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GREECE - A NEW VIETNAM?

by Elias P. Demetracopoulos

I would like to discuss the situation in Greece; a situation which I believe not only denies the Greek people basic human and democratic rights but is also harmful to the national interests of the United States and contains the seeds of another "Vietnam." The element of time is terribly important in this connection, as the dangers posed by the current Greek situation leave little time for constructive action by the United States. In other words, I believe the clock is running out in Greece, and unless some major changes are forthcoming in American policy towards the Athens military dictatorship, both the U.S. and NATO are apt to be faced with potentially explosive political, military and economic developments on NATO's Southern Flank. Some of these developments are all too obvious at this stage.

U.S. foreign policy in Greece, inherited by the Nixon Administration, is based on the erroneous hypothesis that the

dictatorial regime, which changed faces on November 25, 1973, provides military, political and economic stability to satisfy America's strategic interests in the area -- the kind of stability which, supposedly, could not be guaranteed by a democratic alternative.

If that were true -- if indeed the regime offered the only reasonable hope of stability in Greece -- it would be possible for me to understand the U.S. position. Even though as a matter of moral and political principle, I am strongly opposed to dictatorships of any kind. In my opinion, however, the assertion that the Junta has or can bring stability to Greece is false. On the contrary, not only has the Junta failed to provide stability in spite of dictatorial and ruthlessly repressive tactics; it has actually created instability, uncertainty and the very real risk of civil war in Greece.

First, let us begin with the premise that the Junta has brought military stability. Both Pentagon and other senior U.S. officials claim that the Greek armed forces and terrain, as well as the U.S. and NATO bases in Greece, are necessary to maintain control of the Eastern Mediterranean, to deter direct communist aggression from the North, and to provide a vital link with Turkey which would otherwise not be a viable military ally.

In addition they cite increased Soviet naval strength in the Mediterranean to strengthen their argument. I agree with their assessment as to the importance of a strong and stable Greece as far as NATO is concerned. The key question then is: Have the Athens dictators provided this stability?

The Greek armed forces today are far less effective than they were prior to the 1967 and 1973 coups. They are essentially an internal police force in which the Junta-controlled elements watch not only potential civilian opponents but also the very real latent opposition in the armed forces themselves. To this effect the continuing purges of the Greek military establishment seven whole years after the April 21, 1967 coup are a key indicator.

The Junta has systematically removed from the armed forces an alarming number of the officers they consider unreliable. These hundreds of officers were trained at enormous American expense in the U.S., other NATO countries and Greece, since the Truman Doctrine of 1947. The officers purged were not and could not possibly be communist, considering the nature of the recruiting process and the close ties between the Greek Armed Forces and the U.S. military and intelligence communities.

Indeed many of these officers fought against the communists in the Greek guerrilla war. In fact, the officers purged by the

Junta were generally considered by Washington, the NATO authorities and the Joint U.S. Military Aid Group to Greece to represent the elite of the Greek officer corps. Their only sin was to have opposed the illegal seizure of power by a relatively small group of conspirators. It is interesting to note that "the hatchet fell with particular alacrity," according to the May 1969 issue of Le Monde Diplomatique, "on those officers who, during the German occupation ... chose the path of resistance, either inside Greece or outside, especially those who served in the 'Sacred Battalion' which distinguished itself in all Mediterranean campaigns alongside the British forces ... For any man who was capable of choosing to fight against an oppression (the Nazis) is perfectly capable of fighting a new oppression...."

The usurpers who seized power seven years ago are reliably reported to number no more than 300, with a good percentage of them having intelligence and security training and background.

The purging of the cream of the Greek officer corps and a preoccupation with the internal security duties make the combat effectiveness of the Greek armed forces in time of full mobilization of the reserves an agonizingly open question mark for NATO planners. Thus the illegal seizure of power by the Junta and its subsequent actions have not only seriously weakened the combat

capabilities of the Greek armed forces; they have also undermined Greece's political and moral ability to fulfill its NATO commitments. For any crisis which required full mobilization would in all probability lead to the speedy overthrow of the Junta. This really explains why the Junta thought it wise to "defuse" the Cyprus crisis in November 1967. The armed forces have become mostly a police force also charged with preserving the "existing Social Order." The same reasoning applies to the U.S., NATO bases and other American listening posts and propaganda machinery operating on Greek territory. These bases are important. Yet in view of the climate in which they exist it is a real question how much long-range strategy in the area can be built around them.

