AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN GREECE 1946-64

During the period 1946-64, Greece emerged from a world war only to plunge directly into a horrific civil war. The country was plagued by chronic economic problems and political instability broken only by periods of strong rule from the right. In fact, the only constant centers of power were the royal family and the United States. This U.S. intervention was caused by geostrategic concerns and was a direct consequence of the developing Cold War between the U.S. and its erstwhile ally. The involvement was deep and far reaching, encompassing four broad areas: military affairs, economic policy, political and legal development, and foreign policy. In addition to providing a constant stream of military and economic aid, the U.S. implemented its objectives through military and economic advisors, diplomats, and a CIA mission.

As a result of its significant presence, the U.S. has often been unfairly implicated even when it remained on the sidelines. Nevertheless, the literature broadly agrees that the U.S., either passively or actively, did have a profound impact on Greece’s democratic, as well as economic development. According to James Edward Miller, the failure “to create a stable democracy … was largely the work of Greece’s politicians, military and monarchy, but the United States cannot escape some burden of responsibility for what went wrong.”¹ Jon Kofas emphasizes the economic consequences, noting that “the “legacy of Anglo-American intervention … was underdevelopment under a right-wing regime during the 1950s, dependent development since 1960, and the preeminence of foreign advisers in the country’s internal affairs.”²

THE BACKDROP OF WWII

World War II left an indelible impact on Greece. First, the devastation crippled the country and the economy. Second, the war only temporarily masked a constitutional crisis, while at the same time exacerbating political divisions and provoking the formation of resistance camps that would carry Greece into civil war. Both consequences became the impetus for American involvement in Greece.

Greece joined on the side of the Allies on October 28th, 1940, when Metaxas, the dictator, refused to surrender and declared the historic ‘No!’ to Mussolini.³ This was an important turning point of WWII because, given Greek resistance, Hitler was forced to intervene and delay an attack on Russia.⁴ After Metaxas’ death, the king’s decision to appoint a government would have provoked “popular demands for a return to parliamentary procedures” had the country not been
at war. In the spring of 1941, Greece fell to German occupation and two main resistance groups formed: the communist-leaning National Liberation Front (EAM), which controlled the National Popular Liberation Army (ELAS), and the rightist National Republican Greek League (EDES). Clashes between ELAS and other fronts, notably EDES, began in late 1943 with the end of WWII in sight and a fear by the communists that the British would re-impose the monarchy. On the other hand, “Small British and American units were infiltrated into Greece … to ensure an allied presence as soon as the country was liberated.” Thus the scene was set for descent into civil war.

According to Kostas Tsoukalas, the post-war devastation of Greece could be compared only to that of Russia, Poland and Yugoslavia. 550,000 Greeks were killed; the country lost “one in 14” of its population, compared to “1/77” in France and “1/125” in Britain. More than a third of the national wealth and over 400,000 homes were destroyed, as well as over half of the national roads system, 73% of the commercial navy, 66% of trucks, and 60% of large farm animals, and a large part of agricultural crops. Unemployment in the cities stood at 50% and inflation was rampant. It was estimated that Greece would need $3,172 million to reconstruct. Thus, Greece emerged from WWII in complete economic, social, and political disarray.

PART I – MILITARY INTERVENTION

The United States began its involvement in order to address the overwhelming destruction of the war. The economic policies of the U.S. will be analyzed in Part II. Nevertheless, in 1945, UNRRA, an international agency dominated by the U.S., began a mission in Greece and thus both “paved the way for the Truman doctrine” and was a “catalyst for transition from Anglokratia … to Amerikanokratia.” American policy, based on the two pillars of the Truman Doctrine on the political and military front, and a transition from UNRRA to Marshall Aid on the economic front, had two main effects: the first was to make Greece economically dependent, while failing to implement policies that would lead to the long-term economic health of the country; the second was to polarize domestic politics and give favor to the right.

