, the limitations imposed on him by lack of work in Greek archives. Robert Frazier casts his net wide to write his seminal study *Anglo-American Relations with Greece*. Frazier's book was based on sources from the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence, the Treasury, the office of the Prime Minister and private papers of Hugh Dalton, Myers and Woodhouse. The author also reads widely in the US National Archives and a variety of American private papers. Perhaps as a result of this wide coverage Frazier became convinced of the pivotal importance of the British role in

¹¹ Iatrides, 'Perceptions of Soviet Involvement in the Greek Civil War 1945-1949', in Baerentzen, Iatrides, Smith (eds.), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War 1945-1949*, pp. 225-249; D. Close (ed.), *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 156-185.

¹² P. Papastratis, *British Foreign Policy towards Greece during the Second World War 1941-1944* (London, 1984).

¹³ H. Richter, *British Intervention in Greece: From Varkiza to Civil War, February 1945 to August 1946* (London, 1986); H. Richter, 'The Varkiza Agreement and the Origins of the Civil War', in Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 176-177.

¹⁴ G. M. Alexander, *The Prelude to the Truman Doctrine: British Policy in Greece 1944-1947* (Oxford, 1982).

the Cold War and developments in Greece. He argues that 'the only motivation for the British withdrawal from Greece was Bevin's fervent desire to bring the United States to the defence of Europe in the face of a Soviet threat'. Frazier stresses that mutual Anglo-American perception of a Soviet threat to world peace 'gave a new basis for joint Anglo-American policies'.¹⁵ The book was once again based solely on British and American documents.

In drawing attention to the shortcomings of previous studies, one acknowledges how much historians have been impeded by the lack of Greek sources. Even though this thesis marks a step forward in integrating Greek and British sources, archival impediments are still extant. Although the long lasting problem of the fifty-year rule restriction regarding documents on the Greek civil war was solved in 1999 it is, even now, still applied to the post-civil war era and documents referring to NATO. An additional obstacle is the underdeveloped state of the Service of Historical Archive of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Υπηρεσία Ιστορικού Αρχείου, ΥΙΑ) that renders research extremely slow. As a result of cataloguing and filing there are still many restrictions on viewing even those documents that should be made available. Similar difficulties hamper research in the Greek General Staff/ Directorate of History of the Army (Γενικό Επιτελείο Στρατού/Διεύθυνση Ιστορίας Στρατού, ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ) archive. The lack of an organised archival service results in serious restrictions on documents available to research. The problem is slightly eased in the case of the military archive due to the availability the official publications of the Greek General Staff, cited as GES/DIS to underline the distinction between the military primary documents cited as ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ. Access to the archive of the Greek Communist Party (KKE) is still forbidden to researchers rendering the assessment of the policy of the KKE during the civil war years both dangerous and difficult. Although there are published official collections of

¹⁵ R. Frazier, *Anglo-American Relations with Greece* (London, 1991), p. 180.

documents of the Party that present the official party line, as well as memoirs written by Party members, these should be treated with great caution.¹⁶

The literature on the Cold War and power relations between the actors is a matter of debate for years. An interpretation that dominated for the last twenty years- the height of the Cold War animosities-broadly accepted the positions taken by western literature. An orthodox or traditional point of view developed the basic argument of the influential Soviet expansionism. The orthodox western interpretation puts the blame for the Cold War on the USSR whereas the Cold War remained only between the United States and the Soviet Union. The revisionist critique of this interpretation led into a reassessment of the United States involvement in the making of the Cold War. American economic imperialism is brought the centre stage. A post-revisionist interpretation was developed in the 1970s to avoid polarities of the above debate. Both previous views were criticised for being too simplistic in their adherence to one particular side of the argument.¹⁷ Thus a typical post-revisionist conclusion states that

The Cold War grew out of a complicated interaction of external and internal developments inside both the United States and the Soviet Union. The external situation-circumstances beyond the control of either power- left the Americans and Russians facing one another across a prostrate Europe.¹⁸

However, this post-revisionist conclusion from Gaddis shares bi-polar assumptions along with both the orthodox and revisionist writers. Thus, the Cold War literature either orthodox, revisionist or post-revisionist blames or exonerates either the United States or the USSR for any contest. Both the origins and the first Cold War years seem to be a matter of interaction between only the two superpowers where there is no

¹⁶ One example of secondary literature based on research in the KKE's primary sources is the work written by Gr. Farakos. Farakos had been archivist of the KKE for more than thirty years and an active KKE member for more than forty. Gr. Farakos, *December 1944-Δεκέμβρης 1944* (Athens, 1996); Gr. Farakos, *ELAS and Power -ΕΛΑΣ και Εξουσία* (Athens, 2000).

mention of smaller powers involved and especially Britain. The initial stimulus to re-evaluate Britain's role came from Deighton who argues that all such writing is profoundly 'unhistorical' and that 'Britain carried out the responsibility for the Cold War as much as Russia and America'.¹⁹ Deighton's argument is based on the premise that three main victors emerged from the Second World War and that the 'Big Three' constituted of three superpowers: The United States, Soviet Union and Britain. Hence, in this period Britain was as active and war victor as the other two partners in trying to reconstruct world order and geopolitical balance of power.

This latest deconstruction requires a critical re-evaluation of the whole bipolar nature of the Cold War. It follows that all bi-polar accounts of the origins of the Cold War are 'fundamentally deficient'²⁰ and from this perspective this is indeed true. Such a complex reality as the Cold War is not a matter of interaction between only two powers but a multi-dimensional issue with more actors involved. In an even more 'Anglocentric view of the early Cold War'²¹ Frazier suggests that Britain played an important role in dragging the United States to the international affairs.²² Ryan also asserts that the preoccupation of the Foreign Office was to 'maintaining Great Britain in the first rank of power' and this made the Cold War its 'secondary objective'.²³ Smith has summarised this new tendency in historiography as a significant response, which 'has overturned the bi-polarity of the Cold War' and sees the Cold War as the result of post-

¹⁷ W. Loth, *The Division of the World* (London, 1988), p. 9.

¹⁸ J. L. Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York, 1972), p. 361.

¹⁹ A. Deighton, 'The "frozen front": The Labour government, the division of Germany and the origins of the cold war, 1945-17', *International Affairs* 63 (1987), 449-465. On the role of smaller powers in the formation of the Cold War consider also: S. Ball, *The Cold War: An International History, 1947-1991* (London, 1998).

²⁰ R. H. Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership: Britain and America, 1944-1947* (New York, 1981), p. 1; T. H. Anderson, *The United States, Great Britain and the Cold War 1944-1947* (Columbia, 1981), p. viii.

²¹ D. Reynolds, 'Rethinking Anglo-American relations', *International Affairs* 65 (1989), 89-111.

²² Frazier, *Anglo-American Policy towards Greece. The coming of the Cold War, 1942-1947* (London, 1991); R. Frazier, 'Did Britain Start the Cold War? Bevin and the Truman Doctrine', *The Historical Journal* 27, 3 (1984), 715-727.

²³ H. B. Ryan, *The Vision of Anglo-America* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 9.

war interaction between all three power-actors of the wartime Grand Alliance.²⁴ Although Britain did not remain a great power throughout the Cold War era it played a significant role in the making and formation of the early period and this makes the British argument valid.

This new assumption of British significance in the first Cold War period enriches British Cold War policy. The argument is that British first priority was to secure British sphere of influence with American backing. Both Anderson and Hathaway focus on a 1944 Foreign Office Memorandum, which reads that 'it must be our purpose not to balance our power against that of America, but to make use of American power for the purpose which we regard as good.'²⁵ As the argument goes, if Britain wanted to maintain its role as a world power, it should secure political, financial and military American assistance. For British historian Ryan British power crisis could be overcome by a close association with the United States.²⁶ Hence Churchill's Anglo-American 'special relationship' was followed by a co-ordinated foreign policy. On the same principle the Labour foreign policy continued after Churchill's defeat in the 1945 election. Bevin's role in the origins of the Cold War is that of another 'Cold Warrior'. Bevin followed the policy of having the US as the means to shore up the British Empire.²⁷ Deighton also writes that the overriding aim of the British government was to 'secure a continuing American commitment to harmony and a balance of power in Europe that would not favour Communism.'²⁸

²⁴ R. Smith, 'A climate of opinion: British officials and the development of British Soviet policy, 1943-1947', *International Affairs* 65 (1989), 631-47.

²⁵ Anderson, *The United States, Great Britain and the Cold War 1944-1947*, pp. 12-13; Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership: Britain and America, 1944-1947*, p. 52. This is also the main theme in A. Bullock, *Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary* (London, 1983). Although the argument goes back to the First World War years, it acquires special importance during the early Cold War years within the context of British decline.

²⁶ Ryan, *The Vision of Anglo-America*, p. 2.

²⁷ Bullock, *Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary* (London, 1983); Frazier, *Anglo-American Relations with Greece, The Coming of the Cold War, 1942-1947*.

²⁸ Deighton, 'The "frozen front": The Labour government, the division of Germany and the origins of the Cold War, 1945-17', *International Affairs* 63 (1987), 449-465.

Regarding British role in the Cold War origins, Frazier assumes that British policy of manoeuvring the Americans eventually produced the Cold War and Ryan that the confrontation of the Cold War was the result of hard work by the British and especially Churchill.²⁹ Rothwell also notes the importance of British post-war policy and argues that the Foreign Office did not point towards an east-west confrontation.³⁰ This work does not consider that British policy of manoeuvring the US eventually produced the Cold War, but that Britain was powerful enough to influence policy-making and subsequently Cold War developments. Hence, British role as 'Cold Warrior', the role of smaller powers and a multi polar assumption to understand the Cold War is a more balanced interpretation to the traditional Cold War perceptions.

Although both the Truman Doctrine and NATO creation committed the US to the defence of Western Europe against Soviet aggression, Britain did not succeed to remain a great power for long. However, in the process of the power struggle of the early Cold War years it had contributed to the making of the Cold War geopolitical order. As Reynolds put it, the British argument 'offers a healthy antidote to an excessively American dominated account of western policy in the Cold War'.³¹ This thesis is built on the promise that Britain played a formative role in the early Cold War years.

The detailed analyses of British and American policy written since the 1980s form the starting point for the present thesis. By using new Greek sources and delving in archives of British agencies other than the Foreign Office, it is able to go beyond them and suggest that relations between Britain and Greece were close throughout the whole period under examination, despite the promulgation of the Truman Doctrine and the

²⁹ Frazier, *Anglo-American policy towards Greece. The coming of the Cold War, 1942-1947*; Ryan, *The Vision of Anglo-America*, p. 2.

³⁰ V. Rothwell, *Britain and the Cold War 1941-1947* (London, 1982).

³¹ Reynolds, 'Rethinking Anglo-American relations', *International Affairs* 65 (1989), 108.

more interventionist stance taken by the United States government.³² In particular, it argues that the post-1947 situation was dynamic and fluid. It was marked by constant military and political manoeuvre as the British, the Greek government and the KKE constantly reassessed their interests and their tactics. British military influence remained a vital element in Greek politics not only in the final years of the civil war but also until Greece's entry into NATO in 1952.

The structure of this study is both chronological and thematic. The work is divided into six chapters presented in chronological order. Chapter one gives a general picture of the driving forces that influenced the course of events and the key participants. It considers the reasons for the dramatic rise in communist strength during the occupation and the aims of EAM/ELAS; the communist political and military resistance organisation. The significance of British involvement in Greece and its policies to secure a broadly based post-war government are also assessed. The chapter refutes the traditionalist argument of historians of Greece that the civil war broke out as a result of a monolithic communist plan to seize power.³³ Similarly, it dismisses the view that the British provoked the Left into hostilities and caused the civil war.³⁴ It also softens the leftist argument that the 'Varkiza Agreement' became, in the hands of the government, an instrument of revenge.³⁵

³² In the present work there is no discussion about economic relations between Greece, Britain and the United States, which is an issue explored by the unpublished thesis of J. Stefanidis, *The United States, Great Britain and Greece, 1949-1952* (University of London, 1992). Stefanidis focuses on American-backed recovery programmes in Greece between the end of the civil war and the inauguration of Papagos' premiership. From this perspective he argues that after 1947 America was undoubtedly the dominant foreign power in Greece. Stefanidis, *The United States, Great Britain and Greece, 1949-1952*, p. 58. This work however is still based on American and British documents. On the American policy consult: L. Wittner, 'American Policy toward Greece, 1946-1949', in J. Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 229-238.

³³ This is the main theme in A. Averoff, *By Fire and Axe-Φωτιά και Τσεκούρι* (Athens, 1974); K. Tsoukalas, *The Greek Tragedy* (London, 1969).

³⁴ See: Th. Mosxatos, *The Kapetanios Meeting in Lamia-Η Σύσκεψη των Καπεταναίων στη Λαμία* (Athens, 1985).

³⁵ H. Richter, 'The Varkiza Agreement and the Origins of the Civil War', in J. O. Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 167-181.

Chapter two examines British policy towards Greece in 1947 and assesses the British role in the American policy that turned into the Truman Doctrine. The significance of the British note of February 1947 on Greece is analysed and its effects within the Cold War context are evaluated. The chapter traces the evolution of Greek expectations of Britain during the period of the escalation of the civil war and outlines the importance the Greek government attributed to British aid and assistance. The chapter examines in detail Greek counter-insurgency operations (COIN) in 1947 and outlines the gradual change in the practises of the National Army (NA). The role of the British Military Mission (BMM) in the re-organisation of the national forces is analysed. American missions also had a share in the re-organisation of the national forces and therefore an evaluation of British and American co-operation is attempted. Thirdly, the policies of the KKE and EAM are examined and the responsibility of the party for the civil war is assessed. Zahariadis and the KKE Politburo's policy in the spring 1947 is analysed. The aims of the Democratic Army (DA) and the subsequent transformation of the civil war from guerrilla fighting to conventional warfare are also outlined. The chapter refutes the view of the right-wing traditionalist historians of Greece that the British supported right-wing governments appointed by the Palace.³⁶ It is demonstrated that British policy supported moderate governments of the Centre in an attempt to soften the political extremes. It also refutes the orthodox left-wing view that British imperialism had turned Greek politicians into puppets.³⁷ The Greek government, it is suggested, was mainly responsible for its own weaknesses and disabilities. Moreover, the orthodox view that the Soviet Union and its communist satellites fomented the civil war in Greece and that the KKE was acting as their agent is also refuted.³⁸ The

³⁶ S. Markezinis, *Contemporary Political History of Greece-Σύγχρονη Πολιτική Ιστορία της Ελλάδας*, vol.2, (Athens, 1994). Hereafter cited as Markezinis, *Political History- Πολιτική Ιστορία*

³⁷ This is the argument put forward in the official history of the KKE. *History of the KKE-Δοκίμιο Ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ* (Athens, 1996).

³⁸ G. Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat: The Story of the Greek Communist Party* (Oxford, 1965).

revisionist view that the communists were fighting only in response to the aggression of the Greek government is also dismissed.³⁹ Like the government, the KKE was pursuing its own aims with considerable success.

The chapter dissents from the view that British involvement in Greek affair came to a deliberate end in February 1947 as a result of British financial problems.⁴⁰ Instead, it offers an account of how Greece remained within the strategic sphere of Britain after February 1947. The American presence is explained in terms of supporting British policy. Regardless of the Truman Doctrine, the Greek government continued to expect support and assistance from Britain, especially in the form of British Military Mission training the Greek National Army. British assistance in the organisation of Greek counterinsurgency operation after spring 1947 further demonstrates the British intention to continue support for the governmental fight against the Democratic Army.

Chapter three examines in depth the development of Greek counter-insurgency operations and the evolution of the Greek national forces into an effective and self-sufficient machine. Although the Democratic Army evolved into a sophisticated and complex force, capable of challenging the National Army the governmental military machine gradually managed to defeat the Communist forces. The chapter refutes the contention of the orthodox view that the KKE lost the war because of lack of support from the Soviet Union and the closure of the Yugoslav borders.⁴¹ The left-wing claim of the historians of Greece that the western allies defeated the communist army is also dismissed.⁴² Instead, the chapter demonstrates that a combination of factors brought about the victory of the National Army over the Democratic Army. The fighting

³⁹ Alivizatos, 'The "Emergency Regime" and Civil Liberties, 1946-1949', in Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 221-228.

⁴⁰ Vlavianos, *Greece, 1941-1949*, p. 236; Eudes, *The Kapetanios*, p. 279.

⁴¹ See: Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*; S. Vukmanovic, *How and Why the People's Liberation Struggle of Greece Met With Defeat* (London, 1985).

efficiency of the National Army, the western allies' assistance, the KKE's inability to cope with conventional warfare and the lack of communist foreign support all finally brought the defeat of the Democratic Army. The British role in this process is examined, with the aim of defining the true extent of British involvement in the civil war and the British share of responsibility for the defeat of the KKE. In particular, the evolution of air power is analysed in detail, because it was a decisive factor in the defeat of the communist forces. The Royal Hellenic Air Force (RHAF) supported, trained and equipped by the Royal Air Force (RAF) added a new dimension to governmental supremacy. The co-operation between the British Military Mission and the Joint United States Military Aid Planning Greece (JUSMAPG) is analysed, with the aim of offering a realistic account of the allies' relationship. The chapter deconstructs the view that British and American policies were identical and their co-operation straightforward and undisrupted.⁴³ The revisionist view that complete American domination prevailed on the Greek scene of operation, following the British withdrawal, is also dismissed.⁴⁴ Instead, the chapter offers a more complex and balanced interpretation of the situation in Greece.

Chapter four revolves around the issues of the post-civil war search for domestic reconciliation and stability. The character of the Greek politicians within the process of cabinet making and dissolution is examined. The failure of the Greek government to form a long-lasting administration is analysed. The failure of the Greek political world to embrace national reconciliation measures due to the pressure of the Cold War exaggeration is described. The chapter suggests that instability and extremism occurred not because of but despite British intervention. Although British support for King Paul and moderate cabinets played a role in Greece's political development, Britain exercised

⁴² See: N. Psyrroukis, *History of Contemporary Greece, 1940-1967-Ιστορία της Σύγχρονης Ελλάδας, 1940-1967* (Athens, 1975). S. Grigoriadis, *History of Contemporary Greece, 1941-1974- Ιστορία της Σύγχρονης Ελλάδας 1941-1974* (Athens, 1978).

⁴³ Averoff, *By Fire and Axe-Φωτιά και Τσεκούρι*, p. 267.

⁴⁴ O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 173-175.

a light touch with regard to Greek domestic affairs. Partly as a result of this relation, Anglo-Greek amity in the foreign policy field was maintained. The relative importance of the Cyprus issue in the early 1950s bears testament to these good relations.

Chapter five analyses the failure of the Centre experiment in Greek politics. The role of the Palace and the royal solution to the parliamentary deadlock is examined as well as the nature of royal politics. Foreign intervention in Greek affairs is also examined. The response of the Greek political world to the Papagos solution put into question the kind of government the Greeks wanted for themselves. Both the palace and the government looked to Britain for support and the British thus became an integral part of Greek political machinations. The chapter discusses also the American share of responsibility and the United States' objectives in the new system. This discussion reveals the essential unity of aims maintained by Britain and America. Both chapters four and five examine in detail the domestic aspect of Greek politics. These chapters refute the traditional claim of historians of Greece that the Palace enjoyed the Foreign Office's full support and that Britain was obsessed with imposing a right-wing monarchical government.⁴⁵ Instead, British aims are analysed in the light of British pursuit of a strong and democratically elected government of the Centre to moderate polarisation. The failure of the Greek government to form a strong and self-sufficient cabinet is explained, therefore, in terms of Greek internal developments.

Chapter six examines the evolution of Greece's entry into NATO as a full member. The chapter attempts to moderate over-exaggerated claims regarding Greece's importance to NATO.⁴⁶ Instead, the chapter suggests that there were variety of reasons that convinced NATO's members to accept Greece into the North Atlantic Alliance. None was decisive in itself, rather it was the accumulation of perceived advantages that

⁴⁵ Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, pp. 295-300.

⁴⁶ A. Siapkarakas, 'The Importance of Greece to NATO', *Military Review* (August 1961), 90-97.

led to the decision. The chapter also challenges the view that Greece's entry into NATO was solely an American objective. Instead, it gives a more rounded interpretation by analysing the British role in this decision-making. Contrary to the contention of left-wing historians, who portray Greece as capitulating to 'imperial interests', Anglo-Greek relations are explained in the light of mutual interests.

I Setting the Stage: 1941-1946

From Resistance to Civil War

In May 1941 the Germans defeated Greek forces and their British allies. King George II accompanied by Prime Minister Emmanuel Tsouderos, the cabinet, and the great bulk of the British and Greek forces were obliged to withdraw to Egypt.¹ The government-in-exile established itself in Cairo, while the King removed himself to London. In occupied Greece a series of collaborationist cabinets *-quisling-* functioned under the Axis authorities, however the *de jure* Greek government recognised by the Allies was King George's II government-in-exile.²

Within a short time resistance began in occupied Greece. The Greek Communist Party – the KKE – was the first group to organise resistance. The Sixth Plenum of the Central Committee of the KKE in July 1941 endorsed a national front policy and called upon 'the Greeks, the parties and their organisations' to form a national liberation front to fight against any imperialistic power'.³ As a result of its resistance activities the KKE gained considerable political influence among the Greeks. The National Liberation Front (EAM) was founded by the KKE on 27 September 1941. The declared aims of EAM included the liberation of the nation from foreign elements; the formation of a provisional government by EAM after the liberation; and the safeguarding of 'the fundamental right' of the Greek people to decide upon the form of their future government themselves.⁴ Resistance to the Germans, however, was the priority that

¹ For an account of Greek-British relations during the pre-war period see, J. Koliopoulos, *Greece and the British Connection 1935-1941* (Oxford, 1977).

² The Greek government, together with an army of 58,000 British, who had assisted the Greek Army against the Axis, were transferred to Cairo. Prime Minister was E. Tsouderos, a former Governor of the Bank of Greece and liberal by conviction, who also enjoyed the confidence of the conservative party.

³ *KKE Official Documents 1940-1945-KKE Επίσημα Κείμενα*, vol. 5 (Athens, 1981), p. 39. For a map of Greece see: D.1 p. 187.

⁴ *KKE Official Documents 1940-1945-KKE Επίσημα Κείμενα*, vol. 5 (Athens, 1981), p. 39.

swelled the numbers of EAM, appealing to members from diverse political backgrounds.⁵

Other resistance movements followed. Yet none managed to mobilise large segments of the urban and rural population as effectively as had EAM. General Napoleon Zervas created the National Republican Greek League (EDES) on 9 September 1941.⁶ Although the republican General Nicolaos Plastiras nominally headed EDES the right-winger Zervas was its true leader. EDES was second only to EAM in members, although far less popular. Colonel Psarros founded the National and Social Liberation (EKKA).⁷ This was a third and even weaker organisation. To some extent a resistance movement represented each major political party. Yet despite the number of resistance groups, EAM was the most popular and powerful. Although exact numbers are lacking, it has been claimed that EAM had up to some two million members – almost thirty per cent of the population.⁸

EAM's mass appeal was the result of its nation-wide operations. The other groups were purely regional in their activities. EDES operated in Epirus and EKKA in Roumeli. EAM developed a full political programme and established numerous subsidiary organisations, designed to enlist the support of all sections of the population,

⁵ L. S. Stavrianos, 'The Greek National Liberation Front (EAM): A study in Resistance Organisation and Administration', *Journal of Modern History* 24 (1952), 42-54; *History of the KKE-Δοκίμιο Ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ*, pp. 387-89.

⁶ General Nicolaos Plastiras had distinguished himself in the 1909 and 1922 military coups for his republicanism. He was in self-exile in Paris following a failed putsch in 1933. After the end of the civil war he created National Progressive Centre Union Party (EPEK). In the period 1950-52 he headed coalition governments of the Centre and advocated measures of leniency towards the communists. Zervas was a soldier and politician as well. In 1941 he founded EDES and in 1945 he resigned from the army to become a politician. He served as Minister of Public Order in 1947, in which he was noted for his harsh anti-Communist measures. In 1950 he joined the Liberal Party and served as Minister of Public Works in 1950-51.

⁷ K. Pyromaglou, *National Resistance. EAM-ELAS-EDES-EKKA-Εθνική Αντίσταση. EAM-ELAS-EDES-EKKA* (Athens, 1975); For an account of EKKA, K. Pyromaglou, *George Kartalis and his Period 1934-1957-Ο Γ. Καρτάλης και Η Εποχή του*, vol. 1 (Athens, 1965).

⁸ Stavrianos, 'The Greek National Liberation Front (EAM): A Study in Resistance Organisation and Administration', *Journal of Modern History* 24 (1952), 44.

whilst the other groups were primarily military in character.⁹ EAM's appeal was strengthened by the formation of the National Popular Liberation Army (ELAS), in March 1942.¹⁰ The KKE, therefore, through EAM/ELAS established itself as a dominant resistance power. A military Commander, or *Kapetanios*, was in charge. Thanassis Klaras, under the name of Aris Velouhiotis, became the political and military adviser to the first guerrilla band to go to the mountains to fight.¹¹ Thus the KKE by 1942 had taken the lead as the most sophisticated force operating in Greece.

Greece remained within the British zone of interest during the war years. British policy in Greece focused upon maintaining its influence in the country so as to help secure the 'traditionally British area' of the Mediterranean and the Middle East in the long-term. In the short-term the presence of King George in London and the Greek government in exile under British protection also served to keep interest alive. One of the principle supply lines from Germany to Field Marshal Rommel in North Africa ran through Greece. As a result the British were keen to become involved in the direction of resistance activities in Greece. The Special Operation Executive (SOE) war organisation devoted its attention to the possibilities post-occupation resistance and sabotage.¹²

British contacts with the resistance organisations became more intense in October 1942, when SOE-Cairo decided to launch Operation *Harling*. Its objective was

⁹ G. M. Alexander, *The Prelude to the Truman Doctrine* (Oxford, 1982), p. 13. For a scholar account of Greek occupation years: J. Hondros, *Occupation and Resistance. The Greek Agony 1941-1944* (New York, 1983).

¹⁰ EAM claimed that its members up until October 1944 rose to 1,500,000 members; the number is over exaggerated, however, there is no doubt that EAM was the most widespread organisation in terms of members and sympathisers. N. Svoronos, 'The Main Problems of the Period 1940-1950 in Greek History', in Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 1-16. The dramatic rise of communist strength is dual to its double political and military nature.

¹¹ From March 1943, Stefanos Sarafis was an ELAS commander, together with Velouhiotis and an EAM's political commissar. S. Sarafis, *ELAS* (London, 1980), pp. 50, 100, 272. EAM representatives were taking part in ELAS's command dealing exclusively with political affairs. The position of the EAM representative was abolished in March 1944 when EAM and the KKE founded PEEA-its provincial government in the mountains.

¹² For an account of SOE activities in Greece see: R. Clogg, 'The Special Operation Executive in Greece', in Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 109-111; B. Sweet-Escott, 'SOE in the Balkans', in Ph. Auty and R. Clogg (eds.), *British Policy towards Wartime Resistance in Yugoslavia and Greece* (London, 1975) p.7. Thereafter cited as *British Policy*; R. Clogg, 'Pearls from Swine', in *British Policy*, p. 192.

to blow up the Athens-Salonika railway and thus prevent the dispatch of Axis reinforcements to North Africa. Three British commando teams – nine officers and three non-commissioned officers – led by Colonel Edward C. W. ‘Eddie’ Myers, with Major Christopher M. Woodhouse, as second-in-command, parachuted into central Greece. The operation was to be accomplished by Colonel Myers, ELAS guerrillas under Velouhiotis, EDES guerrillas under Zervas and other minor resistance groups.¹³ On the night of 25-26 November 1942, they blew up the Gorgopotamos viaduct. This operation was SOE’s greatest success in 1942. Initially, the intention had been for Myers’ team to evacuate Greece thereafter. However, Myers received orders to remain in Greece to co-ordinate the activities of the various resistance movements. Keeping a general eye on political forces in Greece was also one of Myers’ assigned tasks. Subsequently the British resistance and intelligence group became the British Military Mission in Greece.¹⁴ The mission controlled the distribution of money, arms, and other supplies. Management of the British Military Mission was entrusted to the British SOE-Cairo. Although resistance activities continued, however, there was to be no other spectacular act of resistance organised by British and Greek forces. The amount of supplies and assistance that was provided by the British to ELAS to fight the Germans was actually very limited. The reason for this was that the British did not intend to boost the communist forces.¹⁵

¹³ For early resistance activities between the British and EAM see, E. W. Myers, *Greek Entanglement* (London, 1955); C. M. Woodhouse, ‘Early British Contacts with the Greek Resistance in 1942’, *Balkan Studies* 12, no. 2, (1971), 347-354; R. Clogg, ‘Pearls from Swine’: the Foreign Office Papers, SOE and the Greek Resistance’, in Ph. Auty and R. Clogg (eds), *British Policy*, pp. 167-208. C. Woodhouse, ‘The National Liberation Front and the British Connection’, in J. Iatrides (ed), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 81-101.

¹⁴ E. W. C. Myers, *Greek Entanglement* (London, 1955), pp. 13-96; C. M. Woodhouse, ‘Early British Contacts with the Greek Resistance in 1942’, *Balkan Studies* 12, no.2 (1971), 347-354.

¹⁵ O’Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 56-57. E. Barker argues that British policy towards the various resistance movements in Greece ‘seemed a matter of conflict’ provoking civil war, in Barker, *British Policy*, p. 148; Sfikas also emphasises the negative effect of British assistance towards ELAS, for simultaneously challenging the Greek established order. Th. Sfikas, *The British Labour Government and the Greek Civil War -Οι Άγγλοι Εργατικοί και Ο Ελληνικός Εμφύλιος*, (Athens, 1996), p. 47. On this line, Vlavianos notes that the British assistance to ELAS has its share in the civil war that followed in that it cabled ‘contradictory’ orders after 1943. Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p. 30. Sarafis refutes enormous British assistance to the KKE. Sarafis, *ELAS*, p. 278. KKE’s future political strategy would prove that,

Despite British efforts to limit EAM's powers by mid-1943 the communists had managed to fill the power vacuum left by the absence of the government-in-exile and the distrust felt by most Greeks of the *quisling* cabinets. EAM dominated the resistance scene by combining both political and military power. Myers wanted the guerrillas and the government in Cairo to co-operate with each other. On 10 August 1943, Myers, now promoted to Brigadier, and his political adviser Major D. Wallace flew to Cairo with a guerrilla delegation to meet with the government-in-exile. The delegation consisted of six Greeks, representing the main resistance organisations. EAM secured four out of the six places. The aim of the delegation was to obtain recognition of their status as part of the armed forces of Greece from the Greek government-in-exile. The delegates had two main demands. Firstly, that King George II should declare that he would not return to Greece before the conduct of a plebiscite.¹⁶ Secondly, that the Greek government should be broadened to include EAM's members, who should hold three portfolios within the new government: Interior, War, and Justice. These members should be able to exercise their powers from within Greece.

The Foreign Office was appalled.¹⁷ Rex Leeper, the British Ambassador to the Greek government based in Cairo, accused Myers of encouraging and empowering the communists. As a result, Myers was replaced by Chris Woodhouse as Commander of the British Military Mission in Greece. Republican claims also alarmed the Greek King. On 18 August 1943, King George cabled Roosevelt and Churchill, appealing for their support against the demand of the delegation to postpone his return to Greece until after

regardless the British, the Party was inclined to claim for power. Of the same opinion are: O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 75-76, 85-86; C. Shrader, *The Withered Vine* (London, 1999), p. 52; C. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece* (London, 1976), pp. 27, 36, 64. In this sense both Sarafis and Woodhouse proved right

¹⁶ The position of the King was always in debate in Greece. Royalists and republicans had been competing since 1920s. E. C. Myers, 'The Andarte Delegation to Cairo: August 1943', in Auty, Clogg (eds.), *British Policy*, p. 166; C. Woodhouse, 'Summer 1943: The Critical Months', in Auty, Clogg (eds.), *British Policy*, p. 137.

¹⁷ Churchill supported the Greek King and monarchy in Greece, as a sign of political stability and proximity to the West.

a plebiscite. Four days later, the American President and the British Prime Minister replied to the King's telegram after their meeting in Quebec. Both supported 'his contention that he was prepared to return to Greece as soon as possible'.¹⁸ Churchill and Eden believed that Britain's post-war supremacy in Greece could best be secured by working through monarchy, an institution to which they also felt a strong attachment. Roosevelt did not object Churchill's sympathy for the old order of Greece, although he remained determined to avoid involvement in Greek affairs.¹⁹ Greece and the Balkans in general, were considered by the Americans to be outside their area of interest in late 1943.

The Cairo meeting was a failure. Churchill, Eden, and British Ambassador Leeper, together with the Greek cabinet, refused the demands of the KKE. The delegation departed from Cairo within days of its arrival. Richard Clogg has written that 'the total failure of the mission [...] coupled with the evidence that the Greek government-in-exile had received of the strong commitment of the British government to the support of the King, was certainly a factor contributing to the outbreak of civil war between the rival groups'.²⁰ The agenda of the Cairo delegation, therefore, was crucial in establishing the course of future events. Churchill in particular was determined to re-establish the pre-war order in Greece.²¹

In October 1943, armed clashes broke out between ELAS and EDES. What is known as the 'first round' of the civil war had begun. Throughout the autumn of 1943

¹⁸ FRUS (1943): 4, 142-43, 932-34: The Conferences at Washington and Quebec.

¹⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/37203 R6555, A. Eden to Leeper, 16 July 1943; FRUS (1943): 4, 131-32: Aide Memoir, British Embassy to the State Department, 24 April 1943; R. Leeper, *When Greek Meets Greek* (London, 1950), pp. 10, 27-28; Wittner writes that Roosevelt shared Churchill's attachment to the old order in Greece and this is illustrated in that the American President did not object the return of the King in Greece. Wittner, *American Intervention*, pp. 10-11. The clash between royalism and republicanism was an old issue in Greek affairs including coups and plebiscites to demolish and restore kingship since the inter-war period.

²⁰ R. Clogg, "'Pearls from Swine": the Foreign Office Papers, SOE and the Greek Resistance', in Auty, Clogg (eds.), *British Policy*, pp. 192-194.

²¹ *The Times*, 1 September 1943. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), PREM 3, 211/4, Churchill to the King of the Hellenes George II, 20 August 1943.

and the winter of 1944 the two main resistance organisations began a series of attacks against each other. Neither managed to score a victory – although EDES managed to repel ELAS units that had penetrated EDES territory in Epirus.²² In an attempt to reach a political compromise Premier Tsouderos and Ambassador Leeper proposed, in January 1944, that Damaskinos, Archbishop of Athens, should act as Regent on the liberation of Athens from the Germans. Damaskinos would try to bring about a political understanding among all parties in Athens, before elections and a plebiscite on the return of the King were held. Tsouderos' aim was to pre-empt EAM's attempt to form its own government.²³ On 6 March 1944, the formal agreement of the political parties, excluding the KKE, over Damaskinos' Regency was achieved. Sofoulis, leader of the Liberal Party, was nominated as prime minister in the first post-war government.²⁴

By that time the military hostilities between EAM and EDES had also come to an end. A conference started on 15 February 1944, at the Plaka Bridge, over Arachthos River in Epirus. EAM/ELAS, EDES and EKKKA members all took part. Woodhouse, who as senior BMM officer, had a major role in arranging the Plaka conference. He had telegraphed to Cairo and emphasised that 'a solution must be found now, or Greece will go the way of Yugoslavia'.²⁵ On 29 February 1944, all parties concurred in the 'Plaka Agreement', which put an end to the first round of the civil war. The agreement defined

²² Frazier notes that EAM began the 'first round' of the Greek civil war. Frazier, *Anglo-American Relations with Greece*, p. 31. On the contrary, Vlavianos states that EDES turned its army against ELAS, after arranging a cease-fire with the Germans. Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p. 34.

²³ E. Tsouderos, *Greek Irregularities in Middle East-Ανωμαλίες στη Μέση Ανατολή* (Athens, 1945), pp. 78, 85; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/43676 R1440, Leeper's telegram, 27 January 1944. King George had promised to accept the Regent to soften tension until the plebiscite. Archbishop Damaskinos held republican views, and had avoided the internecine struggles during the occupation by focusing his interests on his flock. He therefore was a candidate acceptable to all sides.

²⁴ Themistocles Sofoulis was republican politician and leader of the Liberal Party, Premier 1945-46, 1947-49. George Papandreou also consented. He was a republican, anti-Communist centrist politician, protégé of the liberal E. Venizelos during the 1920s. PM in 1944. Leader of the National Political Union in 1946. In 1950 he founded the small Social Democratic Party, an offshoot of the old Venizelist party; he served in short lived Centre coalition cabinets in 1950-1951.

²⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/43681 R3430, Woodhouse to Cairo, 27 February 1944.

the area of operations of EAM and EDES organisations, with EDES being confined to its heartland of Epirus.²⁶

Nonetheless, on 10 March 1944, EAM announced the formation of the Political Committee of National Liberation (PEEA). The formation of PEEA came as a shock to most politicians in Cairo.²⁷ The Chairman of the PEEA was Professor Svolos, an authority on constitutional law. On 9 April 1944, PEEA organised free elections by secret ballot throughout 'free Greece' (areas under EAM-ELAS control) to create a 'National Council' of 202 delegates. The KKE, through the election of its National Council, took another step in undermining the legality and authority of the non-elected government-in-exile.²⁸

The British government was alarmed by the creation of PEEA. In order to disarm EAM and weaken the communist plans for taking over power, the Foreign Office asked Tsouderos to invite EAM and other parties to Cairo for discussions over a post-war government. Leeper's diplomacy, aimed at rendering EAM impotent by enmeshing them in a non-communist government, which they would have no opportunity to dominate, was too subtle for some. It was derailed by King George's sudden refusal to appoint Damaskinos as Regent. The King feared that the regency would be the first step towards his loss of the throne.²⁹

²⁶ Woodhouse, *Apple of Discord*, pp. 303-304; Sarafis, *ELAS*, pp. 244-60. Subsequently it was an indefinite and short-term agreement, foreshadowing future escalation.

²⁷ EAM during the Plaka negotiations demanded the formation of a Provisional Committee to form a post-war representative cabinet, which at that point had been rejected by both the representatives of the government and the representatives of the BMM on the grounds that the government-in-exile was the legal authority they all recognised. On PEEA see: *Archive of Political Committee of National Liberation (PEEA)- Αρχείο της Πολιτικής Επιτροπής Εθνικής Απελευθέρωσης (PEEA)*, (Athens, 1990). The KKE seemed to follow the steps of Tito, who in November 1943 turned his Antifascist Council of National Liberation into a 'provisional government'.

²⁸ Papastratis notes that the creation of PEEA reinforced Tsouderos' plan to force all political parties except EAM to join him openly in Cairo, and then blame EAM for not accepting a solution to which all the other parties had agreed. Papastratis, *British Foreign Policy*, p. 164.

²⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/43682 R3988, Leeper telegram, 14 March; PREM 3/211/11, Churchill to Eden, 10 March 1944; FO 371/43683 R4476, Leeper telegram, 13 March 1944.

The charged political situation in Cairo was worsened when a crisis broke out amongst the 20,000 Greek armed forces stationed in the Middle East. On 31 March 1944, thirteen officers of the Committee of National Union of the Greek armed forces demanded that Prime Minister Tsouderos forms a government based on PEEA.³⁰ On 7 April 1944 the Greek army mutinied. A soldiers committee assumed control of the First Brigade, just before it joined the allies in the Italian theatre of operations. Greek naval units, stationed in the port of Alexandria, supported the mutinies. The Second Brigade also declared its loyalty to PEEA. Many other units of the Greek army and navy declared themselves in favour of PEEA. The only notable exception was the Sacred Battalion, which remained loyal to the King and his government throughout the upheaval. The air force backed neither side.³¹ As a result of the crisis, Tsouderos tendered his resignation. On 13 April 1944, the King appointed the liberal Themistocles Venizelos prime minister.³²

The British wanted to restore order. Churchill declared that 'rebellious manifestations in forces will not be tolerated' and that the British government would support 'the lawfully constituted Greek Government headed by the King'.³³ Leeper, reinforced by Churchill's solid backing, telegraphed the Commanders-in-Chief that the Greek government should 'win a complete and bloodless victory and teach the Greek armed forces a lesson'.³⁴ The units with which the British dealt first were the First Greek Brigade, stationed in Egypt, and the Greek ships in Alexandria. On 16 April,

³⁰ J. Iatrides, *Ambassador MacVeagh Reports* (Princeton, 1980), p. 482; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/43728 R5316, Leeper telegram-198, 3 April 1944; PREM 3/211/11, Leeper telegrams-208, 209, 5 April 1944. The King had appointed Emmanouel Tsouderos Premier in 1941 and left with him for Cairo after the German occupation. George was in charge of the Greek armed forces. Venizelos' leftist background was hoped to be a factor in reconciling the republicans.

³¹ Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, pp. 78-79. Themistocles Venizelos is one of the main republican politicians to influence the developments of the period.

³² Themistocles Venizelos is one of the main republican politicians to influence the developments of the period. Prominent in the National Political Union alliance together with Papandreou and Kanellopoulos, leader of the Liberal Party, Prime Minister for a while in 1950 and acting premier in 1951.

³³ W. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol.5 (London, 1952), p. 481.

³⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/43701 R6035, Leeper's telegram, 15 April 1944.

Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham threatened that the Royal Navy would sink all the ships of the Greek fleet 'within five minutes', unless they abandoned the mutiny. Six days later Admiral Voulgaris, Venizelos' new Commander-in-Chief, took over the ships. On 25 April, the fleet surrendered and following the British intervention, all the mutinous Greek troops laid down their arms.³⁵ As a result of the mutiny, the Greek army was thoroughly reorganised. Approximately half of it was put into internment camps. It is probable that had the British not intervened or supported the old established order, the Greek politicians, under the pressure of the mutineers, would have formed a new pro-Communist cabinet.³⁶ The mutiny underlined the inefficiency of the Greek government and the weakness of its mainstay: the army.

While the army was purged, the political task of controlling EAM remained unsolved. Papandreou, a prominent ex-member of the Liberal Party, provided the solution. The KKE regarded him as a sympathiser. On the other hand Papandreou convinced British officials that he could wrest the political initiative from EAM. With their support he was appointed the new prime minister of the government-in-exile.³⁷

A new attempt to rebuff EAM was organised. Papandreou summoned a conference in Lebanon on 17-20 May 1944, to which twenty-five representatives of all seventeen political parties and groups were invited in order to seek a way out of the

³⁵ K. Alexandris, *Our Navy During the War Period 1941-1945- Το Ναυτικό Μας Την Περίοδο του Πολέμου* (Athens, 1952), pp. 148-150. Admiral Alexandris was the Commander-in-Chief to be replaced by Voulgaris.

³⁶ Col. Thrasyvoulos Tsakalotos commanded the Third Brigade. Tsakalotos fought in the mutiny as well as under the British Eighth Army in Italy, earning the title of 'Rimini Brigade'. Later on he played a prominent role in the civil war of 1945-49 as a senior officer of the Greek national army. In 1952, he became Chief of Staff of the Greek Army. The right-wing stream claims that the mutiny in April was 'planned by the Communists' in order to monopolise power. Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, p.187. However, as Woodhouse noted PEEA was the occasion not the cause. Woodhouse, *Struggle for Greece*, p.78. Vlavianos states that the mutiny was only the result of rise of republicanism. Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p. 38.

³⁷ Venizelos was forced to resign on the grounds that he was a KKE sympathiser. P. Kanellopoulos, *Diary 31 March 1942- 4 January 1945-Ημερολόγιο 31 Μαρτίου 1942-4 Ιανουαρίου 1945* (Athens, 1977), pp. 553-554; Iatrides (ed.), *Ambassador MacVeagh Reports: Greece 1933-1947*, pp. 505-508; Papastratis, *British Foreign Policy*, pp. 175-76.

political impasse that had arisen.³⁸ Papandreou's plan was to disarm ELAS and incorporate EAM into the government. As one result of this, the National Army coupled with ELAS's forces would be much stronger and more co-operative.³⁹ Papandreou announced that, in the case of civil war breaking out, the Greek government would appeal for allied support and call on the Allies to intervene openly. Within this context he proposed the formation of both a Government of National Unity and a National Army.⁴⁰

All representatives finally signed the resolution of what is called the 'Lebanon Agreement' or 'Lebanon Charter' on 20 May. The most important provision of the argument called for all guerrilla formations to be placed under the command of a government of national unity, in which five out of twenty relatively unimportant posts were reserved for EAM representatives.⁴¹ Papandreou did not make a clear statement on the Communist demand that the King's return should be prevented. He noted that 'the Government of National Unity is to clarify the issue'.⁴² Britain's support for Papandreou proved a successful gambit. Meanwhile the KKE disapproved of PEEA's 'cheap' capitulation and repudiated the agreement.⁴³ Churchill announced in the House of Commons, 'a hopeful turn in Greek affairs'.⁴⁴ The course of events served British interests. On 28 May, the Foreign Office instructed Leeper that Papandreou was to be

³⁸ G. Papandreou, *The Liberation of Greece- Η Απελευθέρωση της Ελλάδος* (Athens, 1948), pp. 54-56.

³⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/43731 R7608, Spears Telegram-278, 13 May 1944.

⁴⁰ Papandreou, *The Liberation of Greece- Η Απελευθέρωση της Ελλάδος*, pp. 67-70; P. Papastratis, 'The Papandreou Government and the Lebanon Conference', in J. Iatrides (ed), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 119-130.

⁴¹ L. Woodward, *British Foreign Policy*, vol. 3 (London, 1971), pp. 408-409; Sarafis, *ELAS*, pp. 308-33; Papandreou, *The Liberation of Greece- Η Απελευθέρωση της Ελλάδος*, pp. 73-80.

⁴² Papandreou, *The Liberation of Greece- Η Απελευθέρωση της Ελλάδος*, p. 76.

⁴³ Sarafis, *ELAS*, p. 334. KKE's power claim demands were almost equal to those made in Cairo in August 1943, also repeated on 4 July 1944 and rejected by Papandreou. *KKE Official Documents- Επίσημα Κείμενα- 1940-1945*, pp. 406-407. The KKE demanded *inter alia* the retention of four ELAS divisions under the command of ELAS. This divergence between the KKE's agenda, PEEA and the actual agreement underlined the stability of the Government of National Unity. This is one of the incidents that prove the complexities of the KKE's policy and smoothens the argument of right-wing orthodox historians of Greece that the Greek Communist Party had planned its attempt to take over power right after EAM's creation. For this argument see: Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*.

given 'the fullest support, and at all costs prevented from yielding to the insidious atmosphere prevalent in Cairo'. Leeper was also directed to keep in touch with his American and Soviet colleagues and ask them to back British actions.⁴⁵

The Lebanon Charter and EAM's agreement to join the government of national unity facilitated the principal British objective regarding Greece: to prevent the KKE from seizing power after the German withdrawal and then to create a Greek government broadly acceptable to the Greeks to take over after the liberation. British policy regarding Greece in 1944 was based upon the principle of eliminating the communist threat and establishing a pro-British governmental scheme so as to secure 'our strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean'. Eden's report on 8 August to the Foreign Office reads:

If we are to maintain any political influence in SE Europe and, above all, our strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean after the war, it is essential that Greece should be ruled by a Government friendly to us. [...] I regard it as essential that British influence in Greece and the traditional connection between the two countries should be preserved, but unless British forces can be sent in there is a serious danger that the Greek people, who still look to us for assistance, will lose faith in Great Britain and that a Government will come into power which would bring the country under Soviet domination.⁴⁶

The next day the War Cabinet decided to despatch a 6,000 strong British force to Greece to secure peace after the German withdrawal from the country. Roosevelt and Stalin were informed of the British decision on 17 and 21 August respectively and raised no objection.⁴⁷

In order to prevent a communist attempt to seize power, the new Greek government organised a Conference at Caserta, near Naples, on 26 September 1944,

⁴⁴ *House of Commons Debates*, 1943-1944, vol. 400, col. 772, Churchill, 24 May 1944. Thereafter cited as HCDeb.

⁴⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/43731 R8331, Churchill minute, 28 May 1944.

⁴⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), 371/43715, R12457, Eden memorandum, 8 August 1944.

⁴⁷ H. Macmillan, *The Blast of War: 1939-1945* (London, 1967), p. 575.

under the aegis of Papandreou and a British committee.⁴⁸ General H. Wilson, C-in-C Middle East, called both ELAS and EDES representatives to Italy to receive instructions concerning the operations for the final phase of the liberation of Greece. Sarafis, Zervas, Papandreou, Harold Macmillan, Minister Resident at Allied HQ in North West Africa, Leeper and Lt. Gen. Scobie, newly appointed as General Officer Commanding Greece, all took part in the Caserta Conference. It was agreed that all Greek guerrilla forces would be put under the orders of General Spiliotopoulos, Military Governor of Athens and Attica, acting as representative of the Greek government. Spiliotopoulos would then serve under the command of Lt. Gen. Scobie. The agreement decreed that no military action regarding Athens was to be taken, except on direct orders from General Scobie. In this way EAM was put under British command. General Othonaios, a figure respected by ELAS, was nominated as the future Commander in Chief of the Greek army.⁴⁹

On the eve of the German withdrawal from the Balkans, Churchill and Eden were still concerned about communist activities in Greece and Soviet intentions in the Balkans. On 9 October 1944, Churchill flew to Moscow to conclude the 'Percentages Agreement' with Stalin. He suggested that the Russians might have ninety per cent dominance in Romania while the British ninety per cent in Greece; Yugoslavia would be shared on a fifty-fifty basis. The spirit, if not the details, of this Anglo-Soviet agreement had an important impact, for it served to define post-war territorial areas of control.⁵⁰

The last German units left Athens on 12 October 1944, and on 18 October the Greek government, backed by Lt.-Col. Sheppard, the British liaison officer with the

⁴⁸ The Greek Government of National Unity moved from Cairo to Italy on 8 September 1944, to prepare itself for its return to Greece.