The Soviet naval build-up in the Mediterranean, the Middle East crisis and the outflanking of Greece and Turkey by the Soviet Union's rapid strategic deployment along North Africa's coastline and the Middle East, have been and are used by the Johnson and Nixon Administrations as reasons for supporting the Junta. This is indeed tragic, since the Junta's actions have weakened the military capabilities and stability of the Greek armed forces and consequently NATO's strength in the area.

Let us now turn to the key question of political stability which the supporters of the 1967 coup -- including the Junta itself -- cite as one of the prime benefits of the current Greek dictatorship. Measuring political stability is not easy when there is martial law, strict press censorship, when no opposition is permitted, and when violence, although on the increase, has not as yet reached mass proportions. The Junta claims that they stepped in to save the country from the danger of communism -- yet even the most conservative Greek leaders reject the Communist danger as a badly conceived myth. Let us not forget that the Colonels overthrew a conservative government.

Those who place too great an emphasis on the confused political situation in Greece as a justification for the Colonels' coup in 1967 must remember that Greece fought a war against a foreign supported communist war at the peak of the "Cold War" in Europe. The victory, although assisted greatly by U.S. material help and advice, was finally wrested with Greek, and only Greek, blood. If Greece were able to win this victory under a parliamentary government with basic democratic institutions functioning it would be inconceivable to accept that a military dictatorship was necessary to correct an alleged political instability.

There are some who argue that there was no political stability prior to the Papadopoulos Junta and that it was at least an improvement. This argument is superficial as proven by the bloody events of last November when dozens of students and workers were murdered in cold blood. Nevertheless the argument merits an answer.

The fact is that political stability was damaged in the 1965-67 period by the intervention of the Greek Monarchy and its military establishment in the political process, thus perverting the institution of parliament and the mechanism of achieving political stability which had worked well until then. This was done by repeatedly denying the use of the best safety valve available to any democracy -- free elections.

In 1963 and early 1964, the eight years of conservative (ERE) rule under Prime Minister Constantine Caramanlis, ended at the polls with the largest majority in modern times for the Center Union Party led by the late George Papandreou. The peaceful transfer of power was accomplished in the middle of the Cyprus crisis involving the threat of a shooting war with Turkey, following years of impressive aggregate growth and financial stability.

The victors (the Center Union) promised a better distribution of income, a more rapid modernization of Greece to

enable it to enter the Common Market, and a reform of Greece's institutions which included a reduced role of the Crown in controlling the Armed Forces and the political processes. In short, a return to the intent of the constitution which would have the King "reign, not rule." In foreign policy, Greece was to become a fully equal member of the NATO Alliance, with a real voice in determining its own destiny. In pursuing these goals there is no question that the Papandreou Government committed a number of mistakes and lost many opportunities.

The Center Union party was soon faced with the violent and growing opposition of the Crown, the Armed Forces leadership, and the economic oligarchy -- an opposition which was enjoying the support of a large part of the official American establishment in Athens. The result was the arbitrary dismissal by the King of the elected government and a series of comic-opera attempts to make parliamentary rump-governments from mid-1965 through Christmas 1966. The agreement of the Conservative and Center Union Parties to hold elections in 1967 in order to restore real parliamentary government, and thus political stability, led directly to the Colonels' coup. The coup occurred only a few weeks before elections were to be held under the conservative government of Panayotis Canellopoulos-- who, by the way, has spent ~~xxxxxx~~ part of the last seven years under strict house arrest.

The Athens Colonels, despite their current internal strife, continue to persecute the leaders of all major Greek political groupings, i.e., the conservatives, the royalists, the Center Union -- among whom were several of America's best friends -- as well as the left and the extreme left. They have resorted to systematic torture of opponents, as was shown at the Strasbourg hearings of the European Human Rights Commission. This practice of torture has been publicly condemned by leaders of the British, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Dutch and Italian governments, among others.

Despite such a wide condemnation of the Colonels' inhumanity torture continues in Greece, as the tragic case of the Greek Army officer, Spyridon Moustaklis confirms. As a result of brutal tortures by the Greek military police, headed by the leader of the November coup, General Demetrios Ioannidis, Moustaklis is today completely paralyzed and speechless.