A Perfect Storm - the Greek Civil War

The Truman Doctrine of March 1947 must be examined in the context of the Greek Civil War. From the end of WWII to the outbreak of civil war in 1946, Greece was run by a slew of British backed Service Governments, starting with the unity government of George Papandreou,
formed under the Lebanon Charter and with cooperation from the communists. The first major internal crisis occurred in December 1944 when British General Scobie decided to disband EDES and ELAS, causing an uprising, known as the Dekemvriana or Athens Revolt, after police opened fire on communist protesters. Papandreou resigned and was replaced by General Plastiras, under the regency of Archbishop Damaskinos. Clashes spread, but the king was pressured to wait to return after a national plebiscite and the Varkiza Agreement was signed between the Service Government and EAM-ELAS in January 1945, after which ELAS honored the deal to surrender arms to the state authorities. Thus civil war was temporarily averted.

However, political life remained in complete disorder; “[t]here were bitter feelings between those who had escaped abroad in 1941 and those who had endured the occupation; also between those who had resisted the occupation and those who had acquiesced or collaborated in it; and between monarchists and republicans, whose divisions were now overlaid by those between Communists, their fellow-travellers, and the rest.” The social and political fabric of society had been torn. Governments were short lived. Following the Service Government of Plastiras, governments were formed under Voulgaris, Kanellopoulos and Sophoulis.

Britain, the Service Governments and the communists made several mistakes that would later haunt the U.S. First, all sides committed atrocities. Second, the Varkiza Treaty gave general amnesty but didn’t include common criminal offenses and the government suppressed supporters of EAM-ELAS through legal and police action. This encouraged the White Terror, in which “right-wing forces … unleashed a terrorist campaign not only against the communists, but also against communist sympathizers, socialists, and centrists,” exemplified by Colonel Grivas’ organization X. After the Dekemvriana, “84,931 leftists and centrists were arrested, 31,632 were subjected to physical torture and 1,299 were executed.” A British Parliamentary investigating team warned that “Greece is rapidly becoming a fascist state,” while the growing power of the army would have a profound impact on Greek politics for decades to come.

Given the ongoing implementation of terror tactics by the right, the March 1946 elections were seen as a “democratic farce.” Both the communists and centrists requested a postponement, but Secretary Bevin exercised his veto to prevent a change. The communists and a large part of the left made the mistake of boycotting the elections, handing victory over to the right. Excluded from democratic politics, the communists thus saw limited options and in February 1946, took the decision to fight a Third Round of the Greek civil war. In March 1946, the Populist Party won and Tsaldaris became the first elected prime minister of post war Greece.
Transformation of U.S. Policy and the Truman Doctrine

According to C. M. Woodhouse, these elections “marked a watershed in Greece’s foreign relations. For the first time the government of the USA was directly involved in Greek affairs alongside Britain, through participation in the Allied Mission for observing the Greek elections.” Thus, in 1946, the U.S. began to transition from a focus on primarily economic aid to a military and political strategy. “The idea of economic and military intervention [by the U.S. in Greece] was discussed well before the Truman Doctrine was enunciated and certainly before the civil war of 1946-49.”

However, the declaration in February of 1947 by Britain, which had 40,000 troops in Greece, of the intention to “pull out” from both Greece and Turkey alarmed the Americans and accelerated the response. The cause and catalyst was the deepening division between the two superpowers.

According to John Harper, the “transformation” of U.S. policy towards the Soviet Union was caused by several factors, including the re-emergence of the right and conservative public opinion in the U.S., along with the death of FDR and the lessening role of his advisors, the disconnect between the hopes of post-war cooperation with Stalin and the realities that confronted American policy makers, an invitation from Western Europe, that desired a prolonged U.S. presence on the continent, and the triple crisis in Western Europe of *doppiezza* (powerful communist parties in Italy and France were pursuing collaboration, but this strategy was seen as deceptive as they could at any moment commit to an armed struggle), *the dollar gap* (a balance of payments crisis that stop gapped Europe’s recovery), and *Deutschland* (the ever present divisive issue of what to do with Germany).