⁴⁹ Sarafis, *ELAS*, pp. 382-389. The text of the 'Caserta Agreement' is reproduced in Iatrides, *Revolt in Athens*, pp. 311-313. Othonaios replaced Ventiris, the latter a strong anti-Communist.

⁵⁰ For an account of the Anglo-Soviet agreement see, Churchill, *The Second War World*, vol. 6, pp.197-99; S. Xydis, 'The Secret Anglo-Soviet Agreement on the Balkans of October 9, 1944', *Journal of Central European Affairs* 15, (October 1955), 248-71.

Greek government, was established in Athens.⁵¹ The first British troops under Lt. Gen. Scobie arrived on 14 October, and were augmented at the end of October by two brigades of the 4th Indian Division from Italy. The basic objective of British policy had proved successful: the communists had joined a government friendly to Britain. The most serious problem facing the new government was how to bring about the peaceful disarmament of the guerrilla formations and their replacement by a national army, without whose backing the government could not long hope to remain in place.

The December Events

In mid-October there were no serious clashes between ELAS and EDES. Small British units guarded principal ports such as Athens-Piraeus, Salonika, Patra, Preveza, Volos, and Kavalla. The rest of the mainland was under the control of the guerrillas. Zervas with his headquarters at Ioannina held most of Epirus. ELAS with its headquarters at Lamia held Macedonia, Thessaly, Roumeli, and the Peloponnese. The islands were controlled by both ELAS and the Greek authorities, except Crete, which remained under German control until after their final surrender in May 1945. Therefore, EAM/ELAS had three quarters of the liberated territory under its control.⁵²

The peace did not last long. Disagreement between ELAS and Papandreou arose over military issues. The Greek forces in the Middle East, ELAS and EDES organisations would have to be disarmed in order to form the new National Army. But it soon became clear that Papandreou did not intend to disband the brigade most loyal to the King, the Third Brigade.⁵³ ELAS regarded the retention of the Third Brigade as a

⁵¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/43694 R 16803, The Situation in Athens, 15 October 1944.

⁵² Leeper, *When Greeks Meet Greeks*, p. 85.

⁵³ The Third Brigade or Rimini Brigade formed the bulk of the re-organised ME forces after the April 1944 mutiny and consequently was formulated to be anti-Communist. It arrived in Athens on 9 November 1944 from the Italian front to Athens to support Papandreou's cabinet. Its strength was nearly 2,800 men

breach of trust. On 7 November, Papandreou declared that he was planning to dissolve EAM before the Third Brigade, which would arrive in Athens from Italy on 9 November.⁵⁴ The KKE was convinced of Papandreou's anti-Communist feelings and therefore called for mass demonstrations against the government.

Leeper wrote in his diary on 7 November 1944 that he did not expect the facade of unity to last and that 'ever growing lawlessness by EAM in Athens' was about to explode.⁵⁵ The British government prepared itself to face a communist insurgency. Churchill wrote to Eden, that 'we should not hesitate to use British troops to support the Royal Hellenic Government under Papandreou'.⁵⁶ Indeed General Sarafis, military commander of ELAS, noted that he had been warned by Lieutenant General Scobie, 'to bear in mind that a guerrilla army is not able to face a modern army with heavy arms, tanks, aircraft and a fleet at its disposal'.⁵⁷ British reinforcements were despatched from Italy to Greece. There were, however, few heavy weapons and no tanks in Greece. The Greek air force was weak. On 17 November two RAF squadrons and a Greek squadron flew into the main airfield at Athens, to be greeted by the Prime Minister in person. Another three RAF squadrons arrived by the end of the month. At the end of November Scobie had nearly twenty-three thousand troops under his command, though not all were combatants.⁵⁸

The refusal of the KKE to disarm ELAS led to the military confrontation between ELAS and the Anglo-Greek government forces in December 1944. As the dates

including just over 200 officers, coupled with a British force of about 8,000 men. General Tsakalotos, *Forty Years Soldier of Greece-Σαράντα Χρόνια Στρατιώτης*, vol.1 (Athens, 1960), p. 587; Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 114; H. Macmillan, *War Diaries*, vol.1 (London, 1984), p. 595. ELAS armed strength at the time of the liberation in mid-October 1944 was 5,240 officers and 43,700 other ranks. Sarafis, *ELAS*, p. 276. Therefore, the non-communist part of the army enjoyed a distinct superiority of force.

⁵⁴ G. Papandreou, *The Third War-O Τρίτος Πόλεμος* (Athens, 1949), pp. 202-03, Leeper, *When Greek Meets Greek*, p. 92.

⁵⁵ Leeper, *When Greek Meets Greek*, p. 92.

⁵⁶ Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 6, p. 250.

⁵⁷ Sarafis, *ELAS*, pp. 291-92. Scobie was the British officer designated to represent the Allied Commander in liberated Greece.

drew near for the demobilisation of ELAS, EDES and the Third Brigade, tension increased. Siantos – from PEEA – and Sarafis – from ELAS – asserted that they would not disband ELAS unless the Third Brigade was also disbanded. On 18 November, the KKE Political Bureau decided that ‘if a political solution was not found, the ELAS must be prepared for a clash’.⁵⁹ In a show of force the six EAM ministers in the Government of National Unity resigned on 2 December.

The direct cause of the fighting was EAM’s demonstration on 3 December in *Syntagma* (Constitution) Square, Athens. The demonstration turned violent when police panicked and began firing at the demonstrators as they advanced across the square in the direction of the police headquarters. The ‘second round’ of the civil war, or the ‘December Events’, had begun. ‘Maintain order in Athens’, Churchill cabled Scobie, ‘defeat EAM. The ending of the fighting is subsidiary to this. I am ordering large reinforcements to come to Athens’.⁶⁰

Britain was determined to put down the insurgency. General Scobie ordered all ELAS units to leave Athens within seventy-two hours and on the following day he declared martial law. On 5 December Scobie committed his British troops to the fray. Scobie commanded the 4th Indian Division, the Greek Third Brigade, a parachute brigade and an armoured brigade, a total of nearly 20,000 combat troops. In the first three weeks of the fighting in the Athens-Piraeus area, ELAS held the upper hand, however. The Tatoi airfield and some 800 RAF headquarters and ground staff personnel were cut off in the northern suburb of Kifissia. The Kalamaki airfield was insecure and the ground routes from and into the city centre were under ELAS’s control.

⁵⁸ Ibid, pp. 291-293.

⁵⁹ Y. Ioannidis, *Memoirs-Aναμνήσεις* (Athens, 1979), pp. 329-33. J. Loulis, *The Greek Communist Party* (London, 1982), pp. 170-171; Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p. 48; Shrader claims that Scobie should be blamed for polarisation over the demobilisation of ELAS, which brought the armed conflict. Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, p. 39.

Consequently, the port facilities were limited and there was, in Macmillan's words, no 'secure place' of operation for the British.⁶¹ Between 13 and 16 December, however, two British divisions, a tank regiment, two brigades and other supporting units landed in Piraeus. Meanwhile, the ELAS forces of General Sarafis continued fighting their usual enemy: the EDES forces of General Zervas.⁶²

Operational control of the Anglo-Greek forces were entrusted to Maj. Gen. John L. I. Hawkesworth. By 20 December General Hawkesworth had secured his base at Faliron and began attacking ELAS supported by artillery and aircraft. On 27 December, Hawkesworth's forces took control of the southern half of the city, except the Athens-Piraeus road. The tide had turned against ELAS although fighting continued. The role of the British forces during the December events was decisive even if they did not do the bulk of the fighting. British troops used tanks to secure main communication lines such as Sygrou and Kifissias Avenue and to defend the city centre and governmental buildings. In terms of offensive operations, British troops were limited to cutting ELAS off from Athens-Piraeus Avenue, so as to free Piraeus harbour and allow supplies to reach Athens.⁶³ The Greek units conducted the rest of the fighting. British intervention to key points, however, radically changed the course of the events against EAM.⁶⁴

On Christmas Eve, Churchill and Eden flew to Athens for a first hand look at the emergency. This was a definite proof of Churchill's determination to oppose the communists' insurgency. On 26-28 December, Churchill, Eden, Macmillan, the leaders of KKE, EAM/ELAS, the American and French Ambassadors, Colonel Popov of the

⁶⁰ Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol.6, pp. 252, 254. According to Farakos: 17,000 men of ELAS took action in the December Events; 11,000 of Papandreou's forces; 8,000 of British Army. Farakos, *ELAS and Power-O EΛΑΣ και Η Εξουσία*, vol.2, p. 117.

⁶¹ Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, p. 40; Iatrides, *Revolt in Athens*, p. 227. See Map D.2, p. 188.

⁶² O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War 1944-1949*, pp. 104-105.

⁶³ In December the Greek government forces constituted of: 4,000 men (Rimini Brigade), 500 (The Sacred Battalion), 3,000 (Athens City Police), 1,000 ('X' Organisation); 9,000 men (4th Indian Division-3 infantry brigades), 2,000 (Airborne Brigade), 1,000 (Armoured Brigade), 1,000 (Battalion, Leicestershire Infantry Regiment); 50,000 (ELAS), 10,000 (EDES). Iatrides, *Revolt in Athens*, p. 176.

⁶⁴ G. Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War-O Ελληνικός Εμφύλιος*, vol. 1, p. 72.

Soviet Military Mission and Greek national government officials agreed to appoint as Regent Archbishop Damaskinos, to take office, on 31 December 1944. On 3 January 1945, a well-known republican General Nicolaos Plastiras, recently returned to Greece from self-imposed exile in Paris, was appointed as prime minister.⁶⁵

The 'second round' of the civil war effectively came to an end on 15 January. Although ELAS troops had defeated EDES and occupied most of the country they had been forced to abandon Athens.⁶⁶ The formal end of the December Events was a political settlement between the new government and EAM, signed at a seaside villa in Varkiza, a small resort on the outskirts of Athens, on 12 February 1945. Under the terms of the 'Varkiza Agreement', ELAS agreed to disarm. In return the Plastiras government promised amnesty for political crimes. Martial law was lifted, civil liberties guaranteed and the KKE was recognised as a legal political party. EAM was to be permitted to continue as a political organisation. A plebiscite on constitutional issues and elections would be held in one year, followed by elections.⁶⁷ As a result of the 'Varkiza Agreement', ELAS surrendered its arms, although a few 'hard core' party members, like Aris Velouhiotis, refused to comply and fled to the mountains. Other EAM-ELAS members left for Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria.⁶⁸ ELAS officially ceased to exist.

The Development of a Full Scale Civil War

From the 'Varkiza Agreement' onwards the Greek government moved steadily to the Right. On 17 February 1945, the right-wing Populist Party led by the prominent conservative politician Konstantine Tsaldaris, which had been totally dismantled under

⁶⁵ W. McNeill, *The Greek Dilemma* (London, 1947), pp. 103, 192-93.

⁶⁶ Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 6, p. 252.

⁶⁷ The terms of the 'Varkiza Agreement' are included in Iatrides, *Revolt in Athens*, pp. 320-24.

⁶⁸ O'Ballance puts the number of ELAS fighters who crossed over into Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria at about 4,000. O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, p. 113; The right-wing historian Kousoulas estimates

the Metaxas dictatorship, was re-established in Athens. The Populists presented the King and themselves as the bulwark against communism. The moderate republican Venizelist Liberal Party, represented by Themistocles Sofoulis, began to switch its allegiance to the right-wing group. 'White terror' governmental measures against the communists grew. These included arrests of communist suspects, the strengthening of rightist organisations such as Grivas' 'X' to control the Army and Gendarmerie and reduction of the leftist press.⁶⁹ The right-wing shift of the government was also consolidated by the appointment of Admiral Petros Voulgaris as a new caretaker premier to conduct the first post-war elections, following Plastiras' resignation on 7 April 1945. Voulgaris had proved his anti-Communist bent during the army purge of April 1944.⁷⁰

On 26 July 1945, the victory of the Labour Party over Churchill's Conservatives in Britain came as a shock to the Greek political world. The Labour government seemed to represent the British 'socialism in one country'.⁷¹ Greek conservatives feared that the British Labour government would distance itself from them.⁷² These fears, however, were not realised. Bevin was an aggressive and anti-communist Foreign Secretary following Churchill's path. Prime Minister Attlee was not charismatic but strengthened Bevin's anti-communist strategies and backed every effort to weaken the Soviet threat. Attlee and Bevin controlled the cabinet, which prevailed the decisions of the Labour Party. The Left had only four representatives in the government of minor political importance and consequently possible debates within the cabinet were easily dissolved. The foreign policy of the Labour government continued Churchill's pursuit to maintain

23,000 communists in Albania, 20,000 Yugoslavia, 5,000 Bulgaria. Kousoulas, *The Price of Freedom*, p. 149.

⁶⁹ General Ventiris, whom Plastiras appointed Deputy Chief of the General Staff, had promoted the penetration of extreme right-wing organisations within the army. Ventiris, in fact, was one of the leaders of IDEA a right-wing organisation, which prevailed over the Greek Army and in May 1951, was to play a role in Papagos' resignation from the post of Commander in Chief.

⁷⁰ Leeper, *When Greek Meets Greek*, pp. 161-62.

British imperial interests in the Middle East against the Soviet Union.⁷³ On 11 August 1945, Bevin submitted a memorandum on British policy towards Greece to the Cabinet, stressing the continuity with Churchill's line. He also spoke of the need to contain communism.⁷⁴ Bevin noted in the House of Commons that the Labour government's foreign policy regarding Greece would remain almost entirely the same as that of his predecessor.⁷⁵

The situation in Greece was exacerbated by the continuing conflict between the Right and the Left. Right-wing groups, such as Lt. Col. George Grivas' 'X' sought to root out the former supporters of EAM/ELAS. In the KKE too militants were increasingly in the ascendant. In May 1945 Zahariadis returned from the German concentration camp at Dachau and resumed the leadership of the KKE from Siandos.⁷⁶ Zahariadis at the Seventh Party Congress on 4 October 1945 noted that 'if this mess continues, every Greek will have to take to the hills'.⁷⁷ In order to avoid a new crisis Leeper suggested Voulgaris to resign in October 1945. After a month of uncertainty

⁷¹ K. Morgan, *The British Labour Governments 1945-1951* (Oxford, 1985), p. 93.

⁷² Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p. 120. Alexander, *The Prelude to the Truman Doctrine*, pp. 125-26.

⁷³ Morgan, *The British Labour Governments 1945-1951*, pp. 56-81.

⁷⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/48277 R13856, Memorandum by Bevin, 11 August 1945; FRUS (1945): 8, 136-137; British Embassy to Department of State, 11 August 1945.

⁷⁵ HCDeb, 1945-46, vol. 413, cols. 289-91, 16 August 1945.

⁷⁶ Following the decision of the KKE to remain officially committed to the establishment of a more equitable social order in Greece by peaceful means, the Central Committee of the KKE proceeded with the organisation of Self Defence (*Aftoamyna*); an intelligence and propaganda organisation created to co-ordinate defensive actions to protect the KKE from 'monarcho-fascist terrorism. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 163; *History of the KKE-Δοκίμιο Ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ*, pp. 526-535. O. Smith, 'Self-Defence and Communist Policy 1945-1947', in L. Baerentzen, J. O. Iatrides and O. Smith (eds), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War 1945-1949*, pp. 159-178. EAM threatened to abstain from the election given the governmental measure, the 'white terror', against the KKE sympathisers and the consequent falsification of the electoral results and polls. Sofoulis and his Liberal Party also consented with EAM, characterising the election day 'pitiful electoral comedy'. FRUS (1945): 8, 170; MacVeagh to the Secretary of State, 7 October 1945; Sarafis, *After Varkiza-Mετά τη Βάρκιζα*, pp. 127-134. McNeill, *The Greek Dilemma*, p. 180.

⁷⁷ *History of the KKE-Δοκίμιο Ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ*, pp. 526-535. The KKE established in cities and towns throughout the country an intelligence network based on Communist 'cells' with the purpose of collecting information, supplies, money, recruiting and terrifying non-Communist sympathisers. These cells were known as *yiafka*. O'Balance, *The Greek Civil War*, p. 142. O. Smith, 'Communist Perceptions, Strategy and Tactics, 1945-1949', in J. Iatrides and W. Linda (eds), *Greece at the Crossroads. The Civil War and Its Legacy* (Pensilvania, 1995), pp. 87-120.

over the new prime minister, a new stopgap government was formed under Liberal Sofoulis in November 1945 to conduct elections on 31 March 1946.

Greek political instability had become an international issue. On 27 November 1945, the respective American, British and French Chiefs of the Allied Mission for the Observation of the Greek Elections (AMFOGE) arrived in Athens, headed by the future American Ambassador to Greece Henry Grady.⁷⁸ The mission signified the beginning of American involvement in Greek affairs. This did not, however, threaten British interests in the area; on the contrary, it added another power to act as an anti-communist watchdog.

In the meantime, the Second Plenum of the KKE Central Committee, which met on 12 February 1946, initiated the 'third round' of the civil war. It agreed upon a dual strategy of continued political action and build-up of military force. This was signalled by KKE's decision to abstain from the election of 31 March 1946, as announced on 22 February, and the birth of the 'Democratic Army of Greece' (DAG), the successor of ELAS, in the autumn of the same year.⁷⁹ According to Zahariadis' speech at the Seventh Plenum of the Central Committee in May 1950, the Second Plenum 'in effect decided that the new armed struggle should begin'.⁸⁰

The elections called for by the 'Varkiza Agreement' were finally held on 31 March 1946, under the proportional system. The result was in accordance with the intentions and manipulations of the majority of the Greek political world. The KKE boycotted the election. It had already decided that 'the new armed struggle should

⁷⁸ FRUS (1945): 8, 185: MacVeagh to the Secretary of State, 4 December 1945. AMFOGE was composed of more than 1,200 British, French and American observers, under the American chief observer Henry F. Grady.

⁷⁹ KKE's radical decision to abstain was based on political grounds and suppression of the communist voters and sympathisers. On the KKE's decision to abstain see, G. Mavrogordatos, 'The 1946 Election and Plebiscite: Prelude to Civil War', in J. O. Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 181-195; Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, pp. 189-224. DAG or DA is used in the text as DA for reasons of convenience.

⁸⁰ N. Zahariadis, *Ten Years of Fight-Δέκα Χρόνια Πάλης* (Athens, 1978), p. 28.

begin'.⁸¹ The right-wing Populist Party, headed by Tsaldaris, won a majority of 206 seats out of 354.⁸² The election of March 1946 was a critical development marking the evolution from occupation and civil strife. The right-wing party, even before the election, had driven former ELAS partisans back to the mountains. This process gained momentum in the election although the government exacerbated an already polarised political situation. The plebiscite to decide the future of the monarchy prescribed by the 'Varkiza Agreement' was held on 1 September 1946. It too confirmed the re-emergence of the pre-1941 political order. Many who had no love for the monarch voted in favour of his return merely because they regarded the monarchy as the best guarantee against a communist accession to power. On 27 September 1946, King George II set foot on Greek soil for the first time since he had fled in April 1941. He would remain on the throne until his death in April 1947.

The elections signified a new era for Anglo-Greek relations. On one hand, British policy was based on a determination to retain British military presence until the Greek government was able to restore law and order. The Foreign Office hoped that Greece's political leaders would join together in the face of the Communist threat and establish a government of national unity or, at least, a two-party government in which the moderate Right would join forces with the Centre and moderate Left. On the other hand, however, the Labour government declared its intention to be released from interfering in Greek politics. This new direction was to be implemented by Clifford Norton, who replaced Rex Leeper as Ambassador on 7 March 1946. Bevin instructed Norton to support the Populist government of Tsaldaris but to coax the Greeks towards

⁸¹ Zahariadis, *Ten Years of Fight-Δέκα Χρόνια Πάλης* (Athens, 1978), p. 28.

⁸² The main political factions were: the Populists under Tsaldaris, the Liberal Party of Sofoulis, National Union under Kanellopoulos, Papandreou, Venizelos, the National Liberal of Gonatas-Zervas and the KKE-EAM. AMFOGE estimated that out of a total population of 7,500,000 people only 70 per cent of the names on the lists belonged to valid registrants, 13 per cent being invalid and 17 per cent of doubtful validity. Cmd. 6812 *Report of the Allied Mission to Observe the Greek Elections* (London, 1946) pp. 18-29; R. Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece* (London, 1987), p. 18. On 1 September 1946 the plebiscite

a policy of peace, constitutional freedom, parliamentary institutions and financial stability.⁸³

British ambitions for limiting intervention in Greece were, however, undermined by a renewed escalation of violence by the communists. On 26 October 1946 Marcos Vafeiadis (Marcos) announced the creation of the Democratic Army of Greece under his command. The guerrillas numbered no more than 13,000 men, yet fighters experienced in resisting the Germans more than balanced the advantages that government forces had in numbers and material. The squatter camps of neighbouring Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria were laced with mountain trails suitable for moving men and supplies.⁸⁴

Within this context of communist aggression, it was obvious to the Greek government and its British allies that the Greek National Army (NA) needed vast improvements before it could defeat the guerrillas. In December 1946, the NA manpower ceiling was 100,000 men, along with almost 35,000 *gendarmes*. Units of Rural Defence (MAY) and Units of Pursuit Detachments (MAD) were set by the Greek General Staff to act as local home guards in October 1945.⁸⁵ None of these formations, however, was well equipped. Few were properly trained for their duties. Many lacked combat motivation. The Greek Navy too was in poor shape. The outlook of the Royal Hellenic Air Force was also dismal. It consisted of fifty-four British-made obsolete aircraft and fewer than 300 battle-trained pilots. Greek finances precluded the purchase of more aeroplanes, and the Germans had confiscated the only state aircraft factory. Greece had no petroleum refineries, no munitions manufacturers, and no facilities for

was held, 68.4 per cent brought King George back. AMFOGE did not supervise the plebiscite, but did control the electoral registers.

⁸³ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/58679 R 3748, Foreign Office to Norton, 13 March 1946.

⁸⁴ H. Jones, *A New Kind of War* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 19-21; Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, pp. 179-80, 187-88.

⁸⁵ Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, p. 191; Eudes, *The Kapetanios*, pp. 274, 278. One of the main tasks of both organisations was to counterbalance the communist *Aftamyna*.

overhauling aircraft or for making spare parts.⁸⁶ The Greek government, for all its posturing, was in poor shape to fight the communists.

⁸⁶Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, pp. 190-191; M. A. Campbell, E. W. Downs, and L. V. Schuetta, *The Employment of Airpower in the Greek Guerrilla War, 1947-1949* (Maxwell Air Base, 1964), p. 8.

II In Search of Security: 1947

The Maximos Government: The Test of the Centre

As a result of the escalation of the civil war a new round of political negotiations started in Athens. On 8 January 1947, the Foreign Office instructed Norton to press Prime Minister Tsaldaris to form a centrist coalition.¹ British diplomats wanted power-sharing between the parties of the Right and the Left. Despite the assertion of some historians that Britain favoured a right-wing government in Greece, the consistent British aim was the establishment of a moderate government of the Centre.² MacVeagh, the United States Ambassador to Greece, also urged Tsaldaris to form a right-wing coalition of the Centre.³ Tsaldaris, however, was unwilling to surrender the position of his right-wing party. He proposed instead that elections should be held. Both ambassadors rejected the Greek premier's proposition. They argued that there was no constitutional reason for new elections. Moreover, such an act would undermine stability of the institutions of government and encourage further unrest.⁴

The Anglo-American determination to create a moderate and stable government forced Tsaldaris' hand. On 10 January, he consented to the broadening of the government. A new cabinet would be formed under a compromise prime minister with the Populists and Liberals serving as joint vice-premiers. Negotiations started between the Populists and the Liberals over seats in the cabinet. Sofoulis, however, demanded the premiership. In order to enhance his claims to leadership he championed a

¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/66994 R113, Norton to Foreign Office, 8 January 1947.

² Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου Πολέμου*, vol. 1, pp. 174-176.

³ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/66994 R78, MacVeagh to State Department, 8 January 1947; FRUS (1947): 5, 4: MacVeagh to the Secretary of State, 11 January 1947. It was believed that such an act would satisfy the claims for power of the insurgents and bring the warfare into an end.

programme of amnesty, re-organisation of the army and a new election.⁵ Tsaldaris, had no intention of offering Sofoulis the premiership. He was unwilling to weaken his party by co-operating with moderate politicians of the Centre such as Papandreou, Kanellopoulos and Venizelos from the National Political Union (EPE). Moreover the hard-core Populists Gonatas and Zervas, refused to serve under the Liberals. Three days after the talks had begun they ended in failure with each participant accusing the other of intransigence over the distribution of power.⁶ On 23 January, disagreement over the balance of power between the Liberals and the right-wing Populists caused the collapse of Tsaldaris' premiership.⁷

Dimitrios Maximos, an elderly Populist and ex-governor of the National Bank, was drafted in a stop-gap prime minister. He took the oath as Premier, leading a coalition cabinet of the Centre, on 24 January 1947. Maximos enjoyed the approval of the Palace. He was a neutral figure, acceptable to the parliamentary parties, and, as Norton put it, 'no one imagined that at the age of seventy-three and after [a] long absence from politics he wanted the job'.⁸ The coalition cabinet consisted mainly of Populists, Liberals and the National Political Union (EPE). Tsaldaris remained powerful because he became Vice Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs. The EPE were allotted important posts. Zervas became a Minister but without portfolio as a result of Norton's refusal to countenance a more important post for him. The British Ambassador pointed out that Zervas was known to advocate extreme measures against the Left; his

⁴ See footnote 1. Tsaldaris, a purely Populist and right-wing politician, would have preferred new elections with the aim to form again a purely right-wing cabinet and avoid negotiations with the Liberals and the powers of the Centre and Left.

⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/66995 R 460, Norton to Foreign Office, 10 January 1947.

⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/66996 R 578, Lascelles to Foreign Office, 14 January 1947.

⁷ FRUS (1947): 5, 9-11: Marshall to Athens, 21 January 1947.

⁸ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/66998 R 1515, Norton to Foreign Office, 3 February 1947.

appointment could destroy the government's chances of projecting a moderate image both at home and abroad.⁹

In the short-term British and American objectives were realised through the formation of the Maximos government. A cabinet of the Centre had been created. Although some centre-right politicians had joined the cabinet (Kanellopoulos, Papandreou, Venizelos) there was no change in policy: the military campaign against the guerrillas would still be pursued. Yet, the Maximos coalition was extremely fragile. The Left, which would have preferred a more friendly government under Sofoulis and the Liberals denounced the new cabinet as a 'fraudulent product of British intrigue' bent on perpetuating Tsaldaris' 'reign of terror'.¹⁰ King George II predicted that it would be very difficult for the new cabinet to function. Norton, although he liked the 'clever and moderate' Maximos, agreed. Paul Porter, Head of the American Economic Mission, who arrived in Greece in mid-January, reported that Maximos was 'the most non-partisan, moderate and co-operative personality in Government' but that his government was little more than a 'loose hierarchy of individualistic politicians'.¹¹

The Maximos cabinet had to cope with a series of problems. First, and most important, of these were the continuous communist attacks and the inadequacy of the National Army. By early 1947 the Democratic Army had managed to build an impressive force, operating as bands or 'groups', each consisting of seventy to one hundred men and called 'Military Formations'. In February 1947, Marcos had about 13,000 fighting men organised in seven commands under his authority. These commands were in turn headed by political commissars or 'kapetanios'. The DA had

⁹ Markezinis believes that the Maximos government was a Greek test to find the most acceptable combination to the Americans. He notes that it served the transitional period until the 'real' application of the Truman Doctrine. Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, vol.2, p. 307. However, the declaration of the Truman Doctrine in just two months time, weakens this theory.

¹⁰ *History of the KKE-Δοκίμιο Ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ*, pp. 564-67.

¹¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/66998 R1524, Norton to Foreign Office, 3 February 1947.

established permanent headquarters in the north-west corner of the country, close to Lake Prespa on the Greek side of the Albanian and Yugoslav borders. The Grammos and Vitsi mountain ranges provided a natural fortress that protected the Democratic Army against the National Army. This location was also near to the Democratic Army's supply centres outside the country.¹² An important factor that strengthened the Democratic Army was the organisation of 'hit and run' attacks by bands of communist fighters against isolated police and army stations. The advantage of the 'hit and run' strategy was that it weakened the strength and unity of the National Army by spreading its units into different micro-operations.¹³ Thus, the Democratic Army challenged the National Army with guerrilla warfare.

On paper the National Army should have had little difficulty in crushing the opposition. The nominal strength of the National Army at the beginning of 1947 was 100,000 men, organised in five divisions and seven independent brigades; an increase of almost 15,000 men had been authorised as a result of Spiliotopoulos' (Chief of General Staff) visit in London in November 1946.¹⁴ The National Army, however, trained by the British Military Mission for regular warfare, was inexperienced and ill equipped for counter-guerrilla mountain operations.¹⁵ During 1947, the Greek National Army attempted to apply a strategy of 'encirclement' supported by the British Military Mission Commander Rawlins and American officers.¹⁶ This strategy involved attacks on particular communist headquarters or isolated communist hubs. The drawback of this

¹² Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, pp. 203-4. This eventually would prove a decisive fortress to support Communist insurgency operations.

¹³ GES/DIS, *The Greek Army during the Bandit War: The First Year of the Bandit War 1946-O Ελληνικός Στρατός Κατά τον Αντισυμμοριακόν Αγώνα*, (Athens, 1971), pp. 65-66; Th. Tsakalotos, *Forty Years Soldier of Greece- Σαράντα Χρόνια Στρατιώτης της Ελλάδος*, vol. 2, (Athens, 1960), p. 51.

¹⁴ The British government had agreed to finance the improvement and increase of the National Army. On the Greek-British economic agreement in: Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου Πολέμου*, vol.1, pp. 120-123, 237-239.

¹⁵ The National Army, as already mentioned, moved to Egypt after the Germans occupied Greece to continue their semi normal activities in training camps under the aegis of the allies.

¹⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/893, Rawlins, Review of the Anti-Bandit Campaign, 22 October 1947.

strategy was that it left many areas unprotected against the depredations of the insurgents. This favoured the Democratic Army, in that it could counter-attack after the National Army had withdrawn. Another implication of this strategy was that the National Army needed high manpower levels to extend control over the cleared targets. Thus 'hit and run' warfare offered numerous advantages to the guerrillas.¹⁷

Several other factors offset the DA's numerical disadvantages. An unknown but significant number of Greek civilians were assisting the communist fight.¹⁸ The 'hit and run' missions terrorised settlements throughout Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace and yielded conscripts for the Democratic Army.

The country's inadequate road system severely limited army pursuit. The National Army had no armoured force, except for a few British-made Centaur tanks. But these 18-ton tanks armed with small 50-millimetre cannons were virtually useless because they were unable to climb mountainous terrain under their own power. Few passageways in the Greek countryside were paved and once motor vehicles left the main arteries, they had to reduce speeds to less than fifteen miles per hour. A single road connected Athens in the south to Salonika in the north-east. Along the west coast the only north-south highway was the Yannina-Arta-Agrinion road. Across the northern part of the country, a single west-east link ran from Yannina to Trikala and Larissa. Moreover, the Yannina road wound through a low-lying coastal stretch between sea and mountains and provided an excellent opportunity for guerrilla sabotage and ambush.¹⁹

On 18 February, King George II asked Norton and MacVeagh to authorise an increase in the National Army's strength to revive morale otherwise, he feared, 'serious and widespread breakdown of discipline'.²⁰ The Maximos government would be tested on its ability to put an end to the warfare and bring peace and stability to the country.

¹⁷ Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, pp. 241-242; Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, pp. 216-18.

¹⁸ O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, p. 146.

¹⁹ Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece 1941-1949*, p. 205.

Changing the highest echelon of command would show its determination to defeat the enemy. Consequently, on 19 February 1947 George Stratos, Maximos' Minister of War, convened a meeting of the Supreme National Defence Council (ASEA) with the aim of boosting military organisation and morale. Lt. Gen. Ventiris replaced Lt. General Spiliotopoulos as Chief of General Staff although Spiliotopoulos was retained as Deputy Chief of the General Staff.²¹ Plans to improve the equipment of the army, the Units of Pursuit Detachments (MAD), the Units of Rural Defence (MAY) and Commando units were announced.²² In February 1947 the general plan of the governmental forces was war on all fronts. The army, *gendarmerie*, MAD and MAY would all be used. The army thereafter would concentrate in spring 1947 and start continuous military attacks of large scale and duration in order to press the enemy to the defeat.²³ The rest of the forces would focus on the civil control of the Communists.

Yet the bellicose rhetoric emanating from the Greek government did little to hide its parlous state. It could not afford to pay for serious military operations. On 17 February Paul Porter cabled to Washington that the Greek state was virtually bankrupt, since it spent more than fifty per cent of the national income on non-productive purposes. The budget deficit was vast, inflation was rampant and the Greeks were

²⁰ FRUS (1947): 5, 27-28: MacVeagh to Marshall, 19 February 1947.

²¹ GES/DIS, *Archives of the Greek Civil War 1944-1949-Αρχεία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου Πολέμου 1944-1949-(thereafter cited as GES/DIS Archives-Αρχεία)* Ανώτατον Συμβούλιον Εθνικής Αμυνας, 'Πρακτικά της 11^{ης} συνεδριάσεως του ΑΣΕΑ, 19 Φεβρουαρίου 1947' (Minutes of the 11th Meeting of Highest Board of National Defence- ASEA, 19 February 1947'), vol.3, keim. (text) 58, p. 333. ASEA was composed after the 'Varkiza Agreement' in February 1945 to co-ordinate the armed forces; headed by the Prime Minister, Greek Ministers of War, Navy, Air and the three Chiefs of General, Navy, Air Staff, representatives of the British and American military missions were also included. After the end of the civil war it became General Staff of National Defence (ΓΕΕΘΑ).

²² Lack of discipline and organisation were among the main drawbacks of the NA. Tsakalotos, *Forty Years Soldier of Greece – Σαράντα Χρόνια Στρατιώτης της Ελλάδος*, pp. 52-55.

²³ GES/DIS, *Archives-Αρχεία*, Αναφορά Στρατού 4 Φεβρουαρίου 1947 (Army Report, 4 February 1947), vol 3, keim. 42b, p. 259. The war preparations had already started since the days of Lt. Gen. Spiliotopoulos to be accomplished and further enlarged under Lt. Gen. Ventiris. The new plan differed to the old one in that the DA would be fought all over the country, as opposed to the local nuclei throughout 1946.

overcome by a sense of national helplessness manifested in the conviction that the country should be taken care of by its rich allies.²⁴

On the same day the Foreign Office also concluded that there were three ways in which the situation in Greece could evolve. First, if Britain and the United States agreed to aid the country jointly after 31 March, or, if the Americans undertook to shoulder the entire burden the Greek government would fight it out with the communists to the bitter end. Second, if Britain and the United States decided to abandon the country, the Greek National Army might still manage to crush the guerrillas during the campaign planned for the spring. This seemed a doubtful prospect, however, as, according to Norton, the Democratic Army was now operating throughout Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, and the Peloponnese with a high standard of organisation, discipline, and morale. Third, if Western aid ceased on 31 March, and the guerrillas survived the spring campaign, the morale of the National Army would probably collapse and its units would panic and dissolve. Maximos' cabinet would then be compelled to negotiate terms with the communists from a disadvantageous if not hopeless position.²⁵ Norton stressed the need to continue assisting Greece using familiar geopolitical arguments. The threat of a political breakdown in Athens, in the light of the communist uprising, would render Greece highly vulnerable to Soviet imperialism.²⁶ This would damage the security of Europe and the Western world. It would affect areas of particular importance for Britain: the sea routes of the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The Soviet threat to Turkey and Iran, coupled with the civil war in Greece were interpreted as threatening Europe and the Northern Tier. The threat of Soviet imperialism in the Eastern Mediterranean gave the impetus, therefore, for keeping Greece within the British sphere

²⁴ FRUS (1947): 5, 20: Paul Porter to Clayton, 17 February 1947.

²⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/67000 R2359, Norton to Foreign Office, 14 February 1947.

²⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/67032 R1900, Norton to Foreign Office, 5 February 1947.

of influence. The Greeks were told of the 'permanent' and 'unchangeable' nature of British interests in the area and in the political developments of the country.²⁷

The Truman Doctrine

Geopolitical arguments were not, however, the whole story. The bleak prospects of the Greek government were matched by the bleak prospects of the British government. British financial problems preoccupied Whitehall. The issue of whether or not to extend financial assistance to Greece, an obligation that expired in March 1947, dominated the ministers' agenda. On 29 January, Hugh Dalton, the Chancellor of the Exchequer sent a note to Prime Minister Attlee arguing that in light of the weak British economy aid to Greece should be reduced. The Chancellor warned the Prime Minister that the British cabinet should judge national defence 'not only against the more distant possibility of armed aggression, but also against the far more immediate risk of economic and financial overstrain and collapse'.²⁸ Ranged against Dalton were the Minister of Defence, Albert Alexander and, more importantly, the Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin. Bevin argued that Britain should finance an expansion of the Greek National Army. To balance increased aid to Greece, British forces in Greece would be reduced to one brigade of four battalions, which would itself withdraw after the retreat of the Red Army from Bulgaria. Bevin's plan garnered support from the Chiefs of Staff. The British government had a clear choice set before it.²⁹

On 11 February Hugh Dalton asked for a final decision on ending aid to Greece which, in his view, 'from the end of the war onwards had received thirty nine million

²⁷ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΟΥ ΑΡΧΕΙΟΥ-SERVICE OF HISTORICAL ARCHIVE, ATHENS (YIA), 1947, 86.1, 16740, Αναφορά του πρεσβευτή Αγνίδη στην Ελληνική Πρεσβεία Αθηνών, 23 Ιανουαρίου 1947 (Ambassador Agnidis' Report to the Greek Embassy in Athens, 23 January 1947). This note confutes the revisionist argument that the Greek government had nothing to expect from London after March 1947. Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p. 236.

²⁸ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), T 236/1037, 11 January 1947; H. Dalton, *High Tide and After: Memoirs 1945-1960* (London, 1962), pp. 193, 197.

²⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 129/16 C.P. (47) 34, Policy towards Greece and Turkey, 25 January 1947.

pounds, almost without result'. If the British cabinet desired to save money, he argued, it would have to 'start immediately, by cutting the expenses towards Greece'. Greek instability and the inability of its politicians to work together to improve their country reinforced Dalton's scepticism about the value of further aid. He complained to Bevin that 'the Greeks were not helping themselves'.³⁰

Bevin himself was in a quandary. On one hand, he believed that the KKE should be contained. On the other hand, he recognised that the Greeks remained incapable of defending themselves and the burden on Britain was heavy. The British Foreign Secretary therefore turned to the United States to seek assistance.³¹ The two British ministers agreed that the United States would be asked to subsidise the Greek fight against communism and western interests in the area. Bevin cabled 'a strong telegram to the United States for the sole purpose of bringing matters to a head'. Attlee consented to an attempt to make 'the Americans face up to the facts in the eastern Mediterranean'.³²

On 21 February, Lord Inverchapel, the British Ambassador in Washington, was instructed to deliver a note to George Marshall, the American Secretary of State, announcing that, given British financial woes, Britain could not sustain its assistance to Greece after the end of March 1947.³³

Anglo-American negotiations followed the British note. The Truman administration was in little doubt that if the British could not contain the communists in

³⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/67032 R2440, Dalton to Bevin, 13 February 1947.

³¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/67032 R2443, Dalton to Attlee, 11 February 1947.

³² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 800/468/GRE/37/2, Memorandum Bevin, 18 February 1947.

³³ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΟΥ ΑΡΧΕΙΟΥ-SERVICE OF HISTORICAL ARCHIVE, ATHENS (YIA), 1947, 46.1, 21503, Αναφορά του Τσαλδάρη στο Γενικό Επιτελείο Στρατού, 21 Μαρτίου 1947 (Tsaldaris' Report to GES, 21 March 1947); FRUS (1947): 5, 32-37: British Embassy to State Department, 21 February 1947; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/67032 R 1900, Foreign Office to Washington, 21 February 1947. There are various interpretations of the British decision to withdraw aid from Greece: saving manpower, political pressure from the leftist part of the Labour government and public opinion, financial necessity, apply pressure on America, change of strategic priorities, deliberate plot of the British government to force the Americans to enter the international arena. In R. Frazier, *Anglo-American Relations with Greece*, pp. 132-156. The most convincing possible reason focuses on creating a joint Anglo-American alliance to contain communism in the area. Jones, *A New Kind of War*, p. 33.

the Eastern Mediterranean alone, the Americans would have to join in.³⁴ This did not mean, however, that they were necessarily willing to accept a British timetable or a British prescription for action. As a necessary prelude to any Anglo-American agreement the Americans demanded the continuation of the British presence in Greece and co-operation in coping with the civil war. Greece would be included in the American sphere of interests but the British had also to support the undertaking.³⁵

London welcomed the American response. If the Americans agreed to share the burden then London would agree to loan the Greeks two million pounds for the maintenance of their army until June 1947. The British would also retain five thousand men in Greece, as well as non-combatant forces, and would assist the Greek army and the Americans in organising the anti-Communist campaign. On 3 March, Ernest Bevin announced that British troops would remain in Greece. However, their number would be reduced in April to five thousand men.³⁶ Contrary to the view of the historians who claim that the British note signified the end of a significant British role in Greece, Anglo-American negotiations yielded a condominium of the United States and Britain in Greek affairs.³⁷ On 12 March, the Truman doctrine, expounded to Congress by the President a few days after the conclusion of Anglo-American negotiations on Greece was greeted with enthusiasm by the British.³⁸

³⁴ H. Truman, *Memoirs: 1946-1952*, vol. 2, (London, 1956), pp. 124-25; M. P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power* (Stanford, 1992), pp. 144-146.

³⁵ FRUS (1947): 5, 72, 79-81: State Department to British Embassy in London, 1 March 1947; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 131/5, DO (47) 6, Cabinet Defence Committee, 3 March 1947; FO 371/67034 R 3190, British Embassy to the State Department, 4 March 1947.

³⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), T 236/1038, OF 48/39/1, 3 March 1947; FRUS (1947): 5, 87: The Secretary of State (Marshall) to the Embassy in Greece, 4 March 1947; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 131/5, DO (47) 6, 3 March 1947; FO 371/67034 R3190, British Embassy to the State Department, 4 March 1947; CAB 128/9, CM 30 (47) 2, Cabinet decision to confirm maintenance of BMM in Greece, 18 March 1947.

³⁷ Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου*, vol.1, p. 429. Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p. 151; Jones, *A New Kind of War*, pp. 17-35. This argument is approached mainly by revisionist historians.

³⁸ Declaration of the Truman Doctrine, www.whistlestop.org, 12 March 1947; The Truman Doctrine has been considered as a revolution, which made the United States abandon isolation. For those writers who perceive a revolution, see: Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs* (New York, 1956), p. 106; F. F. Lincoln, *United States' Aid to Greece, 1947-1962* (Germantown, 1975), p. 166; W. H. McNeill, *Greece: American Aid on*

The Greek government too was pleased with this double alliance. President Truman received grateful reports from Prime Minister Maximos and Liberal leader Sofoulis, who declared that the American help would serve 'the aim of reconstructing and rehabilitating peace and freedom' and that all Greek requests for help from the United States 'have become true'.³⁹ On 18 March, Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs Tsaldaris cabled the Chiefs of Staff, War and Finance Offices that, to his great relief, the British government would offer the NA two million pounds for military equipment and another one million pounds for economic assistance until the Congress ratified the financial assistance to Greece.⁴⁰ The right-wing world, according to the newspaper *Kathimerini* declared that salvation now had two fronts: America and England.⁴¹ Tsaldaris declared that he 'continued to remain faithful primarily to Great

Action, 1947-1956 (New York, 1957), p. 35. More balanced interpretations against a revolution include: J. L. Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of Cold War* (New York, 1972), p. 318; B. R. Kuniholm, *Origins of the Cold War in Near East* (New York, 1980), p. 427. MacVeagh insisted that the northern tier was the 'front line' between the 'two parts of the world' and that the Greeks were in the 'front-line trenches'. Leffler writes that the Truman Doctrine was the US policy to counterbalance Soviet influence in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean scheduled since 1946. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, p. 121. Critics of the Truman Doctrine include: W. A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York, 1959); Wittner, *American Intervention*; Sfikas writes that 'the policy of support to authoritarian and repressive right-wing regimes in the name of freedom' have been applied, in Sfikas, *The British Labour Government and the Greek Civil War*, p. 143. Among defenders of the Truman Doctrine: H. Feis, *From Trust to Terror* (New York, 1966); J. L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (New York, 1982); B. R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East* (New York, 1980); D. R. McCoy, *The Presidency of Harry S. Truman* (U. Press of Kansas, 1984). The Truman Doctrine was significant in that it was the first step in containing communism; it nonetheless left a number of unresolved questions regarding the duration of American aid, not solved before NATO creation. A. Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin* (London, 1983), pp. 470-471. Bullock, as opposed to the historians who believe that the Truman Doctrine was the American response to the British note to abandon Greece, deems that it was a diplomatic success on Bevin's part to divert the American approaches over Greece so as to gain American protection of the Middle East, accordingly, British presence in Greece was the price the British had to pay to keep the Americans in the Mediterranean.

³⁹ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΟΥ ΑΡΧΕΙΟΥ-SERVICE OF HISTORICAL ARCHIVE, ATHENS (YIA), 1947, 129.1, 1614, Αναφορά του Π. Οικονόμου-Γκούρα απο την Ελληνική Πρεσβεία στην Ουάσιγκτον στον Πρωθυπουργό Μάξιμο, 11 Μαρτίου 1947 (Report by P.Economou-Gouras from Greek Embassy in Washington to Premier Maximos, 11 March 1947).

⁴⁰ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΟΥ ΑΡΧΕΙΟΥ-SERVICE OF HISTORICAL ARCHIVE, ATHENS (YIA), 1947, 46.1, 21502, Αναφορά του Τσαλδάρη προς το ΓΕΣ, 18 Μαρτίου 1947 (Tsaldaris' Report to GES, 18 March 1947).

⁴¹ *Kathimerini*, 16 March 1947. On the contrary liberal newspaper *To Vima* stressed that America would undermine Greek independence whereas *Rizospastis* declared that the Left would continue fighting. In *To Vima*, 14 March 1947; *Rizospastis*, 14 March 1947.

Britain.’⁴² To the western world and the pro-westerners the Truman Doctrine signified the strengthening of western ties and security under an Anglo-American front. It signified neither the end of British commitment in Greece nor the end of Britain as a world power.⁴³

The War in Greece

One of the major reasons why the Greeks continued to look to Britain was the reality of military operations. The rhetoric of the Truman doctrine was vital for the long-term future of Greece. Yet the Greek state could, all too easily, have collapsed in military defeat in 1947 before American aid made itself felt.

In February 1947 the KKE Politburo had decided to give priority to the military struggle. Nicos Zahariadis, the General Secretary of the KKE, informed his mentor, Stalin, in a memorandum dated 13 May 1947, that ‘the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the KKE [...] consider the armed struggle as the most important’.⁴⁴ By the spring of 1947 the Communists had committed themselves to an all out armed confrontation with the government. Indeed, contrary to the claims of pro-leftist historians, who claim that it was the ‘white terror’ that had caused the KKE to act in self-defence, the Party had a clear intention of seizing power through military victory.⁴⁵

On 6 April 1947, Nicos Zahariadis crossed the border to visit Moscow and Belgrade to discuss the military option with his comrades. On 17 April, he wrote to Marcos that ‘the problem of re-provisioning had already been solved’. The Democratic Army would have as its main objective ‘the capture of Salonika’ and should create a

⁴² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/67003 R6476, Norton to Foreign Office, 8 May 1947.

⁴³ Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, vol. 2, p. 291; Vlavianos, *History of Greece*, p.236; Veremis, *The Military in Greek Politics*, p. 151; Stavrianos, *Greece: American Opportunity*, pp. 184-185.

⁴⁴ Quoted from the 14 December 1947 edition of *Avgi* by O. L. Smith, ‘Self-Defence and Communist Policy’, in Baerentzen, Iatrides, Smith (eds.), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War, 1945-1949*, p. 175. The decision was subsequently taken with the understanding that both the Soviets and the Yugoslavs would provide the necessary material help.