Many senior U.S. government officials, at the time of the first Colonels' coup, argued that there was little the U.S. could have done because the coup took the U.S. by surprise and once it was successfully carried out the U.S. was faced with a fait accompli. This is untrue as the threat of dictatorship in Greece was spotted early and this threat greatly disturbed prominent American political leaders long before the actual coup took place.

As early as September 4, 1962, and again on October 13, 1963, Senator Barry Goldwater (R.-Ariz.) in published interviews with this writer stated: "I am particularly concerned about the political developments in that country (Greece) and I do believe that careful investigation should be carried out on those accusations against our U.S. Embassy rôle in Athens in the last Greek elections." And in 1963 he said: "I am against the establishment of a dictator any place. That is why I strongly attacked the suggestion made that the establishment of a dictatorship in Greece would be an effective solution to Greece's problems. Oh, Lord, No. Greece is the most sophisticated, civilized country in the world. Our democratic way of government came from Greece. It would be tragic if Greece, where democracy itself was first founded, were to go back to a dictatorship. I can't even imagine the Greeks thinking about it."

And in the summer of 1966 a galaxy of highly placed and influential U.S. personalities, covering the spectrum of American political life, condemned publicly, very strongly and in no uncertain terms, the possibility of a military dictatorship of any kind in Greece, under whatever pretext. They also urged the Johnson Administration to take all necessary steps to ensure that such a catastrophic development for American interests will not occur.

Their names were: The Speaker of the House of Representatives J. McCormack, Senators V. Hartke, S. Thurmond, E. McCarthy, J. Javits, W. Morse and E. Kennedy; the Chairman of the House Judiciary, Armed Services and Agriculture Committees, Congressmen E. Celler, M. Rivers and H. Cooley; the former Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral A. Burke, the former Supreme NATO Commander in Europe, General L. Norstad; and the Governor of California E. Brown.

They spelled out their views to me in question-answer format, taped, typed and in officially signed press interviews, which received wide coverage both in Europe and America. In short, there were numerous, early and authoritative warnings given to Washington, but to no avail.

Since 1947, America has played a decisive role in Greece, and, beginning in 1959 with Ambassador Ellis Briggs -- ~~xxx~~ a strong advocate of the Athens Colonels -- America has pursued disastrous, contradictory and vacillating policies -- policies largely influenced by inter-service and personality rivalries. Should these policies be continued the communists will have an opportunity to organize and lead a liberation movement in Greece, for the first time since the late 1940's, with wide support and backing from non-communist elements in both Greece and Western

Europe. Such a movement, even if led by communists, would ironically be formed under the banner of returning democracy to Greece. Thus, the tragic makings of a new Vietnam in Greece are all present.

It is very important for Americans to understand that there is widespread belief in non-communist Europe that Washington was involved, either by commission or omission, in the April 21, 1967 coup and that is responsible for the perpetuation of two sets of dictators in the birthplace of democracy. While the substance of the more extreme forms of these theories has not been proven yet, the U.S. should realize that these beliefs have done much more than the criticism of the Vietnam War or the de Gaulle policies to undermine basic U.S. positions and interests in this vital area. This point, in many ways the most telling, is supported by such a personality as Mrs. Helen Vlachou-Loundras, well-known publisher of the most influential conservative Greek newspapers, who was forced into exile in London, when she bravely refused to publish under censorship. Mrs. Vlachou-Loundras spoke about the Greek regime in London on October 17, 1968:

"So the moment of truth is approaching, and the first brand new European dictatorship since the war is about to emerge, born of The Pentagon by the CIA, reared by NATO, surrounded by

doting businessmen. It is no use criticizing the Americans, divided as they are between those who would like to chase the junta but can not do it, and those who can and will not." In this connection it is very significant that the Johnson Administration in December 1967 let down, in a shameful, unbelievable and humiliating way, even the ultra-conservative Greek monarchy which, since the Truman doctrine of 1947, has been a basic element of U.S. foreign policy towards Greece. This happened when King Constantine finally decided to overthrow the Junta in his armed but ill-fated attempt.

That is why I strongly believe that a new, comprehensive and thorough congressional investigation of the U.S. role vis-a-vis Greece would not only be completely justified but also urgently advisable if the blunders of the past are not to be repeated and a new "Vietnam" is to be avoided.