Moreover, Harper emphasizes that the most important cause of the shift in U.S. policy was a belief that the Soviet Union might be interested in pushing not only west, but most alarmingly in threatening the stability of the Northern Tier – Iran, Turkey and Greece. In 1946, the Soviet Union demanded in the UNSC’s first meeting that British troops leave Greece. That same year, “Stalin demanded of the Turks equal partnership in running the [Dardanelles] straits,” and in the ensuing “showdown” advocated by Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson, the “Soviets backed down” in the face of American and Turkish resolve. Acheson advanced the view that later became known as the domino theory: stopping communism in Greece was essential in preventing the fall of the entire region of the Northern Tier to Soviet influence which was seen as a “buffer zone” protecting the Middle East.
Nonetheless, Truman would have to convince both Congress and the American public, which were isolationist and averse to spending U.S. dollars on a remote region that did not seem to fit into U.S. strategic needs. To garner support, Truman’s March 12, 1947 declaration of the eponymous doctrine distinctly emphasized the global battle between good and evil:

At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life … One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms. I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.

Within two months, Congress passed the Greek-Turkish Aid Bill, appropriating $400 million. According to Stephen Ambrose and Douglas Brinkley, “Truman had defined American policy for the next generation and beyond … All the Greek government, or any dictatorship, had to do to get American aid was to claim that its opponents were communist.”

The irony in Truman’s speech is that post-war Greece more closely resembled the “second way of life.” Although Truman was weary of the Tsaldaris government, noting that it was “not perfect” and he condemned “extremist measures of the right or the left,” he insisted that it was democratically elected. Nonetheless, repression continued and during the civil war, the “Greek government’s draconian treatment of prisoners” would be “a major embarrassment for Washington,” and even Truman would be troubled by a lack of judicial process in executions and detentions.

Was Civil War Unavoidable?

Establishing a counterfactual is inevitably a dangerous endeavor. However, it can serve to elucidate how the Truman Doctrine, as it was proclaimed and implemented, had a negative effect on post war development in Greece. First, there is strong indication that Stalin was not interested in aiding the Greek communist cause. Although the USSR took a “hardening stance” after 1946 and it is possible that Stalin encouraged the Greeks even if he did not intend to follow through with assistance, Stalin was very much the “risk-averse” realist. According to Judt, ideology played less of a role than cold calculation. In 1944, he had agreed to the “percentages agreement” with Churchill, conceding Greece to the British sphere of influence. In 1944, the Soviet Union encouraged EAM to join the Lebanon Charter and the unity government.
Moreover, after the Dekemvirana, Stalin advocated a “strategy of coalition.” After the outbreak of the civil war, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania provided assistance to the Greek communist guerrillas, but Stalin was not supportive and wanted, in fact, “to cap Tito’s ambitions.”

Second, it appears that the communists, until July of 1947, preferred to avoid a war and find a political compromise, but the government, bolstered by American support, was no longer willing to negotiate on equal terms. Third, the failure to improve economic conditions and the ongoing white terror fueled opposition, but the U.S. could have helped prevent this by pressuring Tsaldaris to reduce oppression. Although the State Department was “concern[ed] over the quasi-authoritarian Tsaldaris regime,” the fight against communism was more important than reducing political repression. Finally, the majority of the Greek population was exhausted from 6 years of warfare, the communists lacked support from the farmers, and most centrists and liberals opposed a civil war.

Thus, there are strong indications that if the Truman Doctrine had not polarized the two sides, the civil war could have been avoided or a compromise reached. Kofas argues the possibility of a “third option” that the U.S. did not consider at the time, which would have been “to support a center-left coalition government for which there would have been a broad popular base of support.” Kofas continues that “the formation of such a regime was not only plausible, but it was indeed desirable by most politicians.”

End of the Civil War

By 1948, the Greek army reached 200,000 men and thanks to training and a constant influx of U.S. assistance, was able to tilt the balance of the civil war. “Apart from massive aid, much of it in the form of military supplies, a joint General Staff was formed by the Greek and US governments, and American ‘military advisers’ came close to combat action in the mountains.” Moreover, a severe police crackdown, including executions and use of concentration camps in Makronisi and Yioura, dissolved the communist support base. The KKE (the Greek communist party) also made several mistakes, such as changing from guerrilla tactics to conventional war, supporting the “Macedonian” separatist movement, and engaging in terrorist activities and abductions, especially of children. Finally, the split between Tito and Stalin in 1948 and Yugoslavia’s closing off of the borders in 1949 ended any hope for a communist victory.