‘free domain’ in Macedonia, Thrace and probably Epirus.⁴⁶ In May Zahariadis assured Stalin that the Party was capable of beating the Maximos government and could raise an army of 50,000 men to liberate northern Greece with the ‘assistance of all our foreign friends’.⁴⁷ On 27 June, Miltiadis Porfyroyennis, representing the KKE Central Committee, told Eleventh Congress of the French Communist Party in Strasbourg that henceforth ‘all of the political, military and international conditions existed for the creation of a Free Government in Greece’. He demanded the support of all Communist parties in the struggle for final victory.⁴⁸

The military implications of this call emerged over the summer of 1947. The Communists decided to abandon their guerrilla strategy, create a conventional army and fight a positional war against the National Army.⁴⁹ On 11 September, the Third Plenum proceeded to formulate the strategic dimension of the KKE’s plan to seize power. The new strategy was based upon the ‘Lakes Plan’ – the creation of a free area in Macedonia and Thrace with Salonika as its centre. This area would be held by a Democratic Army triple in size to around 60,000 men by the spring of 1948.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ *History of the KKE-Δοκίμιο Ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ*, pp. 564-569; O. Smith, ‘Self-Defence’, in Baerentzen, Iatrides, Smith (eds.), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War, 1945-1949*, p. 160.

⁴⁶ Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, pp. 238-240.

⁴⁷ Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p. 240. It has been suggested that after Zahariadis’ discussion with Zhdanov, Stalin promised the KKE full support. Moreover, that Zahariadis, after being re-assured of Stalin’s support, asked Tito and Dimitrov their supplementary military assistance. J. Baev (ed.), *The Greek Civil War in Greece-Ο Εμφύλιος Πόλεμος στην Ελλάδα* (Athens, 1997), pp. 143-146.

⁴⁸ Woodhouse, *Struggle for Greece*, p. 212; Eudes, *The Kapetanios*, p. 296. The Central Committee of the KKE met in Belgrade in September 1947 with only six out of the twenty-five regular members of the CC in attendance. The resolutions of this plenum, one of the most controversial in the history of the KKE, presented Marcos and the other advocates of guerrilla warfare with a *fait accompli*. The *ad hoc* CC changed the military, political and strategic dimension of the Party. *KKE Official Documents 1945-1949-KKE Επίσημα Κείμενα 1945-1949*, vol. 6, pp. 245-247.

⁴⁹ Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, p. 261. The author believes that the decision for transition was ‘ill-timed’ and ‘ill-advised’ and led the KKE to defeat because its recruitment and military problems had not been solved. For a leftist critic of the decision to convert to conventional warfare see: S. Vukmanovic, *How and Why The Peoples’ Liberation Struggle Met with Defeat* (London, 1950).

⁵⁰ O. L. Smith, ‘Communist Perceptions, Strategy and Tactics, 1945-1949’, in J. Iatrides, W. Linda (eds.), *Greece at the Crossroads. The Civil War and its Legacy* (Pennsylvania, 1995), p. 107. In that article, material from the newspaper *Avgi* published in 1979-1980 is examined; accordingly the official version of the KKE that the Third Plenum took place in the mountains on 12-15 September 1947 is refuted. *KKE, Official Documents 1945-1949-Επίσημα Κείμενα 1945-1949*, vol. 6, p. 245. The ‘Limnes Plan’ was bound to fail, as it required tripling of its strength in a short time and the necessary assistance from abroad had

The aggression and confidence of the KKE caused uproar in Greece. The Right accused the KKE of threatening to undermine the territorial integrity of Greece. The leader of the opposition party, Sofoulis, accused the Maximos government and the Right of not having put down the Communist claims for power. The Left greeted Porfyroyannis' announcements with concern. Some members of the EAM tried to interpret his statement as merely a political gambit.⁵¹ Indeed the Central Commission of EAM proposed to the government its own plan to lessen tension. They suggested that EAM should take part in the cabinet, that a general amnesty should be declared that Parliament should be dissolved, and that the anti-Communist intelligence organisations should be disarmed.

The Greek government was far from sanguine, however. Maximos interpreted Zahariadis' visit to Moscow as constituting a formal authorisation from Stalin to create a communist 'Free' government.⁵² This raised the danger that any territory lost in northern Greece might never be won back. Governmental Greece would shrink and 'Free' Greece would grow until the latter choked the former. In the light of this new danger, the leaders of the opposition, the liberal Sofoulis and the conservative Tsouderos made an attempt to reach a political compromise between the communists and the government. Prime Minister Maximos made it clear, however, that the only way for reconciliation with the KKE to occur was if the Communists laid down their arms. In practice no party felt it was so weak that it had to capitulate and the negotiations came to a fruitless end. Their aftermath was ferocious government campaign against the Left. On 9 July, three thousand KKE sympathisers were arrested on the pretext that a

not been secured. The plan of the KKE to take over before the Americans could penetrate militarily into Greece was not viable, as the KKE had no military means to support its plans.

⁵¹ *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol.16 (Athens, 2000), p. 143.

⁵² Averoff, *By Fire and Axe-Φωτιά και Τσεκούρι*, p. 224. Unfortunately, there are no records available to verify the agenda of the meeting.

communist revolt was imminent.⁵³ Even the American Ambassador MacVeagh had doubts as to the wisdom of these draconian measures.⁵⁴

By the spring of 1947 the Democratic Army had occupied wide expanses of territory to which the governmental forces had no access. The one advantage that accrued to the Greek National Army – an advantage that was to be accentuated by the Communists' evolving strategy – was that for the first time they had a tangible target. The National Army planned, given the victories of the Democratic Army in the mountains of northern Greece, to clear the rebels from the south to the north. The focal point of operations would, therefore, be central Greece. Here government forces hoped to achieve two objectives. First, to cut the route for supplies and reserves to the south and, second, to cut the line of retreat to neighbouring countries. The area in which the counter-attack would start included the regions north of Karpenisi, and Mount Agrafa, to the cities of Karditsa and Trikala. The whole operation was given the code-name 'Terminus', symbolising the aim of the National Army to put an end not only to the military power of the rebels but the political and social upheaval in Greece as well.⁵⁵ Four operations would form the main Operation *Terminus*. First, was Operation *Aetos* (Mount Agrafa, Aheloos river, Nevropoli, Koziakas, Metsovo) starting on 5 April with estimated duration of fifteen days.⁵⁶ Second, was Operation *Ierax* (Hasia, Antihasia,

⁵³ Averoff, *By Fire and Axe-Φωτιά και Τσεκούρι*, p. 244. Partsalidis, Passalidis, Loulis, Gavriilidis from the Political Bureau of the KKE included. Arrests were followed by exile without trial to camps of concentration in Makronisos for the conscripts, Trikeri for the detainees, Yaros for the convicted.

⁵⁴ FRUS (1947): 5, 231: MacVeagh to the Secretary of State, 13 July 1947.

⁵⁵ ΓΕΝΙΚΟ ΕΠΙΤΕΛΕΙΟ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ /ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ, ATHENS (ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ), 1947, 1067/A/44, Αναφορά Διοικητού Στρατιάς Αντιστράτηγου Δ. Γιαντζή, 3 Μαρτίου 1947 (Lt.Gen. D.Giantzis' Report, 3 March 1947); GES/DIS, *Archives-Αρχεία*, ΓΕΣ προς Α και Β Σώματα Στρατού, 'Επιχείρηση Νότια και Δυτικά του Αλιάκμονα, 8 Φεβρουαρίου 1947' (GES to A and B Army Corps, 'Operations in the South and West of Aliakmona' 8 February 1947), vol. 3, keimeno 45, p. 285. The south to north *modus operandi* had been perceived before the replacement of Spiliotopoulos; to be perfected during the spring under Ventiris. GES/DIS, *Archives-Αρχεία*, 1^η Στρατιά 'Γενικό Σχέδιο Στρατιάς δια την διεξαγωγή των επιχειρήσεων ΤΕΡΜΙΝΟΥΣ, 10 Μαρτίου 1947' (1st Army Group, General Plan of the Terminus Operation, 10 March 1947), vol.3, keim.73, p. 398.; GES/DIS, *Archives-Αρχεία*, 1^η Στρατιά, 'Γενικό Σχέδιο Στρατιάς δια την διεξαγωγή των επιχειρήσεων ΤΕΡΜΙΝΟΥΣ, 10 Μαρτίου 1947' (1 Army Group, General Plan of the Terminus Operation, 10 March 1947), vol.3, keim.73, p. 402.

⁵⁶ GES/DIS, *Archives-Αρχεία*, Β Σώμα Στρατού, 'Διαταγή Επιχειρήσεων. Συνθηματικό όνομα 'Αετός', 23 Μαρτίου 1947' (B Army Corps, 'Operation Command, Code name 'Eagle', 23 March 1947), vol.4, keim.

Kambounia) planned to last for ten days starting on 11 May. Third, was Operations *Korax* (north of Metsovo to the Albanian border, Kastoria) and *Kuknos* (Mount Olympos, Pieria). Finally Operation *Pelargos* (Mount Ossa, Pylio) was due for launch in July depending on the success of its predecessors.

The British lay at the centre of 'Terminus'. The command of the National Army was a joint Anglo-Greek effort. The decisions of the Supreme Council of National Defence were taken by the Greek Prime Minister, the Ministers of Air and Navy, the Chiefs of the General Staff, Navy and Air sitting alongside the commanders of the British Military Mission, the British Naval Mission and British Air Mission.⁵⁷ Yet 'Terminus' did not meet its target. Although the Democratic Army under the command of Marcos Vafeiadis lacked both men and munitions, they were able to mount a number of successful 'hit and run' missions against the attackers whilst themselves avoiding being pinned down in protracted battles.⁵⁸ The Communists had a wholly superior intelligence operation to the government. The command of the Democratic Army was very often informed about the plans of the National Army before the attacks themselves took place. Many units of the NA became demoralised by their lack of effectiveness. Moreover the mountains and inaccessible landscape protected the Democratic Army defenders.⁵⁹ Although the government force eventually cleared the ground, its cumbersome operations seemed lack-lustre when compared to communist daring.

4, p.56; D. Zafeiropoulos, *Anti-Bandit War, 1945-1949-O Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών, 1945-1949* (Athens, 1956), p. 224; GES/DIS, *Archives- Αρχεία*, 8η Μεραχεία Γραφείο Πληροφοριών Α2, 'Δελτίο Πληροφοριών, 28 Μαρτίου 1947'(8th division, Information Office Α2, 28 March 1947), vol.4, keim. 8b, pp. 79-80. According to the estimations of the Information Office of the 8th division the number of the insurgents in the Operation Aetos area rose to approximately 2,000 men. The Greek historian D. Botsikas writes that the guerrilla forces in the Operation Aetos area did not exceed the 1,200-1,500 men. Zafeiropoulos agrees with the estimations of the Information Office of the 8th division. Zafeiropoulos, *Anti-Bandit War-O Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών, 1945-1949*, p. 224.

⁵⁷ GES/DIS, *Archives- Αρχεία*, Ανώτατον Συμβούλιον Εθνικής Αμύνης 23 Φεβρουαρίου 1947 (Supreme Council of National Defence, 23 February 1947), vol. 3, keim. 58, p. 333.

⁵⁸ T. Psimenos, *Rebel in Agrafa 1946-1950-Αντάρτης στ' Αγραφα 1946-1950* (Athens, 1985), pp. 78-79.

⁵⁹ *History of the Greek Nation- Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 145. According to Woodhouse the weaknesses of the NA consisted of: low morale, shortage of manpower, Marcos's tactical astuteness in launching a major diversionary attack. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, pp. 205-207.

An additional reason for the failure of the National Army to decisively defeat the communists was the 'Epirus Manoeuvre' executed by the DA by the beginning of July 1947. The 8th division of the National Army, having turned its attention towards Mount Grammos, had left unguarded the exits to Konitsa and Ioannina. The command of the Democratic Army grasped the opportunity to launch attacks in the Epirus area from 7 July. On that day the 8th and 15th divisions of the National Army were about to attack the forces of the Democratic Army in the area of Eptahorion. Two of the commands of the Democratic Army attacked the forces of the National Army at the point where the latter were scheduled to meet and co-ordinate their forces. That was the weak point of the National Army. The Democratic Army attacked with approximately one thousand five hundred men (three battalions and one party of two companies from the Hasia command and another three battalions from the Epirus command). The tactic aimed at breaking the pincer movement of the NA at first and then beating the enemy from the rear. The first success of the Democratic Army came on the night of 6 to 7 July. Parts of the 8th division of the NA in Zouzouli area were forced to retreat. The advance of the governmental forces was stopped.⁶⁰ Simultaneously, however, successful counter-attacks occurred against the 15th division.⁶¹

Epirus, the Democratic Army's hub, became the focal point of the warfare. On 12 July, the National Army was overcome in Derveni. This development caused panic to the national forces, which started evacuating the Grammos area to cover the interior of Epirus. The 8th division turned to Konitsa and a great part of the 9th division, scheduled to attack Grammos, was sent to Ioannina by track. The next day, the Democratic Army troops occupied the Bourazani bridge threatening the road to Ioannina. Eventually the situation was stabilised in favour of the NA. New government air and land forces

⁶⁰ Zafeiropoulos, *Anti-Bandit War-O Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών, 1945-1949*, vol. 2, p. 243.

⁶¹ GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, 1st Στρατιάς 'Εκθεσις Πεπραγμένων Επιχειρήσεων 'Κόραξ', 15 Σεπτεμβρίου 1947' (1st Army, 'Report on Operation Korax', 15 September 1947), vol.5, keim. 20, p. 178.

managed to stop the communist advance. However, the fact that the key route of Pindos remained under the Democratic Army was a sign of failure for the National Army. The communists still controlled the areas across the Albanian, Yugoslavian and Bulgarian borders, which provided them with supplies, equipment and havens in which to hide and organise their battles. Hence 'Terminus' was only a relative success for the NA.

That some successes were salvaged from 'Terminus' was to a large extent due to the British contribution. This contribution was felt, most decisively, in the realm of air power.⁶² One of the National Army's trump cards was the co-operation of air and land forces, for the Democratic Army completely lacked an air force. Whereas the National Army enjoyed combat air support, especially when defending strongholds, and the advantages of aerial reconnaissance, the Communist benefited from neither. Yet the Royal Hellenic Air Force (RHAF) was a weak force. Its main body consisted of two British Supermarine Spitfire IX rocket-armed ground attack squadrons – with sixteen aeroplanes each. Some C-47s (Dakotas) were also used in a makeshift bombing role. The rest of the air force was made up of obsolete communications aircraft such as Airspeed Oxfords and Avro Ansons.

During the summer of 1947, however, the British worked hard to strengthen the RHAF. The British dispatched 250 aeroplanes to Greece. By October 1947 the RHAF was equipped with included 113 Spitfires, eight C-47 (Dakota) transports, nine Vickers Wellington bombers and 108 liaison aircraft (Ansons, Harvards, Austers, Oxfords, Tiger Moths, L-5s). The single-engine AT-6s (Harvards) were useful reconnaissance aircraft, the Spitfires and Wellingtons carried out strafing and bombing operations and the twin-engined C-47 transports protected ground troops and dropped supplies. By late 1947 the Greek Air Force had three fighter-bomber squadrons, each comprising twenty Spitfires,

⁶² Among the historians who claim that British involvement came to an end by beginning of 1947 is Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, p. 312.

equipped with rockets, cannons, and bombs, and three reconnaissance units, each made up of four Harvards armed with a single machine gun and fragmentation bombs. One squadron and one reconnaissance unit were located at each of the three bases: Salonika for the north-eastern operations, Larissa for central Greece, Elefsina for the south.⁶³ These units were hampered by poor maintenance and inadequate pilot reserves. Their obsolescent aircraft would have been incapable of effective air superiority operations. In a situation where the government enjoyed total air superiority they were of inestimable advantage.⁶⁴ To a large extent it was air power that proved decisive in stabilising the situation at the height of the Epirus crisis. Despite the Communist victory, the massive intervention of the RHAF, the arrival of the new government forces and the vacillation of the Democratic Army helped the National Army in its final though relative victory. In the second week of July the Democratic Army was forced to retreat to Mount Pindos.⁶⁵ The fights under the 'Terminus' continued until mid October 1947 but without decisive results for the civil war in Epirus area. The Democratic Army was far from totally

⁶³ The Wellington was the principal bomber used by RAF in the initial stages of the Second World War, this twin-engine aeroplane was effective only against specific targets and not for bombing large areas. The RHAF found the Wellington useless in the civil war and ordered it grounded. For months the RHAF was only minimally successful, for it had inadequate equipment and facilities and an insufficient number of trained pilots and maintenance men. When the enemy was spotted, the pilots failed to co-ordinate with ground units or establish effective communication. The Spitfires were vulnerable to ground fire and could not retaliate effectively because of their limited space for ammunition and their short-range flying capacity. The RHAF later used the Dakotas (C-47) for bombing expeditions, but with no particular accuracy. On one hand the air force provided valuable reconnaissance information, protection of ground troops, provision of supplies, drop of propaganda leaflets; on the other hand though, the planes could not identify guerrilla strongholds hidden in the mountains and that prevented the air and ground forces from defeating the DA. Later on the stricter co-ordination of air and ground forces, the use of tanks and napalm bombs or liquid fire, transformed the RHAF into a more effective force in winning the war. Campbell (et. al.), *The Employment of Airpower*, pp. 34-41, 55-56, 66-69.

⁶⁴ FRUS (1947): 5, 367-368: Memorandum by the Deputy Co-ordinator (Wilds) for Aid to Greece and Turkey, 15 October 1947; Records of the JCS, Part 2: 1946-1953, Strategic Issues: Section 1 (thereafter cited as JCS), US Military Assistance, 1798/1, 'US Assistance to Greece', 15 October 1947, Reel I, Frame 0662.

⁶⁵ GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, 1η Στατιά 'Εκθεσις Πεπραγμένων Επιχειρήσεων 'Κόραξ', 15 Σεπτεμβρίου 1947' (1st Army, Reports on Operation Korax, 15 September 1947), vol.5, keim. 20, pp. 179-180. The decision of the DA not to attack the city of Ioannina is been characterised 'lost opportunity' by the KKE and is a controversy among the left-wing historiographers. Zafeiropoulos, *Anti-Bandit War-O Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών, 1945-1949*, p. 247. It signified, however, the guerrilla character of the communist warfare.

defeated, despite Zafeiropoulos' estimations that 'the operations of 1947 assured the salvation of Greece'.⁶⁶ Rather 'Terminus' brought relative success.⁶⁷

The operations of the NA against the DA from April onwards demonstrated that the Greek government was determined to escalate anti-communist warfare while Zahariadis was leading the KKE towards a full scale civil war. The escalation of the civil war had turned the focus of the Secretary of the Central Committee of the KKE on Soviet military assistance. Zahariadis while preparing for full scale operations was hoping that Stalin would assist militarily, strategically and financially the struggle of the KKE. From April onwards he persistently brought pressure upon his Soviet comrades to support the KKE's struggle to win the war in Greece.⁶⁸

Such a development would fit Stalin's strategic interests in the area and strengthen the Soviet's international status. Even in a less ambitious plan, a powerful KKE within the Greek political scene seemed attractive to the Soviets and their foreign policy. However, the Soviet leader was well aware of the British involvement in Greece as well as the increasing American interest to prevent the Greek communists from taking over power. By 1947 it was clear to him that there were no possibilities of preventing western involvement in the Eastern Mediterranean. Therefore Stalin would neither support an open or total confrontation with the West, which would jeopardise Soviet foreign interests in the Eastern Europe, nor back the war in Greece. Had Stalin decided to support the KKE and its fight, he would have equipped the KKE and supplied its army before or during 1947.

⁶⁶ Zafeiropoulos, *Anti-Bandit War-O Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών, 1945-1949*, p. 262.

⁶⁷ ΓΕΝΙΚΟ ΕΠΙΤΕΛΕΙΟ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ /ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ, ATHENS (ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ), 1067/B/6 Ο Ρώουλινς στον Βεντήρη, 27 Οκτωβρίου 1947 (Rawlins to Ventiris, 27 October 1947). On the same report Rawlins noted to the Chief of the Greek General Staff Lt. Gen. Ventiris the complains made by Col. Davies, Commander of the British Liaison Units on C Army Corps, on the bad organisation and lack of discipline of the training officers of the non-commissioned C Army Corps training school in Salonika. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, pp. 205-207. Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War-Ιστορία του Εμφυλίου Πολέμου*, vol.1, p. 327.

⁶⁸ For an analysis of the KKE policy and the USSR see: Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*; P. J. Stavrakis, *Moscow and the Greek Communism 1944-1949* (London, 1989).

Stalin did not really support the KKE's struggle. The lack of reliable Soviet assistance is also consolidated in Zahariadis' letters dated 6 October and 10 November 1947. These letters to 'comrade Baranov' in Moscow revealed that Soviet aid was exceptionally slow in arriving and the amounts that did arrive were 'still' unsatisfactory. Zahariadis also confirmed that his Balkan comrades 'do what they can' with their limited resources.⁶⁹ This was the picture of the communist assistance from abroad during the civil war. Stalin provided a minimum assistance to the KKE which would not turn to a sufficient back up to counterbalance that of the other side. The Yugoslavs, Bulgarians and Albanians offered their land for shelter and training and minimum assistance given their own financial restrictions. The communist fight thus suffered from limited international assistance, government measures and increasing western assistance.

The Sofoulis Government: A New Centre Experiment

Military ambiguity translated into new political instability. The Maximos government had failed to provide Greece with peace and indeed the civil war had become a war on all fronts. Maximos, agreed with Dwight Griswold, Chief of American Aid Mission to Greece, that structural and tactical changes at governmental level were needed. Griswold suggested that Zervas should be dismissed as his anti-Communist campaign united the Left rather than weakening it.⁷⁰ Konstantine Tsaldaris, leader of the powerful Populist Party, Deputy Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, grasped the opportunity to demand the formation of a new, purely Populist government. On 18 August, Tsaldaris flew to London for discussions with Sir Orme Sargent, the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office. Tsaldaris turned to the Foreign Office to which

⁶⁹ Avgi, no. 32, 12 January 1980. Quoted in Stavrakis, *Moscow and the Greek Communism 1944-1949*, p. 162. Stavrakis characterises the Soviet policy towards the KKE as 'prudent expansionism' or 'policy of dualism'. Stavrakis, *Moscow and the Greek Communism 1944-1949*, pp. 6, 141.

⁷⁰ FRUS (1947): 5, 299-301: MacVeagh to Marshall, 19 July 1947.

'he remained dedicated first' because the State Department had told him to form a coalition government. Tsaldaris failed, however, in his attempt to convince Sargent that he was the most suitable man to take over power. What struck Sargent most from these talks was Tsaldaris' overweening ambition, which Sargent was sure would be placed before the national interest of Greece.⁷¹

A new governmental crisis erupted over the Liberals' attempt to eliminate right-wing elements of the cabinet. On 21 August, Papandreou, Kanellopoulos and Venizelos asked the Populist Ministers of Public Order and of War, Napoleon Zervas and George Stratos respectively, to resign on the grounds that they were unpopular both in Greece and with the British and the Americans. Their aim was to form a Liberal government headed by Sofoulis. Both Tsaldaris and the two ministers rejected the demands and on 23 August the three National Political Union (EPE) ministers resigned. The coalition collapsed. As a result, on the same day, Prime Minister Maximos resigned as well.⁷²

A new element in politics was the fact that Greece had a new king. Paul had succeeded his brother at a good moment, in the spring of 1947, when the start of the government offensive, continued British support and the promise of American aid had engendered an air of optimism. He was fortunate to have a few months grace to ease into the succession before the political and military crises broke out. Not that Paul was a passive observer. He was determined to be more of an interventionist in politics than his brother had been, whose influence had usually been exercised as blocker and a wrecker. As the constitution required, Paul asked the leader of the second biggest party to form a government. Tsaldaris, in an attempt to strengthen the government he was planning to form, asked Sofoulis and the Liberal Party to join the cabinet. Sofoulis turned down

⁷¹ FRUS (1947): 5, 287-288: Memorandum of Villard to Marshall, 8 August 1947; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/67145 R 11654, Report of Discussions between Sargent and Tsaldaris, 18 August 1947.

Tsaldaris' proposal, as he demanded more power for the Liberal Party. Dwight Griswold warned Tsaldaris that if he formed a purely conservative cabinet American aid would slow down.⁷³ Griswold's intervention, however, had no impact upon Tsaldaris' plans. As Orme Sargent had predicted the leader of the Populists announced that he would form a 'pure' right-wing government. Tsaldaris formed a cabinet, which was not acceptable even to other conservatives such as Stefanopoulos, Gonatas or Alexandris.⁷⁴

In response to Tsaldaris' bid for power the American government used its most effective weapon to put the Greek politicians on their best behaviour. On 30 August Loy Henderson, Director of Near Eastern and African Affairs at the State Department, arrived in Athens. He warned Tsaldaris and Sofoulis that if they refused to co-operate with a coalition government then American aid to Greece would be stopped and they would be blamed for it.⁷⁵ Henderson proposed the formation of a Sofoulis-Markezinis coalition government. Tsaldaris, alarmed at the prospect of losing power entirely, was forced to compromise. Once more Washington and London had stood together in refusing to support Tsaldaris. Instead, they preferred a coalition of the Centre under liberal Sofoulis.

The rest of the Greek political world agreed. EPE now agreed to the new coalition, after the exclusion of hard-core right-wing members. Tsaldaris, however, remained as Deputy Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs. On 7 September, the new

⁷² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/72240 R2576, Norton to Bevin, 18 February 1948: Annual Report for 1947; FRUS (1947): 5, 299-301: MacVeagh to Marshall, 19 August 1947; Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, vol.2, pp. 307-309.

⁷³ FRUS (1947): 5, 311-313: MacVeagh to Marshall, 25 August 1947; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO371/67007 R11718, Reilly to Foreign Office, 26 August 1947; *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol.16, p. 146. King Paul was crowned in April 1947 following George's death.

⁷⁴ All three important allies of the conservative world (Ministry of Co-ordination, Public Work, Finance and Justice) under Tsaldaris cabinet in 1946 and Maximos in 1947. FRUS (1947): 5, 318-319: MacVeagh to Marshall 27 August 1947; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/67007 R 11798, Reilly to Foreign Office, 27 August 1947.

⁷⁵ On that event is based the view that American pressure turned the Greek government into a viable coalition of the centre-right. In Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 209-10. A view shared and pursued by the British as well as already noted.

cabinet of ten Liberals and fourteen Populists took the oath. The new government committed itself to an amnesty for insurgents who agreed to surrender and to the release of detainees.⁷⁶ On the other hand, it pressed the British and American to further strengthen national armed forces.⁷⁷ The implications of 'Terminus' made this the first priority. On 14 October 1947, the Supreme National Defence Council (ASEA) met in Athens. Chairing the meeting King Paul called for war on all fronts: 'the aim of the operations,' he declared, 'is to defeat the bandits not to repulse them from one place to another'. The main proposal of the meeting was the direct increase of the size of the army and the creation of Territorial Army battalions, which would assume the duties of static defence and thus set the regular army free of this responsibility to concentrate on the actual fighting.⁷⁸

Counter-insurgency Operations in Greece

The outcome of Operation 'Terminus' had made clear that a new type of warfare was needed if the Greek National Army was to defeat the Democratic Army. By the end of 1947 the British and Americans were working hard on the problem of counter-insurgency in an effort to help their Greek allies. Counter-insurgency warfare combined intelligence with civil and military efforts.⁷⁹ The British role was important in

⁷⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/72240 R2576, Norton to Bevin, 18 February 1948: Annual Report for 1947; FRUS (1947): 5, 299-301; MacVeagh to Marshall, 19 September 1947; Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, pp. 309-311.

⁷⁷ Wittner, *American Intervention*, pp. 227-228.

⁷⁸ GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, Ανώτατον Συμβούλιον Εθνικής Αμύνης (ΑΣΕΑ), 'Πρακτικά 31^{ης} Συνεδριάσεως, 14 Οκτωβρίου 1947' (Highest Committee of National Defence (ASEA) 31st Meeting, 14 October 1947), vol.6, keim. 33, p. 219. ASEA co-ordinated all national forces. See also p. 48, f. 21. By the end of October 1947, the National Army increased from 100,000 to nearly 132,000 men. Jones, 'A New Kind of War', p. 106.

⁷⁹ The Greek undertaking has been a typical case of foreign COIN objectives, as formulated later in the 1950s and 1960s, combining military, political and civil control. The uniqueness of the Greek case, though, is that the KKE itself changed its warfare from guerrilla to conventional combat from 1947, complicating the nature of operations and that the insurgency died out for various reasons, some of them related to the KKE itself. The Anglo-American co-operation was another factor that made the Greek case important. For the rhetoric of the British Army and British COIN operations see H. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, (Oxford, 1997); Th. Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency in the Post-imperial Era* (New York, 1995); Th. Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency, 1919-1960* (London, 1990); C. McInnes, *Hot War, Cold War* (London, 1996), pp. 122-123; T. L. Jones, *The Development of British COIN Policies*

its development. British post-war counterinsurgency activities world-wide have been well documented; however, the effort in Greece has been neglected. It is the role of the United States in shaping Greek counter-insurgency operations that has been emphasised by most historians. It would be fruitless to deny the importance of the American effort. Yet the history of Greek counter-insurgency quite clearly demonstrates the continuing importance of Britain in the final years of the civil war.⁸⁰

At the end of the Second World War the role of the British Military Mission had been defined as the training of the National Army.⁸¹ It also provided small arms, artillery, clothing and miscellaneous supplies.⁸² As a modern guerrilla conflict gathered momentum in the Greek mountains by the end of 1946, the Chiefs of Staff recommended that the British Military Mission should be allowed to unfettered advice on counter-insurgency operations. The British set about organising more specialist teams to train the National Army in ground and air operations, commando tactics and 'Irregular Warfare' techniques.⁸³ The Royal Hellenic Air Force, the national forces, the Greek Royal Navy and the Police were all encompassed by the British reconstruction programme.

In 1946 General Rawlins, Commander of the British Military Mission between 1945-1948, General Spiliotopoulos, the Chief of Greek General Staff, and Field Marshal Montgomery, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, had agreed to transform the National

and Doctrine, 1945-52 (PhD, Univ. of London, 1992), pp. 169-218; T. L. Jones, 'The British Army and Greece, 1945-49', *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 8, no 1 (Spring 1997), 88-106.

⁸⁰ D. S. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: US Doctrine and Performance* (London, 1977); Th. K. Adams, *US Special Operation Forces in Action* (London, 1998); J. J. McCuen, *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War* (London, 1966).

⁸¹ BMM and Military establishments operated in Ethiopia with the aim of training the Imperial Army, in Saudi Arabia with a small BMM at Taif to give infantry training in Greece and a small number of British Navy, Army, Air and Police personnel and Turkey instructing in certain specialised fields. FRUS (1947): 5, 523: State Department Memorandum on Military Missions, undated. JUSMAPG on the contrary was applied for the first time by December 1947 in Greece. For allies' co-operation see: Map D.3, p. 189.

⁸² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/908, BMM(G) Official History; WO 32/15547, History of BMM in Greece 1945-1952; King's College London Archives, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, Papers of General Sir Harold E. Pyman, 7/1/2, 17 January 1947.

⁸³ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 79/54, COS (46), 11 December 1946; WO 202/946, 31 December 1946; WO 202/908, BMM(G) Official History.

Army so that it could 'fight an irregular enemy in mountainous country'. To this end the British proposed innovations such as the greater use of air support, light infantry and commandos.⁸⁴ The effect of these innovations would emerge gradually over the next two years. In early January 1947 the Chief of the Imperial General Staff pressed the Cabinet Defence Committee for a greater British counter-insurgency involvement in Greece. On 14 January 1947, General Rawlins received a new directive which authorised the British Military Mission to 'give the greatest possible assistance' to the enlarged Greek security forces. On 21 January, following another Internal Security conference held at the War Office, Rawlins was instructed to send his men to Greek 'field units' and to ensure that the Greek General Staff acted upon British advice.⁸⁵

In 1947 the escalation of the communist attacks gave the British an opportunity to test their counter-insurgency techniques on the battlefield. At the start of 1947 organised new commando training courses.⁸⁶ A three-stage plan was approved by the Chiefs of Staff on 27 January 1947. The first phase was to comprise the retraining and reorganisation of the security forces, assisted by British Liaison Units, and various special teams including Mountain Warfare Instruction Teams, British Instruction Team Intelligence officers, and an 'Army-Air Co-operation Training Team' under Major Walker-Brush. The second phase would feature 'counter-organisation' actions against the KKE underground network (*viafka*). These actions would consist of population relocation combined with large-scale 'encirclement clearance' operations incorporating the armoured and artillery assaults. The third and final phase, after an area was cleared,

⁸⁴ Agreements to organise at least 3,000 men in Commando columns were also taken on 28 November 1946 by the British Chiefs of Staff. Xydis, *Greece and the Great Powers*, pp. 361, 432-33, 531. The years to come in the following chapter would prove the gradual strengthening of the national forces.

⁸⁵ King's College London Archives, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, Papers of General Sir H. Pyman Papers, 6/1/2, New Directive to Rawlins, 14 January 1947; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 4/2, COS (47) 30, 21 February 1947; WO 261/637 Increase of the BMM, 30 January 1947.

⁸⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 134/4, DO (47) 1, COIN Tasks, 1 January 1947; WO 261/637, BMM report, 30 January 1947.

would be to return it to civil government control.⁸⁷ In pursuit of these objectives the British Military Mission urged the National Army to enhance its mobility and intelligence-gathering capacity.⁸⁸

In March 1947 the posture of the British Military Mission was modified to encompass Bevin's plan to involve the United States in an allied counter-insurgency effort in Greece. Despite the assertions of many historians that the Truman Doctrine signified the passage from a *Pax Britannica* to a *Pax Americana* the Americans did not take on the burden of counter-insurgency operational advising alone after March 1947.⁸⁹ Indeed the Americans themselves insisted that the British should remain fully involved in the effort. On 2 September 1947, the top American official in Greece, Dwight Griswold, invited the British to join twenty-five American Army officers in advising the National Army on future operations. On 19 September 1947, the War Office and Chiefs of Staff approved this idea.⁹⁰ On 11 October 1947, Bevin, encouraged by the American desire to co-operate with the British, proposed that the British Military Mission's operational advisory role in Greece should be strengthened. He wanted to send Indian Army and other 'officers with guerrilla experience to the [British] Mission [in Greece]' to review the strategy of the National Army.⁹¹ The British Military Mission further suggested the creation of 'Commando deep patrolling' as well as the retraining the intelligence network.⁹²

⁸⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 4/1, COS (47) 15,27 January 1947; WO 261/637, BMM(G), 30 January 1947. At that time, Britain had not developed counterinsurgency rhetoric. As observed in Greece and later on in other test cases such as Malaya, counterinsurgency measures included: the use of minimum force, the use of a good intelligence network, cutting off the insurgents from their supplies, the use of the army for static defence duties and emergency laws to apply civilian control in McInnes, *Hot War Cold War* (London, 1996), pp. 118-124.

⁸⁸ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), AIR 24/760, COIN plans, RAF Report, 30 April 1947.

⁸⁹ C. Tsoukalas, *The Greek Tragedy* (Harmondsworth, 1969), p.109. Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p. 236; Close (ed.), *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 203-207. On the contrary, British assistance had played a significant part in the NA's struggle against the DA.

⁹⁰ Wittner, *American Intervention*, pp. 232-6; Jones, 'A New Kind of War', pp. 91-98; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 4/7, COS (47) 121, 19 September 1947.

⁹¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), PREM 8/527, note from Bevin, 11 October 1947.

⁹² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/893, AIR 46/62, Rawlins, 'Review of the Anti-Bandit Campaign', 22 October 1947. Vlavianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p.236. Iatrides, 'Britain, the US and

By spring 1947, however, the Americans had started to expand their political, financial and military role in Greece. The first American Mission to Aid Greece (AMAG) was established in Athens in May 1947.⁹³ The head of the American Mission to Aid Greece, Dwight Griswold, would supervise all expenditures and administer both civilian and military assistance programmes. The mission in Greece began with a staff of forty members (exclusive of military and naval personnel) but that figure soon grew to about 175. The military branch of the mission consisted of the United States Army Group Greece (USAGG) headed by General William Livesay, who arrived in Greece on 19 June, and a small naval section. United States Aid Group Greece had a staff of fifty-four, including officers, enlisted men, and civilians. The naval mission had no more than thirty men, whose duty was to train the Greeks in using American minesweepers, tank landing ships, personnel boats, tugs, and other craft up to the size of a destroyer. United States Aid Group Greece's mission was to secure supplies and equipment for the Greek army. It would function in co-ordination with the British Military Mission in advising the National Army.⁹⁴

Livesay's first challenge was the Greek government's insistence on the expansion of the *gendarmerie*. The *gendarmerie* played a vital role in maintaining civil order after the army had cleared an area of the communist forces. However, its pay and benefits was four times than that of an average soldier, so there was no advantage in replacing soldiers with gendarmes. George Marshall opposed any expansion of the Greek *gendarmerie*. Accordingly, Livesay approved the improvement of Army Security

Greece, 1945-29', in Close (ed.), *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 203, 207. Instead in January 1948 A.V. Alexander suggested sending reinforcements from Palestine to bolster the allied COIN effort in Greece. In R. Frazier, 'The Bevin-Marshall Dispute of August-November 1947 Concerning the Withdrawal of British troops from Greece', in *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War 1945-1949*, pp. 249-262; Sfikas, *Oi Aggloi Ergatikoi*, p. 207; T. L. Jones, 'The British Army, and Counter-Guerrilla Warfare in Greece, 1945-49', *Small War and Insurgencies* 8, no. 1 (1997), 88-106.

⁹³ The Greek historian Veremis writes that AMAG in 1947 signified 'the changing of guard from Britain to the US'. Th. Veremis, *The Military in Greek Politics* (London, 1997), p. 151. Nevertheless, in 1947 the United States was taking its first gradual step towards intervention in Greece.

⁹⁴ Jones, 'A New Kind of War', pp. 61, 101-103.

Units rather than the *gendarmerie* to conduct ‘mopping-up operations’ after the army had cleared an area previously held by communists. Of course the Greeks cared more for American aid rather than quibbles over its actual implementation. Napoleon Zervas, the Minister of Public Order, accepted the American preference for military over para-military forces.⁹⁵ The switch from the *gendarmerie* to Army Security Units was the first substantive American impact on Greek planning. The Americans agreed to a National Army increased in size from 100,000 to 132,000 men.⁹⁶

By early November 1947 the Truman administration was moving toward the establishment of another advisory and planning group in Greece (Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group) under Livesay’s direction. This would be a group of ninety officers and eighty enlisted men divided among the army, navy, and air force, as part of the military section of the aid mission. They would have direct communications with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The group, with its headquarters in Athens, would aid the Greek General Staff through four advisers specialising in armed forces personnel, intelligence, planning and logistics. In co-operation with the British Military Mission, the Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group would provide advice to the Greek commanders and staff. The British would continue their current training duties whilst the Americans concentrated on raising the standard of infantry units.⁹⁷ On 31 December 1947, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) appointed Livesay to command JUSMAPG.

A new Anglo-American concordat covering the presence of British forces had also to be worked out in the summer of 1947.⁹⁸ In January 1947 the British government had decided that the 14,000 British troops stationed in Greece would have to be reduced

⁹⁵ Ibid, pp. 71-73.

⁹⁶ Jones, ‘*A New Kind of War*’, p. 106.

⁹⁷ FRUS (1947): 5, 399: anonymous note, 6 November 1947; Kenneth Matthews, *Memories of a Mountain War Greece* (London, 1972), p. 177; Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, pp. 221-222; Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, p. 249.

to one brigade of four battalions. By July 1947 only 5,000 combatants remained in Greece. The British regarded their presence as a symbolic gesture of British interest and military power in the country. They were formally committed to the defence of the territorial integrity of Greece against any foreign encroachment.⁹⁹ Yet Bevin proposed to the Chiefs of Staff that this mission should be reviewed. He suggested that all the troops might be withdrawn in September 1947. The Foreign Office argued that the retention of a small force of 5,000 men would be inadequate to meet a possible Soviet attack, that the British presence merely provoked the Greek left, and that the troops were thus not good value for money.¹⁰⁰ On 30 July 1947 Sir Jock Balfour, the British Charge in Washington, was instructed to inform the State Department that Whitehall had decided upon the 'immediate' withdrawal of its army from Greece for 'financial' and 'manpower' reasons. Athens was not informed of the British decision.¹⁰¹

In reply to the British *démarche* Marshall cabled Bevin one of the strongest notes recorded in Anglo-American relations concerning Greece. The American Secretary of State stated that the British note rendered co-operation 'unnecessarily difficult' and expressed doubts as to whether there would be any significant financial saving to Britain. Marshall threatened that if London persisted with its course the United States might reconsider all economic commitments in Europe and re-examine the strategic position of Greece, 'because United States foreign policy had been [...] predicated upon British willingness to contribute to the maintenance of stability in Europe'.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ FRUS (1947): 5, 268: British Charge John Balfour to Secretary of State, 30 July 1947.

⁹⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 128/9, CM 14(47) 4, 30 January 1947; CAB 128/9, CM 30(47) 2, 18 March 1947.

¹⁰⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/67043 R 10641, Report by the COS, 28 July 1947.

¹⁰¹ FRUS (1947): 5, 268: Balfour to Marshall, 30 July 1947; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/67043 R 10494, Foreign Office to Washington and Athens, 30 July 1947.

¹⁰² FRUS (1947): 5, 273-274: Marshall to Bevin, 1 August 1947.

Bevin replied that there had been no change in British policy and inquired as to how long the Americans wished the British troops to remain in Greece.¹⁰³ On 9 September 1947, the Chiefs of Staff noted that 'it is strategically important that we must have the closest military collaboration with the United States [...] to support British policy in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean'. Any decision about withdrawal of British troops must be determined on political grounds.¹⁰⁴ The following day Bevin decided 'to take no definite decision' until further discussions had taken place with the Americans about the Near and Middle East.¹⁰⁵ The British troops would remain in Greece willingly until 1950. Bevin's manoeuvre had never been indicative of a desire to abandon Greece. His main purpose was to make the United States send troops to Greece. This would increase the American interest in Greece and in Britain's main area of interest: the Middle East.¹⁰⁶ Yet the Truman administration was unwilling to face the difficulties in Congress that the dispatch of combat troops would have entailed.¹⁰⁷ Politically, it suited the Americans that the British should remain fully engaged in Greece.¹⁰⁸

Conditions on the ground remained conducive to a continuing Anglo-American condominium. There was neither the time nor the opportunity for an orderly transfer of power even if either party had wanted it. On Christmas Eve 1947 the KKE took the step most feared by American and British observers: it announced the establishment of the Provisional Democratic Government in the mountains of north-western Greece (at Pyli,

¹⁰³ FRUS (1947): 5, 275-278: Douglas (Ambassador in the UK) to Marshall, 3 August 1947.

¹⁰⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), PREM 8/797, Note to Prime Minister, 9 September 1947.

¹⁰⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 800/468/GRE/47/33, 34, 35, Withdrawal of British Troops from Greece, 10, 12, 15 September 1947.

¹⁰⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), PREM 8/841, Policy in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, 21 November 1947. In these talks, Bevin had made it clear that Greece's independence was vital to the security of the Eastern Mediterranean, which together with the Middle East forms a strategic whole. The United States aimed at securing an anti-Communist 'barrier' in Italy-Greece-Turkey-Iran.

¹⁰⁷ On the issue of the withdrawal of the British Army see, Frazier, 'The Bevin-Marshall Dispute', in Baerentzen, Iatrides (eds.), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War*, pp. 249-262.

in the vicinity of Lake Prespa, near the intersection of the Greek, Albanian and Yugoslav borders). In an atmosphere of 'celebration' the rebel radio station, Free Greece, announced the setting up of this shadow government headed by Prime Minister and Minister of War 'General Marcos'. Zahariadis, following Stalin's model, assumed no cabinet post but remained the KKE's General Secretary.¹⁰⁹

The announcement of the formation of the Provisional Democratic Government was accompanied by a determined major attack by the Democratic Army designed to seize the north-west town of Konitsa as its capital. Fourteen Democratic Army battalions (over 2,500 men), led by Marcos, moved south from Mount Grammos on the night of 24-25 December and, aided by diversionary attacks elsewhere in Thessaly and Epirus, seized control of the approaches to Konitsa, which was defended by a national forces garrison of some 900 men. Konitsa was the last of the unoccupied fronts of Epirus. Amply supplied with men, rations and ammunition from a provisions supply base in the village of Argyrokastro, over the border in Albania, Marcos employed all of his available artillery (two batteries of 75mm mountain guns, three or four 105mm howitzers, and a variety of mortars) to support a number of attacks on the town from different directions.

Delayed by heavy rains the NA relief forces moving from Grevena and Ioannina did not appear until 30 December. Abandoning the usual guerrilla tactic of withdrawing before the arrival of superior relief forces the DA chose to stand and fight. However, the

¹⁰⁸ FRUS (1947): 5, 458-461: Memorandum by Henderson, 22 December 1947; Leffler, *A Preponderance*, p. 194.

¹⁰⁹ Marcos' Provisional Government was, despite Zahariadis' assurances, not recognised by anyone, even by the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia. It soon became clear that Stalin, alarmed by the growing American involvement in an area so close to his satellites, wanted the Greek civil war to be brought to an end. Marcos later criticised Zahariadis for the decision to proceed to the formation of the PDG without having fulfilled the necessary precondition for international recognition: to capture a major city in which a governmental authority could be established. In Vlachianos, *Greece 1941-1949*, p. 245. The announcement of the Provisional Government had long-term political effects. On 27 December 1947, the Sofoulis government responded to the communists' initiatives by passing the Emergency Law 509, which outlawed the Greek Communist Party and penalised all communist activities with incomparably harsh penalties; the death penalty included.

National Army, newly equipped with American weapons and supported by both air power and artillery, soon drove the Communist troops from the high ground around the town. After suffering heavy casualties the Democratic Army began to withdraw on the night of 31 December-1 January. By 7 January 1948, the National Army had cleared the immediate area although fighting continued until 15 January in the surrounding region. The Greek General Staff later estimated that the Democratic Army had committed about 5,000 men to the battle and suffered 1,169 casualties (400 killed, 746 wounded, 23 captured), while the National Army had suffered 363 casualties (71 killed, 237 wounded and 55 missing).¹¹⁰

The battle of Konitsa was the largest and most sustained Communist offensive up to that time. It was the first conventional battle the Democratic Army had attempted. It was the Communists' first serious defeat. The attempt to seize Konitsa demonstrated that a guerrilla force, acting prematurely as a conventional army, lost most of its tactical advantages when it exposed itself to the superior firepower of its opponents.¹¹¹ The dangers of Zahariadis' concept, of confronting the National Army in conventional operations, were made manifest. Marcos' determination not to abandon guerrilla tactics was shown to have a basis in reality. Zahariadis, however, refused to learn the lessons of the Communists' first major military blunder. At a meeting held at Vitsi on 15 January 1948 Zahariadis announced that the strategy and tactics of the Democratic Army would continue to evolve from guerrilla operations towards more conventional techniques. The Democratic Army would transform itself into a structured military organisation, employing units of battalion size (500-600 men) and higher. Marcos opposed

¹¹⁰ GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, Αρχείο Στρατού (Army Report), vol.7, pp. 52-101; Zafeiropoulos, *Anti-Bandit War-O Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών, 1945-1949*, p. 306; O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War.*, pp. 160-162; Eudes, *The Kapetanios*, pp. 308-309; Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου*, vol.1, pp. 373-388. The KKE officially characterises the Konitsa operation a power show and KKE's attempt to provide the Democratic Government with credentials. *History of the KKE-Δοκίμιο Ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ*, vol.1, p. 581. For KKE supplies from the north see: Map D.4, p. 190.

¹¹¹ *History of the KKE-Δοκίμιο Ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ*, p. 581.

Zahariadis' plans but the will of the General Secretary of the Politburo prevailed. The Provisional Democratic Government proceeded to the creation of a hierarchy of the Democratic Army officers' ranks similar to that of a regular army: these proposals were signed by the President and War Minister General Marcos.¹¹²

The process of the 'militarisation' of the Democratic Army had to take place in secret sustained by a minority of the population and quite frequently in areas and circumstances where its prospects were uncertain and unstable. The areas in which the Democratic Army was operating often lacked sufficient communication between each other. Even if communication was possible enormous precautions had to be taken so to hide war cabinets from government forces.