The European reaction to the Greek coup can be gleaned in the following statements: West German Deputy Klaus Schultz said, "It was 36 years ago that Hitler took power in my country. And he did it under conditions far more democratic than those imposed by the Greek colonels." British Deputy Robert Edwards, during the debate whether to expel Greece from the Council of Europe for violating the 18-nation organization's statutes on human rights, said: "I am amazed at some of these speeches. We

heard them between the wars -- Franco was going to hold elections. Hitler was no dictator and Mussolini made the trains run on time."

In a futile attempt to improve their international image, to buy desperately needed time and to overcome the stubborn refusal of Greeks of prestige and ability to work for the regime, the Junta announced a referendum on a new constitution in September 1968. This Fascist document, which received the private blessing of some American officials, in fact made the Armed Forces the sole final source of power, the guardian of the status quo and the dispenser of civil liberties in Greece. Thus the constitution in effect gave the wolves the responsibility for guarding the lamb by giving the Athens Junta full power to "protect" the liberties they had already seized from the Greek people. Of course, after the November 1973 coup that so-called "constitution" was thrown by the new dictators in the garbage bin, thus ending seven years of staged and well orchestrated wishful thinking both in Athens and Washington.

Let us turn now to the economic stability that allegedly the junta brought to Greece.

Under democracy the Greek economy had achieved one of the highest rates of economic growth in the world as well as monetary

equilibrium. Greece was officially and repeatedly cited as one of two or three countries, which made the best possible use of American economic aid and achieved a spectacular recovery from the ravages of war. Sustained sharp increases in domestic saving, coupled with massive inflow of foreign long-term development capital, allowed for an accelerated capital formation and expansion of the industrial basis of the economy. But instead of burdening you with details I may simply refer to assessment of the free Greek economy by the Nobel prize winner Professor Paul A. Samuelson on May 22, 1967 in NEWSWEEK.

In short, the junta inherited a sound and rapidly growing economy the momentum of which somehow survived the Colonels although there are now increasing signs of very serious deceleration and strain. It, indeed, takes some time to undo a good thing!... Reaping the benefits from the successful development efforts under parliamentary governments the junta in vain strived to buy popular support through measures of utter financial irresponsibility.

For example, a massive giveaway took place when all farm debts amounting to some \$280 million to the formerly U.S.-financed Agricultural Bank were written off. This not only penalized farmers who had paid their debts but probably convinced all

farmers, who constitute some 45% of the total population, that there is no point in paying future loans. What is perhaps worse is that the immense resources distributed in this way have not been directed towards raising farm productivity and bringing about the long needed structural reform of Greek agriculture.

The Government made numerous appeals to attract foreign capital. Its most publicized achievement for political, propaganda and lobbying reasons, was the signing of a lucrative contract with Litton Industries (a few weeks after coming to power in 1967) which guaranteed the latter a handsome annual fee as well as a commission on all investments it induced to come to Crete and the Western Peloponnesus. It is of interest to note that Litton withdraw its proposals prior to the coup, due to overwhelming parliamentary opposition. Litton produced some studies and very small investments coming mainly from the Litton group companies. It would seem that even their corporate name has not been sufficient to overcome the doubts of those who might have put their money in Greece. That is why this contract was terminated.

Although most foreign investors found pre-Junta Greece a favorable spot for private enterprise, a difficulty did arise in the case of the Esso-Pappas refining, petrochemical and steel complex. This contract was strongly criticized by the Center Union before it came to power and was renegotiated to Greece's

advantage while they were in power. Thomas Pappas of Boston, a key fund raiser for President Nixon over the years, has since then managed to avoid, with Junta approval, most of the less profitable investments he was supposed to undertake and he has emerged as one of the most influential and vocal backers of the Junta in the U.S.

Much has been made of an agreement of the Junta with Onassis to establish a new refinery, aluminum plant and tourist investments, reportedly totaling some \$600 million. It is significant that the Onassis effort to build the alumina-aluminum plant in partnership with the U.S. Reynolds Metals Company has fallen through. On April 15, 1971 the Junta publicly and strongly hinted that the agreement with Onassis is likely to be cancelled while Onassis has requested international arbitration. Finally, on November 6, 1971, both parties agreed to scrap their \$600 million investment contract.

By contrast to the massive net inflow of capital from abroad for investment purposes in pre-Junta Greece, today this type of capital inflow is equal to zero, if not negative, on a net basis. It is the first time since the end of World War II that Greece has such a heavy short-term debt burden. It is noteworthy that figures relating to this issue are not made available

by the junta even to international financial organizations.

The overindebtedness created for the economy by the large amounts of short-term borrowing abroad in order to conceal the impending balance of payments crisis may well lead to external insolvency.

In summary, instead of bringing about stable economic growth the Junta has presided over a tragic misuse and waste of national resources, in an attempt to buy acceptance and some semblance of legitimacy. The resulting "gold rush" to extract favorable concessions from the Athens Colonels in return for supporting their dictatorship has resulted in the sacrifice of important Greek economic resources and interests which no parliamentary government could have undertaken and remain in office.

The political anomaly of a new post-war dictatorship in present day non-communist Europe has led to a suspension of some \$55 million of European Investment Bank loans to Greece under the Treaty of Association with the Common Market, which itself continues to be kept "frozen" by the E.E.C. for seven whole years as a direct result of the 1967 coup. The long-run future of Greece's association with the Common Market, the first of its kind, is in fact in doubt. As Greece's chief Common Market negotiator John Pezmazoglu, then Deputy Governor of the Central

Bank, said in a 1966 Bank of Greece message, the economic union of Greece with the EEC was based on the mutually agreed, basic objective of an ultimate political union of Greece with its European partners.

Since then the Governor of the Central Bank, Professor X. Zolotas, an internationally respected central banker, and the equally prominent Professor J. Pezmazoglu have resigned in protest over the Junta and its policies. The latter repeatedly arrested and exiled.

In fact, the great bulk of Greece's trained professionals have refused to participate in the Government, a phenomenon which has seriously hindered efforts at rational economic policy formulation and implementation.

I believe that it is imperative for the Nixon Administration, which is in the advantageous position of having no responsibility for the events of April 21, 1967 and December 13, 1967 to conduct a basic and urgent review of U.S. policy towards Greece on the following grounds:

A. That the assumption that the current military regime in Athens has or can bring stability is incorrect.

B. That the Junta's have greatly weakened Greece's military capability and political ability to fulfill its NATO commitments.

C. That the situation in Greece is potentially dangerous. If present policies are continued, a new Vietnam could result.

D. That widespread belief in Europe that the U.S. is responsible for the 1967 and 1973 coups and for keeping the Colonels in power is seriously damaging to America's position in Europe.

E. That the existence of a military dictatorship in Greece is morally and politically repugnant especially to the extent that it appears that the United States is supporting this regime.

In considering U.S. policy towards Greece I would like here to make several points directed primarily to American conservatives. It has been a tragedy that many American opinions and actions concerning Greece have been viewed as a political issue between conservatives and liberals. As a result of the opposition to the Greek Junta by many prominent American liberals, all too many American conservatives have not realized the true nature and intent of the Greek military regimes. While Greek political liberals have suffered as a result of the coup, as many Greek conservatives with well-known anti-communist credentials have been suppressed, imprisoned, and driven into exile by the Junta. In fact, many of the most severe critics of the coup and the current regime could be described as conservatives.

In the light of the Athens Colonels' past and continued repression of anti-communist Greek conservatives and the often-forgotten fact that the Colonels seized power from a conservative government, I would ask some American conservatives who have either largely remained neutral or have supported the current Greek regime to reconsider their positions. For the situation in Greece cannot be described or understood along American political lines. In this case both American liberals and conservatives, perhaps for different but compatible reasons, should oppose the authoritarian dictatorship imposed on the people of Greece by a small group of Colonels in Athens.

Thus, in reviewing U.S. policy towards Greece I would suggest that the following specific changes in the policies inherited by the Nixon Administration would be both in the interest of the United States and the Greek people:

1. A clear-cut public condemnation of the Greek Junta by the Nixon Administration.
2. Terminate immediately and completely all U.S. military aid to the Athens regime and reverse the disastrous decision announced on September 22, 1970 to resume delivery of major U.S. military equipment to the Athens Colonels. Such a decision gave in effect official public U.S. government approval to the

Athens military dictatorship. This decision was upheld by President Nixon on February 17, 1972, in spite of the Congressional intent, clearly expressed by the overwhelming vote in favor of Ohio's Congressman Wayne L. Hays' Amendment. It was coupled with the announcement of home porting the U.S. 6th fleet in Greece.