The 1947 operations demonstrated the willpower of the Democratic Army to pursue its aims and challenge the status and strength of the National Army. In April the National Army launched its first massive campaign against the DA to eliminate its powers and free the occupied by the Communists areas. Hence 'Terminus' begun in April with the aim to cut the DA's communication line from the north and clear central and northern Greece from the communist influence. The undertaking was relatively successful for the government forces. The operation demonstrated the weaknesses of the NA: functional inefficiency and lack of organisation and discipline. The fights turned in

¹¹² 1. General (Marcos Vafeiadis), 2. Lieutenant-General (Sarantis Protopappas), 3. Major-General (G. Boditsios, Th. Genios, V. Ganatsios, N. Theoharopoulos, N. Kanakaridis, G. Blanas), 4. Colonel: Infantry, Artillery, Cavalry, Air force, and Political Delegates, 5. Lieutenant-Colonel: Infantry, Artillery, Air force, Political Delegates, Medical Committee, 6. Major: Infantry, Artillery, Cavalry, Engineer, Political Delegate, Medical Committee, Military Justice, 7. Captain: Infantry, Engineer, 8. Lieutenant: Artillery, Engineer, 9. Second Lieutenant: Artillery, Engineer, Medical Committee, Political Delegates; *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 150. Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, pp. 480-481. On the DA's transformation see: D. Close, Th. Veremis (eds.), 'The Military Struggle, 1945-1949', in Close (ed.), *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 109-112. ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΟΥ ΑΡΧΕΙΟΥ-SERVICE OF HISTORICAL ARCHIVE, ATHENS (YIA), 1948, 126. 2, 16204, Υπουργείον Εξωτερικών, Απόρρητον, 'Πληροφορίες Επικείμενων Ενεργειών', 23 Ιανουαρίου 1948 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Top Secret, Information on Future Actions, 23 January 1948). Unfortunately, there is no way to double check the validity of the public intelligence information office in terms of numbers and specific lists, but propaganda of the KKE itself reinforce the idea that DA fighters were expecting Soviet assistance. M. Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (London, 1962), pp. 181-82; V. Dedijer, *Battle Stalin Lost* (New York, 1971), pp. 68-68.

favour of the government forces in the battlefield though the communist forces were not totally defeated in the area. The key factor that brought the supremacy of the national forces was the use of air power to spot and bombard the DA. The 'Epirus Manoeuvre' in July proved the power and determination of the Democratic Army to pursue its goals. It brought a serious blow to the prestige and morale of the National Army, and despite the fact that the communist defenders were finally beaten, it was another relative government success. The line of communication between the DA and the Balkan communist countries was not cut. Thus from a strategic point of view 'Terminus' failed to meet its two main objectives. The Democratic Army lost the battles but not the war. Konitsa battle was the first communist conventional attempt against the NA. The tide, however, had started turning towards the national forces due to allied support and equipment.

Overall the 1947 campaigns proved the determination of the DA to take over power and the need to re-organise and supply the NA. The role of the British and Americans in this process obviously was of great importance. These operations, nonetheless, were of different and changing nature for both sides. The year 1947 marks a changing type of warfare for the communist defenders. Typical guerrilla warfare turned to an almost conventional one from the battle of Konitsa in December onwards.

The successful defence of Konitsa encouraged the National Army and British and American Missions to believe that an offensive in 1948 might give the Democratic Army a decisive victory. The prospect of victory by the summer of 1948 seemed a realistic one. Underpinning this optimism was a perception that all units had been more effective whilst co-operation between ground and air forces had improved. The continuous assistance, advice and equipment provided by the foreign allies had improved the quality of the national forces. At the same time the Communists were beginning to conduct operations in a way that suited the British and the Americans.

III The Denouement: 1948-1949

Military Preparations

At beginning of 1948 the Greek General Staff began work on the transformation of the national forces. This transformation was made possible by the enhanced assistance of both the United States and Britain.¹ In January 1948 the National Defence Corps (commonly known as the *Ethnofroura*) was strengthened to counter-balance the communist *Aftoamyna*. *Ethnofroura* would accommodate the local 'home guard' functions of the Units of Pursuit Detachments (MAD), Units of Rural Defence (MAY). Its initial establishment of 20,000 would soon increase to more than 50,000 men. These units, coupled with the *Gendarmerie*, would perform the civil part of clearance operations by arresting, detaining, and persecuting communist suspects. The manpower ceiling for the National Army itself rose in stages from 132,000 in early 1948 to 147,000 in May 1948.²

The British had a share in these new arrangements. On 19 January 1948, the British Military Attaché, Colonel Shortt, complained to the War Office that there were not yet enough officers with the counter-insurgency experience required in Greece. Nevertheless in March 1948 the Training Commando Units Centre was created. The Greek 'Raiding Forces' were reconstituted as commandos at the Vouliagmeni Training Centre near Athens.³

The British advisers were, however, already by 1948 shifting their main emphasis to conventional rather than counter-guerrilla war as they sought to meet the

¹ This moderates the view of orthodox and revisionist historians that the defeat of the insurgents was the result of the two foreign powers' intervention. See also in this chapter footnotes 88-92.

² By the end of the civil war the total of all services was 265,000 including 13,500 in the Royal Navy and 7,500 in the Royal Hellenic Air Force. Zafeiropoulos, *The Anti-Bandit War-O Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών*, p. 20. *Gendarmerie* as trained and advised by the British Police Mission would pursue the communists outside the battlefield.

Communists' shift to the conventional strategy.⁴ Major General Ernest Down replaced Stuart Rawlins as British Military Mission Commander on 27 March 1948. As a result British advice on operational doctrine was modified. The strategy of 'encirclement' had been found wanting in 1947. Down favoured the replacement of encirclement in villages and towns with the 'relentless chasing small bands [...] in the hills'.⁵ He adhered to the strategy of 'clear and hold' but insisted that it had to be based on the continuous conduct of offensive operations supported by maximum use of air power.⁶ To match Down's aggressive military strategy Clifford Norton re-thought his political strategy. Norton was so determined that the National Army should crack the 'bandits' in 1948 that he told the Americans that no political compromise was possible 'until their final defeat'. He adjudged that attempts to reach a compromise with some elements at least of the Left, which he himself had urged on the Greek government during 1947, were 'absolutely wrong'.⁷

On 14 February 1947, the Greek government agreed to effective Anglo-American control over the National Army.⁸ The arrival of a vigorous and aggressive American field commander, Lt. Gen. Van Fleet on 24 February 1948 to assume command of the Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group signalled the American determination to bring the civil war to an end. As Van Fleet told the press, the

³ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/908, History of BMM(G); WO 33/2641, War Office Paramilitary Establishments, 19 January 1948.

⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/950, BMM(G), 31 March 1948; WO 261/548, BLO in GHQMELF, 20 March 1948; DEFE, 4/11, COS (48) 24, 18 February 1948; Jones, 'The British Army, and Counter-Guerrilla Warfare in Transition, 1944-1952', *Small War and Insurgencies* 7, no.3 (winter 1996), 278.

⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 5/10, COS (48) 64(0), 24 March 1948; King's College London Archives, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, Gen. H. Pyman Papers, 6/1/14, 3, 4 March 1948; Woodhouse states that training effort of the BMM had been inefficient for long and that 'criticism of British training methods by American officers was justified'. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 238.

⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/72248 R12202, Gen. Down's 'Appreciation of the Bandit War in Greece', October 1948. Field Marshal Papagos, 'Guerrilla Warfare', in F. M. Osanka (ed.), *Modern Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 236.

⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/72242 R 6174, Norton to Sargent, 12 May 1948; FO 371/72242 R 7475, Norton to Bevin, 21 June 1948.

⁸ Wittner, *American Intervention*, p. 242; Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 238.

JUSMAPG, 'appears to be in charge of operations'.⁹ Van Fleet's aim was to keep the Democratic Army continuously engaged. JUSMAPG, Down and the Greek commanders framed the plan for government operations in 1948. The national forces, it was agreed, would undertake a 'staggered offence' designed to extend control progressively over selected areas on the country, moving from the south to the north in four phases. First, the Roumeli region would be cleared in order to ensure that the national forces had a line of communication between Athens and Salonika. Second, the National Army would attack Democratic Army bases in the Grammos area in June 1948. Third, it would conduct commando operations to clear the Peloponnese. Fourth the National Army would conduct a winter campaign in the Vitsi area to eliminate the Democratic Army.¹⁰

During this planning the distribution of power between the allied military missions became a delicate issue. Averoff has claimed that the collaboration between the British Military Mission and the Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group was 'excellent'. O'Ballance assumed that JUSMAPG was in complete control by the summer of 1948. In fact functions remained shared between the British and the Americans and conflicting interests brought clashes between the two missions.¹¹ In January 1948 Britain had assigned an additional one hundred seventy-five advisers to the Greek army units in the field; this meant that there were three times as many British as American advisers fulfilling this role. The January 1948 agreement between the American and the British missions assigned operational and logistical duties to the former mission and training to the latter. General Down suggested that co-operation could be further improved by the merger of the American and British groups.¹² Van Fleet, however, rejected this proposal. He wanted America's officers to have as wide an

⁹ Wittner, *American Intervention* p. 244.

¹⁰ Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, p. 225. The main drawback of the 1947 'encirclement' strategy was that it required enormous manpower to cover the various targets and left other nearby areas unprotected and vulnerable to the 'hit and run' tactics of the DA.

¹¹ Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, p. 267; O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, p. 175.

authority as possible. The two missions continued to offer separate advice to the National Army. Members of both missions could enter the combat zones but they could take 'no executive part' in the campaigns.¹³ The Greek Commander-in-Chief had to give orders for any field operations, deployment of units or release of battalions.¹⁴

The Battles of 1948

From the spring of 1948 the Greeks confronted each other in conventional warfare. The Greek national forces, under the guidance and assistance of the British Military Mission and Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group, started a series of attacks against the Democratic Army. The National Army had a strength of 132,000 men, with artillery, armour and aircraft, and were supported by a further 50,000 National Guards. On the other side were approximately less than 24,000 Democratic Army troops, who had little artillery, no armour, and no aircraft. Despite the overwhelming superiority of the government forces, however, encounters were hard fought and the outcomes uncertain. The National Army continued to display poor organisation and fighting ability. The inferior Democratic Army hampered even further by its faulty strategy fought bravely and with a will to win that the government forces found hard to match.

Operations began with an attempt by the National Army to occupy the DA hub in Roumeli. The Mounts of Parnassos, Giona and Agrafa remained important Democratic Army bases and jeopardised the rear of any National Army operations in the north. The aim of the Operation *Dawn* was to clear an area of about 2,000 square miles in the 'waist' of Greece and eliminate the KKE's military centres inside Greece and

¹² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/908, BMM (G), History.

¹³ Records of the JCS, Part 2, Strategic Issues, Section: 1, US Military Assistance, 1798/7, 16 March 1948, Reel I, Frame 0815; Records of the JCS, Part 2, Strategic Issues, Section: 1, US Military Assistance, 1798/10, 7 May 1948, Reel I, Frame 0894.

¹⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/895, 15 January 1948; WO 202/950, BMM(G) 31 March 1948; Jones, *A New Kind of War*, pp. 158-159. See also Map D.3, p. 189.

abroad. On 13-14 April 1948 the National Army established the tactical initiative by a diversionary raid into the Mount Agrafa area by a commando battalion. The commandos successfully neutralised important communist headquarters at the village of Mastrogianni.¹⁵ Spurred on by General Van Fleet's call to 'get out and fight!' the National Army initiated its first major campaign under the new strategy of 'staggered offence' on 15 April 1948.¹⁶ Army units blockaded the north, east and west of the area of operation, whereas to the south the Gulf of Corinth, patrolled by the Royal Hellenic Navy (RHN), prevented the Democratic Army's escape.¹⁷ The Royal Hellenic Air Force, strengthened by RAF's aircraft, flew in support overhead. There was hard fighting in the Mornos Valley and around the town of Artotina but the hard-pressed Democratic Army units, abandoning mules and hostages, took guerrilla-like avoiding action and escaped towards Agrafa. By 17 May the insurgents had been forced out of Mount Roumeli.¹⁸ For the time being Roumeli was cleared of organised Democratic Army units and government communications between Athens and Salonika were re-established.

Forty days were required for the completion of Operation *Dawn*, which ended on 26 May 1948. Many of the Communist troops had been able to escape to the north or hide in Roumeli itself but the Democratic Army's underground organisation had been broken up. Large quantities of its supplies had been captured, and the communist army had suffered over 2,000 casualties (610 killed, 310 wounded, 995 *Aftoamyna* personnel

¹⁵ Instead of a sweep from south to north, as planned in 1947, which had the effect of driving the rebels back to their secure bases, Operation Dawn aimed to concentrate and crush the forces of the DA in central Roumeli. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, pp. 237-9. The numbers of the National Army are estimated totals of the different units as there are no statistics in the official documents of GES/DIS. As a result there are variations in the strength of the National Army. For instance Margaritis gives a total of 90,000 men in a combat battalion that consisted of 500-600 men. Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου*, vol.2, p. 34.

¹⁶ GES/DIS, *Archives-Αρχεία*, Β' Σώμα Στρατού "Επιχείρηση 'Χαραυγή', 25 Μαρτίου 1948" (B' Army Corps, Operation Dawn, 25 March 1948'), vol. 7, keim.59, p. 311.

¹⁷ Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 240. See Map D.5, p. 192.

¹⁸ GES/DIS, *Archives-Αρχεία*, Οδηγεία Ι Μεραρχίας, 11 Μαΐου 1948 (Directive for I Division, 11 May 1948), vol. 8, pp. 166-67. Operation Dawn is described by Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, p. 255, 257; Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, pp. 239-240, 258-260.

captured) and there had been mass arrests of communist civilian supporters.¹⁹ Dominique Eudes has noted that Operation *Dawn* was the product of British 'empiricism'.²⁰ British intervention was apparent in the course of this operation. British advisers had pushed the importance of intelligence-led counter-organisation mass arrests. Yet the British themselves did not regard Dawn as a great success. They pointed out that the National Army had not managed to inflict decisive losses on the Communists.²¹

The next major National Army operation, Operation *Crown*, was launched on 20 June 1948 and continued until 22 August. The objective of Operation *Crown* was to clear out the main Democratic Army stronghold in the Mount Grammos and cut the line of communication to the north and south. Grammos was a complex of mountains and extremely rugged terrain. In the centre of the range lay Aetomilitsa the seat of the Provisional Democratic Government where Vafeiadis had his general headquarters. The Democratic Army defences in Grammos consisted of two lines of fortifications, each several kilometres in depth, and were strong and well manned. The outer defence ring blocked the passes leading through deep ravines to the interior of the region; the inner ring, protecting the core area, included numerous well-camouflaged machine gun bunkers constructed of logs. Within the Grammos stronghold approximately 24,000 Democratic Army troops led by Vafeiadis faced some 70,000 government troops organised in two formations, A and B Corps.²²

¹⁹ Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, p. 260; Tsakalotos, *Forty Years Soldier- Σαράντα Χρόνια Στρατιώτης*, vol. 2, p. 120.

²⁰ Eudes, *The Kapetanios*, p. 320.

²¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 4/10, Operational War Office plan BMM(G), COS (48)22, 13 February 1948; AIR 46/30, RAF to BLU, 19 March 1948; DEFE 5/10, COS(48)38 (0), 17 February 1948, COS(48)64(0), 24 March 1948; WO 202/893, BMM(G) Operations, 20 August 1948.

²² D. Katsis, *Diary of A DAG Rebel 1947-1948-To Ημερολόγιο Ενός Αντάρτη του ΔΣΕ 1947-1948*, vol. 2 (Athens, 1998), p. 150. According to intelligence report the General Staff estimated the Democratic Army combatant forces at about six-and-a-half thousand men. Although the government intelligence information was wrong, the National Army held a clear numerical supremacy. GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, GES/A1, Σχέδιον Επιχειρήσεων Κορωνής, 10 Μαΐου 1948, παράρτημα πρωτο, Γραφείο A2, Δελτίον

The initial National Army deployment comprised five divisions (40,000 men) supported by air and artillery, together with an additional 7,500 National Corps and 4,500 *Ethnofroua* troops to protect the government lines of communications. The National Army plan called for a three-phase operation. First, it aimed to clear areas near the main Democratic Army base. Second, government troops would attack and occupy positions along the Democratic Army outer defence belt. Third, communications between the Grammos and Democratic Army support in Albania would be cut and a general assault from all directions would be launched against the Democratic Army inner defences. Tsakalotos' A Corps was assigned the mission of protecting the lines of communication and dealing with the Democratic Army units in Epirus while Kalogeropoulos' B Corps was assigned the main attack itself.²³

The National Army would enjoy much better air support from the RHAF during the operation. One of the most important contributions was to be made by two squadrons of British-made Spitfire fighter-bombers based at Ioannina and Kozani.²⁴ The Royal Hellenic Air Force aircraft, employing strafing attacks, rockets, fragmentation bombs, and, for the first time on 20 June, napalm supplied by the Americans, wreaked serious damage on Democratic Army installations and troops. The Royal Hellenic Air Force flew 3,474 sorties during Operation *Crown* reaching a peak during August, when 1,570 sorties were flown.²⁵

Πληροφοριών (GES/A1, Operation Plan *Crown*, 10 May 1948, annex 1, Bureau A2, Information form), vol.8, pp. 263-68; Zafeiropoulos, *The Anti-Bandit War- Ο Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών*, pp.363-64.

²³ O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 170-173. The official archives do not provide the exact number of the forces that took part in the Grammos fights and thus the approximate number varies based on the additions of the paramilitary troops. A combat battalion consists of 500-600 men, whereas the LOK units are considered to be weaker than regular units. Margaritis estimates that the number of the National Army to take part rose to 90,000 men. In Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου Πολέμου*, vol. 2, p. 34.

²⁴ Air support had become an established COIN concept in the RAF, RHAF and British and Greek army groups. The Air Ministry thus mirrored the practice of other British institutions in dispatching specially selected personnel to advise the Greeks on COIN matters. In that sense T. L Jones is justified in noting that the RHAF approved RAF 'anti-bandit doctrine'. Jones, *The Development of British Counterinsurgency Policies and Doctrine*, 1945-1952, p. 208.

²⁵ Campbell, Down, Schuetta, *The Employment of Airpower*, pp. 42-45, 52. Implications of the Operation *Crown* were that the British-made Centaurs, armed with small 50 millimetre cannons, were obsolete,

Operation *Crown* officially ended on 21 August 1948. By 22 then some 1,500 Democratic Army defenders had slipped over the border into Albania fully equipped. Another 8,000 Democratic Army combatants moved off to the Vitsi region.²⁶ Averoff characterised Operation Crown as 'the largest, the most difficult, the longest, and the most deadly battle of the entire war'.²⁷ Nonetheless, it achieved only moderate success, for it did not bring about any fundamental change in the situation. The ability of the Democratic Army to take refuge in nearby Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria was particularly galling. Several National Army commanders were accused of a lack of aggressive leadership. After the end of the operation Van Fleet characterised it as 'a bitter disappointment' and the 'guerrilla's' leadership, training and morale as 'excellent'. He stated that 'everything that has been accomplished up there has been done by air and artillery'.²⁸

Technically Operation *Crown* was an American operation. Yet British continued to have a say in Greek warfare. The American mission gave advice in the allied joint planning group where it retained four permanent members compared to the BMM's two. The situation was, however, different at the technical level. Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group had fewer than 300 men. It maintained 20 officers at the National Army unit level whereas the British Military Mission had over four times as many men overall and seven times the American number in Liaison Units. Lieutenant General Tsakalotos pressed his generals to adopt British thinking and therefore to place

underpowered and unable to climb. As a result, the army was unable to defeat the Democratic Army and close the guerrillas' main avenue of escape. Wittner, *American Intervention*, p. 243; O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 170-173. An additional drawback was that the Spitfires could carry only a limited number of napalm bombs for they were too heavy. Jones, *A New Kind of War*, p. 293.

²⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 476/2 R9148/11/19, Consul-General Knight to Reilly (Athens) 6 August 1948; GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, ΓΕΣ/Γραφείον Α1, 'Εκθεσις επιχειρήσεως Βιτσίου. Απο 23 Αυγούστου μέχρι 3 Δεκεμβρίου 1948' (GES/Bureau Α1, 'Operation Vitsi Report, 23 August to 3 December 1948), vol.11, p.35; O'Ballance gives the Democratic Army casualties as 3,128 killed, 589 captured, and 603 surrendered, O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, p. 173.

²⁷ Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, p. 280.

²⁸ FRUS (1948): 4, 196, 206: Van Fleet, 24 November and 30 November 1948; Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, pp. 242-245.

a greater emphasis on small unit patrolling.²⁹ The Greek headquarters noted that during the summer operations, General Down 'acted as Advisor-in-Chief on tactical matters' and British liaison units advised on the execution of operations down to brigade level. Furthermore, Royal Air Force officers on the ground cast a 'critical eye' on the Royal Hellenic Air Force.³⁰

Mount Vitsi was the next important hub of the Democratic Army. The Provisional Democratic Government and the Democratic Army General Command had been re-established at Vitsi after having been forced to leave their headquarters in Grammos. The Vitsi operation lasted from 29 August to 20 September 1948. The plan of the Vitsi campaign was much the same as that undertaken at Grammos albeit on a smaller scale. The National Army used three (1st, 2nd, 15th) divisions from B Army Corps. After reconnaissance aeroplanes located the enemy, Spitfires began strafing operations. The initial results were successful. Nonetheless, as in the Grammos operation the National Army's weakness became apparent as the drive broke down because of confusion in command, complicated by bad weather. On 29 August, the National Army launched a strong attack against the Vitsi position but the government troops were tired and the Democratic Army troops defended their base tenaciously.³¹

²⁹ General Down, Commander 1948-1950, distinguished himself in supporting 'clear and hold' operation by air support and small army units.

³⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/983, BMM(G) Operations, 20 August 1948; DEFE, 4/14, COS (48)92, 5 July 1948; AIR 23/6395, RAF to BLU, 1 June 1948; Jones, *A New Kind of War*, pp. 158-59; Abbott, *The Greek Civil War*, p. 13. After the Czech crisis the United States increased defence budget for Universal Military Training (UMT) in Western union within the context of European Recovery Program. Greece, Italy, Germany, Palestine, France, Philippines were a few countries military assistance was recommended to support governments friendly to the United States to preserve internal order. M. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power* (Stanford, 1992), pp. 148, 194-197, 239. British advisers, however, continued to be involved in National Army training during 1949. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/899, Commander in Chief Middle East Land Forces (CINCMELF) notes to War Office, 16 October 1948. See Map D.6, p. 193.

³¹ ΓΕΝΙΚΟ ΕΠΙΤΕΛΕΙΟ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ/ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ-GENERAL STAFF/DIRECTORATE OF HISTORY OF THE ARMY, ATHENS (ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ), 1948, 1012/ A/57, Αναφορά Αντιστράτηγου Δ. Γιαντζή περι εκκαθάρισεως του Βιτσίου, 3 Οκτωβρίου 1948 (Lieutenant-General D. Yiantzis' Report on Vitsi clearance, 3 October 1948).

The results were moderately successful. Both sides needed a rest and were thus forced to pause.³²

The stalemate of Grammos and Vitsi led the Greek government to renew its pleas for an expansion of the armed forces funded by the Americans. Tsaldaris argued that the army should be enlarged from 132,000 to 250,000 soldiers by the spring of 1949. The army, Tsaldaris and Sofoulis insisted, must wage offensive war at the same time as it conducted defensive operations to protect people and property in the wake of the advance.³³ On 29 September 1948, the stalemate in Grammos and Vitsi forced Van Fleet's hand. He advised the Department of the Army that the Greek armed forces should not be reduced to a level which the Greek economy could support. He informed Colonel Walker from the United States Army, who arrived in Athens to discuss the issue of reduction, that such an act was out of the question. Given the 'guerrilla' move from one area to another, Van Fleet insisted that 'overall the picture had worsened rather than improved since the Grammos victory'.³⁴ General Down, for his part, emphasised the importance of air cover while performing counter-insurgency operations.³⁵ General William A. Matheny, Chief of the Air Section of the JUSMAPG, too argued that an expanded air support system was needed to give the army the mobility it required. The soldiers could not by themselves pursue small guerrilla groups in such rough terrain.³⁶

Both the British Military Mission and Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group in Athens moved towards the Greek position of further enlarging the

³² Margaritis characterised the September results as 'failures'. In Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου Πολέμου*, vol.2, pp. 195-131; Rentis, Minister of Interior, overreacted by asking Sofoulis whether this 'would be another Asia Minor disaster'. In Th. Tsakalotos, *Grammos-Γράμμος* (Athens, 1970), p. 32.

³³ FRUS (1948): 4, 154-155: Memorandum by G. Marshall, 30 September 1948; FRUS (1948): 4, 156-157: The Charge in Greece (Minor) to the Secretary of State, 1 October 1948.

³⁴ FRUS (1948): 4152-153: Grady to Secretary of State, 29 September 1948.

³⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 5/11, COS's views, COS (48) 127(0), 10 June 1948; AIR 8/1258, COS (48) 155, 19 July 1948; FO 371/722498 R12202, Gen. Down, Appreciation of the Anti-Bandit War in Greece, 22 October 1948.

³⁶ FRUS (1948): 4, 160: Grady to Marshall, 16 October 1948; Wittner, *American Intervention*, p. 245; Jones, *A New Kind of War*, pp. 184-85.

armed forces in response to the Grammos-Vitsi stalemate in autumn 1948. The key to success, according to the JUSMAPG, was 'more men, more money, more equipment'. Van Fleet submitted a military budget for the coming fiscal year. As opposed to the \$150 million allocated by the government for fiscal year 1949 Van Fleet requested a new budget ceiling of \$200 million and a new Greek army ceiling of 147,000 men.³⁷

Van Fleet's belligerent attitude had consequences for the British. The more the JUSMAPG became involved in the National Army affairs, the more the BMM was demoted into a secondary role in Greece. On 2 July 1948, the War Office had even recommended that in order to retain American co-operation, the BMM should be subordinated to the JUSMAPG. By 1 October 1948, the British had agreed that the JUSMAPG should assume full responsibility for 'all operational matters [...] [of] policy or higher direction [and] tactical training', and henceforth the Americans should predominate in this regard.³⁸ Nevertheless, the British Military Mission would still be responsible for organisation and training of the Greek, air, army, navy and police and in this way the British share in Greek affairs is consolidated.³⁹

Stalemate in Late 1948

The Grammos-Vitsi stalemate reawakened the issue of Army restructuring. Prime Minister Sofoulis tried to solve the army's leadership problem by putting forward a well-known military figure, General Alexander Papagos, for the position of

³⁷ FRUS (1948): 4, 193-94: McGhee to the Under-Secretary of State (Lovett), 24 November 1948; FRUS (1948): 4, 183: Grady to Marchall, 13 November 1948.

³⁸ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 4/14, War Office view in COS (48) 91, 2 July 1948; WO 261/549, GHQMELF Report, 20 September 1948; WO 202/895, Agreement Regarding British Advice, 1 October 1948; Jones, *The Development of British counterinsurgency policies and doctrine*, pp. 225-26.

³⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 5/8, COS/WO views, COS (48) 129, 22 October 1948; ΓΕΝΙΚΟ ΕΠΙΤΕΛΕΙΟ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ/ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ-GENERAL STAFF/DIRECTORATE OF HISTORY OF THE ARMY, ATHENS (ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ), 1948, 1012/A/6, Αναφορά απο τον Αντιστράτηγο Γ. Παπαγεωργίου, 27 Οκτωβρίου 1948 (Report by Lieutenant-General G. Papageorgiou, 27 October 1948). In July 1948, Mac Veagh was replaced by Henry Grady as Ambassador and Chief of the USAGG to smooth tension between Mac Veagh and Griswold over

Commander-in-Chief of the Greek armed forces.⁴⁰ King Paul also supported Papagos' accession as Commander-in-Chief.⁴¹ Papagos himself laid down his conditions of acceptance in a letter to Sofoulis on 11 November. He demanded complete control of planning, order of battle, appointments and operations. Martial law was to be imposed throughout the country, with strict censorship. Papagos would command the Navy, Air Force and *Gendarmerie* as well as the Army. Papagos was unwilling to brook interference by the allied missions.⁴² These demands were so extensive that Sofoulis hesitated to meet them. Nevertheless martial law was extended to the entire country on 29 October 1948.

Despite his touchiness on the issue of foreign interference both Van Fleet and Down supported Papagos as Commander-in-Chief. Van Fleet's bullish demands for more money and equipment ran parallel to Papagos' similar demands. To many in Greece, therefore, it seemed that the Americans were willing to endorse not only Papagos but also his methods.⁴³ Any hopes that Papagos' appointment in the near future would give the Greek government a boost soon evaporated, however, because a new

command issues. Grady, head of the Allies' March 1946 observation of Greek elections, would be responsible for supplies, logistics and operations in Greece.

⁴⁰ Alexandros Papagos had been victorious in Albanian war against the Italians in 1940 and was imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp from June 1943 to May 1945. After the War he held no military command but in July 1947 he was offered the title of General *ex officio*. Papagos was Lord Chamberlain of King Paul's Household until January 1949. He witnessed Operation *Dawn* as an observer with Van Fleet and Down. In January 1949 he became Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces as well as Field Marshal. Papagos was the first non-blue blooded Greek to become Field Marshal, a title hitherto exclusively preserved for the members of the royal family. Lt. Gen. Giantzis became Chief of the General Staff.

⁴¹ The Palace played a vital role in Greek decision making, standing at the top of political hierarchy. It represented a combination of both political and military powers and within this context the Court could play a decisive role in politicising the Army or militarising the cabinet. Norton, Van Fleet, Down and Grady, however, had proposed Papagos' appointment as Commander-in-Chief by 23 October 1948 because the national forces needed a 'strong personality' and a 'strong leader'. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/72248 R 12095, Norton to Foreign Office, 23 October 1948. Papagos' strong personality would create in early 1950s a clash between the two important institutions of Greek politics: the Army and the Court.

⁴² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/72249 R13203, Papagos to Prime Minister, 11 November 1948; Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 247.

⁴³ FRUS (1948): 4, 176-77: Grady Confidential Telegram, 26 October 1948; Wittner, *American Intervention*, pp. 247-248; Jones, *A New Kind of War*, p. 186.

political crisis broke out.⁴⁴ On 6 November, Venizelos, who had withdrawn from EPE to rejoin the Liberal Party as its Vice-Chairman, informed King Paul that the majority of his Members of Parliament had withdrawn their support from the coalition government in order to form a new Liberal cabinet. As a result, Sofoulis resigned on 12 November.⁴⁵

Tsaldaris and his Populist Party tried to stymie the Liberals by forming a new cabinet with the right-wingers Napoleon Zervas and General Stylianos Gonatas as Ministers of Public Order and War respectively. Norton and Grady, however, intervened to prevent this 'provocative' move.⁴⁶ They reasoned that a purely right-wing formation would antagonise the Liberals and the other parties of the Centre, who would constantly try to overthrow it. Four days after Sofoulis' resignation Norton proposed to Grady that he should intervene in favour of the formation of a neutral cabinet excluding the provocative extremists General Zervas and General Gonatas. As a result of this Anglo-American pressure the coalition re-assembled on 18 November under Sofoulis' premiership.⁴⁷ Norton and Grady had been forced to intervene more overtly than they would have wished. The crisis further discredited democratic Greek politicians in their eyes. Greek politicians would indulge in their own petty squabbles at the moments of gravest danger.

As the politicians squabbled in Athens the Greek government had to face a wave of Democratic Army counter-attacks. Despite the losses sustained in holding off the

⁴⁴ The military inefficiency was attributed to the political weakness. The main characteristic of this was the 'conventional' policy and a lack of determination to beat the enemy. General Down has reported that the Greek national forces lacked combat spirit and the Greek politicians and government were exclusively responsible for this. Close, 'The Reconstruction of a Right-Wing State', in Close (ed.), *The Greek Civil War, 1943-1950*, pp. 172-73.

⁴⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/72201 R 13356, Norton to Foreign Office, 23 November 1948. ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΟΥ ΑΡΧΕΙΟΥ- SERVICE OF HISTORICAL ARCHIVE, ATHENS (YIA), 1948, 57.1, 56786, ΥΠΕΧ-Ανώνυμη Αναφορά Περὶ Εσωτερικῆς Πολιτικῆς, 16 Νοεμβρίου 1947- Report On Greek Internal Politics, 16 November 1947.

⁴⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/72248 R12357, Norton to Foreign Office, 1 November 1948; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/72248 R12579, Norton to Foreign Office, 6 November 1948.

⁴⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/72202 R13356, Norton to Foreign Office, 23 November 1948.

government's attacks on Grammos and Vitsi, Zahariadis convinced the KKE that the fault did not lie with the strategy of using the Democratic Army in a conventional army role. Zahariadis blamed instead Marcos' emphasis on guerrilla tactics for dividing the Party and obstructing victory. The Democratic Army, according to the General Secretary of the Politburo, should be more thoroughly reorganised along regular army lines to enable it to take the offensive. Zahariadis' will prevailed. The General Secretary ordered a series of assaults on the towns of Karditsa, Edessa and Naoussa, and established a concentration of troops in Grammos and Vitsi that was intended to beat the National Army into submission.⁴⁸

By the end of 1948 the Democratic Army had accomplished its reorganisation into divisions, brigades, battalions similar those of the national forces. After the Grammos battle the total Democratic Army forces, according to the intelligence sources of the GES, rose to 21,400 combatants. Of these 2,700 were acting in the Peloponnese, 1,700 in mainland Greece, 2,500 in Epirus, almost 6,500 in Vitsi and Agrafa and another almost 7,700 in Thrace.⁴⁹ Having re-occupied the Grammos during the last months of 1948 the Democratic Army increased its attacks on major towns throughout Greece.

The most serious of these attacks was carried out by some 6,000 Democratic Army troops against the town of Karditsa, on the plain of Thessaly. Karditsa was a town of 50,000 citizens, plus refugees from other areas, defended by a reinforced National Army battalion of approximately 860 men. On the night of 11-12 December 1948 the

⁴⁸ Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, pp. 253-57; Iatrides, 'Civil War 1945-1949', in *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 210-11; Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, pp. 276-77; Matthews, *Memories of a Mountain War*, pp. 252, 267; O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 181-183; Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, pp. 252-53; Eudes, *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 335-338; Jones, 'A New Kind of War', p. 190.

⁴⁹ ΓΕΝΙΚΟ ΕΠΙΤΕΛΕΙΟ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ/ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ-GENERAL STAFF/DIRECTORATE OF HISTORY OF THE ARMY, ATHENS (ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ), 1948, 1015/A/57, Διεύθυνση Πληροφοριών, 15 Σεπτεμβρίου 1948 (Information Office, 15 September 1948); GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, Διεύθυνση Πληροφοριών -ΓΕΣ, 'Δελτίο Πληροφοριών 10 Σεπτεμβρίου 1948' (Information Office, GES, 10 September 1948), vol.11, p. 318. According to Shrader the DA

communist forces eliminated the National Army outposts and struck at the town.⁵⁰ The Democratic Army combatants put out road-blocks, set ambushes on approach roads and destroyed a bridge on the Trikkala to Larissa road, all of which delayed the arrival of reinforcements. The telephone network connecting the government's defence was damaged. By the dawn of 12 December the city was entirely under the control of the Democratic Army force. The Royal Hellenic Air Force was unable to damage Democratic Army posts because they had been established in the city centre.⁵¹ At this stage the Karditsa battle appeared to be a great victory for the Democratic Army, which proved quicker and more efficient than the National Army.

However, by the night of 12 December Greek national forces reinforcements started arriving in the area from around Thessaly. These forces included armoured units equipped with British-made Centaur tanks. Once the National Army had been strengthened the Royal Hellenic Air Force attacked the Democratic Army forces. The 1st and 2nd divisions of the B Army Corps pushed the Democratic Army forces outside the city centre into the open country.⁵² In the battle the National Army lost 23 men killed, 76 wounded and 35 missing a total of 134 men or 18 per cent of its initial force. The *gendarmerie* lost four men and had six wounded. The Units of National Guard Defence (MEA) lost 15 dead, 15 wounded and 13 missing men. The losses of the garrison were about 200 killed, wounded and missing. Most serious of all were the civilian casualties: 150 were killed and wounded and over 1,000 were abducted, of whom about 35 per cent

strength was about 23,000 combats during the height of the civil war in 1948-1949. Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, p. 110.

⁵⁰ GES/DIS, *Archives- Αρχεία*, 'Σχέδιον Κατάληψης πόλεως Καρδίτσας' (Capture plan of Karditsa city), vol. 11, pp. 378-79.

⁵¹ ΓΕΝΙΚΟ ΕΠΙΤΕΛΕΙΟ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ/ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ-GENERAL STAFF/DIRECTORATE OF HISTORY OF THE ARMY, ATHENS (ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ), 1948, 1513/ B/ 23, Σχέδιον Διασώσεως Πόλεως Καρδίτσας, Αναφορά Αντιστράτηγου Γιαντζή, 12 Δεκεμβρίου 1948 (Report on Safeguard Karditsa city, Lieutenant General Yiantzis, 12 December 1948); GES/DIS, *Archives- Αρχεία*, Εκθέσεις Πεπραγμένων Φρουράς Καρδίτσας (Report by Karditsa Guard), vol. 11, p. 387; T. Psimmenos, *Rebel in Agrafa- Αντάρτης στ' Αγραφα, 1946-1950* (Athens, 1983), p. 209.

were women. The Democratic Army troops suffered some 800 casualties.⁵³ The battle of Karditsa ended up as something of a success for the National Army. Eventually the battle would turn in favour of the government forces.

On 21-22 December, some 2,500 Democratic Army combatants attacked the key towns of Edessa and Naousa on the road from Salonika to Florina, using both machine-guns and mortars. The assault on Edessa failed. The Democratic Army attacks failed to catch the National Army by surprise. The communist forces were weakened by their losses in material and troops, the physical exhaustion of its combatants and bad winter weather. Under the constant threat of the air strikes it was becoming harder and harder for the Democratic Army to hide and move from one area to another.⁵⁴

Despite the unsuccessful attacks, the Democratic Army did not waste any time before starting the next operation. The troops of the Democratic Army departed on 26 December 1948 from Vitsi with sixty new recruits, food and a large quantity of medical supplies looted from a hospital. On 11 and 12 January 1949, the same Democratic Army troops, which had attacked Edessa on 21 December, took Naousa from its 900 strong National Army garrison. On 12 January, however, further National Army reinforcements of some 2,5000 men arrived from Salonika and Veroia to assist the National Army. On 15 January, the National Army managed to re-capture the city of Naousa. Nevertheless, the Democratic Army attackers escaped once again in good order on the night of 15 January 1949 with large quantities of supplies and over 600 recruits. The National Army

⁵² GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, Εκθεσις Πεπραγμένων Φρουράς Καρδίτσας κατά την τριήμερον μάχην 11, 12, 13, Δεκεμβρίου 1948' (Report by Karditsa Guard over the battle on 11, 12, 13 December 1948), vol. 11, p. 389; Psimenos, *Rebel in Agrafa-Aντάρτης στ' Αγραφα, 1946-1950* pp. 290-210.

⁵³ Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 257; Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, p. 230.

⁵⁴ GES/DIS, *Archives- Αρχεία*, Διοίκισις Εθνοφρουράς Θεσσαλίας, 'Εκθεση επι των γεγονότων των Σοφάδων στις 19, 20, 23 Δεκεμβρίου 1948' (Report on events in Sofades on 19, 20, 23 December 1948), vol.11, pp. 398-404.

lost only 8 men, whereas the Democratic Army lost 58 killed and 70 captured or surrendered during the battle for the town.⁵⁵

Despite the growing size of the National Army, its material advantages, its better allied equipment and the steady improvements in leadership and training introduced by the British and the Americans, it continued to find that superior numbers and firepower did not bring the hoped-for final success against the Democratic Army. The ability of the Democratic Army to escape, endure long-lasting operations and counter-attack were all threatening signs for the National Army. The Democratic Army had conducted unsuccessful positional defence, like the battles of Karditsa and Naousa and suffered serious defeats, like Operation *Crown*. It was, in truth, losing the war. Yet the atmosphere in governmental Greece at the turn of the year was hardly triumphant. The continued uneven performance of national forces further strengthened the voices of those calling for change.

The End of the Civil War

On 19 January 1949 Papagos was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Greek armed forces. He was equipped with new powers enabling him to replace corps commanders, implement martial law and bypass the nation's civilian leadership. Three days after his appointment, Papagos enlarged the Supreme National Defence Council into the War Council, which consisted of the premier, the deputy premier, the leaders of the four parties participating in the government, Grady, Van Fleet and Down.⁵⁶ Papagos informed the War Council that 'the size of [the] Greek Armed Forces was inadequate' and that he had accepted the position of Commander-in-Chief only upon allied and

⁵⁵ GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, GES/A1, 'Εκθεσις επι της επιθέσεως κατά Ναούσης, 11 -16 Ιανουαρίου 1949' (Report on Naousa battle, 11-16 January 1949), vol. 12, keim.8, p. 94; GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, 'Εκθεσις για τη μάχη της Νάουσας και για τον ελιγμό, 28 Ιανουαρίου 1949' (Report on Naousa battle and manoeuvre, 28 January 1949), vol.12, keim. 8, p. 91.

⁵⁶ ASEA was the body to co-ordinate the Greek armed forces. For ASEA see also pp. 48, 66.

governmental assurances that the armed forces would be increased to 250,000 men.⁵⁷ Indeed the national forces including the Units of Pursuit Detachments (MAD), the Units of Rural Defence (MAY) and Units of National Guard Defence (MEA) increased throughout 1949 and reached an eventual total of 265,000 men. The tide of battle in the Greek civil war shifted dramatically in 1949 as a result of the enlargement of the National Army, modern and abundant equipment, new tactics and most notably the use of the air power. Papagos proved to be an efficient Commander-in-Chief but he was fortunate in having such supportive allies. The communists still committed to an aggressive strategy. Yet that strategy was one which the British and the Americans were well-equipped to meet.

At the Fifth Plenum of the KKE on 30 and 31 January 1949, Zahariadis had engineered the ousting of Marcos from his positions as Premier, Minister of War, and Commander of the Democratic Army.⁵⁸ Vice Premier Ioannidis took over as Premier of the Provisional Government. Zahariadis himself took over the direct command of military operations, in order to complete the conversion of the Democratic Army from a guerrilla army to a conventional force. By the spring of 1949 the Democratic Army had reached a strength of 100,000 men and women fighters, reserves and auxiliaries from abroad. Between 30 March and 5 April 1949, Zahariadis radically re-organised the Provisional Government to constitute a cabinet under his full control.⁵⁹ Zahariadis' strategic policy of sustained attacks against well-defended urban areas, along with a 'static defence' of the Grammos and Vitsi, concentrated the lightly armed Democratic

⁵⁷ FRUS (1949): 6, 246-49: Satterthwaite to Secretary of State, 8 February 1949; Wittner, *American Intervention*, p. 248; Jones, 'A New Kind of War', p. 196.

⁵⁸ Marcos, after being expelled from the party took refuge in the Soviet Union and did not return to Greece before 1982.

⁵⁹ Now that Marcos was put aside Zahariadis had no opposition in decision making in the Politburo. In January 1949, the KKE officially announced that it had sided with Moscow regarding Tito's quarrel with Stalin since June 1948, when Yugoslavia was expelled from Cominform. Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, pp. 334-35; Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 263.

Army and exposed it to the devastating effects of the National Army's superior numbers, artillery, and most of all aerial firepower.

In March 1949 the 8th Democratic Army division in Grammos managed to join up with the Democratic Army forces, which had escaped into the mountains after the Grammos battle (on 20 August 1948). During the winter of 1949 this force had created a new area of Communist control in the highest areas of the Mount Grammos. Its aim was to 're-capture Grammos area'. This area was Democratic Army's political and military base with natural barriers to protect the Democratic Army from the National Army. The bases in Mounts Grammos and Vitsi were also adjacent to the Albanian and Yugoslavian borders and housed reception and distribution points for supplies and equipment from the neighbouring Communist countries. The Yugoslav-Soviet split had decreased the amount of aid the Democratic Army received from Yugoslavia. On the other hand the DA had received a large quantity of Czechoslovakian and German spoils of the Second World War. Albania and Bulgaria continued to provide the Democratic Army with a wide range of support, including free transit across their borders, permission to manoeuvre on their territory, training bases, hospitals, recruiting areas, food, money, clothing, arms, ammunition and refuge for the families of the Democratic Army combatants.⁶⁰ It was from Albania that a Democratic Army division, newly equipped with modern Soviet-type automatic weapons, entered the Mount Grammos in the first days of April 1949 seizing and occupying peaks and passes.⁶¹

In late March 1949 General Van Fleet developed a campaign plan for 1949. Van Fleet's plan was to use some 50,000 National Defence Corps (*Ethnofroua*) men to free the National Army from its static defence obligations, to contain the Democratic Army in northern Greece, to conduct mobile operations with the bulk of the 147,000 men of

⁶⁰ Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου Πολέμου*, vol. 2, p. 481.

the National Army to attack the Democratic Army strongholds in Mounts Grammos and Vitsi and then to mop up the remaining communist troops throughout Greece.⁶² The British Military Mission opposed Van Fleet's south to north plan, citing the urgent necessity to first cut off the Democratic Army's supply lines with the neighbouring Communist states. Van Fleet, however, persuaded General Papagos and the Greek General Staff to follow his own plan.⁶³

In March 1949 the BMM re-assessed its role in Greece. General Down ordered that henceforth the British should not take on any operational role because the 'United States view tends to predominate'. Indeed Van Fleet preferred that the British should take 'take no active part in operations'. Nevertheless the BMM continued to offer advice to the Commandos at the Vouliagmeni Training Centre. There it stressed the need 'to patrol constantly in order to obtain information and security'. The British retained some influence in tactical training and planning. The advisers attached to the Greek Raiding Forces, which were incorporated into the Commandos, operated throughout 1949.⁶⁴ General Down noted that the Raiding Forces were 'the best troops for eliminating small groups of bandits [...] [by] continuous and relentless' pursuit operations.⁶⁵

Most of the aid that would enable the Greek armed forces to be expanded came from the United States. Yet Britain remained active in specific areas. Field Marshal Sir William Slim, who had succeeded Montgomery as Chief of the Imperial General Staff, pointed out after a visit to Greece that the 'bandit' problem was still a serious one and demanded a major commitment of air power. He proposed a further increase of the

⁶¹ GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, 8η μεραρχεία, 'Ιστορικών των τελευταίων μαχών του Γράμμου,' (8th division, 'the last battles of Grammos') vol. 13, keim. 16, p. 127; Zafeiropoulos, *The Anti-Bandit War-O Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών*, pp. 575-76.

⁶² Campbell, (et.all), *The Employment of Airpower*, p. 30.

⁶³ Abbott, *The Greek Civil War*, p. 34; Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, p. 235.

⁶⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/895, British and American views, 10 February 1949; FO 371/78481 R2657, Down in Peak Foreign Office note, 3 March 1949.

⁶⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 216/702, Field-Marshal Slim report, 18 March 1949; Jones, *The Development of British Counter-Insurgency Policies and Doctrine*, pp. 205-248; Jones, 'The

Royal Hellenic Air Force by two bomber and one reconnaissance squadron. On 24 March 1949 Slim told Bevin that if Greek air power was enhanced the Democratic Army would be defeated within the next 12 months.⁶⁶ Subsequently Norton was 'pleased to announce' to the Greek government that Britain would furnish the Royal Hellenic Air Force with 22 Spitfires which would arrive in Greece in June-July 1949 to cover the summer operations.⁶⁷ Yet even in this specialist field American influence was growing. United States Navy Helldiver bombers and large stores of napalm bombs were made available for the operations carried out in the summer of 1949.⁶⁸

One of the first successes enjoyed by the Papagos regime was the final operation to mop up Democratic Army forces in the Peloponnese. These were wiped out by Operation *Pigeon*. The National Army under Lieutenant General Tsakalotos had great superiority in numbers: a division, a brigade and thirteen battalions of light infantry: nearly 20,000 men, against the approximately 4,000 Democratic Army troops which remained in the region after the *Aftoamyna* (KKE self defence organisation) had been purged. Operation *Pigeon* began on 19 December 1948, before Papagos took over. It consisted of 11,000 men and several LOK units under Tsalakotos. The operation was divided into two phases. The first phase was to clear the northern part of the peninsula supported by a secondary effort to neutralise the Democratic Army troops from the south. The second phase was thorough sweep from north to south.⁶⁹

The Greek Navy secured the coasts of the Peloponnese, particularly along the Gulf of Corinth in the north, to prevent re-supply and escape by sea of the Democratic

British Army and Counter-Guerrilla Warfare in Transition, 1944-52', *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 7, no.3 (Winter 1996), 265-307.

⁶⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/78348 R3285, Slim-Report on the Situation in Greece, 18 March 1949. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 800/468/GRE/49/5, Greece, Bevin's report on meeting with Slim-CIGS on 24 March 1949.

⁶⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 800/468/GRE/49/7, Bevin to Attlee, 13 May 1949; FO 371/78339 R5579, Norton to Foreign Office, 2 June 1949.

⁶⁸ GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, Α Σώμα Στρατού/Α1, 'Εκθεσις επιχειρήσεως 'Πυρσός', 2-30 Αυγούστου 1949, (A' Army Corps, Report on Operation Torch, 2-30 August 1949), vol. 14, keim.35, pp. 414-15.

Army forces.⁷⁰ At the end of January 1949 the 22nd brigade of the Democratic Army and other units in the Ahaia and Hleia areas tried to counterattack the National Army. Gradually, however, the National Army proved stronger and more effective, causing the collapse of the enemy's activities. The Democratic Army was denied supplies, nursing care for the wounded and an intelligence network. At the same time the battles created a wave of unarmed communist migrants who tended to stick to the Democratic Army combat units for protection. The Democratic Army's flexibility and military performance was consequently undermined.⁷¹

In the seven weeks of Operation *Pigeon*, the Democratic Army combatants had 679 killed, 1,601 taken prisoner and 628 voluntarily surrendered, in addition to the complete destruction of *Aftoamyna* apparatus. The National Army reported 26 killed and 72 wounded from A Army Corps. Having attained his objectives Lieutenant General Tsakalotos left the mopping-up to mobile *Gendarmerie*, Detachment Units and groups of armed peasants under regular army officers.⁷² The communists were defeated both politically and militarily in the Peloponnese.

Having cleared the Peloponnese Lieutenant General Tsakalotos went to Roumeli to implement the 'south to north' plan. The campaign was to begin with mopping up operations in central Greece. Operation *Rocket* was launched on 25 April

⁶⁹ GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, A' Σώμα Στρατού/A1, 'Σχέδιον Επιχειρήσεων 'Περιστέρα', 14 Δεκεμβρίου 1948'(A' Army Corps, Operation Pigeon, 14 December 1948), vol. 11, p. 291.

⁷⁰ The role of the Royal Hellenic Navy (RHN) was not a dramatic one, for there was no actual battle at sea. On an average of four times a week, ships were called upon to deliver gunfire ashore to assist in the defence of a beleaguered coastal village or support with their presence an army unit operating near the coast. Its task was limited to patrolling the sea and the providing of sea transport for the movement of troops and supplies. Thus the navy denied the waters to DA defenders. The aim of sea patrolling was to prevent the communists from sea escape, reinforcement or re-occupation of seaside cleared areas and to secure the islands from potential attack. J. C. Murray, 'The Anti-Bandit War', in T. N. Greene (ed.), *The Guerrilla And How To Fight Him* (London, 1962), pp. 65-111.

⁷¹ The Greek Navy consisted of about 115 ships, three-quarters of which were on loan from Britain. There were 1 cruiser, 10 destroyers and 2 submarines. The Greek Navy lifted a complete infantry division, together with four LOK (Commando) units, from the mainland to the Peloponnese.

⁷² GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, A' Σώμα Στρατού, 'Εκθεσις επιχειρήσεως Αχελώου, 21-30 Μαρτίου 1949'(A Army Corps Report on Aheloos operations, 21-30 March 1949), vol. 13, p. 465; Tsakalotos, *Forty Years Soldier of Greece- Σαράντα Χρόνια Στρατιώτης της Ελλάδος*, vol. 2, p. 210; Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 261.

1949. 50,000 troops of the National Army descended upon Roumeli and Thessaly determined to drive the 12,000-strong Democratic Army northwards. Their tactics were to round up all suspected *Aftoamyna* personnel and other communist sympathisers in the area of operations. The government forces were formed into small groups in order to carry out a relentless pursuit of the communist army. Three months after the start of Operation *Rocket Tsakalotos*' forces had driven the Democratic Army troops north of the Aliakmon River. Central Greece, Thessaly and the southern area of Mount Pindus were all clear.⁷³

In mid-1949 Epirus became the main focus of the government forces. The major task of the National Army was to drive the Democratic Army from its bases in the Mounts Grammos and Vitsi. On 12 May 1949, Papagos initiated a new temporary command: the Headquarters of Epirus and Western Macedonia (SHDM) under direction of the General Army Inspector, Lieutenant General Ventiris.⁷⁴ The scheme united all government forces in an area dominated by the communists. SHDM, once reinforced from southern Greece, would have nearly 200,000 men under its control. The creation of the Headquarters of Epirus and Western Macedonia demonstrated the army's determination to improve its reputation after the lacklustre performance of previous years. The Headquarters of Epirus and Western Macedonia included B Army Corps, which was in charge of the Mount Vitsi area. In particular the heavily reinforced 8th division was responsible for Epirus. Political, military and intelligence units were incorporated to raise the strength of the division to some 30,000 men.⁷⁵

⁷³ Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, p. 338; E. Wainhouse, 'Guerrilla War in Greece, 1946-1949. A Case Study', in F. M. Osanka, (ed), *Modern Guerrilla Warfare: fighting communist guerrilla movements* (London, 1962), pp. 217-227.

⁷⁴ Lieutenant General Ventiris from Chief of the Greek General Staff since February 1947, became General Army Inspector in February 1948 and Commander of SHDM in May 1949. During 1948 Lieutenant General Giantzis became Chief of the Greek General Staff.

⁷⁵ GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, Αρχιστράτηγος Παπάγος, Διαταγή, Προσωρινή Συγκρότηση Διοικήσεως, 12 Μαΐου 1949 (Field Marshal Papagos, Command, Provisional Command Composition, 12 May 1949), vol.13, keim. 51, p. 358. The force of the National Army was so enlarged that a regular National Army infantry division had nine battalions and the 8th of the B Army Corps had twenty-one. On 24 June 1949,

In August 1949 the National Army launched Operation *Torch*. The plan of this operation was to drive the Democratic Army from its strongholds in Grammos and Vitsi on the Albanian-Yugoslav border. Torch A would attack the Democratic Army on Mount Grammos. Torch B would clear Mount Vitsi and finally Torch C would clear out the Grammos region.⁷⁶ By the beginning of August 1949 the Royal Hellenic Air Force had concentrated almost all of its effective units around the Grammos and Vitsi areas. The plan was first to bombard the Democratic Army's areas of control. The National Army would then follow up to pursue the communist troops. The power of the Royal Hellenic Air Force consisted of three squadrons of 54 English-made Spitfires XVI, three reconnaissance flights of twelve American Harvards, one transport squadron which comprised of eleven Dakotas, one flight assigned to artillery observation composed of ten old-fashioned aircraft and a bombardment flight which constituted three Dakotas.⁷⁷ The real advantage was the proximity of the airports to the battlefields. Most of the

Prime Minister Sofoulis died at the age of eighty-eight. Alexander Diomidis, ex-Governor of the Bank of Greece, formed another coalition government until new elections be held in early spring after the four year term of the current parliament was due to expire. This transition, however, did not affect the Army's operations.

⁷⁶ On 11 July 1949 Tito announced the closure of Yugoslav frontiers with Greece owing to the numerous violations and the many Yugoslavs who were being killed. However this was the result of Tito-Stalin break and Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Cominform by June 1948. On the role of Yugoslavia's cut of assisting the DAG, it has been supported that Tito had decided to reduce aid to the guerrillas as a result of Western diplomatic pressure and the possibility of Western economic aid. In N. Pappas, 'The Soviet-Yugoslav Conflict and the Greek Civil War', in W. S. Vucinich (ed.), *At the Brink of War and Peace: The Tito-Stalin Split in a Historic Perspective* (New York, 1982), pp. 224-225. E. Barker explains it as a result of the pro-Stalinist stance of the structure of the KKE. In Barker, 'The Yugoslavs and the Greek Civil War of 1946-49', in Baerentzen, Iatrides, Smith (eds), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War*, pp. 300-05. Another view suggests that Tito was unable to stop his country's aid to the Greek communists as soon as he wanted to because of protests from his Slavo-Macedonian communist supporters. In J. Pirjevec, 'The Tito-Stalin Split and the End of the Civil War in Greece', in Baerentzen (et al.), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War*, p. 316. The Communists named Tito 'traitor' for having withdrawn his support to the communist struggle. Zahariadis, *Ten Years of Struggle- Δέκα Χρόνια Πάλης*, p. 41. From the view point of the Right Zafeiropoulos agrees with the communist argument that the DA was totally 'dependent' on Yugoslavia. Zafeiropoulos, *Anti-Bandit War -Ο Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών*, p. 657.

O'Ballance notes that the closing of the Yugoslav-Greek frontier was a 'deadly' blow to the DA. In O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, p. 195. M. Mazower notes that it was the 'last straw'. In Mazower (ed.), *After the War Was Over*, p. 7. Indeed the Yugoslavian help had affected the final outcome, but not to a significant extent. By June 1949 the DAG had already been decisively defeated in the Peloponnese, an area with no direct connection and effect to Yugoslavia. On top of that the DA forces were better equipped than ever during the Grammos and Vitsi battles in August 1949. See Map D.6, p. 187.

⁷⁷ Spitfires XVI gradually replaced the IX model. This type of aircraft was totally upgraded since their 1940 ancestors and the Battle of England. They were equipped with strong engines of 1,700 horsepower,

aircraft were operated from Kozani, which was equi-distant to Vitsi and Grammos. The arrival of the American Helldivers improved bombing performance even further. During the first week of August the air force made widespread use of napalm.⁷⁸ The centrality of air support in counter-insurgency operations had become an established concept. The full realisation of this concept was made possible by American material support. The concept itself, however, was the fulfilment of the advice the British had given the Greeks about the use of air power since 1947.⁷⁹

Several key positions were taken and the Democratic Army's lines of communications into Albania were threatened as a result of the *Torch A* attack. The *Torch B* offensive started on 10 August 1949. The National Army managed to force the Provisional Government to abandon its capital at Pyxos (Epirus) and take refuge in Albania. Some 4,000 Democratic Army troops also crossed the border into Albania. Another thousand fled to Yugoslavia where they were disarmed and interned. For the National Army the battle was most successful: Mount Vitsi was cleared. Democratic Army casualties during Operation *Torch B* included 997 killed, 509 captured, and 133 surrendered, as well as twenty Albanian soldiers killed and seven captured. B Army Corps of the National Army lost 265 killed, 1377 wounded and 9 missing.⁸⁰ Even more

availability to transfer war-cargo, rockets, bombs, and after special alterations, under the aegis of JUSMAPG, to carry Napalm bombs. Zafeiropoulos, *Anti-Bandit War-O Αντισυμμοριακός Αγών*, p. 595.

⁷⁸ The first two of a large instalment of American Helldivers had arrived that month at Larissa, the newly established HQ Central Greece. The remainder of the aircraft-39 Helldivers and 10 additional surplus-were scheduled to arrive by carrier on 15 August 1949. T. Papathanasiades, 'The Bandits' Last Stand in Greece', *Military Review* 30, 11 (February 1951), 22-31.

⁷⁹ Campbell (et al.), *The Employment of Airpower*, pp. 31, 51-52; O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 196-99; Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, pp. 278-93; Jones, 'A New Kind of War', p. 218; Jones, *The development of British counterinsurgency policies and doctrine*, p. 242; GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, ΣΗΔΜ, 'Εκθεσις επι της αεροπορικής δράσεως κατά την επιχείρηση 'Πυρσός', 18 Αυγούστου 1949' (SHDM, Report on air force activities during Operation 'Torch', 18 August 1949) vol.14, keim.27, pp. 312-13.

⁸⁰ GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, Β Σώμα Στρατού Α1 Γραφείο, 'Εκθεσις επιχειρήσεως 'Πυρσός'. Απο 10-15 Αυγούστου 1949' (B Army Corps A1 Bureau, Report on Operation 'Torch', 10-15 August 1949), vol. 14, keim. 33, pp. 389-390; GES/DIS, *Archives-Aρχεία*, Ανωτέρα Διοίκησης Αεροπορείας, 'Εκθεσις 'Πυρσός', 10 Σεπτεμβρίου 1949' (Highest Air Command, Report on Operation Torch, 10 September 1949), vol.15, keim. 5, p. 147; Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 280; Jones, 'A New Kind of War', p. 218; Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, p. 239.

damaging than the casualties and the loss of territory for the Democratic Army was the loss of its equipment.

Torch C was the final offensive on Mount Grammos and started on 19 August. By the start of operations the Royal Hellenic Air Force had been reinforced by fifty-one Helldivers. The Democratic Army defenders numbered 7,000-8,000 combatants plus the remnants of those who had escaped from Vitsi. The National Army outnumbered the Democratic Army forces, however, by ten to one.⁸¹ On the night of 24-25 August the final assault on the Grammos area began with an artillery bombardment and attacks from rocket-firing Spitfires. The government army moved forward shielded by the Helldivers, which in the first twenty-four hours, dropped forty-eight tons of incendiary bombs on the Democratic Army's defences. Between 24 and 29 August the Royal Hellenic Air Force flew 826 sorties and delivered 250 tons of bombs, rockets and napalm. The accuracy of the bombing was more impressive than in any previous operation by the National Army.⁸²

The Democratic Army position on Mount Grammos itself fell on 27 August. On the following day the National Army sealed off the two main passes into Albania, *Stairs* and *Brooks*. The Democratic Army defenders finally abandoned Grammos entirely on 31 August. Their remnants retreated into Albania, Bulgaria, Rumania and Yugoslavia where they were subsequently disarmed and detained. The civil war was over. Contrary

⁸¹ Woodhouse claims forty-nine Helldivers. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, pp. 281-83; Margaritis, *History of the Greek Civil War-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου Πολέμου* vol.2, pp. 535-36.

⁸² The air force mobilised at Operation Torch C included: a. Kosani airport-almost 50 Spitfire XVI model combatant air craft (two squadrons), one flight pursuit of Spitfires IX model, one flight Dakota bombards (4 air craft), one flight Harvard, b. Larissa airport- one squadron bombard Helldivers (24 air craft), flight Dakota transport (4 air craft), c. Ioannina airport- one flight combatant Spitfire (6 air craft), d. Argos, Elefsina, Sedes, Orestiko, Airports various air support. GES/DIS, *Archives-Αρχεία*, Ανωτέρα Διοίκηση Αεροπορίας, 'Εκθεσις επιχειρήσεως 'Πυρσός', 10 Σεπτεμβρίου 1949' (High Air Command, Report on Operation Torch, 10 Sept. 1949), vol. 15, keim. 5, p. 152. On Tsarno attack: GES/DIS, *Archives-Αρχεία*, 1η Μεραρχία, 'Εκθεσις πεπραγμένων επι της επιχειρήσεως 'Πυρσός Γ' και πτώσεως του Γράμμου, 1η Μεραρχία' (I Division 'Report on Operation Torch C', Grammos collapse, I Division'), vol. 15, p. 48. GES/DIS, *Archives- Αρχεία*, Εκθεσις της αεροπορικής δράσεως κατά την επιχείρησην 'Πυρσός Γ', 2 Σεπτεμβρίου 1949', (Report of air force during Operation Torch C', 2 September 1949), vol.15, keim. (text) 36, pp. 473-74.

to the boast made by the KKE Politburo that 'Grammos will be the tomb of monarcho-fascism' the *Torch C* operation proved to be the epitaph of the Democratic Army.⁸³

On 16 October 1949 Radio Free Greece announced:

The Greek Provisional Government is ceasing hostilities to prevent the total destruction of Greece. The Democratic Army has not laid its weapons aside, but has suspended its operations for the time being. This should not be taken to mean that the Greeks are giving up the struggle for the rights of the people. The Anglo-American Imperialists and their monarcho-fascist agents would be mistaken if they assumed that the struggle was over and that the Democratic Army had ceased to exist.⁸⁴

Notwithstanding this empty Communist bluster, on 27 October 1949, the Labour government announced that the British army would withdraw from Greece because the civil war had come to an end.⁸⁵ On 7 November, the Intelligence Division of the American Army General Staff issued an estimate of the situation in Greece declaring that the Greek government was 'able to control' any 'guerrilla' threat.⁸⁶ In the same month President Truman announced to Congress victory in Greece. All sides agreed that the Greek civil war was over.

The National Army had suffered about 13,000 casualties, either dead or missing, and over 26,000 wounded. Approximately 38,000 communists were dead and over twice that many wounded. In addition a mixture of mines and massacres, by both sides, had killed some 80,000 civilians. Almost 40,000 leftists were in detention. Over 5,000 had received death or life sentences. On top of that, large numbers of Greeks had been displaced and were homeless. Almost 10 per cent of the population had taken refuge in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Albania and the Soviet Union. If one considers that the National Army had lost 37,000 men in the Asia Minor Expedition, 8,000 in the Balkan Wars and

⁸³ Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 283. Cold War exaggeration did not cease to exist for the American Ambassador in Moscow, Alan G. Kirk insisted that the cease-fire was 'a Soviet tactical lull' and thus the Americans should push the rehabilitation of Greece. Jones, *A New Kind of War*, p. 220.

⁸⁴ Eudes, *The Kapetanios*, p. 354.

⁸⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 128/16/CM 62(49), 27 October 1949.

⁸⁶ Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, p. 241.

15,000 during the Second World War then the civil war was the most costly struggle of twentieth century Greece. There is little wonder that it cast a long shadow over Greece's post-war political development.⁸⁷

The manner and nature of this victory was pregnant with future importance. The explanation for the success of the National Army forces has long been the subject of debate. Some observers tied the victory to the Stalin-Tito split. According to this argument the crucial ingredient was the shift in Balkan alignments that ultimately forced Yugoslavia to withdraw support from the Democratic Army combatants.⁸⁸ There can be little doubt that this created problems to the KKE troops. Yet the remainder of the Communists' Balkan allies remained steadfast. The Democratic Army was able to fight a very tough war after the closing of the Yugoslav border. The KKE's change in tactics from guerrilla to conventional warfare has been emphasised by numerous writers.⁸⁹ The conventional tactics used in Konitsa and Naousa cost the KKE popular support. The most important single factor in the defeat of the Democratic Army, however, was the improvement in the morale, discipline, combat-worthiness and equipment of the National Army. In the final Grammos and Vitsi operations the government forces fully exploited their material and manpower advantages. America's Cold War strategy and massive American economic and military aid to Greece all played an outstanding role in this transformation. Victory without American support is almost impossible to imagine.⁹⁰ However, the presence of British troops, training personnel and advisers

⁸⁷ Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*, p. 164; A. Laiou, 'Population Transition during the Civil War', in Baerentzen et al (eds.), *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War 1945-1949*, pp. 55-105. Logistics and numbers are usually an unreliable source. The history of the KKE notes that the NA had 15,969 killed, 37,557 wounded, 2,001 missing; in total 55,527 men. The Democratic Army lost approximately 30,000 lives. The civilians were: 154,000 killed, 800,000 homeless, 24,626 totally destroyed houses. *History of the KKE-Δοκίμιο Ιστορίας του ΚΚΕ*, p. 619.

⁸⁸ O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War*, pp. 195; McNeill, *Greece*, p. 42.

⁸⁹ Kousoulas defines Zahariadis' decision for conventional warfare the 'most basic error' made in the war, in Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, p. 271; Wittner, *American Intervention*, p. 253.

⁹⁰ Indeed, by the end of 1949, the American military programme had channelled \$353.6 million worth of military aid, including hundreds of war equipment, warplanes and ships, 4,130 mortar and artillery pieces,

played a vital role as well. Some commentators have, rightly, drawn attention to the contribution made by the RHAF, an organisation tied particularly closely to its British patrons.⁹¹ Without the British and the Americans the Greek forces would have been quite unable to encompass the 'continuous, relentless' pursuit of the Communists so as to 'exhaust them and to force them to disintegrate' that Papagos identified as lying at the heart of victory.⁹²

Although the Communists had been defeated the Greek state had been hollowed out. The British and the Americans had repeatedly committed themselves and attempted to aid moderate governments of the Centre. Yet this commitment had been just as often undermined by the egregious behaviour of centrist politicians. They had squabbled and intrigued in Athens whilst the war was won by their American-supplied and Anglo-American trained army in the rest of the country. The British and the Americans did all they could to retain civil control and democratic norms. It was inevitable, however, that the prestige of the army should rise, both in its own eyes and those of others, as the reputation of politicians waned. The British government hoped to disengage gently from Greece offering encouragement from the sidelines as the Greek body politic

89,438 bombs and rockets, 159,922 small weapons, 7,7 million artillery and mortar rounds, and 344 million small arms rounds. Wittner, *American Intervention*, p. 253; Jones, 'A New Kind of War', p. 197.

⁹¹ See: Campbell (et. al), *The Employment of Airpower*.

⁹² The importance of Papagos as the central constant in the defeat of the KKE is emphasised at Papagos, 'Guerrilla Warfare', in Osanka, (ed), *Modern Guerrilla Warfare*, pp. 228-242. Matthews also stresses Papagos' Command in Matthews, *Memories of a Mountain War*, pp. 261-63; Woodhouse is not enthusiastic about Papagos' contribution. He notes that the Greeks 'had won the war' before he took command and before the deployment of Napalm bombs, which arrived in Greece too late. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 276.

reconstructed itself. Yet the morbidity of Greek politics drew the British in once more as, having won the war for the Greeks, they attempted to win the peace as well.

IV Post-Civil War Politics, the Korean War and NATO Security Considerations: 1950

The Period of Unstable Coalitions

The end of the Greek civil war did not bring stability to Greece. As Sir Clifford Norton, the British Ambassador in Athens, put it at the end of 1950: 'if 1949 was the year of victory over the communist rebels, 1950 may well be labelled the year of hope deferred, so far as political stability and economic progress are concerned.'¹ The struggle between the communists and the non-communists was replaced by competition between liberals and conservatives and rivalry amongst politicians of the Centre. The result was the collapse of successive governments. The failure of the political parties to create stable alliances meant that six different coalition governments were formed during 1950 alone. Historians have placed the blame for this instability in various places. Some highlight the role of the Palace in political intrigues. Others see Greece as a penetrated political society. Constant meddling by foreign powers lie, for them, at the root of the problem. The aftermath of the civil war is also seen as important: for the Left the harsh treatment of the defeated Communists – who still commanded considerable popular support – poisoned the body politic by encouraging the growth of an anti-democratic police state. Historians of the Right regard the leniency shown to the Communists as a destabilising influence on politics. A close study of Greek politics in the immediate post-civil war period confirms that all these factors had a part to play. More immediately, however, such a study reveals that the Greek situation can be 'over ideologised'. One is struck by the fact that the most obvious and recurrent problem was the overweening ambition of the leading Greek politicians. It was not ideology but a lust for place and power that constantly destabilised the political situation. There were no

¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 95106, Annual Review for 1950, Norton to Bevin,

Greek political leaders who might be described as statesmen. None had a vision that stretched beyond the next deal or cabinet reshuffle. The Greek electoral system had been designed to allow these pygmies to ply their trade.²

On 6 January 1950, John Theotokis, a former leading Populist, ex-Speaker of the House and King Paul's confidant, was appointed Prime Minister of a caretaker government.³ A debate arose over the electoral system under which the elections would be held. King Paul proposed a 'photographic system' based on the majority principle. There would be a separate ballot for each candidate with his photograph printed on it. This system would strengthen personalities, weaken parties and enable the King to dominate the cabinet. For that reason, of course, the parties rejected this system. They threatened to boycott the election unless it was held according to the existing system of proportional representation.⁴

Norton would not support King Paul's plans. He reported to the Foreign Office his belief that King Paul was trying to impose a political system based around personalities that the King could dominate. Norton foresaw further political upheavals if the King continued to demand the creation of a new electoral system. Norton did not merely report his views to London; he told Paul quite bluntly that the foreign allies

13 January 1951.

² Respectively in Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*; E. Nikolakopoulos, *Parties and Parliamentary Elections-Κόμματα και Βουλευτικές*; P. Paraskevoudopoulos, *Liberal Openings-Φιλελεύθερα Ανοίγματα* (Athens, 1987); S. Linardatos, *From Civil War to Hounta -Απο τον Εμφύλιο στη Χούντα* (Athens, 1977). Thereafter cited as *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*. See also Appendix C, p. 185.

³ Following Sofoulis' death on 24 June 1949, Alexandros Diomidis, Vice-President of Sofoulis government, ex-Governor of Bank of Greece, formed a coalition government with conservative Konstantine Tsaldaris and liberal Sofocles Venizelos as Deputy Premiers. The coalition increasingly suffered from the rivalries between these dominant partners from opposing parties. The four years after the last elections of March 1946 were about to come to an end and elections would be held in spring 1950. On 5 January 1950, Venizelos and his liberal ministers resigned from the coalition to push for early elections before republican General Plastiras returned from Paris and organised his own political party of the Centre, which would threaten the Liberals' unity and strength. Consequently, the coalition dissolved and Diomidis on 5 January 1950 also submitted the King his own resignation. On 14 January 1950, Plastiras and Tsouderos founded EPEK (National Progressive Union of the Centre). Papandreou renamed his 'Democratic Socialist' into 'Party G. Papandreou'.

⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87660, R 10110/12, Norton to Foreign Office, 9 January 1950; *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 173.

would not support his political gambit.⁵ Without the support of Britain and America King Paul had little chance of imposing a new electoral system in the face of the furious opposition of the political parties. He had little choice but to withdraw his constitutional reforms. The existing system of proportional representation would, therefore, be applied in any future election.⁶

The organisation of the state was still dominated by the system that had been created during the civil war. The anti-Communist Resolution 'C' of 1946 – under which any political activity endangering the 'security of the state' was penalised was still active. The Emergency Law 509 of 1947 banned any Communist activity. Special court-martials existed with the jurisdiction to deal with crimes against the state. Directives introduced since 1947 restricted basic civil rights such as freedom of the press. The creation of a truly democratic state faced, therefore, major obstacles. The *Gendarmerie* and the various units of armed civilians created during the civil war for counter-insurgency operations still dominated the countryside. There were also several thousand political prisoners held without trial in concentration camps.⁷ Most of the country was still governed under the martial law, which had been introduced in November 1948.⁸

British and American officials stationed in Greece regarded political repression in Greece to be excessive. Given that the civil war was over, they believed that the continuation of these punitive anti-Communist policies undermined democracy and prevented normalisation. The allies' representatives continuously expressed the view that the Theotokis government and the Greek military leadership constituted an obstacle

⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87660 R10110/4, Norton to Foreign Office, 6 January 1950. This is one of the cases that illustrated that the Foreign Office did not follow a particular policy to back the Palace unconditionally, as often supported. On that see: Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, p. 298. The broader spectrum of the cases of Iraq and Egypt as well as the microworld of Greek politics demonstrated that there was not consolidated British policy to support kingship. W.R. Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East 1945-1951* (London, 1988), pp. 263, 694-699. Occasionally, the Foreign Office put aside the power of the King if this did not promote British policy.

⁶ On Greek internal situation and elections Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 72, 87.

⁷ Alivizatos, 'The Emergency Regime and Civil Liberties' in Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s*, pp. 223-8.

to Greece's return to a normal, stable and unified political life.⁹ As a result of Anglo-American pressure martial law was lifted on 11 February 1950. Restrictions on travel were removed in most parts of the country. Resolution 'C' was also abolished. However, Emergency Law 509 remained intact. The military tribunals also remained in operation.¹⁰

New political forces emerged for the forthcoming election. On the Right the Populist Party faced a challenge from a new right-wing formation, the Independent Political Camp (PAP), which was led by former collaborators of the dictator Metaxas. The National Unity Party of Kanellopoulos also challenged moderate conservatives. The Liberal Party of Venizelos in the Centre was reinforced by the adherence of the National Liberals of General Stylianos Gonatas, who, in the 1946 electoral campaign had co-operated with the Populists. Tsouderos' Democratic Progressive Party and George Papandreou's Party also competed for the traditional Liberal vote. Another new political force was EPEK – the National Progressive Union of the Centre led by General Plastiras. Plastiras' republicanism had endeared him to the greater part of the republican and left-wing supporters of Eleftherios Venizelos, particularly the refugees from Asia Minor.¹¹ EPEK would form a join coalition of the Centre together with the parties of Tsouderos and Papandreou. The Left was represented in the election by an alliance of the various leftist groups: the Union of Democratic Leftists, the Socialist Party, the Leftist Liberals and the Politically Independent Camp. All favoured amnesty for

⁸ *To Vima*, 28 January 1950.

⁹ FRUS (1949): 6, 465: Minor (Chargé at the Embassy in Greece) to Acheson, 16 December 1949.

¹⁰ Nikolakopoulos, *Parties and Parliamentary Elections-Κόμματα και Βουλευτικές Εκλογές*, pp. 157-8. Resolution 'C' of June 1946 introduced a series of new crimes and reinforced the powers of the executive for the persecution of the Left. Emergency Law 509 of December 1947, outlawed the KKE and the organisations that were under its influence and penalised any type of communist activity.

¹¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87668 R 10113/15, Norton to Rumbold, 12 May 1950. EPEK's drawback was that it suffered the enmity of the Palace, because Plastiras had been instrumental in the ousting of two kings, Paul's father, Konstantine I in 1922 and Konstantine's I son George II in 1924.

communists and abolition of restrictive measures.¹²

Although this plenitude of parties created an apparently divergent political spectrum, in reality there were no substantial differences on either domestic or foreign policy issues. All the parties supported Greece's determination to side with the West and contain Communism with British and American backing. In terms of political programmes, they all supported a fairer distribution of wealth and claimed to have a special interest in the welfare of the rural class.¹³ As Norton noted wearily these political forces afforded little hope for change.¹⁴

The elections were held on 5 March 1950. No less than twenty-nine parties and alliances contested 250 seats under a system of proportional representation.¹⁵ The election left the Populists with 62 seats, the Liberals with 56 seats, EPEK with 45 seats and Papandreou with 35 seats, as the strongest parties.¹⁶ No party was powerful to form even a minority government strong enough to resist probable post-election alliances. Thus a one-party government could not be formed. The formation of a coalition was, therefore, inevitable. The combined vote of the three Centre parties of Venizelos, Plastiras and Papandreou taken together gave them the majority of the seats – 136 out of 250. As a result the three men agreed to set aside their differences and form a centrist coalition. Plastiras would take over premiership as the 'newest' and most appealing liberal politician in the Parliament. The aim of Plastiras coalition would be to displace the Populists. As a result Norton concluded that General Plastiras was 'the moral victor in the election'.¹⁷

King Paul, however, was reluctant to offer Plastiras the Prime Minister's chair

¹² Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 83-84; Charises, *Elections-Eκλογές*, p. 230.

¹³ *The Times*, 4 March 1950.

¹⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87661 R 10110/ 25, Norton to Foreign Office, 16 February 1950.

¹⁵ Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece*, pp. 22-24.

¹⁶ For an account of the election results see: Nikolakopoulos, *Parties and Parliamentary Elections-Κόμματα και Βουλευτικές Εκλογές*, pp. 394-5; Clogg, *Parties and Elections*, pp. 22-26.

due to his anti-royalist past.¹⁸ It was not just Plastiras' past that worried the King. As premier Plastiras would threaten the rule of the Army. Not only the Palace but its main ally, the national forces and Field Marshal Papagos, would be put under the command of the government, turning the royal order upside down. Inevitably King Paul disliked the idea of risking his own status and power by swearing in Plastiras as Prime Minister. As a result of the King's disapproval, there was a delay in forming a cabinet.

Clifford Norton 'did not entirely trust Plastiras' entourage' because it was dominated by leftists. Nevertheless, he believed that a Plastiras-Venizelos coalition government would correspond to the 'will of the people'. A government aligned with popular sentiment as expressed through the ballot box offered the best chance of enduring peace and stability. The Foreign Office instructed Norton to try to improve King Paul's poor relations with General Plastiras. The British Ambassador in his turn advised King Paul that Plastiras' coalition government would constitute the 'best solution'.¹⁹ The British embassy calculated that EPEK's leniency programme directed at the Communists might help to bring the stability necessary to normalise the situation in Greece. Britain was still interested in securing a democratic government politically acceptable to the Greek people as well as in keeping Greece under the western umbrella.²⁰

Attempts to coax King Paul to accept the 'moral' outcome of the election were, however, derailed almost as soon as they had begun. Venizelos betrayed his allies Plastiras and Papandreou by conniving with the Palace. He accepted the King's mandate to form a government himself. He was hastily sworn in as prime minister before he had

¹⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87661 R 10110/33, Norton to Bevin, 10 March 1950.

¹⁸ Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 97-8. See footnote 11.

¹⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87661 R10110/ 33, Norton to Bevin, 10 March 1950; FO 371/ 87661 R10110/40, Norton to Rumbold, 9 March 1950.

²⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87662 R 10110/46, Norton to Foreign Office, 16 March 1950. Grady replaced Mac Veagh in July 1948.

even had the chance to produce a full list of ministers. The public justification of this manoeuvre of creating a 'cabinet of the King's mandate' was that the Liberal Party was the strongest party at the election. The turn to Venizelos was, however, a risky one. Without EPEKs and Papandreou's support the cabinet would have little chance of survival.²¹

Not only did the British and Americans deprecate the formation of the Venizelos *ad hoc* minority government but it was assailed from all corners of the Greek political world. The papers of the Centre and Centre-left in Greece – *To Vima* and *Ta Nea* – denounced it for frustrating the freely expressed will of the people. They found it troubling that the Premier would have to rely upon the support of conservatives. The Populist leader, Tsaldaris, announced the 'unconditional' support of his party for any cabinet that would prevent Plastiras and Papandreou from taking over. EPEK had emerged as Tsaldaris' main political rival during the elections.²² Papandreou condemned Venizelos. Prominent members of the Liberal Party declined to accept posts in the new cabinet on the grounds that this government was an attempt by the Palace and the Right to weaken and divide the Liberal world.²³

The British and American Ambassadors were as one in their aim of establishing a stable cabinet. The British Ambassador stressed the danger that the new government would provoke the 'bitter enmity of the Right' as well as dividing the Centre. Nevertheless, he made clear to King Paul and Queen Frederica that, despite his objections, he did not intend to interfere in the Greek internal political affairs, let alone

²¹ FRUS (1950): 5, 351-52: Minor to Acheson, 23 March 1950. In this light, the theory that the Palace acted arbitrarily was justified. For such views see Linadratos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 84-87, 146-147. American Ambassador Grady was absent to the United States.

²² FRUS (1950): 5, 346: Grady to Acheson, 15 March 1950. This is one of the few cases that the whole political world agreed upon an issue, as a result of personal, political ambitions.

²³ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87662 R10110/62, Commonwealth Relations Office, 29 March 1950.

prevent the government from taking over.²⁴ The British thought that the Venizelos experiment was misconceived but did not think it in their interest to constantly interfere in Greek politics. The Americans were, however, much less diplomatic. They started to mutter darkly that instability and autocracy would put at risk the chances of future American aid.²⁵

Indeed both the British and the Americans had every intention of drawing down their aid, whatever the twists and turns of Greek politics. The end of the civil war and the consequent surrender of the Democratic Army forces confirmed the supremacy of the National Army and its allies. The national forces had not only proved themselves competent in defeating the insurgents but had also emerged as an effective and technologically advanced army. Both the British and the Americans believed that a smaller National Army was desirable once the emergency was over. As early as 23 October 1949, when the tide of the combat shifted in favour of the National Army, the Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group proposed a reduction of the Greek military and security forces from 250,000 to 123,000 by the end of 1950.²⁶

At the same time JUSMAPG also proposed that its own size should also be reduced.²⁷ On 6 March 1950, the Under-Secretary of State, James Webb, proposed to the Executive Secretary of National Security Council, James Lay, the reduction of American aid to Greece. JUSMAPG would be reduced from 274 advisers in August 1949 to 128 by the end of 1950. Indicative of American perceptions was that in June 1950 the Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group in Greece became Joint United States Military Aid Group in Greece, eliminating the advisory and planning

²⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87662 R 10110/46, Norton to Rumbold, 23 March 1950. This is one of the cases that illustrated that the Foreign Office did not support the Greek Palace unconditionally. Similarly there was no particular policy to assist the policies of the Crown.

²⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87663 R10110/72, Chancery to the Southern Department-Foreign Office, 3 April 1950.

²⁶ FRUS (1950): 6, 440-442: Grady to Diomidis, 23 October 1949.

²⁷ Records of the JCS, Part 2, Strategic Issues, Section 1, US Military Assistance, Reel II, Frame 0321,

nature of the mission. The lower ranking Major General Reuben Jenkins replaced Lieutenant General James Van Fleet on 30 June 1950.²⁸

This policy was mirrored by Britain. In November 1949 the Chiefs of Staff approved the withdrawal of the last British brigade from Greece. The last battalion was departed from Salonika in February 1950.²⁹ The four British Military Missions remained in Greece, however. On 20 January 1950, the Chiefs of Staff noted that the British Naval, Military, Air Force and Police Missions in Greece were still engaged in training and organising the Greek armed and Police forces.³⁰ On 24 January 1950, a common proposal drawn up by the Chiefs of Staff in London and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington suggested that the British Military Mission should be reduced in parallel.³¹ As a result, on 3 March 1950, the strength of the British Military Mission was reduced from 200 to 60 relatively high-ranking officers.³²

The newly-formed Venizelos government's most immediate problem was not, however, the chilly attitude of Greece's allies. Rather it was the split of the Centre that it itself had created. Prime Minister Venizelos asked the prominent leaders of the Centre parties of Papandreou and of Plastiras to join his cabinet. Papandreou refused and told Venizelos to resign. Plastiras was unwilling to offer succour to his treacherous rival, Venizelos. On the other hand Kanellopoulos, the Deputy Premier and Minister of Defence, himself resigned because he was offended that a deal of any kind had been

1801/27, Memo by the COS, US Army for JCS, 3 February 1950.

²⁸ FRUS (1950): 5, 410-411: NSC 42/1 Paper, 19 September 1950; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101818 R1192/23, History of the British Military Mission to Greece.

²⁹ Records of the JCS, Part 2, Strategic Issues: Section 1, Reel II, Frame 0267, 1801/27, Memo by the COS, US Army for JCS, 16 November 1949; Records of the JCS, Part 2, Strategic Issues: Section 1, Reel II, Frame 0321, 3 February 1950. Vlavianos, *Greece, 1941-1949*, p. 236. Stefanidis, *Britain, the United States and Greece*, p. 58.

³⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO/37187755 R 1202, from the Ministry of Defence to the Chiefs of Staff, 20 January 1950.

³¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 21/1966, Telegram from Washington to Ministry of Defence in London, 24 January 1950; Records of the JCS, Part 2, Strategic Issues: Section 1, Reel II, Frame 0321, 1801/27, Memorandum by the COS to the JCS, 3 February 1950.

³² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/908, Report by Major General Packard C. D., BMM Athens, 3 March 1950.

offered to the republican Plastiras. On 14 April 1950, having failed to garner any worthwhile support, the Venizelos government resigned.³³ Contrary to the view expressed by some historians it was not the Americans who were to blame for the collapse of the Venizelos cabinet. It was other domestic political leaders who crushed Venizelos. As Ambassador Grady noted the resignation of Venizelos' government was due to 'its innate weakness primarily and to likelihood that it would not get from parliament a vote of confidence'.³⁴ King Paul was left with no alternative but to offer the loathed republican Plastiras the mandate. A new coalition of the Centre was sworn in on 15 April 1950.

The Plastiras administration was based on another broad coalition. Despite his treachery Venizelos was offered the posts of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in an attempt to appease the Palace. He declined Plastiras' offer, however, and the posts remained vacant for the rest of Plastiras' short premiership. The Populists too were excluded from this formation. Field Marshal Papagos told both Norton and Grady that he would accept the Plastiras government as a 'necessary stage' in Greece's political evolution. However, he would immediately resign from the position of the Commander-in-Chief if the Plastiras administration attempted to curtail his powers and put the army under the authority of the government. Papagos was still in absolute control of the armed forces, which had been entrusted to him at the climax of the civil war.³⁵

³³ Stefanidis noted that Venizelos' resignation came as a result of American intervention, discontent over his economic policy and determination to impose a government of the Centre. Stefanidis, *The United States, Great Britain and Greece*, p. 139. Linardatos as well, believes that the government was brought down because of Grady's intervention against the Venizelos' political measures. Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 104-107. The foreign factor was decisive. However, the Greek politicians themselves proved unable to sustain their government. It was not foreign pressure that brought down the Venizelos government, because Venizelos would form another three different cabinets in the months to come.

³⁴ FRUS (1950): 5, 364-365: Grady to Acheson, 17 April 1950. Grady had anyway not exceeded the State Department's policy of technical 'non-interference' in Greek internal political affairs, though did not go to the limit of this direction either.

³⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87663 R10110/93, Norton to Rumbold, 28 April

Plastiras himself had no intention of deviating from a pro-Western line. Contrary to popular belief Plastiras was not a left-wing politician: he devoted to maintaining the alliance with the western powers. In the case of Britain this was best illustrated by his attitude to the Cyprus question. By spring 1950 agitation among the Greek public over the question of *Enosis* with Cyprus was strong enough to seriously concern British observers.³⁶ Yet Plastiras declined to endorse the Greek-Cypriot demands for support of their struggle on the grounds that the time was inopportune for raising the question. His government was anxious not to strain Anglo-Greek relations and the British would not depart from the view that the question of sovereignty over Cyprus was closed for the foreseeable future.³⁷

Despite its pragmatic approach to international relations the Plastiras coalition enjoyed neither unity nor stability. Very soon disputes arose over programmes in favour of the communists. Plastiras was not a hard-core left-wing politician. He was trying, however, to bring society into a balance.³⁸ In June 1950 Plastiras' government passed five 'leniency' bills and was about to close the concentration camps.³⁹ With the outbreak

1950.

³⁶ On 15 January 1950, an unofficial plebiscite among the Greek-Cypriot population of the island was held in Cyprus and resulted in a 96 per cent vote in favour of *Enosis*. This further alarmed the British about Greek foreign policy.

³⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87722 R1081/169, Report in 'Activities of the Cypriot Delegation to Greece', 8 August 1950. Plastiras' pro-western foreign policy contradicts historians who support that the General was a left-wing politician as considered in: Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*. In practise there was no difference between conservatives and liberals in Greece towards foreign policy issues. Field Marshal Papagos who supported agitation strengthened *Enosis* sentiments. According to General Grivas, leader of EOKA pro-*Enosis* and anti-British organisation, General George Kosmas, the Chief of General Staff in Cyprus was in the confidence of Marshal Papagos and hoped to win official backing for the *Enosis* plans. However for the time being Papagos noted that the Cypriot liberation campaign was 'premature' and at this moment he would do nothing to risk exposure as a revolutionary plotting against Great Britain. Ch. Foley (ed.), *The Memoirs of General Grivas* (London, 1964), p.13.

³⁸ Around 13,000 detainees were in exile (Makronisos island), around 17,000 sentenced and 2,289 sentenced to death for political reasons, and 5,500 pending trial. *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 173.

³⁹ In July 1950 the initiatives of the Premier Plastiras to release ailing detainees caused great opposition to the government. Vice-President Papandreou and some liberals accused Plastiras of being too tolerant with the communists. The Premier announced that he was obsessed with reconciliation. Failing to succeed he would resign. Venizelos as well turned against Plastiras with the aim to overthrow the government. Linardatos suggested that Plastiras government was brought down because the Palace and the Americans disliked 'communist' Plastiras. Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 140-141.

of the hostilities in Korea at the end of June, however, anti-Communist hysteria grew and it became more difficult to make a case for national reconciliation measures. Pressure on the Greek cabinet by the Greek moderate parties to abandon measures of leniency increased.⁴⁰ In August the Liberal Party ministers resigned from the Plastiras coalition supposedly over the issue of leniency measures. This, however, was only the official excuse. The real reason was that Venizelos' party was offered more posts in a new Liberal government by the King. Anti-Communist rhetoric was merely a cover for the personal ambition of Venizelos and the Liberals. General Plastiras submitted his resignation on 18 August 1950 after 125 days as prime minister. The withdrawal of the Liberal Party's support from the coalition brought the third governmental collapse in the first eight months of 1950.⁴¹ The Foreign Office was under no illusions as to the real driving force – personal ambition – that dominated Greek politics. The new royal plans did not enjoy the approval, let alone the consent, of the British government. Norton once again tried to discourage King Paul and the royal establishment from undermining stability in Greece.⁴²

The Venizelos Governments: A Marginal Stability

King Paul entrusted the mandate for the formation of a new government of 'national unity' to Sofocles Venizelos who was sworn in on 21 August 1950. A new coalition based on the Liberals, the second strongest party, was formed. The King wanted this coalition to include the Populists. Venizelos, however, proposed an alliance with the moderate politicians Papandreou and Tsouderos, hoping that they would both support him and form a purely Centre coalition. Tsouderos, however, refused to betray

⁴⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87664 R10110/101, Norton to Younger, 7 July 1950.

⁴¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87664 R10110/125, Norton to Atlee, 22 August 1950; Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 143-147.

⁴² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87701 R1054/3, Conversations between Ernest Davies and King and Queen of Greece and Field Marshal Papagos, 14, 17 July 1950. Dafnis, *The Greek*

his electoral ally Plastiras. The Democratic Progressive Party and EPEK deputies decided not to give a vote of confidence to the Venizelos government. The Populists refused to tolerate an administration in which they themselves were not strongly represented. On its own Papandreou's support was not enough to give the government the necessary majority in Parliament. Consequently, Venizelos failed to receive his vote of confidence. He was forced to submit his resignation. His suggested solution to the impasse was the holding of fresh elections under the majority system.⁴³ The failure of the Venizelos government to receive a vote of confidence signified a new period of political unrest and re-ignited calls to set up a single strong party that could command a stable majority in Parliament.

King Paul, in particular, had a preferred solution to the power vacuum created by party infighting. He wanted his confidant Papagos to assume power. The combination of royal and military power would, in the King's opinion, not only guarantee political stability but also the safety of the monarchy. Yet Papagos, royalist though he was, was far from being a royal poodle. In August 1950 Papagos and King Paul seriously discussed the creation of a royal-military government. Their negotiations, however, did not, at this stage, reach fruition. Indeed they ended in deadlock. Papagos demanded an unconditional Premiership – untrammelled control wielded in the royal interest but not by the Palace. Naturally enough King Paul shield away from the possibility that he would become a powerless figurehead in a regime in which the real leader was a military dictator. His thoughts started to turn instead to the creation of a government that was devoted to the Court. The Army was to be the bulwark of royal power rather than a

Political Parties-Τα Ελληνικά Πολιτικά Κόμματα, p. 470.

⁴³ Venizelos' Liberal Party received 106 votes for and 124 against. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87664 R 10110/15, Norton to Rumbold, 6 August 1950; *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol.16, p. 175; Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, p. 360. The majority system would restrict participation in parliament to the parties with the largest share of votes and offer the first party massive parliamentary majority.

threat to it.⁴⁴

Neither the Papagos solution nor a royal puppet government attracted much support from Britain. As usual the British wanted an efficient and sustainable government to take over. The Head of the Southern Department, Sir Anthony Rumbold, described Papagos' entry into politics as the last card to be played. Papagos acted as a guarantor against the recrudescence of Communist power. His intervention in politics at a time of anything other than acute crisis was, however more likely to further increase rather than suppress long-term instability. British interest in the developments in Greece was expressed in discussions between the Foreign Office and State Department officials in September 1950. Ernest Davies and the American Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East, South Asia and Africa, George McGhee, discussed a closer co-ordination of British and American efforts to support political stability in Greece. Both decided that a joint Anglo-American front was needed to prevent King Paul from arbitrary attempts to impose his own ideas and solutions to the political instability.⁴⁵

With spectre of the 'Papagos solution' hanging over him Venizelos renewed his efforts to form a new coalition. The Populists would be included.⁴⁶ On 13 September 1950, the fifth cabinet of 1950, a tripartite coalition administration, was sworn in, headed again by Venizelos. Papandreou and Tsaldaris were appointed Deputy Premiers.⁴⁷ This tripartite coalition proved a difficult test of the cohesion of not only the

⁴⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87663 R10110/93, Norton to Rumbold, 28 April 1950; Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 147-150. Papagos' determination to form the cabinet he would have liked is also justified in Dafnis, *The Greek Political Parties-Ta Ελληνικά Πολιτικά Κόμματα*, pp. 474-475.

⁴⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87664 R10110/118, Norton to Rumbold, 8 September 1950; FO 371/87665, R 10110/ 125, Rumbold to Norton, 9 October 1950. Giannouloupoulos supports that the Americans supports Papagos' solution on the grounds that he would form a strong government; in Giannouloupoulos, *Post-War World-Ο Μεταπολεμικός Κόσμος*, p. 289. Dafnis, *The Greek Political Parties-Ta Ελληνικά Πολιτικά Κόμματα*, pp. 474-475.

⁴⁶ Linardatos suggests that Papagos solution was a King's trick to avoid new elections and probable victory of Plastiras. Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 147-155. However, this conspiracy theory should be treated with caution for it was the Centre's power clashes and desire to exclude the Populists that had mainly caused governmental making and dissolving.

⁴⁷ The Liberals were given ten ministries, the Populists and Papandreou's party nine. *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol.16, p. 175. Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp.

cabinet but also the Liberal Party itself. The co-operation with Tsaldaris and the Populist Party was bitterly opposed from within the Liberal Party. Twenty out of fifty-seven Liberal deputies voted in favour of immediate elections. Two prominent leaders of the Liberal Party, the former ministers, Konstantine Rendis and Ioannis Zigdis, left its ranks to join Plastiras. In mid-October the liberal newspaper *To Vima* began a strong campaign against Tsaldaris' son over charges of misuse of public money. In reality this was an attack against the leader of the Populist Party himself and an attempt to exclude the Populists from the government. Papandreou declared that the dealings in which the name of the Populist leader was involved were 'too strong to be ignored'. With the consent of Venizelos he tried to convince Tsaldaris to withdraw from the government until the scandal had passed off.⁴⁸ Tsaldaris, however, refused to resign. Therefore, on 2 November 1950, the Prime Minister submitted his own resignation to the King. He claimed that his resignation was a sign of 'political responsibility and sensitiveness'. In reality dissent in his own party had forced him to try and exclude the Populist Party from the cabinet.⁴⁹ The tripartite government was dissolved after just fifty-one days.⁵⁰ Venizelos and Papandreou intended to continue the government with a reshuffled bipartite cabinet.

On 3 November 1950, Venizelos took over Premiership for fourth time in the same year. Papandreou became Deputy Premier and Minister of Co-ordination. Portfolios were distributed amongst the Liberals and Papandreou's Party members.⁵¹

156-157.

⁴⁸ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87665 R 10110/139, Norton to Bevin, 29 November 1950.

⁴⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87665 R10110/138, Norton to Rumbold, 15 November 1950. Clogg supported the view that the Populists withdrew their backing to provoke new elections. In Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*, pp. 166-7; Markezinis noted that the Liberals withdrew as a result of the scandals. Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, p. 360.