3. Take the initiative for joint NATO action against the Junta by exercising maximum diplomatic, economic and military aid pressure, on a well-coordinated basis, in behalf of the Atlantic Alliance. Such an American initiative will take options away from Moscow policy-makers and will build up U.S. influence in NATO and among the European liberals, intellectuals and youth. Such a U.S. initiative would have worldwide favorable repercussions and Washington will be in a better position to exploit existing turmoil among Moscow's Eastern European communist satellites, non-satellites and the communist parties in non-communist Europe.

4. Give full U.S. support to the efforts of the Common Market and the Council of Europe to isolate morally, politically and economically the Athens Colonels until the Greek people are free to chart their own political course.

5. Find appropriate ways and means to support actively and effectively all anti-Junta, anti-communist elements who represent the vast majority of the Greek people.

6. Strong efforts should be made to repair the damage done to the U.S. prestige and interests by the prevailing belief of U.S. involvement and support of the Greek Juntas. Such efforts may include the use of the Voice of America. Such initiatives are essential to forestall violent anti-American backlash in Greece, which otherwise is a virtual certainty.

In evaluating the merits of the above basic recommendations it is important to understand the following points:

A. All the above peaceful measures are sufficient if used effectively, in my opinion, to overthrow the Greek dictatorship without bloodshed, and without risking American lives, as in Vietnam, Korea, Lebanon and the Dominican Republic. The Nixon Administration must have learned some very valuable lessons with the events in Pakistan, the crisis in Peru and the negotiations over the Spanish bases. These events proved the grave risks inherent in dealing with anti-communist military dictatorships and should help dispel the myth that such regimes serve effectively the U.S. interests.

B. If the Junta is overthrown by these peaceful measures proposed to the Nixon Administration, Washington will be in a much better position to deal also with the Middle East crisis, having the full support and cooperation of the liberated (with American support) Greek people, and the U.S. and NATO bases

presently in Greece will not any longer be surrounded, as is the case today, by an increasingly hostile population, which makes their value presently, in case of emergency, doubtful.

C. Approximately 100,000 hard-core Greek communists live in various parts of the Eastern European communist world, including the thousands of young children taken by the retreating Greek communist guerrilla forces in 1949. These children are now completely trained militarily and indoctrinated politically. Greece has very extended and rugged mountain frontiers with her northern communist neighbors. These facts may represent, at a given moment, an ace in the hands of Moscow and Peking.

D. Greece's unique geographical position places her athwart the crossroads of Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. The Middle East and Africa are two areas where the Greeks for centuries have maintained the closest ties and interests. On the northern borders of Greece is a kaleidoscope of three different kinds of communism: The Peking style in Albania (where hundreds of Chinese advisors are stationed in this first Chinese beachhead in Europe), the Moscow style in Bulgaria, and the Tito style in Yugoslavia. This fact itself makes Greece a very good western "window," an ideal listening and influence post for the South-eastern European area. But it also makes Greece far more exposed to external communist and Slavic-chauvinistic pressures now

greatly complicated by the current Sino-Soviet confrontation.

E. The U.S. record over the last decade clearly shows a very benign attitude toward right-wing military coups while registering great alarm over left-wing ones. The so-called Schwartz doctrine (former top Pentagon authority on international security affairs), makes clear the U.S. will not interfere with extra-constitutional, totalitarian rule by anti-communist governments. This double standard justified anti-U.S. accusations all over the world and, naturally, Greece.

We were all dismayed at the ruthless crushing <sup>in 1968</sup> with Soviet military power of the modest liberal reforms which were taking place in Czechoslovakia. No satellite could be allowed to sway that far from orthodoxy and control in the minds of Warsaw Pact hard liners. Moscow paid a heavy price in terms of world condemnation and the discrediting of hard-core Czech communists. To many, the parallel of the U.S. position in Greece is disquieting. And Moscow's diplomats and propagandists are counter-attacking criticism aimed at their Czechoslovakian action and their brutal handling of dissenters by pointing to the U.S. role in Greece since April 1967. For the coup against the prospect of a liberal but pro-NATO government was carried out by people closely connected with the U.S. military, intelligence and financial complex, with U.S. weapons and using a top-secret

emergency NATO plan. All in the name of anti-communism, the preservation of the orthodoxy of Greece in the Western Alliance and protecting the Monarchy -- which the first Junta forced into exile and finally abolished.