⁵⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87665 R10110/139, Norton to Bevin, 29 November 1950.

⁵¹ On 16 November, the Populist Ministers, who had been left out of Venizelos cabinet, twenty-seven of sixty-two of the Populist deputies (Stefanopoulos, Karamanlis and Rallis included) joined forces with Kanellopoulos' National Unity Party and formed the Populist Unity Party (LEK) headed by both

The bipartite cabinet could, in fact, command a workable parliamentary majority. Thus, on 16 November 1950, Sofocles Venizelos and George Papandreou managed to secure a vote of confidence in Parliament of 164 for to 54 against. Simultaneously, strong anti-Communist measures were revived. Resolution 'C' was re-imposed and left-wing newspapers were suppressed.⁵²

As these events unfolded Clifford Norton and the new American Ambassador in Athens, John Peurifoy agreed that it was dangerous for the government of Greece to continue with its hand-to-mouth parliamentary existence. This existence depended on the whims of a group of political power brokers. These political leaders disliked and distrusted each other. They were happy to betray one another in order to gain a marginal political or personal advantage. The British and Americans thought that this circus had to end. One group of politicians had to triumph whilst other faded from the scene. It was not particularly important in the grand scheme of things, which group turned out to be winner or loser. Each was anti-communist enough for Anglo-American purposes. The tendency of some centrists to flirt with the left-wing was offset by the tendency of some politicians of the right to engage in capricious and destabilising persecutions. Thus, the Foreign Office could support Plastiras' government whilst rejecting Papagos' entry into politics or Tsaldaris' premiership despite the fact that Plastiras was considered a communist sympathiser whereas Papagos and Tsaldaris were out-and-out anti-Communists. Norton and Peurifoy had little confidence that the Venizelos-Papandreou coalition would last much longer than its predecessors. They believed the best thing that could happen once it collapsed was for early elections to be held under the majority system. The result should empower the big parties and make possible a stable

Kanellopoulos and Stefanopoulos, on 6 January 1951. *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol.16, p. 176.

⁵² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87665 R10110/139, Norton to Rumbold, 29 November 1950; *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol.16, p. 179; Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 179, 181-3.

government.⁵³ The probable alternative to a new electoral system was the emergence of an authoritarian regime under Field Marshal Papagos. Such a regime, they believed, would be at odds with the needs of post-civil war Greek society. On 27 November 1950, the Greeks were warned that only the formation of a strong government would make Greece's association with NATO possible.⁵⁴ The very fact that this warning was issued, however, suggested that the Western allies were moving back towards a more interventionist approach in Greek affairs.

Greece Joins NATO

In October 1949 the Greek Foreign Minister, Panayis Tsaldaris, had prepared an *aide-memoire* to Acheson requesting him to consider some kind of security arrangement for the countries immediately to the east of the NATO area.⁵⁵ In April 1950 Greece and Turkey made formal applications to join NATO. Many existing members did not, however, welcome the application. Denmark, Norway, and the Benelux states expressed apprehension about assuming responsibility for the defence of a region distant both geographically and culturally from Western Europe. Britain preferred the establishment

⁵³ FRUS (1950): 5, 433-435: Acheson to Peurifoy, 9 November 1950; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87665 R10110/138, Norton to Rumbold, 15 November 1950. The Foreign Office disagreement with royal tactics further weakens historians who believe that the Court was fully backed by the Foreign Office. In Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, pp. 295-300.

⁵⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87665 R10110/138, Minute to Norton, 27 November 1950. The Foreign Office had an additional reason to discourage Papagos from entering politics and taking over power, as Field Marshal was in favour of *Enosis* of Cyprus with Greece. From the Foreign Office's point of view Détente in Greek-Turkish relations would reinforce stability in the area and keep Cyprus' issue dormant; that excluded the take over of a military government, in PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95106, Annual Report for 1950, Norton to Rumbold, 13 January 1951.

⁵⁵ FRUS (1949): 6, 447-449: Tsaldaris to Acheson, 28 October 1949. Greece's entry into NATO was a dividing issue among Greek historians. For an account of both the right and left-wing arguments see: Th. Couloumbis, *Greek Political Reaction to American and NATO Influences* (London, 1966), pp. 40-41. An official source is that by Major General A. Siapkarakas, 'The Importance of Greece to NATO' *Military Review*, August (1961), 90-97. The author states that Greece's inclusion into NATO was the result of its affluent material resources (minerals, agriculture, trade, industry), land-sea and air space, 'moral strength' of the Greeks and 'outstanding place among Europe's modern armies' and finally the convincing argument of its strategic importance. He totally neglects the impact of the Korean War in pointing Greece's importance to the western security. Despite both right and left-wing views that the West was by definition interested in Greece's entry into NATO, the process of its incorporation was longwinded and precipitated by the Korean War.

of a separate Middle East Command.⁵⁶

In the spring of 1950, however, more auspicious signs for the Greek petition to join NATO emerged.⁵⁷ In May 1950 at the tripartite discussions held in London between the United States, Britain and France the situation in Greece and its strategic importance was discussed. Acheson and Bevin reaffirmed the determination of the United States and Britain to safeguard the independence and territorial integrity of Greece.⁵⁸ The volatile situations in Egypt and Iran suggested the need for action to firm up the western position in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. The British and American approach was, however one of caution.⁵⁹ Both allies were still undecided regarding the necessity of including Greece in NATO. The limited American defence budget and limited British resources were devoted to making good NATO commitments to secure Western Europe. Moreover, opposing Anglo-American interests in the Middle East complicated matters. The British plan for a Middle East Command faced American scepticism. Endless conversations seemed likely to produce stalemate rather than action in this area.⁶⁰

This rather sluggish approach to Mediterranean security was, however, galvanised by the outbreak of the Korean War. Within this context the need to broaden NATO's geographical borders was re-assessed.⁶¹ Greece and Turkey were included in

⁵⁶ S. Papacosma, 'Greece and NATO', in L. S. Kaplan, R. W. Clawson, R. Luraghi (eds), *NATO and the Mediterranean* (SR, 1985), p. 191. The containment of Soviet power in the Middle East was agreed as a shared Anglo-American objective in a series of talks held in 1950. See: Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, pp. 192-197. In these talks British goal focused on securing American support in the Middle East. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 131/9, DO (50) 40, 19 May 1950; CAB 131/8, DO (50) 5 Meeting, 23 March 1950; CAB 131/9, DO 45, Report by the Chiefs of Staff on Defence and Global Strategy, 7 June 1950; *Documents on British Policy Overseas* (DBPO) Series II, vol. 4, (London, 1991), pp. 411-434. On the British attempt to establish a MEC consult: D. Devereux, *The Formulation of British Defence Policy Towards the Middle East, 1948-56* (London, 1990), pp. 43-75.

⁵⁷ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, pp. 91-9, 109-110

⁵⁸ FRUS (1950): 5, 414: Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State (J. E. Webb) to the Executive Secretary of the NSC (Lay), extract 19 September 1950; FRUS (1950): 3, 1076: Report of the Tripartite Preliminary Meeting, 6 May 1950.

⁵⁹ Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, p. 348.

⁶⁰ McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO*, p. 65.

⁶¹ L. Kaplan, *The United States and NATO* (Kentucky, 1984), pp. 9-10. The Berlin crisis, Prague's coup, the communist invasion of South Korea, the explosion of the first Soviet atom bomb and the victory of the

this re-assessment. On 6 July 1950, Premier Attlee intimated to President Truman his fears of a possible Soviet initiative to 're-light the fire' in Greece.⁶² On 26 July, Reuben Jenkins, the new Chief of the Joint United States Military Aid Group to Greece, reported to the Joint Chiefs of Staff that he and Ambassador John Peurifoy had revised their estimate of the amount of aid required by Greece. They proposed that Joint United States Military Aid Group should be authorised to programme for a 200,000 men force with the possibility of expanding the national forces to 400,000 men.⁶³ Even at the peak of the civil war the government had not had such a strong national defence force. In the summer of 1950 the policy of demilitarising Greece was thrown into reverse by the Americans.

Although the American and British diplomats were reluctant to encourage a military autocracy this change in military policy inevitably increased the importance and power of Field Marshal Papagos. Papagos had been politically weakened by the decision to reduce the size of the armed forces and the military missions. He could no longer pose as the sole conduit or arbiter of Anglo-American aid to Greece. In July 1950, however, he was able to suspend demobilisation. The whole Greek political world agreed that because of the deteriorating international situation the National Army should be increased. In September 1950 the Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed with Papagos that the Greek National Army should be increased to a strength of 147,000 men by the end of the year – as compared to the 122,000 serving in July 1950.⁶⁴ On 1 September 1950, Venizelos had announced to the Secretary General of the United Nations that the Greek

communist forces in China had all increased the Soviet threat.

⁶² FRUS (1950): 5, 314: Attlee to Truman, 6 July 1950. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 87710 R1078/2, Foreign Office to Crossely, UK Delegation to UNSCOB, 19 July 1950; FRUS (1950): 5, 408-409: Memo of informal discussions prepared in the embassy in London, 19 September 1950. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, p. 286.

⁶³ FRUS (1950): 5, 387: Reuben Jenkins to Joint Chief of Staff, 26 July 1950.

⁶⁴ FRUS (1950): 3, 240-241: Minor to Acheson, 24 August 1950. According to Jenkins the national forces would consist of a force of: 147,000 NA, 10,000 for RHN and 60 ships, 7,400 for RHAF. AMAG would remain in Greece. JUSMAG would have 266 personnel by 30 June 1950. FRUS (1950): 5, 406: JCS to Jenkins, 15 September 1950; FRUS (1950): 5, 410-411: NSC 42/1 policy on 'US Objectives with Respect

government had unanimously decided to send a unit of brigade strength to join the United Nations Forces in Korea.⁶⁵

A further boost to the power of the military and its allies was provided by the association of Greece with NATO. On 4 September 1950, during a tripartite meeting of Foreign Ministers in New York between the United States, Britain and France, it was decided that the security of Europe and the Middle East would be endangered if the Soviet Union obtained control of either Greece or Turkey. Bevin and Acheson agreed to announce the admission of Greece and Turkey to associate status with NATO.⁶⁶ On 4 October 1950, Greece was invited to co-operate with the Atlantic Treaty countries in military planning for the Mediterranean area.

In the winter of 1950-51 there was a tension in British policy towards Greece. British analyses of Greek politics acknowledged its very personal nature. They concluded that the frangibility of politics caused by its personalisation could probably be fixed by changes in the structure of the political system. Political turmoil in Greece had little to do with the Cold War. Yet once instability in Greece was set in the context of international 'instability' it took on a much more ideological Cold War aspect. Co-operation with the Americans was desirable for Cold War reasons but inhibited British

to Greece and Turkey', 19 September 1950.

⁶⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87710 R1078/9, Norton to Foreign Office, 4 September 1950. Turkey also followed the same path. The Menderes government gathered over 5,000 troops to embark for Korea on 18 October 1950. This battalion eventually departed for Korea on Christmas day 1950. F. Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy 1950-1975* (London, 1977), pp. 390-392. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95106, Annual Report for 1950, Norton to Bevin, 13 January 1951.

⁶⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/87466 R1074/8, Tripartite Meeting of Foreign Ministers in New York, 4 September 1950. There are various explanations to explain the entry of Greece and Turkey into NATO in the beginning with associate status and finally as a full member. It has been noted that the Korean War was the turning point, creating the need for massive increase in military assistance, expanded geographical territories under NATO, defence of Europe and the creation of a Mediterranean command. In Kaplan, Clawson, Luraghi, *NATO and the Mediterranean*, pp. 9-19; Rearmament efforts, political and economic interests in the Middle East. In Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, pp. 419-425; For an account on the Middle East Command negotiations see Devereux, *The Formulation of British Defence Policy*. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, p. 420. American isolationists feared that the opening wedge for a vast program of assistance would destroy the American economy before it damaged the Russians. In Kaplan, Clawson, Luraghi (eds.), *NATO and the Mediterranean*, p. 35. The creation of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers of Europe and of American military air bases in Turkey overcame objections to their membership because Europe's southern flank defence had been

freedom of manoeuvre in regional affairs. Whilst the British wished to discourage Field Marshal Papagos from emerging into politics the strengthening of the army, to which they acquiesced, was likely to make this a possibility. The Greek problem could not be placed on the back burner because internal crises were likely to continually reoccur until some kind of solution had been found.

These dilemmas were soon brought to a head. The Venizelos administration faced a decisive crisis in late February 1951. The leaders of the Populist Unity Party (LEK), Panayiotis Kanellopoulos and Stefanos Stefanopoulos, announced that their party was withdrawing its support from the government.⁶⁷ This meant that the Venizelos-Papandreou coalition could no longer muster a parliamentary majority. The motives of Kanellopoulos and Stefanopoulos were difficult to comprehend. There were allegations that Field Marshal Papagos was behind the defection. The prospect of the LEK and Papagos forming a new right-wing cabinet was rumoured. A political power play by both leaders was another possibility. They may have wished to force the LEK's way into the government from a position of strength after it had demonstrated the government's dependency on its support.⁶⁸ Whatever LEK's motives their manoeuvre simply confirmed British scepticism that under the political system as it existed in 1950 any coalition, even one with a large majority, could hold on to power for any length of time.

The National Progressive Union of the Centre (EPEK) skilfully exploited the crisis. As the government was dragged into a test of confidence in the Chamber, General Plastiras offered the support of his party on two conditions: that an all-party committee

strengthened. Kaplan, Clawson, Luraghi (eds.), *NATO and the Mediterranean*, p. 9.

⁶⁷ LEK had won deputies from the Populist Party and turned powerful conservative party. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 95116 R10114/5, Chancery to Southern Department, 21 February 1951. Linardatos suggests that the aim of LEK seemed to be the formation of a new cabinet with the new force sharing power. Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 196,199.

⁶⁸ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95116 R10114/3, Norton to Foreign Office, 8 February 1951.

be set up in order to draft a new electoral law and that the government should propose to the King that general elections be held. Prime Minister Venizelos accepted these terms and his government received a 133-to-91 vote of confidence on 22 February 1951.⁶⁹ The issue of the conduct of general election came to the foreground once again. Efforts would concentrate on the reconstruction of the traditional 'big parties'.

⁶⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95116 R10114/5, Chancery to Southern Department, 21 February 1951; Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 199.

V Stabilisation Era: 1951-1952

Papagos Enters Politics

As a result of the announcement of the elections the political temperature rose once again. Papagos' steps to enter politics stoked up the heat even further. On 10 January 1951, Papagos made his first attempt to present himself as the best solution to the political crisis. In an interview with Charles Yost – the US Chargé d'Affaires in Athens – the Field Marshal denounced the Venizelos government. He stated that a 'strong administration' was needed to secure a parliamentary majority. The statement in itself was of no particular importance. What was significant, however, was Papagos' portrayal of himself as potential saviour. The Field Marshal told Yost of his intention to become prime minister. He intended to enter the election at the head of a slate composed of candidates of his own choosing. His ticket would be drawn from 'all groups and classes'.¹

Some conservative and liberal politicians favoured the Papagos solution. Indeed Markezinis, head of the conservative New Party, Papagos' friend and main counsellor proposed his own version of the Papagos solution. Markezinis favoured Papagos' participation in the next elections as the head of a wider right-wing coalition of individual politicians. Markezinis wanted to renovate the traditional Right and secure a conservative cabinet to replace the failing coalitions of the Centre.² At the other end of the political spectrum the liberal newspaper *To Vima* spoke of 'the need' for Papagos' entry into politics. For the liberals Papagos' appeal to all groups and classes appeared to guarantee liberal participation in the government. If Papagos appeared to be able to attract substantial support from within the traditional parties he had also gained a new

¹ FRUS (1951):5, 445:Yost to the State Department, 4 January 1951; In Papagiannopoulos, *Field Marshal A.Papagos-Στρατάρχης Αλέξανδρος Παπάγος*, p. 372.

and important opponent. By the beginning of 1951 the Palace had swung from its initial enthusiasm for the Field Marshal to outright opposition.³ The falling out had its origins in the rift between Papagos and the Palace over the issue of the distribution of power, which had arisen in 1950. The clash became more intense in the months that followed.

If the King's enthusiasm for Papagos had waned then that of Greece's allies remained low. The British and American embassies believed that the international and domestic situation in Greece called for a 'strong government'. However, they considered that there were still 'overriding' arguments against the Field Marshal. They feared that his entry into politics would foreshadow the creation of a dictatorship. Peurifoy announced that Papagos' entry into politics should not be encouraged. According to Norton Papagos might be 'acceptable' only if he headed a broad and moderate coalition and formed a 'right of centre' party.⁴

On 28 May 1951, Papagos submitted his resignation from the position of the Commander-in-Chief of the National Army. Two days later, after a fruitless meeting with King Paul, the Field Marshal submitted his formal resignation letter to Prime Minister Venizelos citing 'ill health' as his reason for demitting office. King Paul was appointed Commander-in-Chief in Papagos' place according to the protocol set out in the constitution for such emergencies. The Field Marshal himself told Peurifoy that his resignation was the result of the rift with the Palace.⁵ Papagos' resignation from the post of Commander-in-Chief, however, was dictated by his personal ambitions. By resigning

² FRUS (1951): 5, 445: Yost to the State Department, 4 January 1951.

³ *To Vima*, 22 February 1951.

⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95116 R10114/2, Norton to Noble, 31 January 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 470: Peurifoy to the State Department, 9 March 1951.

⁵ FRUS (1951): 5, 477: Peurifoy to the Department of State, 5 June 1951. This reason is also supported by some historians. According to this argument Papagos accused Paul of trying to limit his army powers by re-organising the General Staff officers. Veremis, 'The Military' in Featherston, Katsoudas (eds.), *Political Change in Greece*, p. 218; Stefanidis, *The United States, Great Britain and Greece*, p. 172. This was not the case though, because, despite the change of officers, no policy was scheduled to limit the Field Marshal's authorities. Papagos had under his control all three armed forces and the police up until he resigned. On Papagos resignation see next footnote.

from the Army, the road to enter politics was opened. He eliminated accusations that he was trying to create a military dictatorship.⁶

The Greek government was alarmed by this new development. The resignation of the Field Marshal caused a variety of reactions across the Greek political world. No one doubted its importance, however. All political parts stressed the appointment of the King as C-in-C and the effect of the subordination of the army to the government.⁷ Venizelos asked Papagos to reconsider his decision. He was particularly fearful of the response of IDEA to the resignation. The Holy Bond of Greek Officers, *Ιερός Δεσμός Ελλήνων Αξιωματικών* (IDEA), was a powerful group of right-wing officers in the armed forces. The organisation had been created in October 1944 as a result of the army mutiny in the Middle East.⁸

In the early hours of 31 May 1951 high-ranking officers and members of the Higher Military Committee met unofficially to discuss the issue of the resignation. Many were prominent members of IDEA. As a result of the meeting most major military garrisons in the country were put on alert. A number of military units moved into the city of Athens. The main routes into Athens were put under military control. Brigadier Christeas 'occupied' the General Staff building situated at the Old Palace in the centre of Athens.⁹ According to Lieutenant General Karayannis, an IDEA member, Papagos' resignation was seen as a reaction against the Venizelos government's attempts to

⁶ Linardatos, in a rather exaggerated form, suggests that Field Marshal's resignation was sudden in the hope of catching by surprise the Greek politicians and consolidating his strength. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 227. On the contrary, Papagiannopoulos writes that Papagos had made clear to the public his entry to politics in order to 'bring the real change the Nation's needs' and so the government was prepared for Papagos' resignation. In Papagiannopoulos, *Field Marshal A. Papagos-Στρατάρχης Αλέξανδρος Παπάγος*, pp. 443-444. Stefanidis writes that the reason was over the control of the armed forces. Stefanidis, *The United States, Great Britain and Greece*, p. 177. Veremis notes that Papagos resigned 'following a disagreement with the royal court' due to King's interference in army affairs. Th. Veremis, 'The Military', in K. Featherstone, D. Katsoudas (eds.), *Political Change in Greece* (London, 1987), p. 218. Haralampes writes that the disagreement of the Palace and Papagos over army command brought Papagos' resignation. Haralampes, *Army and Power-Στατός και Πολιτική Εξουσία*, pp. 39-41. This argument, however, does not explain Papagos' entry into politics later on in August.

⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95143 R11951/1, Norton to Foreign Office, 31 May 1951. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95143 R1195/5, News Review, 1 June 1951.

⁸ Grigoropoulos, *From the Top of the Hill-Απο την Κορυφή του Λόφου*, pp. 446-448.

reduce the army's powers. This triggered a coup to secure the independence of the army.¹⁰ The plotters established themselves in the Ministry of Defence (located in the Parliament building). In the confusion that followed Papagos' resignation it was the IDEA organisation that was able to act most quickly in speaking for the army.¹¹ Within hours, however, the Chief of the General Staff, Lt. Gen. Grigoropoulos, asked from the *putschists* to return to order. The rebels made clear that they would only obey the Field Marshal's orders. Grigoropoulos asked for Papagos' intervention. The Field Marshal visited the Ministry of Defence and asked the officers there to return to their normal duties. By noon of 31 May 1951 order had been restored in Athens, after the *putschists* had been reassured by Papagos that there would be no sanctions against them. The Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Venizelos attributed the settlement of the coup to Papagos' decisive intervention.¹²

The existing literature on the coup of 31 May has gaps despite the credible but biased accounts of the officials involved in the incident. There is no clear evidence as to who organised the coup, why and when. According to the official findings of Zozonakis, the Counsellor of the Military Defence, who carried out an investigation in January 1952, the plotters were mobilised by IDEA. It is not clear at what stage Papagos himself became aware of the initiative of the plotters. However, no matter what the extent of his support might have been, the truth is that the coup ended only after the Field Marshal's intervention. His willingness to stand down his admirers suggests that he was not aiming at military dictatorship. Rather he was confident that he could obtain power by

⁹ Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 229.

¹⁰ On the military coup there is a detailed account in Karayiannis, *The Greek Drama-To Δράμα της Ελλάδος* (Athens, 1964), p. 265.

¹¹ It has been estimated that in winter 1945-1946 seventy-five per cent of the army officers were IDEA members. Karayiannis, *The Greek Drama-To Δράμα της Ελλάδος*, pp. 210-211.

¹² After the end of the rebellion Lt. Gen. Grigoropoulos was appointed C-in-C of the General Staff National Defence (ΓΕΕΘΑ), Tsakalotos Chief of the Greek General Staff, Kitrilakis General Inspector of the Army. Grigoropoulos, *From the Top of the Hill-Από την Κορυφή του Λόφου*, pp.451-3; Lieutenant-General and member of IDEA- Karayiannis, *The Greek Drama-To Δράμα της Ελλάδος*, pp. 266-267.

political means.¹³ He was even willing to acquiesce to moves that the government took against the plotters. The Field Marshal had asked Venizelos not to impose sanctions against the insurgents as he himself had promised them. He even proposed that the events should be described as an alarm drill. Venizelos, however, expressed his government's intention to gradually remove the most important of the IDEA officers from key positions. Lieutenant General Grigoropoulos put the participants of the putsch under detention and ordered a preliminary examination, while the ringleaders of the coup were placed under house arrest.¹⁴

Papagos' resignation and the ensuing events of 31 May came as a blow to the British and Americans. Norton and the British embassy believed that the deterioration in the relations between King Paul and Papagos was a serious cause for alarm. Instead of acting as guarantors of Greece against Communism, their personal ambition was pressing them forward into the front-line of politics thus removing the safety net that had underlain the unpredictable political situation. Norton believed that the most important act was to try to reconcile the Palace, the Field Marshal and the Venizelos government.¹⁵ The American Ambassador agreed with his British colleague. Peurifoy reported that the resignation of the Field Marshal was a great blow to Greece at time when some formal security arrangements for the country with NATO were being

¹³ Based on the available sources it is not clear whether Papagos directed the coup or if so the extent of his influence. He might have caused it as a direct attempt to demonstrate his power to the public, militia and government or as an indirect way to underline his power without being accused of having planned it. Lt. Gen. Grigoropoulos, Chief of General Staff, writes in his memoirs that the Field Marshal knew in advance the intentions of the plotters. For an account of the coup, see Grigoropoulos, *From the Top of the Hill- Απο την Κορυφή του Λόφου*, pp. 445-64, 468-72. Veremis supports that IDEA members did not only want to support Papagos but attempted to overthrow the government after the Field Marshal resigned as Commander in Chief. Veremis, 'The Military', in Featherstone, Katsoudas (eds.), *Political Change in Greece*, p.218. A hard-core right-wing version claims that Papagos had no relation in any way with IDEA, which had anyway dissolved itself after the end of the civil war. In Papagiannopoulos, *Field Marshal A. Papagos-Στρατάρχης Αλέξανδρος Παπάγος*, p. 448.

¹⁴ FRUS (1951): 5, 475-6: Yost to the Department of State, 1 June 1951; Brigadiers Kontopoulos, Christeas, Tavoularis, Colonel Papadopoulos, Anagnostopoulos were among those who had been demobilised. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 238; Grigoropoulos, *From the Top of the Hill- Απο την Κορυφή του Λόφου*, pp. 460-1; FRUS (1951): 5, 481: Peurifoy to the Department of State, 11 June 1951.

discussed. General Jenkins and Peurifoy believed that Papagos' resignation involved the morale and efficiency of armed forces and hence the security of Greece and the West.¹⁶ The British agreed.¹⁷ Upon his return to Greece on 2 June 1951 Peurifoy undertook a sustained effort to mend fences. In a discussion between himself, the Prime Minister, the King, and Papagos, the American Ambassador proposed to them to bury past grievances and try to bring the Field Marshal back to his post. From the allies' point of view, the Field Marshal as Commander-in-Chief would guarantee the military stability required for Greece's entry into NATO.¹⁸ Regardless of Ambassadors' negative responses, however, Papagos was determined to stay away from his military duties. There is no evidence that the British and the Americans had any direct influence on the events of May 1951.¹⁹ The Field Marshal was content to have demonstrated his power whilst Venizelos believed that he had skilfully outmanoeuvred IDEA.

In the aftermath of the coup the next bone of political contention was the system that would govern the elections. The formal discussions about the electoral law lasted from 10 to 26 July 1951. Venizelos and Plastiras were in favour of a kind of modified proportional representation, which would favour the two or three parties heading the list. Both Plastiras and Venizelos expected that such a system would benefit their parties whilst opening up reasonable prospects for creating working majorities in Parliament. Tsaldaris advocated the introduction of the majority system as a means of achieving a strong government. Papandreou, on the other hand, wished to see the existing system of

¹⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95143 R11951/1, Norton to Foreign Office, 31 May 1951.

¹⁶ FRUS (1951):5, 482: Peurifoy to the Department of State, 11 June 1951.

¹⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95143 R1195/7, Norton to Morrison, 7 June 1951.

¹⁸ FRUS (1951): 5, 482-483: Peurifoy to the Department of State, 11 June 1951.

¹⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95143 R1195/8, Norton to Morrison, 20 June 1951.

simple proportional representation maintained. The system favoured his own small party and increased the probability that he would be included in any coalition cabinet.²⁰

Knowing that the electoral system proposed by Venizelos and Plastiras would weaken his party Papandreou tried to scupper its chances. He decided to resign from the cabinet with immediate effect. Papandreou calculated that his resignation would trigger an immediate election under the old system.²¹ In order to cover his tracks he manufactured a dispute with the Americans over the price of wheat and the scale of government subsidies to wheat producers. On 1 July 1951, Papandreou and the ministers politically close to him such as Lagakos, Minister of Justice, Makkas, Minister of Industry, Yiannopoulos, Minister of Transportation, Labropoulos, Minister of Agriculture as well as their junior ministers handed in their resignations. The government was left with insufficient parliamentary support and collapsed. On 28 July, Venizelos was forced to offer his resignation as well.²²

The King, however, objected to the prospect of early elections. He was still averse to the idea of accepting Plastiras back into power. He also wanted to prevent Papagos from entering politics. He grasped the opportunity of Papandreou's resignation, therefore, to form another stop-gap cabinet. He asked Venizelos to form a broader coalition and thus forestall rushed elections. Venizelos agreed to take over until the planned elections. Venizelos promised that he would safeguard the rights and powers of the Crown in the coming revision of the constitution. He was able to form such a government because Tsouderos was willing to betray his ally Plastiras. The Populist

²⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95117 R10114/14, Norton to Morrison, 9 May 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 473: Yost to Department of State, 12 May 1951. Modified proportional representation would grant to three parties receiving largest popular vote all parliamentary seats not allotted in first distribution.

²¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95117 R10114/16, Norton to the Foreign Office, 4 July 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 473: Yost to the Department of State, 17 May 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 481-483: Peurifoy to Department of State, 11 June 1951; A. Raikou, *Lectures on Constitutional Law-Παραδόσεις Συνταγματικού Δικαίου*, vol. 5 (Athens, 1978), pp. 148-158.

²² Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 253.

Unity Party (LEK) left EPEK and went over to the Liberals.²³ Tsouderos became Deputy Premier and Minister of Co-ordination of the Venizelos' caretaker government on 3 August.²⁴

On 27 July 1951, the Greek Parliament introduced the new electoral law that would create a system of modified proportional representation. Its main stipulation was a threshold of votes that would allow a party to take part in Parliament. Under the new law a party would need seventeen per cent and a coalition of parties twenty in order to participate in Parliament. Smaller parties would have to be wound up to combine together in bigger organisations in order to survive.²⁵

On 3 August, the King signed the decree dissolving the Parliament and proclaiming the elections. Three days later Papagos officially announced the creation of his party: The Greek Rally. Its aim, he claimed, was to provide the country with 'the real change the Nation needs'. He advocated both 'change' and 'stability', catchwords that would prove effective in the party's electoral campaign.²⁶ Papagos decreed that the Greek Rally would accept politicians of all persuasions. It would only do so, however, if they agreed to serve under his banner. He wanted to attract and accommodate both conservative and liberal adherents in a right-wing party. The Rally was avowedly hostile to co-operation with other parties.

²³ In July EPEK split. On 13 July Emmanouel Tsouderos and his friends and MPs St. Merkouris, K. Maris, G. Tsouderos, among others, left the party. The official excuse given by Tsouderos for the resignation from the party was the disagreement with N. Plastiras over the organisation of the party and particularly the combinations in the electoral districts. Plastiras attributed Tsouderos' resignation to his own 'hidden ambitions'. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 258. In fact, Tsouderos shifted to the conservative party eventually to take part to the government.

²⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95117 R10114/16, Norton to the Foreign Office, 4 July 1951; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95117 R10114/21, Norton to Foreign Office, 3 August 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 489-490: Peurifoy to Department of State, 28 July 1951. Dafnis, *The Greek Political Parties-Ta Ελληνικά Πολιτικά Κόμματα*, pp. 486-488.

²⁵ *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, pp. 176-177; Nikolakopoulos, *Parties and Parliamentary Elections-Κόμματα και Βουλευτικές*, pp. 149-191.

²⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95117 R10114/21, Norton to Foreign Office, 3 August 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 490-491: Peurifoy to Department of State, 31 July 1951.

Papagos' candidature caused, as might be expected, *a furore*.²⁷ The King was outraged and threatened to 'take steps' against the Field Marshal. According to an account given by the Chief of the Greek General Staff, Tsakalotos, King Paul asked him to arrest Papagos. The Palace maintained that according to military law any officer who resigned remained an army official for six months thereafter. Papagos was thus committing a breach of military discipline by defying his commander-in-chief. Papagos was debarred from politics unless he had the explicit consent of the King. King Paul believed he had the right to arrest the Field Marshal if Papagos defied him. Tsakalotos, however, had no intention of moving against Papagos. Tsakalotos refused to obey the King's order on the grounds that it was an extreme and unwarranted act. Paul's impotence merely served to reinforce Papagos' power in the Army.²⁸

The Populist leader, Tsaldaris, perceived Papagos as a formidable threat to the political existence of his conservative party. He described Papagos' entry into politics as an 'intrigue'. Papagos' purpose, Tsaldaris charged, was the disorientation of the Greeks. He was paving the path to a military dictatorship. Tsaldaris was right to be worried, although Papagos was far from preparing a dictatorship.²⁹ The Populists had failed to win a workable majority at the last two elections. The emergence of Papagos into politics offered the hope of new impetus for the Right. Many Populists were attracted by the prospect of a strong charismatic leader whose appeal stretched beyond their existing constituency. The same calculations were made further to the left. LEK dissolved itself

²⁷ The Greek historian S. Linardatos writes that Papagos' entry into politics had fallen 'as a bomb', that many had been caught by surprise and also that it had been a 'shock' to the King. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 262-263; Stefanidis, *The United States, Great Britain and Greece*, p. 187. However, Papagos seems to have been preparing the ground for his entry into politics gradually since 1950. Firstly with his careful plan to present himself as an independent and self-sufficient politician and eventually with his resignation in May 1951 from the Army. J. P. Carey, A. G. Carey give an over-idealised version of Papagos supporting that his entry into politics came as a result of 'his national pride', with the main aim to give an end to instability. In J. P. Carey, A. G. Carey, *The Web of Modern Greek Politics* (New York, 1968), p. 149.

²⁸ *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 177; Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 263-265.

as party and joined Papagos banner. Papandreou too rapidly found himself in difficulties as some of his followers seemed to be preparing to join Papagos' bandwagon. The left of Centre press joined with their enemy Tsaldaris and embarked upon a campaign to prove that Papagos' ultimate aim was to impose a dictatorship. Papagos frightened and galvanised the hard Left as well.

Simultaneously, the Left was given a new boost. A new left-wing formation appeared on 3 August 1951: the United Democratic Left (EDA). It was originated by former EAM members, members of the outlawed KKE and minor left-wing parties. Led by Ioannis Pasalidis EDA was intended to be the Rally of the Left.³⁰ This polarised scheme of the Greek Rally and EDA reflected the impact of the Cold War in Greece. It also proved the polarised character of the forthcoming election. The only leader who was confident enough to believe that he would not be entirely occluded by Papagos was Plastiras. He publicly welcomed the Field Marshal's candidature.³¹

As ever British diplomats feared for the stability of the Greek political system. Accordingly Norton's first priority was to prevent open conflict breaking out between Papagos and King Paul. Along with his American colleague, Peurifoy, Norton persuaded King Paul to relinquish the office of Commander-in-Chief. Lieutenant General Grigoropoulos was raised to the office in his stead. The King, however, would not leave the matter alone. He believed that Papagos was potentially a threat to the

²⁹ Conservative newspapers on 31 July 1951, in Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 266; Papagiannopoulos, *Field Marshal A. Papagos-Στρατάρχης Αλέξανδρος Παπάγος*, p. 484.

³⁰ Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 270-271; *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 178; Nikolakopoulos, *Parties and Parliamentary Elections-Κόμματα και Βουλευτικές*, p. 179. EDA was a coalition of the Left and the only communist voice in the political scene until 1956. It represented a coherent effort of the Left to give itself a new blow, similar to the right-wing parties. After failing to co-operate with General Plastiras, EDA took a hard-core stance and incorporated in its list a number of deportees and imprisoned KKE members.

³¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95117 R10114/21, Norton to the Foreign Office, 3 August 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 490-491; Peurifoy to the State Department, 31 July 1951.

monarchy itself because of his relationship with the Army.³² On 4 August 1951, King Paul responded to this threat. He ordered the Chief of the General Staff, Tsakalotos, to sound out army commanders about the desirability of the armed forces being permitted to vote in the forthcoming elections. The issue was of great importance since in the 1950 elections the military had represented more than ten per cent of the electorate. King Paul was afraid that the great majority of the army officers led by IDEA would vote for Papagos. Tsakalotos conceded that Papagos' entry into politics was 'a grave test' for the armed forces. He was particularly concerned about 'the deleterious influence of IDEA' and warned that the organisation 'should not be underrated'. Tsakalotos admitted that officers would not hesitate to guide their men towards voting in Papagos' favour. Once again, however, Tsakalotos defied the King's wishes. He refused to exclude the Army from voting in the forthcoming elections. He feared that such a move would merely precipitate another IDEA 'reaction'.³³

Once again the allies backed Tsakalotos in his attempts to prevent the King stirring up the Army. Norton told King Paul to practice restraint. Peurifoy was even more active on this issue. The American Ambassador obtained an assurance from Venizelos that the soldiers would be allowed to vote. Peurifoy asked General Frederick (Head of JUSMAG) to ensure that all legal steps were taken to permit the soldiers to exercise their right to vote. He went on to tell the King to stop interfering with the electoral campaign.³⁴ On the other hand Peurifoy visited Papagos and urged him to avoid any action that might make the King's position 'difficult' in case he was elected.³⁵

³² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95118 R10114/39, Norton to Morrison, 5 September 1951; Nikolakopoulos, *Parties and Parliamentary Elections-Κόμματα και Βουλευτικές*, p. 178; Karayiannis, *The Greek Drama-To Δράμα της Ελλάδος*, pp. 262-264.

³³ Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 280-281.

³⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95118/10114/36, Norton to Foreign Office, 29 August 1951.

³⁵ FRUS (1951): 5, 501-506: Peurifoy to the Chief of the JUSMAG G (Frederick), 22 August 1951. The leftist historians suggest that Papagos formed a semi-dictatorship supported by the United States. In N. Psyroukis, *History of Contemporary Greece- Ιστορία της Νεότερης Ελλάδας 1940-1967*, vol. 2, (Athens, 1975), pp. 50-55. Giannouloupoulos suggests a more balanced account: that the Americans supported

These Anglo-American manoeuvres avoided the prospect of the King and the Field Marshal fighting for the soul of the Army in the event of Papagos' election.³⁶

Although the attempts to head off a Paul-Papagos clash by restraining the King suggest that the Western powers favoured Papagos this was not entirely the case. The British were reluctant to support Papagos. Sir Clifford Norton felt uneasy about the connections of Papagos' entourage with IDEA. He felt even uneasier about Papagos' support for *Enosis*. The combination of Papagos' influence over the military and his *revanchist* goals concerning Cyprus threatened to shift the axis of Greek foreign policy. The pro-Western aspect of the military might be replaced by its anti-British aspect. Anglo-Greek conflict would 'neutralise' the value of Greece as a prospective NATO ally. Peurifoy shared Norton's reservations about Papagos. Not only did he warn of the consequences of a Palace-Army split he also feared the polarisation of Greek politics into two camps: one led by Papagos the other by Plastiras. Although the American Ambassador conceded that Papagos' initiative might form a possible answer to the problem of political instability, he expressed concern about the 'artificial and probably temporary crystallisation of political forces' which might create a 'meaningless' reconstruction of the traditional conservative party.³⁷ Papagos' connection to IDEA was a further complication in his mind. Both the British and American embassies feared that the Field Marshal's entry into politics might lead to the establishment of a military regime. Neither, however, planned any serious intervention in Greek politics except for emollient and ameliorative measures such as the change in Commander in Chief. This was, in part, an admission of impotence. Diplomats recognised that Papagos was a popular figure. Any attempt to strangle his movement at birth was likely to provoke a

Papagos because he could provide strong political government backed by the army. Giannouloupoulos, *Post War World-O Μεταπολεμικός Κόσμος*, p. 289.

³⁶ Thus King Paul failed to strengthen his power in ΓΕΕΘΑ, which was headed by the Gin-C.

³⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95117 R10114/24, Norton to Mason, 1 August 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 492-493; Peurifoy to the Department of State, 1 August 1951.

dangerous backlash. Furthermore British and American officials in Greece admired Papagos as an energetic and competent figure. He was neither weak enough nor dangerous enough to move against.³⁸

Indeed the new electoral law transformed the Greek political scene in the elections held on 9 September 1951. As a result of the modified proportional representation only nine parties contested the election. The main contestants were The Greek Rally headed by Papagos, the Populists headed by Tsaldaris, the Liberals headed by Venizelos, National Progressive Centre Union (EPEK) headed by Plastiras and the United Democratic Left (EDA) headed by Pasalidis. The poll was declared seventeen days later. It returned the Greek Rally as the strongest party. The Rally did not, however, gain an absolute parliamentary majority. The Rally received 36.53 per cent of the vote and 114 seats out of 258. EPEK came second with 23.49 per cent and 74 seats. Venizelos polled 19.04 per cent and secured 57 seats, EDA received 10.57 per cent and elected ten deputies. Tsaldaris managed only 6.66 per cent and two deputies. Papandreou's party failed to cross the threshold and neither he nor any of his supporters were re-elected. The borderland polling districts and the military polling stations in particular favoured the Field Marshal. Papagos received 53.43 per cent of the army votes.³⁹ The modified proportional representation system as well as the creation of the new bipolar system of the Right and the Left had obviously favoured the big parties. The elections of 9 September 1951 were a landmark for the future political development of Greece. The political alliances that had been formed dominated Greek politics for the

³⁸ FRUS (1951): 5, 491: Peurifoy to the Department of State, 31 July 1951.

³⁹ FRUS (1951): 5, 508: Peurifoy to the Department of State, 15 September 1951; Meynauld, *The Political Powers in Greece-Oi Πολιτικές Δυνάμεις στην Ελλάδα*, p. 92; Nikolakopoulos, *Parties and Parliamentary Elections-Κόμματα και Βουλευτικές*, pp. 422-423. Clogg, *Parties and Elections*, p. 27. The Populist Party, which was all-powerful during the civil war, although it had lost its strength, reduced the strength of the Greek Rally. In this light, one can justify those who believed that Papagos' entry into politics was 'premature'. *To Vima*, the Centre newspaper noted that the elections after would be Papagos' success, whereas these ones were 'untimely'. *To Vima*, 1 August 1951. Nevertheless, Papagos needed time to establish himself on the political scene and in this light his entry into politics in 1951 offered him the time to win the absolute majority in the elections of November 1952.

following two decades. Moreover, the elections showed that, contrary to the usual belief that the King headed the Right, the majority of the conservatives voted against the will of the Crown.

Yet despite this momentous re-alignment there was a limit to change. As before it was impossible to form a single-party government. Papagos' key goal had not been achieved. Indeed although the emergence of his Rally as the single largest party in this its first election was a major achievement the results demonstrated that there were limits to the Field Marshal's appeal. In fact the parties of the Centre had won an overall majority. Their problem was that these seats were still divided between two separate formations: EPEK and the Liberals. As a result there was a serious possibility that politics would return to 'business as usual'. Indeed King Paul proposed a tripartite coalition composed of the three major parties. Norton and Peurifoy, perhaps relieved that Papagos had not achieved an unalloyed triumph, also favoured the three party solution in order to create a 'strong and broadly acceptable government'.⁴⁰

Papagos, however, in a typically uncompromising stand, excluded any possibility of taking part in a coalition cabinet. Instead he called for the formation of a caretaker government and the proclamation of new elections under the majority system. Naturally, King Paul and the Palace strongly opposed this prospect.⁴¹ Instead, on 29 September 1951, Plastiras and Venizelos formed a government enjoying a parliamentary majority. Plastiras was Premier whilst Venizelos took on the posts of Deputy Prime

⁴⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95118 R10114/43, Norton to Foreign Office, 19 September 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 508-509; Peurifoy to the Department of State, 15 September 1951.

⁴¹ On the rift between Papagos and the Palace there are different views. Papagiannopoulos writes that, despite the well known and well proven pro-royalist Papagos' beliefs, the clash between Papagos and the Palace originated from the end of 1950 when the former refused to be appointed the King's Premier. Papagiannopoulos, *Field Marshal A. Papagos-Στρατάρχης Αλέξανδρος Παπάγος*, pp. 469-470. There is also the view that the relationship of Papagos and the Palace deteriorated because of disagreements with King Paul over the powers of the Army, which according to the King could 'awake' *Ethnikos Dichasmos* (National Schism) and this in turn would challenge again the position of kingship as in the case of Eleftherios Venizelos and King Konstantine I, father of King Paul, in 1920. Linardatos, *From Civil War-Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 296, 299. Indeed, both cases are justified. However, the uncompromising character of Papagos and mainly his political ambitions had brought the clash between the two men.

Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. The cabinet consisted of EPEK and Liberal ministers in proportion to the parliamentary strength of the two parties.⁴²

The Plastiras Government

The Plastiras government managed to remain in power for almost a year. Although Plastiras had always been considered to be a left-wing sympathiser politician he turned out to be a typical Cold War pro-westerner prime minister. He followed an anglophile foreign policy on the Cyprus issue. He confirmed the rights of the King by the introduction of a new constitution. The eventual fall of his cabinet was the result of the usual falling out between coalition partners over issues of personality and power rather than 'the contradictory policies towards the communists' as suggested by some historians.⁴³

An important issue for Plastiras premiership was the constitution, which had not been reformed since 1911. On 27 July 1951, at an *ad hoc* meeting at the Tatoi Palace between all party leaders, except for Papagos and the Left, it had been agreed that the new chamber would vote for a new constitution. The prime mover in maintaining the momentum for constitutional reform was the King himself. Paul was still smarting from his repeated humiliations during the rift between Papagos and the Palace. He was desperate to consolidate his status.⁴⁴ The role of the King and his authority to appoint ministers and dissolve governments were ratified in article 31 of the constitution. At one

⁴² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95118 R10114/54, Norton to Foreign Office, 1 October 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 511: Peurifoy to Department of State, 16 October 1951.

Papagiannopoulos argues that the King proposed the formation of the tripartite coalition to undermine Papagos' strength. Papagiannopoulos, *Field Marshal Alexandros Papagos- Στρατάρχης Αλέξανδρος Παπάγος*, p. 445. From another perspective, Linardatos notes that King Paul aimed at sustaining the Liberals in power as much as possible to please the Liberals and put down any liberal claims for republicanism. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 301. Both historians are partly right. Papagos had strengthened his powers during Plastiras premiership through the new electoral law. Similarly, the new constitution under Plastiras cabinet would favour the King's rights. Claims for republicanism, however, were not a threat at that point for the King.

⁴³ *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 180.

stage Papagos had threatened to break the power of the Palace. Instead the result of the election led to the confirmation of royal power in Greek politics. This was the most important achievement from the point of view of the Palace. The new constitution was also framed to appeal to the Army. It prescribed *inter alia*: restrictions on the press and freedom of speech and that civilians should be court-martialled if they acted 'against the security of the armed forces'. The application of emergency laws in the case of a threat to national security even without parliamentary approval was ratified. The constitution banned the right of strike to civil servants. The constitution was a thoroughgoing Cold War document. It reflected the balance of power thrown up by the September 1951 elections. There could be considerable dispute as to which political grouping had emerged best from this election. One thing was certain, however: the left was weak. All other parties could agree to measures that infringed civil liberties but helped guarantee their own political futures.⁴⁵

The strengthening of the centre-right in Greek politics was entirely satisfactory to Britain. The Cold War politics of Greece could be seen as a triumph for British diplomacy. They had managed to achieve their objectives and stay friendly with both the Greeks and the Americans. Sir Charles Peake, Norton's successor as British Ambassador, considered that the allies were still 'on close and cordial terms'.⁴⁶ It was not just the embassy that provided a conduit for this cordiality. The British Military Mission was still in operation training Greek forces. British diplomats and soldiers attended political and military meetings and took part in decision-making.

⁴⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101799 R1017/5, Peake to Eden, 5 February 1952; *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 179.

⁴⁵ *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 179. For an account of the new constitution see, A. Svolos, *The Greek Constitution-To Ελληνικό Σύνταγμα*, vol.1 (Athens, 1954), pp. 3-8. Svolos and Vlahos write that this new constitution 'was not new but just a deterioration of the old ones'. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 362. That constitution was applied until 1967, to be renewed in 1975.

⁴⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 101899 R1017/3, Peake to Harrison, 6 February 1952.

Even the most difficult issue in Anglo-Greek relations – Cyprus – had been kept off the boil. Archbishop Makarios' demand that the question of self-determination for Cyprus should be institutionalised by the Greek government taking the issue to the United Nations alarmed the Foreign Office. William Strang, the Permanent Under-Secretary, had made clear to Venizelos and Leon Melas, the Greek Ambassador in London, that 'there were no disposition on the part of His Majesty's Government to discuss the Greek proposals'.⁴⁷ On 14 May 1951, Venizelos had met with Norton and the British Ambassador and had stressed to the Greek Prime Minister that 'there is no Cyprus issue'. Five days later the Greek Prime Minister stated that the official Greek position towards the Cyprus issue was that 'the issue of Cyprus is always open' but 'the contemporary situation does not allow us to proceed to a solution'.⁴⁸ Plastiras, in his turn, continued the same Anglophile foreign policy. In his pre-election programme there was no agenda for Cyprus.⁴⁹ On 22 November 1951, Averoff, the Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, cabled the Greek delegation to the United Nations led by George Mavros instructing them 'not to raise the Cyprus question'.⁵⁰ The Foreign Office in return recognised the efforts of the Greek government 'to minimise *Enosis* propaganda'.⁵¹

⁴⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 101793, Annual Report of 1951, 24 January 1952.

⁴⁸ *To Vima*, 20 May 1951; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101793, Annual Report for 1951, 24 January 1952.

⁴⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/ 101793, Annual Report for 1951; On the contrary, Valinakis supports that the Cyprus issue was one of the main pillars of Greek foreign policy, together with NATO and containment of communism. G. G. Valinakis, *Introduction to the Greek Foreign Policy-Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική* (Thessaloniki, 1989), p. 45.

⁵⁰ Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 350. On 12 November 1951, Politis, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Archbishop of Athens, Spyridon, as well as the Greek delegation indirectly brought the question of Cyprus to the attention of the UN General Assembly in a speech about the interpretation of Article 73 of the Charter and self-determination rights. Simultaneously pro-*Enosis* student demonstrations were organised in Athens University on 22 November. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101793, Annual Report for 1951. All developments remained small-scale reactions easily controlled by the government itself.

⁵¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101807 R1051/2, D.F. Murray Minute, 14 May 1952. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95118 R10114/65, Peake to Mason, 10 November 1951; Linardatos suggests that the Americans were in favour of the British deterioration as a power and prefer to 'forward their status on the ruins of the British Empire'. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 351. However, it seems that the Americans relied on British support still at that time.

The Plastiras government, however, faced serious practical drawbacks. On 10 March 1952, Plastiras suffered a stroke, which incapacitated him for many months. Four days later Theodoros Havinis, the Minister of Public Works, resigned in protest against American pressure on the issue of the renewal of the contract between the Greek state and the American owned Athens Water Authority. At the same time, Kartalis, the Minister of Co-operation and Sakellariou, Minister of Defence, also resigned in protest of the reactions at the continuing executions of communists. A number of deputies resigned from both EPEK and the Liberals: as a result the Plastiras government lost its majority of the seats in Parliament. Plastiras announced that elections would take place in September 1952.⁵² Once again the Greek political system revealed its fissile nature. A potentially strong government of the Centre had been created. The hard Left had been reduced to a negligible political force. The militaristic Right had been contained. Political reform had reduced the number of parties to manageable numbers. Yet the leading politicians were simply unwilling to make the system operate. Instead of recognising its virtues their disagreements on a myriad of issues destabilised it once more.

As a result the electoral system came to the fore once again. The majority system seemed to be as the only solution. Since Greek politicians were unable to get along with each other only the enforced dominance of one figure of party would provide the ballast the system needed. The electoral law, however, divided the Greek leaders. General

Alternatively, Stefanidis believes that the Americans pressed the British to 'support' Greek leaders. In Stefanidis, *The United States, Great Britain and Greece*, p. 207.

⁵² FRUS (1952-54): 5, 271-272: Peurifoy to the Secretary of State, 25 February 1952; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101794 R1013/6, Peake to Foreign Office, 12 March 1952; *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 180. At the same time, anti-Communist measures and executions of communists had caused strong reactions in Greece and abroad. Telegrams from politicians, clergy and common people from across the world had been sent to King Paul to cancel the executions of eight communists. The case had become internationally known. Picasso had drawn the sketch of Belogiannis, one of the most famous convicts. However, Cold War rhetoric prevailed. Linardatos suggests that Minister of Defence Sakellariou has been forced to resign in order to smooth the upheaval of the executions. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 395. This, up to a certain

Plastiras re-affirmed his preference for the majority system. Papagos too favoured the majority system. King Paul and Venizelos, however, favoured the re-introduction of the simple proportional representation system, which would allow small parties the strength to gain seats in the Parliament.

The risk of another prolonged and destabilising argument alarmed the allies. On 14 March 1952, Peurifoy warned that a return to simple proportional representation would have 'disastrous effects' on the supply of American aid. He described the initiative for the re-introduction of simple proportional representation as 'palace intrigue' aiming at permitting King Paul to rule through unstable coalitions. Peake agreed with his colleague's exasperation with the Greek political situation. According to his own reports to the Foreign Office he had sided with the American as 'for good or ill the United States Government have now committed themselves to a definite and overt interference in the internal affairs of the country'.⁵³ The Americans supported the majority system because the Centre experiments had failed to provide parliamentary strong cabinets.⁵⁴ In an undisguised intervention in domestic politics Peurifoy openly advocated a change in the electoral system to a simple majority one.⁵⁵

extent, brought the downfall of the government, but this downfall coupled with the instability of all coalitions demonstrates that the electoral system allowed the dissolution of the cabinets.

⁵³ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101799 R1017/12, Peake to Eden, 19 March 1952. Linardatos believes that the Palace together with the 'English' did not favour the majority system because they preferred coalition cabinets, which offered them more space for intervention. Both the Palace and the British were afraid of Papagos' Premiership and the total American 'guardianship' in Greece. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 371. W. H. McNeill gives a more realistic account and writes that the American embassy and Missions continued to pay for Greece provided the establishment of 'stable government', which the majority system would provide. In W. H. McNeill, *The Metamorphosis of Greece since WWII* (Oxford, 1978), p. 48. Orthodox historians of Greek history tend to believe that the Foreign Office supported *a priori* the Palace and the Americans preferred any right-wing formations. Markezinis, *Political History-Πολιτική Ιστορία*, pp. 295-300. This incident, however, is one of the cases that discredited these beliefs.

⁵⁴ Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*, p. 167.

⁵⁵ J. Carey and A. Carey, *The Web of Modern Greek Politics*, p. 153.

The Rally Wins the Election

Plastiras tabled a proposal for a new electoral system. On 12 September 1952, it gained the approval of Parliament by a narrow majority. The American intervention played a decisive role in creating this new system. Without this stick it would have been unlikely that the necessary votes in favour of change could have been found. It was obvious to all that the majority system would favour Papagos who had been the victor of the previous elections.⁵⁶ Those not aligned with Papagos would lose out.⁵⁷ The biggest loser, of course, was the King. In September 1951 he had been threatened by political impotence. Instead the Papagos threat had been averted and a new constitution had reiterated his position at the heart of political life. Now the Americans had forced the Greek political elite to reverse that decision. Paul wildly declared that he split the Rally by appealing to royalists and rule through a new series of royal minority governments. Peake quite understood why Peurifoy had finally lost patience and effectively committed the United States to a Papagos government. Yet because Britain had not had the power to engineer this crisis themselves they were at least able to wield a calming influence at a time that anti-American sentiment ran high. It was left to the British to remind the King how unrealistic he was being.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101800/1017/31, J. Galsworthy to Foreign Office, 27 August 1952; *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 181.

⁵⁷ The American support of Papagos and the majority electoral system in the elections of November 1952 is a matter of controversy in Greek historiography. Linardatos, from a rather 'conspiracy' point of view, notes that Plastiras voted for the new system solely as a result of American 'blackmail' over reducing American financial support. In Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 495-496. Valinakes gives a more rounded account and justifies the American 'intervention' in order to support Papagos and stability between government and army. In Valinakes, *Introduction to the Greek Foreign Policy-Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική*, p. 44. Giannouloupoulos, emphasising the domestic factor, notes that the change of the electoral system came as a result of a Greek need to form a strong parliamentary majority. In Giannouloupoulos, *Post-War World-Ο Μεταπολεμικός Κόσμος*, p. 294. Papagiannopoulos, in a totally pro-Papagos interpretation, notes no relation between the new electoral law and Papagos' Premiership, which would have occurred regardless the system. Papagiannopoulos, *Field Marshal A. Papagos-Στρατάρχης Αλέξανδρος Παπάγος*, pp. 480-484. This system would subsequently back a strong single-party cabinet.

⁵⁸ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101800 R1017/37, Peake to Harrison, 2 September 1952; FO 371/101800 R1017/40, Peake to Strang, 17 September 1952.

On the basis of a deal between the government and the Rally, the majority system was finally enacted into a new electoral law on 4 October 1952. The deal also promised further advantages for the Right. Voters would need to return to their home town and villages in order to vote. The place where a man could vote was determined by the 1940 census rather than by the incomplete 1951 census. Voting based on this traditional basis was easier for the anti-communist local police forces to monitor and control. In theory women were to be allowed to vote and to stand as candidates. In practice, however, few were registered to vote.⁵⁹ The Army was, of course, encouraged to vote.

On 10 October 1952, the Plastiras government resigned to be succeeded by a caretaker government headed by the Public Prosecutor in the Supreme Court of Justice Dimitrios Kiousopoulos. Kiousopoulos proceeded to dissolve the Parliament and proclaim elections for the 16 November 1952.⁶⁰

Even more so than in September 1951 the appeal of Papagos – now being made under an electoral system favourable to him – forced the other parties to reorganise themselves. A number of prominent Centre politicians, including George Papandreou and Emmanouel Tsouderos, had already aligned themselves with Papagos. In an attempt to withstand the impact of the Papagos' bandwagon the National Progressive Centre Union (EPEK) headed by Plastiras, the Liberals headed by Venizelos and the small Socialist Party headed by Svolos decided to enter the elections on a joint slate. This so-called Union of the Parties also included a small number of left-wing personalities. The

⁵⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101803 R10114/4, Galsworthy to Barnes, 8 October 1952; Nikolopoulos, *Parties and Parliamentary Elections-Κόμματα και Βουλευτικές*, pp. 194-195.

⁶⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101800 R1017/42, Lambert to Southern Department, 'The Record of the Plastiras Government', 22 October 1952; *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 182. The Greek left-wing historian Linardatos attributed the fall of Plastiras government to the American intervention. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 414. The execution of the communists, Plastiras' bad health and the re-organisation of the political world coupled with the western preference to Papagos, also contributed to Plastiras' fall. The main drawback,

campaign strategy of the centre-leftist world was two-fold. They wished to point to the government's achievements during its year in office. Even more, however, they tried to whip up fears of a 'white terror' by arguing that Papagos' movement was merely a front for right-wing authoritarians backed by the Army. Yet, in truth, Plastiras had very little with which to appeal to the electorate. His attempts to extend leniency to former communists had, of necessity, been half-hearted. They had called into question his reliability without addressing in any real way the bitterness left over from the civil war. Neither had his much vaunted social reform programmes amounted to much. Legislation allowing the expropriation of land and its redistribution to landless peasants had been enacted but no land transfers had yet taken place.⁶¹

The elections of 16 November 1952 returned the Rally with a majority of unprecedented proportions in Greek electoral history. The Union of the Parties failed in its last ditch attempt to deny Papagos a majority. Reaping the benefits of the majority system Papagos' party won a crushing parliamentary majority. Out of the 300 seats being contested the Rally won 247. This landslide was based on winning 49.22 per cent of the vote. Support for Papagos had increased by one-third over a year. Notwithstanding this, however, the effects of the new system are clear. Papagos had received less than half of the total vote but over four-fifth of the seats. The obverse of this was that the Union of the Parties secured only 51 seats with 34.22 per cent of the votes. The vote for Union was less than that garnered by its individual partners the previous year. Yet an alliance commanding over one-third of the votes had been left with less than one sixth of the seats. EDA polled 9.55 per cent of the vote but failed to secure the election of any of its candidates. The Populist Party won only 1.05 per cent of

however, was that the existence of the government was based on coalitions of the centre powers and that left the cabinet exposed to making and unmaking of alliances. See also f. 52.

⁶¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO/101803 R10114/9, Peake to Eden, 2 December 1952; Nikolakopoulos, *Parties and Parliamentary Elections-Κόμματα και Βουλευτικές*, pp. 108-109.

the votes and no seats. The Parliament was rounded out by two deputies from minor parties.⁶²

The new electoral law had achieved its stated purpose. It had produced a government with clear parliamentary majority. Papagos' triumph paved the way towards the formation of the first post-war stable, single-party, government. Papagos had managed to appeal to all non-communist forces. The Rally was indeed worthy of its name. It was to go on to enjoy eleven uninterrupted years of rule. Greek politics after November 1952 was quite different to that in the post-war years. Papagos would stay in power until his death in 1955. Yet even the passing of the Rally's charismatic founder did not dent its electoral prospects. Renamed the National Radical Union (ERE) it remained the party of government under Papagos' successor, Konstantine Karamanlis.⁶³

Papagos' victory came about because of changes in Greek politics. The communists and their surrogates had lost all but a hard core of support. The politicians of the Right, Centre and soft Left had discredited themselves by their behaviour during and after the civil war. The King had been unable to rally a royal party. Papagos, however, was a royalist whatever his disagreements with Paul. At least the victory of the Rally can be said to have secured respect and a degree of influence for the Palace. The

⁶² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO/101800 R1017/49, Galsworthy to Barnes, 26 November 1952. Nikolakopoulos, *Parties and Parliamentary Elections-Κόμματα και Βουλευτικές*, pp. 108-109; Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece*, p. 31.

⁶³ The establishment of the Rally's majority became a matter of controversy. Papagiannopoulos, notes that it was the result of Papagos himself and his strong administrative capacities. Papagiannopoulos, *Field Marshal A. Papagos-Στρατάρχης Αλέξανδρος Παπάγος*, pp. 480-486; Left-wing historian Dafnis, writes that Papagos brought totalitarianism by supporting exclusively the new post-war bourgeois. Dafnis quoted in Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 524. Another pro left-wing Greek historian Linardatos writes that Papagos enjoyed the support of the Americans, who brought him to power. Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 524. Stefanidis also supports that Papagos was the result of American 'overt intervention'. In Stefanidis, *The United States, Great Britain and Greece*, p. 229. Giannouloupoulos suggests that Papagos succeeded because he managed to change the political scenery of the Right since the elections of September 1951. In Giannouloupoulos, *Post-War World-Ο Μεταπολεμικός Κόσμος*, p. 300. It has been supported that the Rally's success lay in supporting the agrarian population. *History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 183. In fact, one can not ignore that the prominent characteristic of the majority system is the security of strong government in terms of parliamentary majority and stable single party formations. In this light, the case of the Rally was the typical consequence following the new law. The Rally's administration fitted the allies' policy in that it secured a strong, right-wing cabinet to govern a four-year term and make Greece part of the system of Western security and integrated member of NATO.

one institution of state that had enhanced its reputation was the Army. It had provided Papagos' springboard into power. It benefited greatly from his elevation. The IDEA officers who had been demobilised as a result of the coup of 30 May 1951 were reinstated in their offices. Some were appointed to key positions in the Greek government. A. Natsinas, a prominent IDEA officer, for instance, became the head of the newly created Greek Government Information Service (KYP).⁶⁴ The final piece in the political jigsaw, it is true, had been put in place by the United States. Peurifoy's decisive intervention had undermined resistance to the electoral law. Even under the previous electoral law, however, the Rally would have emerged as overwhelmingly the strongest party. The new system that the Americans had insisted on nevertheless was a key element in the system's enduring stability. This is a long way from saying that the Rally was the creation or even the puppet of the western allies. After the elections Sir Charles Peake wrote that he and Peurifoy were 'delighted' by the result. Yet both they and their predecessors had attempted to use their influence to obviate the need for the Papagos solution. Their preferred solution had been always been a stable coalition government of the Centre. But the Centre would not hold; things repeatedly fell apart. The Anglo-American influence on Papagos' victory was of decisive importance. They had merely made it clear that they would no longer help either politicians or the Palace in their attempts to thwart the clear will of the Greek people. Eventually, it was the new electoral law, which made the allies' expectations true.

⁶⁴*History of the Greek Nation-Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. 16, p. 184; Th. Veremis, 'The Military', Featherston, Katsoudas (eds.), *Political Change in Greece*, pp. 218-219.

VI Greece's Accession to NATO: 1952

Greece and NATO's Southern Flank

One result of the Korean War was that measures to secure Europe and the Middle East against Communism became even more important to the western allies. According to a NSC paper dated 6 February 1951 Greece constituted 'a symbol of the ability of the United States to effectively assist nations threatened with communist domination'.¹ George McGhee, Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East, South Asia and Africa wrote to Acheson that if the West was to make wartime use of the Middle East oil, bases and manpower, further political and military action was required.² In consequence, thoughts turned to ways in which both Greece and Turkey, with whom it had been twinned in such deliberations since the Truman doctrine, might be strengthened.³ In the American conception Greece constituted the linchpin between Europe and the Middle East. These two areas the Americans regarded as being

¹ FRUS (1951): 5, 451-461: NSC 103, 'The Position of the US with Respect to Greece', 6 February 1951; Documents of the NSC 1947-1977, NSC 103, 'The Position of the US with Respect to Greece', 6 February 1951, Reel 3, Frame 0055. This also coupled with the American Foreign policy for raising military expenditures by January 1950 and NSC 68 later on in September. In December 1950 as a result of the Korean War, the rearmament efforts and the US reinforcements to Europe, D. Eisenhower was appointed as the first Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). On 2 April 1951 Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) was created in Paris, under Eisenhower within the context of the employment of American troops in Europe.

² McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO*, p. 79. McGhee was American Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East, South Asia and Africa since 8 June 1949 and American Ambassador to Turkey and Chief of the United States Aim Mission (T) from December 1951 to 19 June 1953.

³ According to some historians Turkey was the key issue in bringing the Americans closer to the south-eastern Mediterranean area. McGhee suggests that the Americans wanted to expand American control to the Straits. McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection*, pp. 74-76; M.P. Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy and the Cold War: the United States, Turkey and NATO, 1945-1952', *Journal of American History*, vol. 71, no 4 (1985), 823. Leffler emphasises the American interest in including Turkey and Greece into NATO as a result of the rise of nationalism in the Middle East and Turkey's fear of neutrality in case of general Soviet attack. Leffler, *A Preponderance*, p. 425. Couloumbis attributes the inclusion into NATO to the rapid American global ascendancy. Couloumbis, *Greek Political Reaction to Americans and NATO*, p. 19. Kuniholm estimates that the invitation to Turkey and Greece to join NATO was not the effect of the Korean War, but the struggle for power in the Near East policies against Soviet ventures, as outlined by 1946. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East*, p. 425. Nevertheless, despite the fear of Turkish neutrality, the actual treaty of Turkish and Greek admission into NATO was vague on that point. So the use of Turkey's land and manpower seemed to be more realistic motivation.

interdependent in both peacetime and war.⁴ Greek governments had long wanted Greece to become fully-fledged member of NATO. The prime objective of the Greek governments' foreign policy had always been the securing of western military assistance. In spring 1951, the Greek Prime Minister, Venizelos, made a petition for extending Greece's role to a full NATO member. The reason for this call was the protection of Greece against a probable Soviet attack. The experience of the civil war and the escalation of the Cold War had made the communist threat a vivid danger.⁵ In 1951 their requests began to be taken seriously. Nevertheless the internal politics of NATO meant that the road to Greek membership was not entirely straightforward.

In February 1951 the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff began lobbying for enhanced Greek military strength. They suggested that the manpower ceiling for the Greek armed forces should be raised by one-third to 164,000 men. These increases and more general support for the Greek army would be financed by increased American aid.⁶ On 8 March 1951, Admiral Carney, the Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces in Southern Europe, suggested that all the countries of the Northern Mediterranean should be considered as parts of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe's right flank. Dwight Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) also favoured the enlargement of his European Command. As a result, on 30 April 1951, Truman and Acheson agreed that the accession of Greece and Turkey into NATO should become the openly-expressed policy of the American administration.⁷

⁴ FRUS (1951): 5, 451-461: S. Everett Gleason (Acting Executive Secretary of the NSC) NCS report, 6 February 1951; Documents of the NSC 1947-1977, NSC 103/1, 'The Position of the US With Respect to Greece', 14 February 1951, Reel 3, Frame 0070.

⁵ FRUS (1951): 3, 508-510: Peurifoy to Acheson, 13 April 1951.

⁶ FRUS (1951): 5, 50-60, 70: Conference of Middle Eastern Chiefs of Mission, Istanbul, 14-21 February, 1951; Documents of the Joint Chief of Staff (thereafter JCS), JCS 1798/58, Additional Military Aid to Greece, 15 February 1951, Reel 4, Frame 0015; McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection*, pp. 78-85.

⁷ FRUS (1951): 3, 479-485: Carney to Eisenhower, 8 March 1951; FRUS (1951): 3, 501-505: Acheson to Marshall, 24 March 1951. Eisenhower in early 1950 had become Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). The Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) had its political headquarters in Paris. The regional southern European command headquarters in Naples was directly subordinate to the

The British were also interested in incorporating Greece and Turkey into NATO. On 17 May 1951 British policy, as outlined by the Foreign Secretary, Herbert Morrison, was targeted at associating Turkey with the defence of Middle East.⁸ This association would, it was hoped, extend American military commitments into the Eastern Mediterranean. Britain saw NATO's enlargement to include Greece and Turkey as a possible means to deal with the Anglo-Egyptian impasse of British rights over Suez. The Middle East Command that the British had long wanted to form might prove more palatable to the British if it was linked to NATO. Consequently Morrison was inclined to support Greece's application for NATO membership.⁹ The British Minister of Defence, Emmanuel Shinwell, came to much the same conclusion. Shinwell emphasised the strategic importance of Greece against 'enemy forces' and the importance of the American commitment to defend the area. The military presence of NATO, he argued, would deter the Soviet threat from entering the Eastern Mediterranean.¹⁰

When the Cabinet discussed the proposals presented by Morrison and Shinwell their major concern was no longer the principle of Greek membership into NATO – its desirability was conceded. What really concerned the British was the question of command arrangements in the Mediterranean. The Chiefs of Staff argued that Greece and Turkey should not be a part of Eisenhower's command but instead should join a British Supreme Allied Commander Middle East (SACME). Ideally the putative Middle East Command would be linked to NATO and the American Sixth Fleet Commander

SACEUR. The expansion of the regional planning groups with supreme allied commands showed the massive defence structure undertaken by the American military aid by early 1950.

⁸ FRUS (1951): 5, 104-106: informal United States-United Kingdom discussions, 2 April 1951; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 129/45, CP (51) 130, memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Admission of Greece and Turkey to NATO, 17 May 1951.

⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 129/45, CP (51) 132, 'Strategic Importance of Greece and Turkey', 17 May 1951; HC Deb, 1951, vol. 488, col. 198, 30 May 1951; E. Athanassopoulou, *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests 1945-1952* (London, 2000), pp. 207-211.

¹⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 21/1967, CP (51) 132, note by the Minister of Defence, 'Turkey and Greece and NATO', 17 May 1951; CAB 129/45, CP (51) 132, 'Strategic Importance of Greece and Turkey', 17 May 1951.

would be under SACME.¹¹

This plan faced obvious difficulties. Neither Greece nor Turkey was willing to place their forces under British command either in the Mediterranean or the Middle East. Both countries wanted their forces to report to a United States general and be part of the NATO European army.¹² Their primary thought was of American beneficence. Political leaders were convinced that in order to support their general in Europe the United States would loosen the purse strings. Although Marshall Aid was drawing to a close Greece could expect new ports and airports as the first stage of an American reconstruction of their infrastructure.¹³ The Greek military too were keen to prioritise the American connection. A round of military talks was held in Athens and Ankara under General Bradley (Joint Chiefs of Staff), Field Marshal Slim (Commander of the Imperial General Staff) and their colleague French General Licheres in October 1951. According to Bradley's report the Greek Chiefs of General Staff wanted to place their forces under Eisenhower's command. They believed that the inclusion of Greek ground forces in SACEUR's southern command would turn Greece into the master in the Balkan theatre in terms of military power and prestige. The Royal Hellenic Navy, the Greeks argued, should be under the command of the Sixth Fleet.¹⁴ They opposed the alternatives favoured by the British – the inclusion of the Aegean and the islands within the Middle East Command, the Greek Navy under the control of the British Supreme Commander for the Middle East and a separate command for the Greek and Turkish

¹¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 4/43, COS (51) 84, COS Committee meeting, 21 May 1951; DEFE 5/31, COS (51) 309, COS Committee meeting, 28 May 1951. For an account of the culmination and failure of MEC see Devereux, *The Formulation of British Defence*, pp. 55-64.

¹² Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, pp. 42-46. On these lines it also supported that Turkey was willing to play the Middle Eastern role asked by the West as soon as Turkey became a NATO member. In, F. Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy, 1950-1975* (London, 1977), p. 392. Nevertheless, neither Turkey nor Greece did join such an organisation of collective security as Middle East Defence Organisation or Middle East Command, which anyway was shelved by 1953 in the light of NATO and the Baghdad Pact, ratified two years later.

¹³ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 128 23/19, CC 5(51), 8 November 1951. G. McGhee, *Envoy to the Middle World* (New York, 1983), p. 218.

¹⁴ FRUS (1951): 3, 594-595: Peurifoy to Acheson, 12 October 1951; Grigoropoulos, *Field Marshal A.*

forces under a British general.¹⁵

Neither would the Americans accept British predominance in an area where the main naval and air strength was provided by the USAF and the USN. Carney was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the United States Naval Forces in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean to support Eisenhower not to divide American power in the Mediterranean and Europe.¹⁶ The most that the Americans were willing to concede was a suggestion, never acted on, that Turkey might co-operate in the defence of the Middle East Supreme Command under a British Supreme Commander whilst Greece would come under SACEUR's command but be linked with Middle East Command headquarters.¹⁷

In reality the manoeuvres surrounding Greece and Turkey's relationship to NATO increasingly tended towards the extrusion of British interests. The British might applaud the overall concept but when they expressed concerns about details they were overruled.¹⁸ The decision to accept Greece and Turkey into NATO was finally taken at

Papagos-Στρατάρχης Αλέξανδρος Παπάγος, pp. 475-477.

¹⁵ FRUS (1951): 3, 713-714: Middle East Command and Place of Turkey and Greece in the NATO Command Set-up, 23 November 1951; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95129 R1051/3, Eden to Peake, 14 December 1951.

¹⁵ FRUS (1951): 3, 613-616: Peurifoy to Acheson, 28 December 1951. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 5/33, COS (51) 567, Field Marshal W. Slim, 4 October 1951; FRUS (1951): 3, 594-595: Peurifoy to Acheson, 12 October 1951; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 128, 23/19, CC (51) 5, Conclusions of Cabinet meeting, 8 November 1951; From mid-October, the Egyptian Parliament voted bills to evacuate the British troops from Egypt and abolish the British rule in Sudan, which acknowledged its unity with Egypt. Cyprus was the site of the British Middle East command headquarters in Middle East. Devereux gives a detail analysis of the MEC plans, however, he omits the European dimension of British security considerations.

¹⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 129, CP (51) 130, Memorandum by Morrison, 'Admission of Greece and Turkey to the NAT', 17 May 1951. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 131/10, DO (51) 18, Cabinet Defence Committee, 2 July 1951; FRUS (1951): 3, 475-486: 8 March 1951; FRUS (1951): 3, 551-552: Draft Memorandum Prepared by John Ferguson of the Policy Planning Staff, 6 July 1951.

¹⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 131/10, DO (51) 18, Minutes of the Cabinet Defence Committee, 2 July 1951; FRUS (1951): 3, 551-554: Command in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East, 6 July 1951.

¹⁸ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/11923 R262, Wright, British Embassy in London, to G.W. Harrison, Northern Department-Foreign Office, Admission of Greece and Turkey, 3 September 1951; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), CAB 128, 29/54, CM60 (51), minutes of Cabinet meeting, 27 September 1951.

the Ottawa conference on 22 October 1951.¹⁹ The Greek liberal and conservative world welcomed the news. Advantages of Greece's inclusion into NATO revolved around the military and economic benefits. It was also estimated that public expenses for defence would be decreased by approximately fifty per cent whereas financial assistance would increase by \$ 100-200 million per year. There were drawbacks involved as well including fear from all perspectives of political circles of high expenditure on armaments to be imposed to Greece. Naturally, however, advantages compensated for all disadvantages.²⁰

Despite agreements, the new Conservative government of Winston Churchill kept plugging away at the command issue.²¹ They enjoyed little more success than their Labour predecessors. The formal inclusion of Greece in NATO was ratified at the Lisbon meeting in February 1952. On 15 February 1952, the Military Committee of the

¹⁹ Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands expressed reservations on NATO's enlargement to non-Northern countries on conditions of geographical proximity, political organisation, culture and religion in the case of Turkey. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/11923 R262, Wright, British Embassy in London, to G.W. Harrison, Northern Department-Foreign Office, Admission of Greece and Turkey, 3 September 1951

²⁰ Grigoropoulos, *From the Top of the Hill- Απο την Κορυφή του Λόφου*, pp. 514, 521-522; The Left, as expected, came out against NATO alliance for the latter deliberately dissuaded Greece from smoothing or enlarging its relations with Bulgaria and Albania, which led to maintaining tension in the Balkans. Couloumbis, *Greek Political Reactions to American and NATO Influences*, pp. 34-41; Valinakis, *Introduction to the Greek Foreign Policy-Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική*, p. 50. Major General Andrew Siapkarakas, Greek Army, 'The Importance of Greece to NATO', *Military Review*, August (1961), 90-97. The author notes that Greece was accepted into NATO because it suited western standards. Siapkarakas' argument should be treated with caution because he overestimates Greece's importance on a national and international level, especially *vis a vis* Turkey. Siapkarakas' report, however, is important because it is one of the few documents of Greek officials on Greece's perceptions towards NATO. The archives of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs on NATO are still restricted for research. From another point of view, Lt. Col. Edward R. Wainhouse, writes that the only valuable element Greece possessed for a foreign power was its geographic position. Wainhouse, 'Guerrilla War in Greece', in Osanka (ed.), *Modern Guerrilla Warfare*, pp. 217-227. Both authors, however, have presented the two opposite sides of the matter. In practice, a series of bilateral policies and necessities had brought all parts together.

²¹ FRUS (1952-1954): 9, 168-170: 'Middle East Command', 4 January 1952; FRUS (1952-1954): 6, 774-777: Third formal meeting of President Truman and Prime Minister Churchill, 8 January 1952; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 5/36, COS (52) 11, 3 January 1952. FRUS (1951): 5, 257-264: NSC report, 27 December 1951; The Greek historians tend to acquire an American point of view and support that 'Churchill's government marked the disintegration of the empire', Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 353. Accordingly, 1947 and thereafter signified the 'change of guard' from Britain to the US in sustaining the lifeline of pro-Western Greece, whereas the formation of NATO was the vivid proof of American predominance. Th. Veremis, 'The Military', in Featherstone and Katsoudas (eds.), *Political Change in Greece*, p. 217; Tsoucalas, *The Greek Tragedy* (London, 1969), p. 109. However, Britain deserves to be given credits for putting the foundations of American assistance. Moreover, Britain had a secondary but important role in NATO command arrangements.

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Standing Group agreed to include Greek and Turkish ground armed forces in Eisenhower's general command and specifically under Admiral Carney's (CINCSOUTH) command. A Greek and a Turkish general would control their countries' respective land forces. Each would report directly to Carney. The air forces of both Greece and Turkey would be placed under an American commander, who would be appointed by Admiral Carney.²² The British could do little other than consent to this arrangement. The only concession they won was a promise to link the Greek and Turkish navies to the British naval commander in the Mediterranean in his Middle East Command role. Yet even this promise was fairly meaningless. The exact nature of this linkage was not clarified. It most certainly did not mean direct command. In any case Middle East Command did not yet exist and no one could accurately predict when it would. NATO was the real game. In the end a compromise was devised to create a separate Eastern Mediterranean Command under Admiral Carney. This new Commander-in-Chief for the Mediterranean (CINCMED) would have his headquarters in Malta. On 18 December 1952, the naval forces of Greece and Turkey were placed under the authority of Admiral Louis Mountbatten, who was serving under Carney's command and the Sixth Fleet.²³

The British did not fare much better when it came to the details of Greek military affairs. Greece's inclusion in NATO made a rethink of the size, shape and role of its armed forces inevitable. During the fiscal year 1952-1953 the Greek state was estimated to be devoting forty-nine per cent of its budget to defence, as opposed to the

²² FRUS (1952-1954): 5, 178-179: North Atlantic Committee session, Lisbon, 26 February 1952; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101818 R1192/12, communiqué by HMG to the Royal Hellenic Government, 29 February 1952; Cmd. 8489 *Protocol Regarding the Accession of Greece and Turkey into NATO* (London, 1952); McGhee, *The US-Turkey*, p. 102; Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, p. 44.

²³ FRUS (1952-1954): 5, 352: Acheson to Truman, 17 December 1952; McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO*, p. 102. Command Arrangements as well as naval British presence in the Mediterranean are also discussed in E. J. Grove, *Vanguard to Trident* (London, 1987), pp. 104, 153-164. G. Tsitsopoulos, 'Oi Ελληνοτουρκικές Αμυντικές Σχέσεις 1945-1987' (The Greek-Turkish Defence Relations 1945-1987) in A. Alexandris, Th. Veremis, P. Kasakos, V. Koufoudakis, Ch. Rasakis, G. Tsitsopoulos (eds.) *Greek-*

thirty per cent spent by Britain. Moreover in March 1952 Greece was estimated to have numerically the largest army in relation to its population of all NATO member-states.²⁴

As a result a debate about the so-called 'defence burden' arose between the Greeks, the British and the Americans. Like the discussions over command arrangements the defence burden issue suggested that the Greeks were looking to the Americans rather than the British to shape the future. Yet the efforts the British made to influence these discussions highlights the fact that they had not lost an interest in Greek affairs.²⁵

The Defence Burden Debate

Kartalis, the Greek Minister of Co-ordination was determined to extract further allocations of cash from the Americans to cover the disproportionate amount of government expenditure dedicated to defence. During the civil war military expenditure had doubled from its pre-war levels. By 1952, however, the civil war had been over for three years and there was little danger of a recrudescence of a Communist military threat. Officials in Washington began to suggest that the bloated Greek defence establishment could be reduced without endangering either Greece's stability or its role in the Western alliance. These proposals were met with fierce resistance in Greece itself. Not only did the Greek government object to its loss of subsidies but so too did the US embassy and the economic mission.²⁶

In May 1952 formal discussions on the defence burden were launched in Athens. George Mavros, the Greek Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs met with Admiral Carney and the American Commanding Officers in Greece. The Americans proposed cuts in the

Turkish Relations 1923-1987- Οι Ελληνοτουρκικές Σχέσεις 1923-1987, (Athens, 1988), p. 182.

²⁴ Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 455-457.

²⁵ For an account of the left-wing historiography of Greece in N. Koulouris, *Greek Bibliography of the Civil War-Ελληνική Βιβλιογραφία του Εμφυλίου Πολέμου*; D. Haralampes, *Army and Political Power-Στρατός και Πολιτική Εξουσία* (Athens, 1985).

²⁶ B. Sweet-Escott, *Greece: A Political and Economic Survey* (Oxford, 1954), p. 158; FRUS (1952-1954): 1, 546-547; On Military Assistance and Defence Support to Greece, 18 August 1952; McNeill, *The Metamorphosis of Greece since WWII*, p. 232; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO

Greek defence budget. The Greek negotiators responded with the warning that any reduction in the size of the armed forces would undermine morale. A discontented army would threaten the new-found domestic and international stability that the two countries had been working to achieve. Lieutenant General Grigoropoulos, the Chief of the Greek General Staff, persistently resisted every attempt of the government to curtail the military budget, let alone the size of the Greek national forces. Carney was not impressed. He thought that the Greeks' insistence on maintaining all their military programmes was tantamount to graft. The Greeks were gold-plating every military request for their own glorification. Little military or political damage would be done, in Carney's view, if the Greek military was reduced to a realistic establishment. Ambassador Peurifoy, however, sided with the Greek point of view. He was not as sanguine as the NATO commander about the underlying stability in Greece. Carney saw an oversized and inefficient military. Peurifoy with his intimate knowledge of recent events knew how important it was to keep the Greek generals sweet – even at the cost of some expensive military toys. Faced with Peurifoy's opposition Carney proposed a compromise: the tables of establishment of the Greek forces should be kept the same but units should be reduced to smaller regular cadres that could be reinforced at times of crisis.²⁷

The Americans, however, were not the only ones interested in the defence burden issue. There were Anglo-Greek talks on the same issue. As a result of the Mediterranean command arrangement discussions a number of high-ranking British delegations visited Athens during the course of 1952. Each discussed expenditure as well as command. In May 1952 Admiral Carney was not the only NATO commander in Athens. The Deputy Supreme Commander, Lord Montgomery, arrived also.

371/101816 R1102/5, Peake to Eden, 2 September 1952.

²⁷ Linardatos, *From Civil War- Απο τον Εμφύλιο*, pp. 456-457.

Montgomery was typically outspoken. He thought it ridiculous that Greece was spending forty-five per cent of its national budget on defence and said so, openly. His solution was the same as Carney's: the Greeks should aim to create small but well-equipped armed forces with a well-trained reserve ready for emergencies. Montgomery, of course, went further in his criticisms than his NATO colleague. He said directly what many British, American and NATO officials thought: Greece was playing on a now non-existent Communist threat to justify over-expenditure and an unnecessary repressive political system. He argued that Plastiras was on the right lines: leniency rather than repression was the route to long-term stability. As Montgomery put it 'the true bulwark against Communism was an affluent citizen who trusted their leaders rather than prison bars'.²⁸

Lord Mountbatten, operating as a dual-hatted NATO and British Commander, visited Athens in July 1952. He too supported Carney and Montgomery's call for smaller armed forces. Mountbatten argued that since war was not imminent the NATO countries should concentrate on safeguarding their economic and political stability. Montgomery himself returned to the charge in September 1952 in a memorandum that suggested present levels of expenditure on Greek armed forces were wasteful of both NATO and Greece's limited resources.²⁹

The fact is that it was a British Field Marshal, albeit one operating in a NATO role, who was the least diplomatic critic of Greek policy, antagonised the Greek government and created a *froideur* in relations. The right-wing press were particularly outraged that Montgomery had gone out of his way to praise Plastiras rather than Papagos. Grigoropoulos, the Chief of the Greek General Staff, complained that Montgomery's suggestions caused confusion and undermined the efforts of the Greek

²⁸ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101794 R1013/11, Peake to Foreign Office, 21 May 1952; Grigoropoulos, *From the Top of the Hill- Απο την Κορυφή του Λόφου*, pp. 517-518.

²⁹ Grigoropoulos, *From the Top of the Hill- Απο την Κορυφή του Λόφου*, pp. 518-519.

General Staff to improve its performance. The American embassy was worried enough to persuade Montgomery to 'clarify' his remarks in a fashion that was less offensive to Greek sensibilities.³⁰

Montgomery and the other British, American and NATO commanders were only speaking the truth, however. The financial situation of Greece was indeed poor. The nation remained an underdeveloped country with limited productive capacity. Despite infusions of American aid the unstable and weak Greek governments of the post-civil war period had shown little aptitude for economic management. On 4 April 1952, for instance, Kartalis drew a gloomy picture of the Greek economy. Inflation was a constant problem in the financial sphere. Yet this was merely the symptom of underlying structural weaknesses. Industrial investment was dangerously low. Even more fundamentally agricultural productivity was very poor. Wages remained at roughly the same levels as in 1951, national income increased by only 1.5 per cent and counter-inflationary measures in 1951 had brought a marginal monetary stabilisation.³¹ The Greeks were not very good at their core economic activities.

Plastiras made a limited attempt to deal with these criticisms. In September 1952 he announced that compulsory military service would be reduced in length by one-third, from thirty-six to twenty-four months. This change would bring Greece into line with the other European members of NATO most of whom maintained a two-year term of military conscription. The reduction of the length of military service was – supposedly – designed to alleviate the problems of the government's finances by saving an estimated 500 million drachmae. In fact this was a sleight of hand. The expected military expenditure for the fiscal year 1952-1953 remained at the same levels of approximately two and a half billion drachmae as the previous year.³² The Greek government wanted to

³⁰ Linardatos, *From Civil War- Από τον Εμφύλιο*, p. 455.

³¹ Ibid., p. 448; B. Sweet Escott, *Greece: A Political and Economic Survey*, p. 48.

³² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101816 R1102/5, Peake to Eden, 2 September

give the impression that they were responding to allied demands. In reality they were planning to continue to spend beyond their means in the expectation that the Americans would finance their spendthrift plans under the cover of NATO solidarity. Plastiras also had a more pressing political rationale for this announcement – he hoped it would boost his popularity in the forthcoming general elections. His gambit failed utterly. It remains true, however, that there was now a consensus amongst the Greek political and military elite. They regarded Greece's entry into NATO as a triumph. It was a victory that obviated structural reforms in the economy or indeed rational economic management of any kind. NATO for the Greeks was a valuable constant.

The British Military Mission and the NATO Framework

At the highest levels of command the British were losing out. Once the Communist threat had receded politico-military relations were reduced much more to a simple financial transaction. This was the kind of transaction in which the British could not hope to compete with the Americans. At a lower level, however, there was a period of transition. British military personnel were still embedded within the Greek system.

Following the end of the civil war both the British Military Mission and the Joint United States Aid to Greece (JUSMAG) had decided to reduce their presence in Greece. The official task of both missions was to advise and assist the Greek General Staff in maintaining the national forces as an effective westernised army.³³ Both the British and

1952.

³³ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/904, Report by Brigadier G. D Browne, BMM in Athens, November 1950-June 1951. Within this context, the JCS decided to provide additional military aid to Greece. In fact, as a result of the Korean War and the American policy of containing the communists, the ceiling strength for the Greek military establishment was set to 94,700 to be attained by 31 December 1950; with the distribution of personnel: 80,000 Army, 8,500 Navy, 6,200 Air Force. On 15 September 1950, the JCS approved a further ceiling increase for the Greek armed force of 164,400: 147,000 for the Army, 10,000 Navy, 7,400 for the Greek Air Force. Similarly, on 15 February 1951 the NSC approved that the United States should undertake to maintain internal security in Greece, repelling any attempt of communist attack and finally bear an increasing percentage of the Greek economic burden. Records of the JCS, Part 2, Strategic Issues: Section 1, US Military Assistance, JCS 1798/58, 29

the Americans engaged, however, in more direct aid. They continued to lead 'intelligence gathering' patrols in the border areas.

The post-civil war objectives of the British Military Missions in Greece had been set out on 13 June 1950. Their first task of 'clearing the ground' was all but accomplished with the end of the civil war. The emphasis shifted therefore to the second task – 'building the house' as it was called. This involved the creation of self-sufficient armed forces, which in future, would be able to operate without constant guidance from British and American military advisers. For the British this transformation was to come about as much through professionalisation as it was through re-equipment.³⁴ The British set up Basic Training Centres all over the country, Training Establishments in Staff College, Specialist Training Centres, Army Schools, Corps Schools. These centres functioned under joint British and Greek command. The training centres replaced the old method of training whereby conscripts were called up directly into units. In the aftermath of the civil war, therefore, the average Greek soldier was much more likely to come into direct contact with British soldiers and British training methods. The British also introduced a more formal system for officer selection and promotion. This 'scientific' method was to replace the haphazard 'patronage' system that had operated up until then. It is remarkably important that from the 1950s onwards the majority of officers were academy graduates.³⁵

At the apex of the new system were two institutions. The War College prepared a small cadre of the most effective officers for future high military command. War

September 1951, Reel IV, Frame 0038.

³⁴ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 32/15547, Report on The Work of the BMM (Greece), by Major General C. D. Packard, 13 June 1950; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/908, A History of the BMM 1945-1952; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101818 R1192/23, A History of the BMM(G) 1945-1952.

³⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 32/15547, History of the BMM(G) 1945-1952, 13 June 1950; Greek Army Headquarters, *Ιστορία Οργανώσεως του Ελληνικού Στρατού -History of the Organisation of the Greek Army* (Athens, Dept. of Army History Publication, 1957) cited from Kourvetaris, 'The Greek Army Officer Corps Its Professionalism and Political Interventionism', in Janowitz, Van Doorn (eds.), *On Military Intervention*, pp. 170-190.

College graduates were eligible to attend the National Defence School, which brought them together with civil servants and politicians. Here a future nexus for civil-military relations and national leadership was to be created. The products of these institutions came to dominate military affairs in the post-civil war period. British officers were involved in setting up this higher training system. The Americans were also influential at this level. Selective officers were also trained at training courses in the United States within the JUSMAPG context. Nevertheless it can be seen that British procedures and patterns of thought had been inculcated in the Greek military at all levels.³⁶ By the very nature of a hierarchical military establishment these influences, once implanted, would last for a generation.

The success of the joint British and American undertaking to re-organise the Greek Army consisted not only in the final defeat of the insurgents but also in the introduction of military professional education and training of the national forces. This was reflected in the acceptance of the status of Greek officers among their fellow NATO members.³⁷ After 1949 the Greek armed forces became, relative to their past, a less politicised organisation modelled on other western armies.³⁸ This transformation should

³⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/ 895, Major General E.E. Down report, June 1947-November 1949; WO 32/15547, History of the BMM 1945-1952. Table of the Army General Staff, 3rd Office of Education of the Officers, Athens, cited in Kourvetaris, 'The Greek Army Officer Corps', in Janowitz, Van Doorn (eds.), *On Military Intervention*, p.171. The training of the local national armies with the aim to make them capable of defending their nation was a typical task undertaken by both the BMM and JUSMAG. Training centres and training officers operated in particular areas of interests world wide as well as one of the most critical aspects of foreign involvement in a country. An American mission operated in Vietnam from the beginning of 1954 to support United States involvement in Southeast Asia. See: J. L. Collins (ed.), *The Development and Training of the South Vietnamese Army 1950-1972* (Washington, 1986).

³⁷ Greek Army Headquarters, *Ιστορία Οργανώσεως του Ελληνικού Στρατού -History of the Organisation of the Greek Army* (Athens, Dept. of Army History Publication, 1957) cited from Kourvetaris, 'The Greek Army Officer Corps Its Professionalism and Political Interventionism', in Janowitz, Van Doorn (eds.), *On Military Intervention*, pp. 155-201.

³⁸ The Greek army was a highly politicised corps, which from the inter-war years had attempted a number of coups and counter-coups: 1922, 1926, 1933, 1935 and 1943. After the end of the civil war, not only did it develop professional self-image, but also a coherent ideological identity: keep itself out of politics, defend stability and peace in Greece and prevent communists from seizing power again. There is also the view that the Greek officers began to stage autonomous coup d'états between the two great wars-a period of a general parliamentary crisis in Greece. Most inter-war coups, however, sought to replace one civilian order with another rather than permanently hand over the government to the army. In this light, only the coup of April 1967 constituted a direct intervention of the army into politics, when the military elite

not be overstated, of course. As the American historian William McNeill observed 'a professional corps of officers', approximately 15,000 strong, had become, in their own eyes, the 'special guardian' of Greece.³⁹ A certain *metastasis* (transformation) did occur. Yet this is not to say that the Greek forces became a depersonalised and non-politicised corps. Western norms were present in the dominant value system but they were often relegated to a second or subsidiary level.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the British Military Mission and Joint United States Military Advisory Group did give the Greek national forces a more professional self-image.

British influence was far from negligible during the transitional period between the end of the civil war and Greece's entry into NATO. Nevertheless, Greece's inclusion into NATO resulted in the British decision to withdraw its Air, Army and Police missions.⁴¹ D. F. Murray of the Southern Department of the Foreign Office, explained that if Greece joined NATO under Admiral Carney's command, 'there would seem to be little purpose in retaining dwindling British Missions' in Greece.⁴² According to the Air Commander, British Military Mission to Greece, the RAF Mission 'will be negligible and barely worth considering'. He concluded that the mission should be run down and its duties handed over to the Americans.⁴³ The Americans themselves were happy with this arrangement. The Chief of the JUSMAG to Greece Major General Frederick (who

managed a dominant state apparatus. For a general account of the role of the military in Greek politics, see Th. Veremis, *The Military in Greek Politics* (London, 1997). The author suggests that the change of military attitude occurred in the 1980s with the prevalence of populism under the socialist government.

³⁹ McNeill, *The Metamorphosis of Greece since WWII*, pp. 97-98.

⁴⁰ According to the eminent statesman, Panayiotis Kanellopoulos, who served as Minister of Defence in several post-war cabinets, IDEA members succeeded promotions and vital appointments through the 1950s and 1960s. The most important of these appointments was the choice of General Kardamakis as Head of the General Staff. P. Kanellopoulos, *Historical Essays-Ιστορικά Δοκίμια* (Athens, 1975), pp. 26-44.

⁴¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95157 R1641, minute by Murray, 8 November 1951, 21 December 1951; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), PREM 11/914, Report on 'Future of British Service Missions in Greece', 21 November 1951; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 216/473, Notes from General Perowne, 25 March 1952; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 216/473, W.S. Slim report, 18 April 1952.

⁴² PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95141 R1192/15, D.F Murray, 15 August 1951.

⁴³ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95141 R1192/15, memorandum by R. Barnes, 23 August 1951; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), AIR 20/8439, D. G Lewis- Commanding RAF

had succeeded Jenkins in May 1951) believed that the British Military Mission in Greece had outlived its usefulness and should be dissolved by mutual agreement. The American Ambassador in Greece, Peurifoy, saw no advantages in retaining the British Military Mission. He noted that the British should 'withdraw voluntarily at the time of final adjustment of command relationship in Eastern Mediterranean'. The Joint Chiefs of Staff concluded that the withdrawal of the British military mission would have no adverse impact on the efficiency of the Greek armed forces. They noted that those functions not taken over by the Americans would be filled by a small number British liaison-advisor officers left behind.⁴⁴ In early January 1952, thirteen British police officers, for instance, would remain at *Gendarmerie* training schools.⁴⁵ The strength of the RAF Mission was reduced to 3 junior officers: one Air Attaché and two assistants, one of whom would be concerned solely with questions of supply for the Greek Air Force and detached permanently to work with the American Mission. The other would be appointed to the British embassy in Athens.⁴⁶ Army officers would remain affiliated to JUSMAG(G) that remained in Greece under Major General Charles Hart. The executive responsibility for the remaining British officers would also be transferred to the Chief of JUSMAG.⁴⁷ On 29 February 1952, General Perowne announced formally that the missions would cease to exist on 30 April 1952 'having accomplished' their duties and being replaced by NATO's services.⁴⁸

Mission in Greece, 7 September 1951.