Moscow intervened with Soviet troops to crush what she considered dangerous Czechoslovak liberalization tendencies.

While I do not believe that the use of U.S. troops to protect the freedom of the Greek people was, or is, necessary, it is a tragedy that the Johnson and Nixon Administrations played the role of Pontius Pilatus while U.S.-supplied tanks were used to crush Greek democracy and kill innocent students and workers even though ample warnings about the impending coups existed. That the Johnson and Nixon Administrations, on many occasions, have given the impression of supporting the dictatorship of the Athens Colonels, is doubly disquieting, considering that the freedom of the Greek people was guaranteed by NATO which Greece freely joined as a free nation in 1952.

In the process the U.S.'s best friends were systematically destroyed. In the end the Greeks will force their oppressors out of power. The process could be bloody and might well involve the U.S. in another Vietnam-type situation. It is, therefore,

legitimate to ask why long-term U.S. interests are being sacrificed in Greece for the sake of an ephemeral appearance of security and stability and whether it is wise to continue along this road to disaster much longer. And disaster is inevitable if one is to judge from more recent events.

The "more recent events" that I have in mind are the following:

- a. The naval mutiny of last May which led to the abolition of the monarchy last July. Let me remind you that when the first conspirators seized power in 1967, they claimed that they did so to protect Greece's institutions, including the monarchy.
- b. No discussion of the Greek military regime would be complete, if one does not attribute the proper meaning to the November 1973 events. During that month, young students who were 12 and 13 years old, when Dictator Papadopoulos assumed the dubious role to "educate the Greeks" in his own way, revolted against his ruthless tyranny. Several dozens of them have been murdered.
- c. Following the student uprisings, a new coup took place, which changed very little except that it brought the lowest level of mediocrity in government, reactivated the dreaded island concentration camp of Yaros, which was closed down in 1969, after strong protests from the International Red Cross and has exiled there

recently, after their brutal arrest, four well known members of the last Greek Parliament Messrs. George Mavros, John Haralambopoulos, George Sterghiou and Mrs. Asimina Yannou.

d. This new group, which is still treated with kid gloves by the U.S. officials, came to power again to "preserve law and order," something that many American officials told us had been achieved by the first coup of 1967. In my view, these events only confirm the absence of law and the disappearance of order from the Greek political life for the past seven years.

e. This new group, which increasingly acquires all the signs of a new Quadaffism, under the leadership of General Ioannidis, Chief of the dreaded military police, also claims that one of its missions is to cleanse the "corruption" of the last seven years. In this respect, they may be in for something very revealing, since the military junta of Papadopoulos is well known for the massive swindling of public funds for personal gain. The new junta provides now all the necessary documentation in this respect.

It is ironic that Papadopoulos also came to power to "cleanse the corruption" of the old political leadership. However, he was totally unable to find even one person from that "old", as he calls it, leadership who has misused public funds.

The new post-November group, made up of mediocrities is heading for real disaster in all fields. For example, a very

characteristic example, the abilities, the I.Q.'s of the previous Papadopoulos governments, compared to the present Ioannidis government, politics aside, are 50 to 10!!!

Concerning the security interests of the U.S. in that country, it is all too obvious they cannot be defended for long. The Greek Juntas, for example, during the last Middle East War, had no problems in allowing Soviet overflights in support of the Arabs, but they were unwilling to permit U.S. overflights in support of Israel, in direct contradiction of President Nixon's July 1972 statement that without aid to Greece you have no viable policy to save Israel.

Under these conditions, then one asks, even at this late day, what compels the U.S. to stick by the unstable and ruthless regime now governing by brutal force the Greek people? My answer is simple: In the trauma of Watergate and the cynical rejection of moral principles coupled with the shortsightedness of those who formulate foreign policy in Washington, the modern day tragedy of Greece is by and large ignored. That is until it becomes another Vietnam. And that day may not be too far off.

Thank you.

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