⁴⁴ Records of the JCS, Part 2, Strategic Issues: Section 1, US Military Assistance, JCS 1798/59, 23 August 1951, Reel IV, Frame 0038; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/96551 WU11923/272, Ottawa Meeting, 17 September 1951.

⁴⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101830 WG 1643/1, Report by J. C. A Roper, British Embassy to Athens, 5 January 1952.

⁴⁶ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/101818 WG1192/2, D. F. Murray, 10 January 1952.

⁴⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/906, Major General Commander LECM Perowne, 29 February 1952; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 216/473, S. Venizelos to General Perowne, 26 April 1952. Churchill College Archives, Cambridge, Noel Baker Papers, 4/350, 12 May 1952, press cutting without title.

⁴⁸ Brigadier G. P. Hobbs is a typical intelligence officer, who worked in Greece as Chief Staff Officer, BMM(G) 1942-1947, Colonel of Liaison 1947-1949, Military Attaché in Athens 1954-1957. Major General H. L. Boatner, JUSMAG (G) on 18 January 1955 noted Hobbs as 'leading figure' in the British

The British Naval Mission, however, proved an exception. Britain intended to remain a significant naval power in the Mediterranean. 'Showing the flag' in the Mediterranean was the symbol of British naval power. In the purely Greek context they took a close and continuing interest in naval communications between Cyprus and the Greek mainland.⁴⁹ The British Naval Mission was to continue to 'assist in the defence of the Middle East and fight alongside the British Mediterranean Fleet' despite the presence of the United States Sixth Fleet in the Aegean and the Mediterranean basin.⁵⁰ The British Naval Mission only came to end on 15 October 1955, when it was decided that its head Admiral Selby would not be replaced. According to the official statement the reason for the withdrawal of the Mission was financial.⁵¹ Admiral Selby himself noted, however, that other considerations lay behind the decision to 'wind up' the mission and turn its functions to a lower ranking British Naval Attaché. By 1955 the Greek government was no longer subordinating the question of Cyprus to the need to integrate in the western alliance. Instead they were consciously whipping up anti-British feeling over Cyprus. In addition a new American Commander in the Mediterranean,

Espionage Service with the aim to maintain Greece under the British influence. King's College London Archives, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, Brig. G. P. Hobbs Papers, 16/1-13 NID.

⁴⁹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), ADM 1/23715, Report of Head of British Naval Mission, 1-5/1952; FO 371/95141 R1192/15, memorandum by D. F. Murray, 28 August 1951.

⁵⁰ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95141 R1192/15, minute by Cheetman-Foreign Office, 20 September 1951; FO 371/95141 R1192/21, minute by Morrison, 22 November 1951. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), ADM 1/23538, M0193/52, 22 January 1952; FO 371/95141 R1192/15, meeting in Foreign Office on Service Missions, 28 August 1952; ADM 116/6330, 24 October 1955.

National Library of Scotland, Rear Admiral Robert Kirk Dickson Papers, Head of the BNM in Athens 1949-1951, MS 13587 (207-214), 30 September 1949, 13 October 1951. Accordingly, it was claimed that the Greek Navy had 90 British vessels, including 6 submarines, but only 42 American vessels and a high proportion of the largest ships were British. PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 371/95141 R1192/15, Cheetman-Foreign Office to Parker H.-Ministry of Defence, 20 September 1951. There is also the reason that the British withdrew their Air, Army and Police Missions for economic reasons while they kept their Naval Mission in Greece with the aim of linking the Greek and Turkish naval forces to MEC through a British Allied Naval Commander for the Mediterranean. In Stefanidis, *The United States, Great Britain and Greece*, p. 101. This latter version, however, does not explain the timing the Mission withdrew in October 1955 when both Greece and Turkey were already under NATO's command.

Moreover the missions were not so numerous to be an unbearable cost.

⁵¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), ADM 1/23538, M0193/52, Report of Head of BNM(G) Rear Admiral Smith (1951-1953), 22 January 1952; *The Times*, 15 October 1955; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), PREM 11/914, Ward-Head of Southern Department 1955- to H. Caccia-Private Secretary, 24 October 1955; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), ADM 116/6330, M370/18/55, Report on Future of BNM (G), 25 October 1955.

Admiral Fechteler 'did not want us [the British]'.⁵² According to the agreement between the Foreign Office, the Admiralty and the Greek authorities the Mission would remain on a 'dormant basis' to 'keep an eye' on the Mediterranean area and provide Britain with a naval listening post.⁵³

UNSCOB and Balkan Cold War Policy

It should be noted in passing that a further symbol of residual British influence was disbanded in 1952. As far back as January 1947 an *ad hoc* United Nations Committee had arrived in Greece to investigate the accusations of the Greek government that its northern neighbours were assisting the Communists, by providing shelter, supplies, military equipment and economic assistance.⁵⁴ The Committee consisted of eleven members of whom Britain was one. The Committee was succeeded by UNSCOB (United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans) whose formation was mandated by the General Assembly on 21 October 1947.⁵⁵ Its base was Salonika and its mission was to mediating and reconciling between the four neighbouring countries of Greece; Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Albania and Romania that directly supported the Greek communists.⁵⁶

⁵² King's College London Archives, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, Rear Admiral Selby Papers, GB 99 KCLMA Selby. Rear Admiral Selby was Head of BNM(G) 1953-1955. Of all the alternatives the most convincing seem to be the strengthening of the presence of NATO and Americas' predominance.

⁵³ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), ADM 116/6330, Rear Admiral W. H. Selby, 18 October 1955, 24 October 1955, 30 December 1955; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), PREM 11/914, 24 October 1955.

⁵⁴ The driving force behind America's motivation to send the UN committee was the typical Cold War suspicion of Soviet expansionism. The British had hoped by 1945 that the UN would reinforce their role in the area. DBPO: 1, 102, Sargent, 11 July 1945.

⁵⁵ FRUS (1947): 5, 865-889: Marshall to Austin (US Representative at the United Nations), June-September 1947; A. Nachmani, *International Intervention in the Greek Civil War: The United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans. 1947-1952* (New York, 1990); The committee consisted of Britain, US, Soviet Union, France, China, Belgium, Syria, Poland, Colombia, Australia and Brazil. UNSCOB was a western product. An unarmed observer operation rather than a peacekeeping force of the type subsequently deployed by the United Nations in the Sinai, Gaza Strip, Congo, Cyprus, Golan Heights, Lebanon and elsewhere to serve western intelligence needs. H. N. Howard, 'Greece and its Balkan Neighbours (1948-1949): The United Nations Attempts at Conciliation', *Balkan Studies* 7 (1966), 3.

⁵⁶ *United Nations Resolution*, Security Council, Series II, 1946-1947, Reports on Communist Activities, p. 38. *United Nations Resolution*, General Assembly, Series I, Reports on 30 September, 21 October, 3

Greece's inclusion into NATO called the necessity of the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans into question. UNSCOB's mandate had been renewed since the end of the civil war because it had some marginal usefulness in intelligence gathering. During 1951 it was called on to counter Cominform propaganda in the Balkans. On many occasions the committee had undertaken to repudiate Cominform propaganda in the Balkans. The governments of Albania and Yugoslavia accommodated the large number of Greek armed communist refugees, who had escaped to these countries in 1949. The Greek Communist 'Free Greece' radio station continued to operate from Romanian territory, transmitting instructions to the so-called 'fighters' of the movement. The Special Committee assembled evidence to demonstrate that Communist states were continuing to aid the KKE. The committee's annual report to the sixth United Nations general assembly claimed that tension persisted in the Balkans fermented by former 'guerrillas' who threatened 'the political and territorial integrity of Greece'.⁵⁷ However, UNSCOB's Cold War functions changed with NATO's enlargement. Although the Western Allies were still concerned about Soviet intentions the Americans reckoned that the admission of Greece into NATO provided a deterrent much stronger than any body of observers. As a result, in October 1951 they proposed the dissolution of UNSCOB. The intelligence part of its mission would be performed by an *ad hoc* sub-commission of the Peace Observation Committee (POC) under the United Nations auspices. A small observer group of 10-15 persons would be located in Greece to keep a watch on the Greek borders with Albania and Bulgaria.⁵⁸ The British supported the Peace Observation Committee proposal. The Greek government accepted

November 1947, pp. 203-205; *YearBook of the United Nations, 1947-1948*, 21 October 1947, pp. 298-302; *YearBook of the United Nations, 1948-1949*, October 1948-July 1949, pp. 245-256; Howard, 'Greece and its Balkan Neighbours 1948-1949: The United Nations Attempts at Conciliation', *Balkan Studies* 7 (1966), 1-26.

⁵⁷ FRUS (1951): 5, 453: Staff Study by the NSC 'The Position of the US With Respect to Greece', 6 February 1951; FRUS (1951): 5, 493-498: Report of the UNSCOB, 'Conclusions', 15 August 1951.

⁵⁸ FRUS (1951): 5, 515-516: Memorandum by the director of the office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian

it in November 1951. UNSCOB was dissolved in February 1952.⁵⁹

It was Greece's entry into NATO in 1952 rather than the Truman Doctrine of 1947 that marked a turning point in Anglo-Greek relations. In the period between 1947 and 1952 Britain remained an important player in Greek political and military affairs. The British provided a great deal of practical help to the Greeks in military matters. Even in politics the British retained some influence, not least because of their relationship with the monarchy. In theory it benefited the Greek government to have two rather than one friendly power working with it. Yet, since the British almost always sided with the Americans, this advantage seemed by 1952 to be a wasting practical asset. It made little sense for the Greeks to align themselves with the British in debates about NATO command arrangements. As the Communist menace faded so too did fears of American hegemony. The Greeks wanted American money rather than British brains.

Affairs (Rountree) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (McGhee), 19 October 1951; FRUS (1951): 2, 514; Acheson to Truman, 21 November 1951.

⁵⁹ FRUS (1951): 5, 516: note 2 without name, 20 November 1951. Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat*, pp. 184-187; Details on the negotiations on the Balkan alliance are to be found in John Iatrides, *Balkan Triangle: Birth and Decline of an Alliance Across Ideological Boundaries* (The Hague, 1968).

Conclusion

This study has attempted to deconstruct a number of myths connected with Anglo-Greek relations in the 1940s and early 1950s. Both the traditional and revisionist historiography on Greek history tends to assume that 1947 brought about a British withdrawal from Greece that resulted from Britain's post-war financial difficulties. In fact both countries sought to maintain close bilateral relations for five years after the British note of February 1947 signalled the end of military aid. The British army did not withdraw from Greece until 1951. The British Military Mission remained involved with the National Army until 1952. In the short-term the American take-over of the Greek financial burden did not undermine British policy towards Greece. On the contrary, Britain's position was strengthened by America's backing.

The subject of Anglo-Greek relations in the late 1940s is a complex one. It was deeply affected by the Second World War, the Greek civil war and the Cold War. Each tended to push the British and the Greeks together rather than apart. The relationship of the two countries was based on common interests and bilateral security concerns. It was the relationship of a great power and a small and relatively poor country. The Greek governments looked to Britain as the power with the long-term traditional policy in the region and a well-established objective to keep Greece within a British sphere of influence. The British governments sought to maintain Greece as a buffer state to secure their routes to the Middle East, and later on, to secure Europe's borders from possible Soviet expansion.

The KKE thought of the British 'monarcho-fascists' as its main enemies and the main obstacle to its seizure of power. The Party accused the British of provoking the civil war in Greece by supporting undemocratic Greek governments and their 'white terror'. In their turn the British were convinced that the KKE intended to use EAM as a

springboard for seizing power and subjugating Greece to Stalinism. British policy on Greece was strongly influenced by the mounting evidence of Soviet expansionism in the Balkans and the Middle East.

British policy towards Greece was formulated on the premise that it was necessary to have a regime in power that would accommodate British interests in the area. The first prerequisite for the establishment of such regime was the defeat of the insurgency. The second objective was the establishment of a broad-based government that would be acceptable to the majority of the Greek population. British aims during the years under examination remained relatively constant.

The implementation of British policy, however, revolved around a complicated policy of intervention. Bevin blended intervention and non-intervention throughout the years under examination. The Labour foreign policy enjoyed a high degree of bipartisan support. Professional diplomats too understood that the Labour Foreign Secretary was pursuing traditional British interests. The Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, Sir Orme Sargent, asserted in November 1945, for instance, that the new government would maintain the Greek commitment but by 'other and more discreet methods'. The Labour cabinet was committed to the ideals of 'anti-imperial' policy and 'non-intervention'.¹ They had to modulate the rhetoric surrounding their policy rather than its reality, however. The most spectacular British intervention in the civil war had occurred under the wartime coalition when, during the 'December Events', Churchill had ordered that British troops treat Athens as a 'conquered city'.² As a result of Churchill's decisive action his successors could afford to be more discreet. The British Army guaranteed Greece's territorial integrity rather than engaging in combat operations. The British troops who did go into combat were involved in directing and

¹ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), FO 800/276/GRE/45/10: Sargent Papers, Sargent to Leeper, 9 November 1945.

² Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 6, p. 252.

assisting Greek counter-insurgency operations. These operations by their very nature tended to cloud the degree of British involvement not least because they took place in remote areas where few journalists could be found. The Labour government followed the pattern of intervention as 'oscillating' intervention. If at all possible Britain would stand at one remove from the civil struggle. It would, however, intervene both militarily and politically at times of crisis only to withdraw once more once the crisis had passed. The trust that the Greek government put in the guarantee of its survival, provided by Britain, was underlined by the right-wing Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tsaldaris, even as the Truman Doctrine was promulgated.³

It would be correct to characterise British and American policy towards Greece as moving along parallel paths. Even before the crisis of February and March 1947 the United States had decided that it needed to become more militarily involved in the Mediterranean region. The British did not lure the Americans in. Rather they provided a good opportunity for the Truman administration to launch their new policy in public. This parallel development of policy explains why, on the whole, Anglo-American co-operation in Greece was so amicable. Neither side felt it was being 'used'.

During the course of 1948, however, with the appointment of General James Van Fleet, the United States consolidated their supremacy over the British in Greece. This does not imply that the British presence was not important, but that the Americans became the leading power in this collaboration. Each power maintained its own military missions acting in Greece with separate roles. In 1949 the Joint Chiefs of Staff urged the White House to maintain its 'predominant position' and to be nothing less than the 'senior partner' in a 'senior-junior' arrangement with Britain. The Americans wanted to maintain control over military assistance and 'hold in predominant position on all

³ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΟΥ ΑΡΧΕΙΟΥ-SERVICE OF HISTORICAL ARCHIVE, ATHENS (YIA), 1947, 46.1, 21502, Αναφορά του Τσαλδάρη προς το ΓΕΣ, 18 Μαρτίου 1947 (Tsaldaris' Report to GES, 18 March 1947).

fronts'.⁴ This, however, does not suggest that there were serious clashes between the two allies in Greece. Whatever the surface disagreements might be, the correlation of interests between Britain and the United States ran deep, and, in the end, the two countries were always prepared to support each other.

The Greek civil war was a complex military struggle. During its final two years the nature of the armed struggle itself was transformed from guerrilla to semi-conventional warfare. Guerrilla activities in the mountains were combined with conventional operations aimed at capturing cities. It was never a purely military struggle. Both sides were fighting for the 'hearts and minds' of the civilian population. The KKE used its *yiafka* network to organise the Party's activities whilst the Greek government created a number of civil guard organisations to fight the Democratic Army defenders. This type of warfare demanded sophisticated counter-insurgency operations from the National Army. They were not well prepared to carry out such operations. They lacked strategic imagination, tactical savvy and the willingness to engage the enemy more closely. Each of the missing components had to be inculcated by foreign military advisers. In the end, however, the war was one between Greeks. The British and the Americans could teach the National Army how to win the war but the government forces themselves had to win the victory. It says much for the skill and diplomacy of these advisers that they were able to motivate the Greek armed forces to the point where they could fight the war so competently. It is pointless to characterise the government forces as 'puppets' of foreign powers, whether Britain or America. If they had deserved this epithet then the war would never have been won.⁵

The British Military Mission comprised of army, air, navy and police divisions to train forces in its respective areas of interests. The British counter-insurgency role in

⁴ FRUS (1949): 6, 453, 455: Van Fleet to Department of Army, 7 November 1949.

⁵ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 202/892, WO Instructions for the formation of the National Army, June 1945; McNeill, *The Greek Dilemma*, p. 189.

Greece remained active throughout the civil war until the final defeat of the Democratic Army in October 1949. After 1947 American formations further reinforced the National Army's fight against the insurgents. JUSMAPG too was divided into three divisions – army, air, and navy. Tasks were divided between the BMM and JUSMAPG. The British Military Mission continued its training duties; JUSMAPG provided operational advice and supplies. Naturally the relationship between the two allied missions was not always easy. Yet the Anglo-American partnership not only trained the National Army to a state in which it could defeat the Communists, but made it a full and effective part of NATO.

The Greek counter-insurgency operations symbolised the determination of the West to contain communism. Britain's counter-insurgency effort in Greece was crucial. It was the British Chiefs of Staff who first introduced the three-stage strategy of 'clear-and-hold' in January 1947. This strategy called for and established a framework for military, political and intelligence co-operation that lay at the root of future successes.⁶ The strategy necessitated the retraining and re-organisation of the security forces by British units, instruction teams, and intelligence officers. The American 'staggered offence' strategy applied after Van Fleet's arrival involved these political and military practises. Moreover the British role was crucial in terms of air power. Air supplies and equipment, RAF personnel and RHAF training improved the RHAF's levels of performance. Air raids were of decisive importance against the Democratic Army defenders, who lacked any air cover.⁷ Many of the techniques developed by the British in Greece were applied elsewhere by both the British themselves and by the Americans.⁸

⁶ The first stage was the reorganisation of security forces. The second was propaganda organisation to counter balance *yiafka* and the third militarily 'clear' areas. Papagos, 'Guerrilla warfare' in Osanka (ed.), *Modern Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 236; PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), WO 261/637, BMM (G), On New Training Team, 30 January 1947.

⁷ PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW (PRO), DEFE 5/8, COS (48) 129, 22 October 1948; ΓΕΝΙΚΟ ΕΠΙΤΕΛΕΙΟ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ/ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ-GENERAL STAFF/DIRECTORATE OF HISTORY OF THE ARMY, ATHENS (ΓΕΣ/ΔΙΣ), 1012/A/6, Αναφορά του Αντιστράτηγου Γεωργίου Παπαγεωργίου, 27 Οκτωβρίου 1948 (Report by Lt. Gen. G. Papageorgiou, 27 October 1948).

⁸ Jones, *A New Kind of War*, p. 235.

The British role in Greek politics was equally creative. British diplomats consistently aimed at the creation of a stable coalition of the Centre. In politics Britain backed a coalition of the Centre with the aim of creating a stable government. In one sense the British were as successful in politics as they were in war. They managed to keep the whole democratic show on the road. The KKE and its front organisations could never gain enough purchase on the political system to fatally undermine the governance of Greece. In the end, however, British policy was undermined by unreliability of all the anti-communist politicians and parties. The dream of a stable coalition of the Centre was undermined by their inability to co-operate.

For Greece itself, the negative effects of the civil war were evident for years to follow. Political rivalry between the Right and the Left, between monarchists and republicans continued to divide the people. Concentration camps and political seclusion followed the communist identity during the decades that followed. The KKE remained illegal for almost thirty-five years.

The King and the royal Court were a constant destabilising factor in politics. The Palace exploited, for its own political interests, the fragmentation of Greek political forces and the willingness of certain politicians – such as Sofocles Venizelos – to bow to royal demands for parliamentary support. By 1950, IDEA had gradually established its loyalty to Papagos and had become the rallying point of officers whose professional ambitions were frustrated by the clients of the Court. The British tried to steer and restrain King Paul. British representatives treated the emergence of Papagos into politics with some scepticism. It was only when it became clear that Papagos did not plan a dictatorship that they swung their support behind him. The triumph of Papagos suggests that just as in military affairs Greek politicians went their own way. They too were to a great extent independent of the Allied powers.

Appendices

Appendix A: Principal Characters

A.1 Main Participants

Acheson Dean, US Secretary of State, 1949-1953.

Agnidis Th. Greek Ambassador in London, acting in 1947-1949.

Alexander A.V., Secretary of State for Defence in the British Labour Cabinet, 1946-1950.

Attlee Clement, Prime Minister of the British Labour government 1945-1951.

Burns J. F., US Secretary of State until 1947.

Bevin Ernest, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the British Labour administration, 1945-1950.

Browne G. D., Brigadier, Commander BMM(G) November 1950-June 1951.

Churchill Winston Spencer, British Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, 1940-1945; Prime Minister October 1951-April 1955.

Crawford, General Kenneth, Commander, British Land Forces, Greece, 1946-1947.

Cripps Stafford, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the British Labour cabinet, 1947-1950.

Dalton Hugh, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the British Labour cabinet, 1945-1947.

Dendroumis Vassilis, Greek Ambassador to Washington from 1950.

Dickson R.K., Rear Admiral, Head of the BNM(G), 1949-1951.

Down Ernest E., Major General, Commander BMM(G) 1948-1949.

Eden Anthony, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the British National Government, 1940-1945; Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Conservative cabinet, 1951-1955.

Eisenhower Dwight D., General Secretary of the Army, Supreme Commander, Allied Powers, Europe (SACEUR).

Forrestal James, Secretary of Defence, 1947-1949.

Frederick, Major General Robert, Chief of the JUSMAG (G) from May 1951.

George II, King of the Hellenes, Succeeded to throne, 1922; Abdicated, 1924; Recalled by plebiscite, 1935; Fled from Greece after German invasion, 1941; Recalled by plebiscite, 1946. Died in 1 April 1947. Succeeded by his brother Paul.

Gonatas Stylianos, General, Member of the Revolutionary Committee and Premier, 1922; Founded National Liberal Party, 1945; Minister of Public Works and Reconstruction in Cabinet of Tsaldaris, Apr. 1946-Jan.1947.

Grady Henry, US Ambassador to Greece, July 1948- March 1951; Chief US Mission

(G).

Grigoropoulos, Lieutenant, General Theodoros, Chief of the Greek General Staff, March-May 1951; Head of Greek National Defence Council from June 1951.

Griswold Dwight, Chief of US Mission in Greece 1947-1948.

Hobbs Godfrey, Lieutenant-Colonel, October 1944-February 1945 served in Greece in the BMM. March 1947-December 1949, as Colonel, served as associate between Greek General Staff and the BMM. During 1954-1957, Brigadier, was appointed military attaché during negotiations over Cyprus.

Ioannidis Ioannis, Member of the KKE Politburo.

Jenkins, Major General Reuben E., Chief of the JUSMAG (G), 1950.

Kanellopoulos Panayiotis, Professor of Sociology, Prime Minister November 1945; Leader of the National Radical Union, acting Minister in all cabinets, joined Papagos's Greek Rally on 6 August 1951.

Kiousopoulos Dimitris, Public Prosecutor, PM of the caretaker government October 1952- November 1952.

Kirk Alexander, US Ambassador to Greece, 1941-1943.

Kopróló Fuad, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs

Lascelles Daniel, Counsellor of the British Embassy in Athens, 1945-1947.

Leeper Rex, British Ambassador to Greece, 1941-1946.

Lovett Robert A., Deputy secretary of Defence until Sept. 1951; Secretary of Defence.

Livesay William, General, Director of USAGG June 1947; JUSMAPG late 1947.

Macmillan Harold, British Resident Minister at Allied Headquarters in North-West Africa, accompanied the Allied Headquarters to Italy as Acting President of the Allied Commission in Italy, mediator between parties in Greece in the Greek civil war.

MacVeagh Lincoln, US Ambassador to Greece, 1933-1941, 1943-1948.

Marshall George, US Secretary of State, 1947-1949.

Maximos Dimitrios, Governor of National Bank of Greece; Prime Minister, January - August 1947.

Melas Leo, Greek Ambassador in London 1951.

McGhee George, Assistant Secretary of State for Near East, S. Asian, and African Affairs from October 1949; Ambassador to Turkey from December 1951.

Montgomery Bernard, Field Marshal, Chief of the Imperial General Staff 1946-1948, Chairman of Western European Committee 1948-1951, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe 1951-1958.

Morrison Herbert, British Minister of Foreign Affairs 1951.

Mountbatten Louis, Admiral (British Navy), Commander-in-Chief for Eastern

Mediterranean.

Myers Edward C.W., 'Eddie', Colonel, Brigadier, Commander BMM (G) 1942-1943.

Norton Sir Clifford, Succeeded Leeper as British Ambassador in Athens, March 1946-October 1951.

Papagos Field Marshal Alexandros, Greek C-in-C of the armed forces, 1941, 1949. Premier November 1952-1955.

Papandreou George, Joined Venizelist movement in Thessaloniki (Salonika), 1916; Prime Minister, Apr.-Dec. 1944; Minister of the Interior in Cabinet of Maximos, January 1947; Deputy PM, Minister of Co-ordination and Minister of Religion and National Education, until July 1951.

Packard, Major General Sir Charles Douglas, Commander BMM 1949-1951; Chief of Staff, General Headquarters, Middle East Land Forces, 1951-1953.

Patterson Jefferson, US Representative on the UN Special Committee on the Balkans.

Partsalidis Dimitrios, Member of the KKE Politburo.

Peake Charles, British Ambassador in Athens from 1951.

Perowne LECM, Major General Commander BMM(G) June 1951-April 1952.

Peurifoy John E., US Ambassador to Greece and Chief of American Mission for Aid to Greece from March 1951

Plastiras Nicolaos, General, President of the Revolutionary Committee, 1922-1923; Launched abortive coup d'etat, 1933; Premier, Jan- Apr 1945, April 1950-August 1950, Sept. 1951- October 1952.

Politis Athanasios G., Greek Ambassador to the US.

Porter William J., Office of Greek, Turkish, Iranian Affairs, Department of State.

Rawlins, Major General Steward, Head of the BMM in Athens, 1945-1948.

Sakellariou, Vice Admiral Alexander, Greek Minister of National Defence from Oct.1951.

Sargent Sir Orme, Under-Secretary of the Southern Department of the British Foreign Office until 1946; Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1946-1949.

Scobie Ronald, Lieutenant-General, Commander BMM (G)1944-1945.

Siantos Georgios, Member of the KKE Politburo.

Sofoulis Themistocles, Leader of the Liberal Party; PM November 1945-March 1946, September 1947- June 1949.

Selby W.H., Admiral, Head of the BNM(G), 1951-1955.

Truman Harry, Succeeded Roosevelt as President of the US, 1945-1952.

Tsaldaris Konstantine, co-leader of the Populist Party, 1945-1946; Leader of the

Populist Party, 1946; Premier and Foreign Minister 1946-1947; Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister 1947-1949; Vice-President in Venizelos's cabinet Sept. 1950.

Tsakalotos Thrasyvoulos, Lieutenant General, Chief of the Greek General Staff, from June 1951.

Tsouderos Emmanuel, Governor of the Bank of Greece, 1931-1939; Premier of government in exile, 1941-1944; Minister of Co-ordination in Cabinet of Sofoulis.

Vafeiadis Marcos, Member of the KKE Central Committee, 1942; Chief ELAS Commander in Macedonia during the Second World War; Organised the Democratic Army 1947; Commander of the Democratic Army December 1947 to January 1949.

VanFleet, Lieutenant General James A., USA former Director, Joint US Military Advisory and Planning Group in Greece, 1948-1950.

Venizelos Sofocles, Son of Eleftherios Venizelos; Premier, Apr 1944; Founded Liberal Party, 1946; Vice-Premier in Cabinet of Maximos, January 1947; Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs October 1951- October 1952.

Ventiris, Lieutenant General Konstantine, Chief of the Greek General Staff February 1947; Inspector General of the NA February 1948; Commander of SHDM May 1949.

Woodhouse Chris, Major, Commander BMM(G) 1943-1944; Second Secretary in embassy in Athens, 1945.

Yost Charles W., Minister at the American embassy in Athens. 1951-1954.

Zahariadis Nicolaos, Installed by Comintern as Secretary of the Central Committee of the KKE, 1931; General Secretary, 1935; Leader of KKE after 1945; Expelled from the Party, 1956.

Appendix B: Greek Governments 1944-1952

B.1 Chronological Table of Governments

October 1944- January 1945: George Papandreou.

January 1945- April 1945: Nicolaos Plastiras.

April 1945-October 1945: Petros Voulgaris.

November 1945-November 1945: Panayiotis Kanellopoulos.

November 1945-March 1946: Themistocles Sofoulis.

Elections 31 March 1946 (proportional representation)

March 1946- January 1947: Panayis Tsaldaris.

January 1947- September 1947: Dimitrios Maximos.

September 1947-June 1949: Themistocles Sofoulis. (Sofoulis died.)

June 1949-January 1950: Alexander Diomidis caretaker government.

January 1950-March 1950: John Theotokis caretaker government.

Elections 5 March 1950 (proportional representation)

March 1950-April 1950: Sofocles Venizelos.

April 1950-August 1950: Nicolaos Plastiras.

August 1950-September 1951: Sofocles Venizelos.

Elections 9 September 1951 (reinforced proportional representation)

September 1951-October 1952: Nicolaos Plastiras.

October 1952-November 1952: caretaker Dimitrios Kiuousopoulos.

Elections 16 November 1952 (majority system)

November 1952: Alexander Papagos

Appendix C: The Electoral Systems

C.1 The Electoral Systems

The first two post-war elections in Greece on 31 March 1946 and 5 March 1950 were held under the system of proportional representation similarly to the electoral system of 1936. The 1946 election, due to the decision of the KKE to abstain, had produced the closest correlation between the number of votes cast for a given party and its proportion of seats in Parliament and a relatively stable and strong majority to govern. The system was tested in 1950, with greater number of parties to participate. It resulted in weak correspondence between the share of votes cast and the share of seats received. No party managed to receive a strong majority to govern and coalitions of the Centre were formed.

As a result of the unstable coalitions during 1950 and 1951 new election would be conducted under a new electoral system of reinforced proportional representation on 9 September 1951. The aim was to limit the number of parties elected in Parliament and form stronger coalitions or alliances. Participation in Parliament was restricted to the three parties with the largest share of votes, subject to a seventeen per cent minimum for single parties and a twenty per cent minimum for parties in alliance. Only nine parties contested the 1951 election. Yet, no single party managed to win a workable majority of seats. Therefore, still weak coalitions of the Centre were formed, which were vulnerable to making and dissolving alliances.

The lesson to draw so far was that a further change in the electoral system was needed if a strong cabinet was at last to be formed. This was a debate between the right and left-wing parties. The right-wing parties supported the new simple majority system, which coupled with the American will; whereas Prime Minister Plastiras publicly sided against. Nonetheless, the majority system was adopted on 12 September 1952 to be

applied to the election on 16 November 1952. Only two parties were now represented in Parliament, the Greek Rally and the Union of the Parties, which was a coalition of the three Centre parties. The majority system gave a strong majority to Papagos' Party. The Greek Rally with 49 per cent share of votes resulted in and 82 per cent share of seats in the House and thus a single party formed a government.

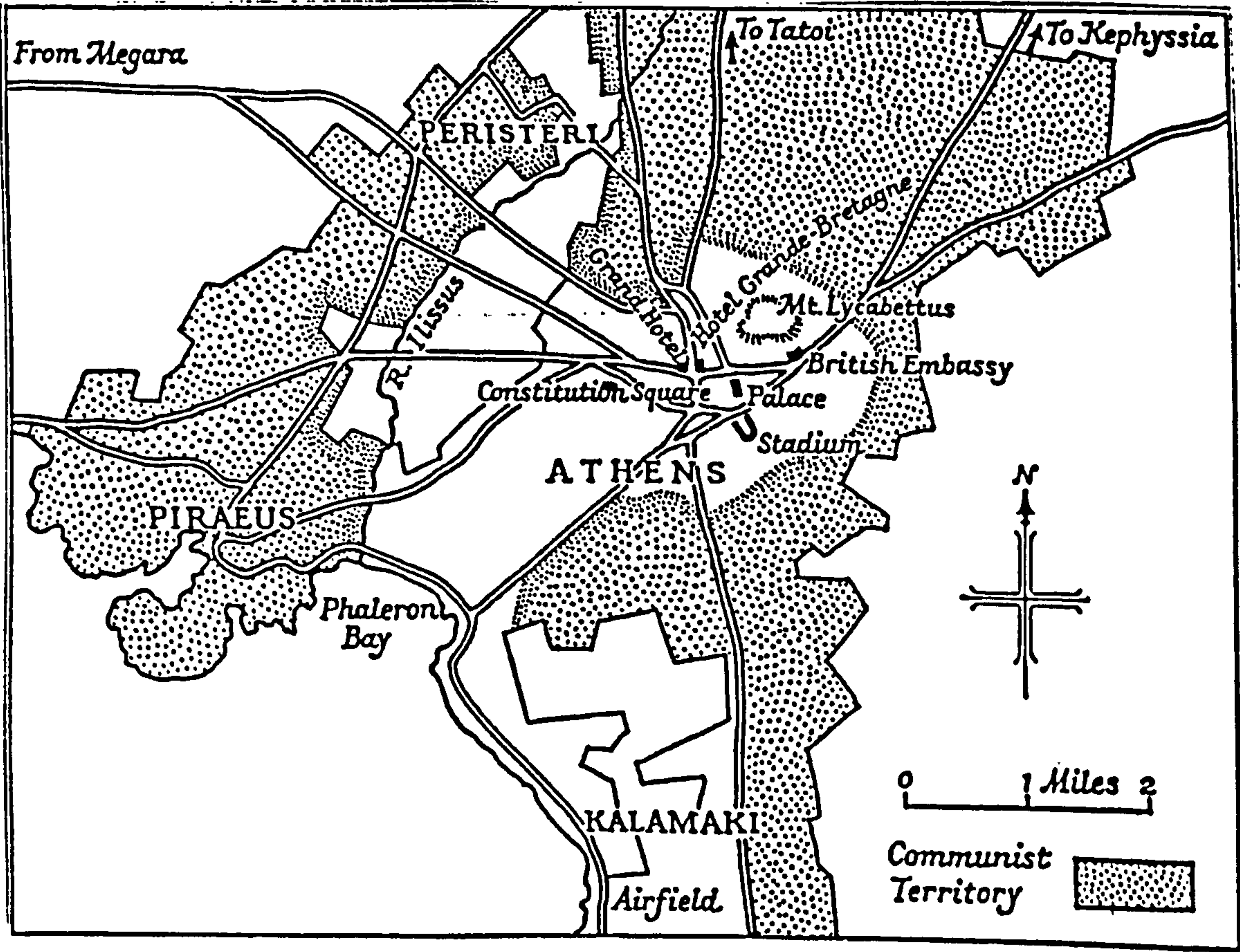
Appendix D: Maps

D.1 Map of Greece



Source: O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War, 1944-1949*, London: Faber and Faber, 1966.

D.2 The Map of Athens during the December Events

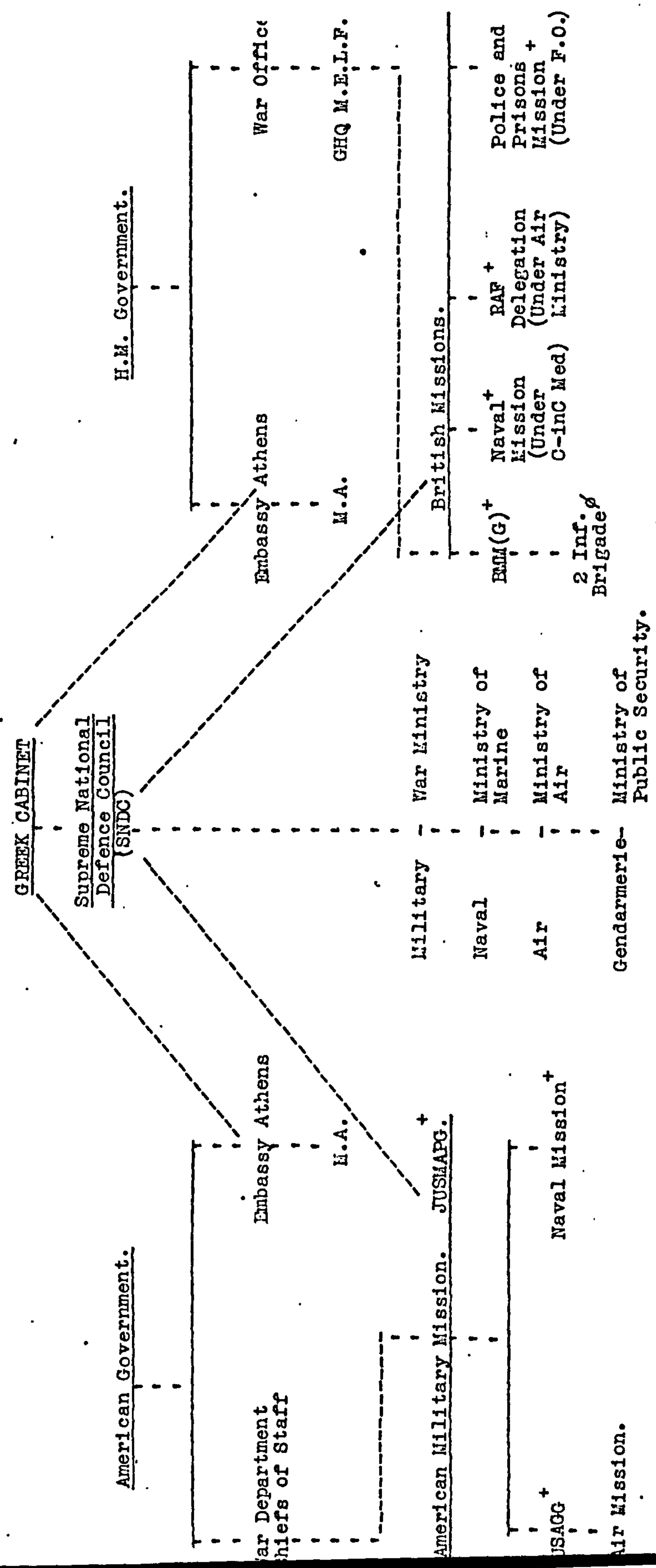


Source: H. Macmillan, *The Blast of War, 1939-1945*, London: Macmillan, 1967, p.565.

D.3 British and American Military Missions Command Set Up in Greece.

TOP SECRET.
ANNEX I.

British and American Military Missions
command set up in Greece.



Notes: Lieutenant General Van Fleet is Director JUSMAG and Commander USAGG.
+ All heads of these Missions have seats on SNDC.
ø Under operational command C-in-C MELF under Admin Command BEE(G).

Abbreviations.
JUSMAG British Military Mission (Greece).
JUSMAG Joint United States Military Aid and Planning Group Greece.
SAGG United States Army Group Greece.

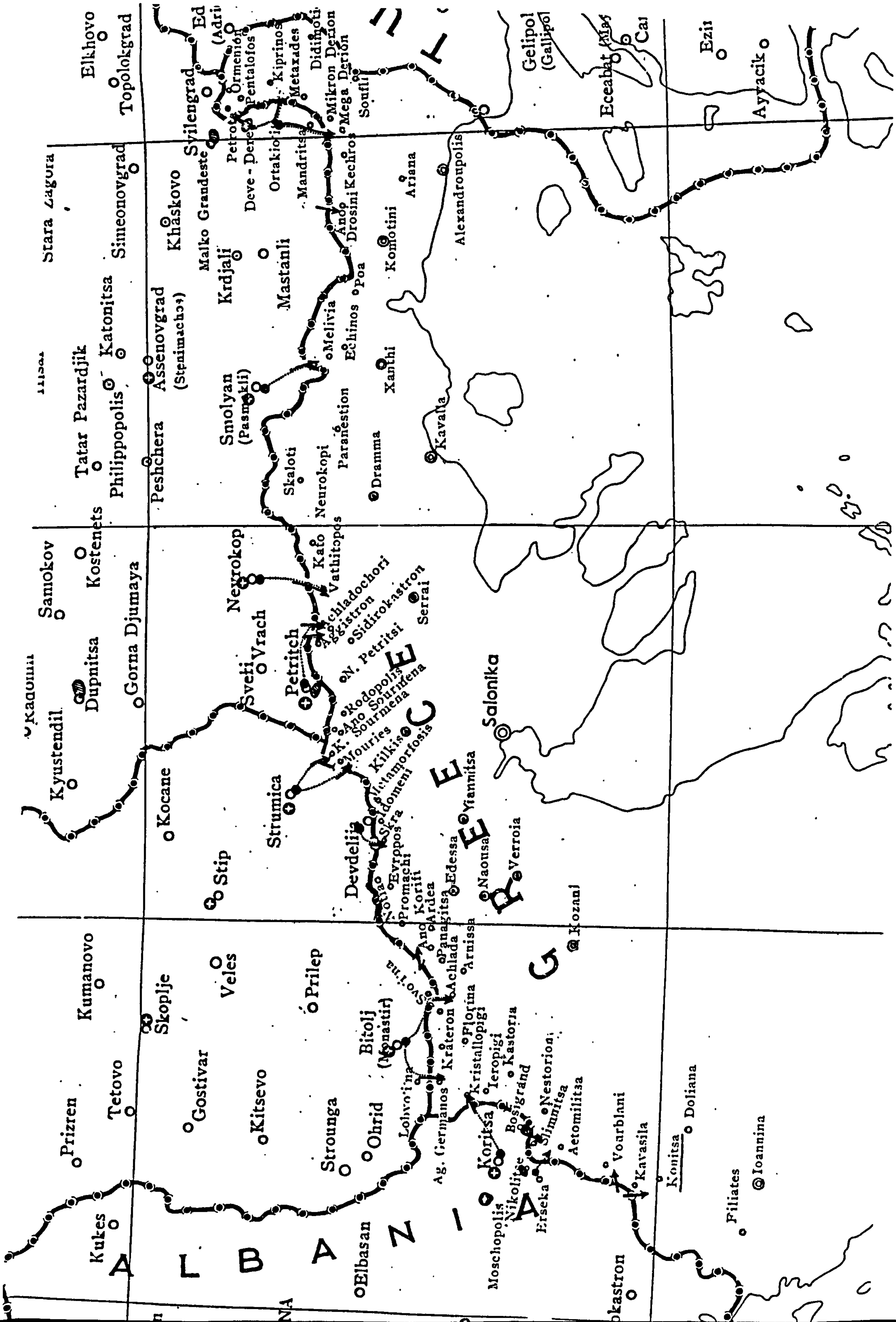
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D.4 Map of Communist Supplies from Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.



→ main passage of DA defenders entrance.

....→ itinerary from and to Greece.

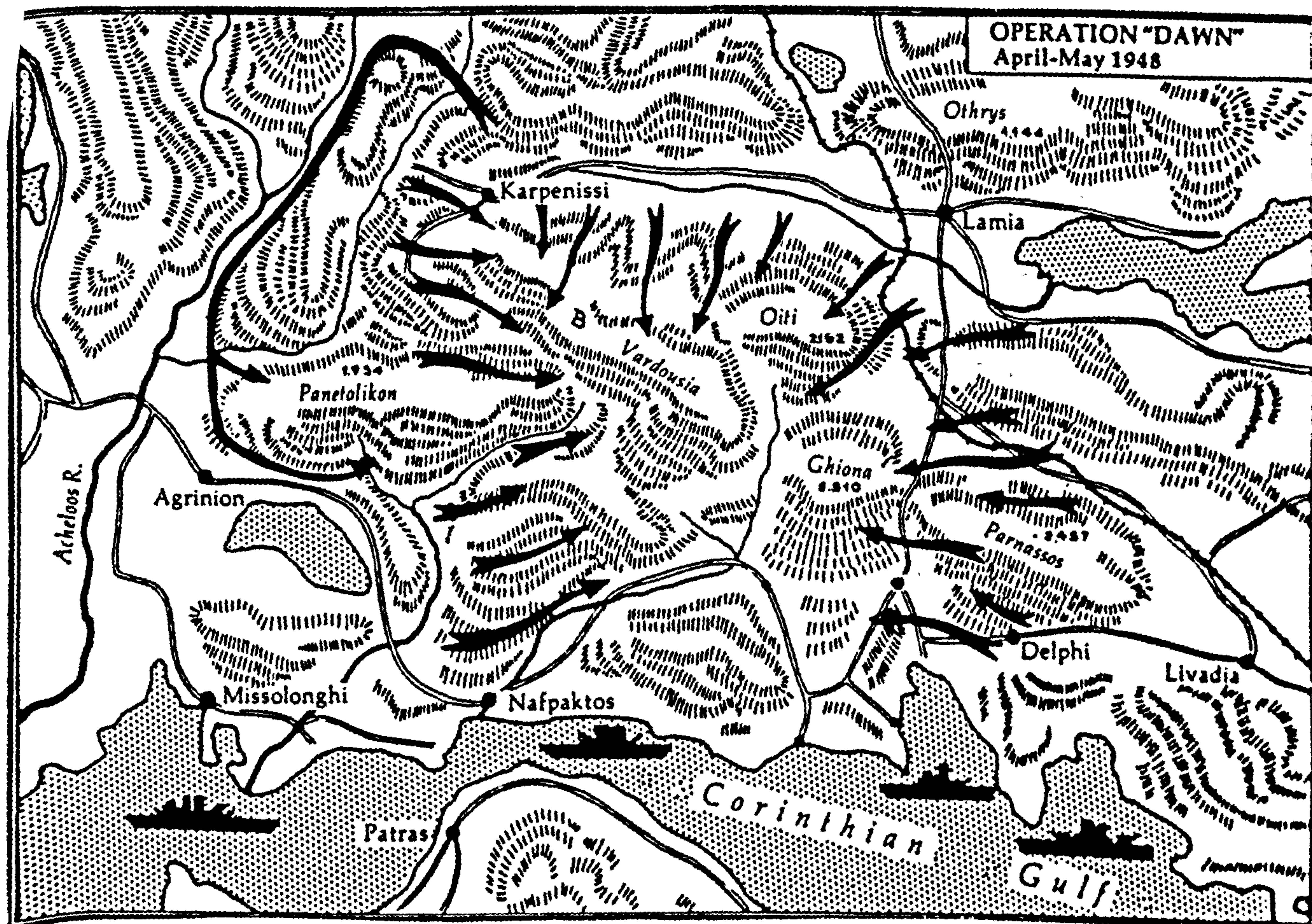
◦ main allied cities

hospitals abroad.

DA supply centres and training camps in Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria.

Source: YIA, 1948, 126.5, Παραστατικός Χάρτης Ενισχύσεως των Συμμοριτών
υπο Αλβανία, Γιουγκοσλαβία και Βουλγαρία-Map of Bandits Supplies from
Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria.

D.5 Operation Dawn



Source: Averoff, *By Fire and Axe*, London: Caratzas Brothers, 1978, p. 420.

D.6 The Mountain Forts of the Democratic Army at Mounts Gr.



Appendix E: Table

E.1 Democratic Army Combatant Strength in Greece, 1946-1949

Date	Total	Peloponnes e	Central Greece, Crete, Islands	Epirus Western Macedonia	Eastern Macedonia Western Thrace
March 1946	2,500				
June 1946	3,000				
July 1946	4,000				
August 1946	5,500				
October 1946	6,000				
December 1946	9,285				
Early 1947	11,390	400	8,140	1,700	1,150
March 1947	13,000				
April 1947	14,250				
Summer 1947	18,000				
September 1947	13,610				
October 1947	17,000		3,000	8,500	5,000
November 1947	19,420				
December 1947	20,350				
January 1948	22,250				
February 1948	24,140				
March 1948	25,000	1,000	9,450	9,450	5,100
April 1948	26,210	3,000	8,800	10,400	4,010
May 1948	25,610				
June 1948	23,300				
July 1948	24,180	2,500	4,940	10,490	6,250
August 1948	21,100				
September 1948	23,720				
October 1948	25,480				
November 1948	25,000	3,300	1,720	13,080	6,900
December					

1948	24,000	3,300	1,620	11,080	8,000
January 1949	23,210	3,000	2,020	10,390	7,800
February 1949	24,090	1,600	5,370	11,120	6,000
March 1949	21,810	1,000	7,780	7,250	5,780
April 1949	19,820	100	4,830	9,750	5,140
May 1949	20,240	50	5,650	9,880	4,660
June 1949	18,270	130	2,840	11,280	4,660
July 1949	17,635	80	1,270	12,855	3,430
August 1949	10,105	0	1,735	5,610	2,760
September 1949	3,580	0	1,490	590	1,500
October 1949	1,910				

Source: Based on JUSMAPG, Greek General Staff, and US Military Attaché-Greece reports and other sources. Cited in Shrader, *The Withered Vine*, p.111.

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23: Air Ministry and Ministry of Defence: RAF Overseas Commands.
24: Air Ministry and Ministry of Defence: Operations Record Books, Commands.
46: Air Ministry and Ministry of Defence: RAF Liaison Missions.

CAB 21: Cabinet Office and predecessors: Registered Files.
79: War Cabinet and Cabinet: Chief of Staff Committee.
122: War Cabinet and Cabinet Office: British Joint Staff Mission and
British Joint Service Mission.
128: Cabinet Minutes (CM and C Series).
129: Cabinet Memoranda (CP and C Series).
130: Cabinet Committees (Miscellaneous Committees: Minutes and Papers.
131: Cabinet Defence Committee: Minutes and Papers.
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