As a result of the civil war, 40,000-158,000 people had died, 80,000-100,000 crossed the northern borders as refugees, and one in ten Greeks was homeless. Moreover, “[t]he KKE
guerillas and the Athens-based and western-backed government of the king terrorized villages, destroyed communications and divided the country for decades to come.”

Thus, despite the evident human and economic costs, sadly one of the greatest consequences was the “political, ideological, and cultural” abyss it left in its wake. According to Judt, the “European civil wars … together with the unprecedented brutality of the Nazi … occupations … corroded the very fabric of the European state. After them, nothing would ever be the same.”

PART II – ECONOMIC INTERVENTION

UNRRA and the Amplification of the U.S. Economic Role

The economic devastation that overwhelmed Greece after WWII was only exacerbated by the civil war. What is more, policies by the Greek government, often recommended or mandated by the American mission, did little to improve economic conditions. The US had entered the stage before the civil war with the establishment of a UNRRA mission. At the time, Greece was still run by the Service governments and that of Prime Minister Voulgaris and his Minister of Reconstruction, Varvaressos, who was the first to attempt, but fail, to implement meaningful economic reforms, presaging a consistent pattern for years to come. Varvaressos criticized not only the rich class, which after “collaboration with the enemy … took advantage of the shortages of goods … to accumulate riches,” and which invested in gold speculation rather than in the national economy, but also the “unscrupulous practices of many merchants, importers, financiers, and speculators.” Incredibly, .5% of the population earned 50% of the income. His plan consisted of streamlining and accelerating provision of UNRRA aid, increasing taxes on profits, and implementing government regulations, but did not include necessary structural reforms in the agricultural and industrial sectors. The U.S., weary of the British and interested in taking a more unilateral approach, denied aid from the Export-Import Bank to Varvaressos, who had been appointed by Britain.

The defeat of Varvaressos’ economic agenda was the first blow to meaningful reform, and would be compounded by the negative role played by UNRRA. First, the distribution of UNRRA aid by the Greek government was “nothing short of criminal,” with 3 in 4 children malnourished while food supplies ended up on the black market. Second, competition, necessary to revitalize the economy, was discouraged and reconstruction funds benefitted the established economic oligarchy. Third, UNRRA favored imports rather than local purchases. Fourth, even though UNRRA had a strong say in deciding economic policy, including what
infrastructure projects to implement, or which factories to support, “even fully justified decisions by UNRRA officials in Greece [were] subject to reversal by someone in London or Washington.” Finally, during this period, UNRRA did not succeed in pushing for economic reforms. The government, dependent on support from the wealthy class, failed to implement progressive taxes; according to a UN FAO report, “less than one fifth of the taxes … bore primarily on … persons receiving large incomes.” Unemployment and inflation persisted, while Greece became financially dependent on the US. It was under such dire economic conditions that Greece had plunged head first into the political buildup to the Civil War.

**AMAG and Marshall Aid**

As a result of the Truman Doctrine, by the end of 1947, the U.S. was heavily involved in military and economic policy through the American Mission for Aid to Greece (AMAG). The Agreement of Greek Aid “permitted AMAG to control the organs of the state.” In addition, Greece was required to set up a counterpart account, which was administered by AMAG, thus further increasing the organization’s clout. The head of AMAG, Governor Griswold, was “The Most Powerful Man in Greece” in 1947, according to the New York Times and was generally perceived as “overbearing” and was widely disliked.

Most of the aid through AMAG was spent directly on defense, while a large part of the rest was invested in “military-related infrastructure.” AMAG represented a deeper level of control, but much like the UNRRA mission before it, it failed to produce the necessary results. In particular, Kofas identifies as major failures: the lack of a “long-term reconstruction program,” the inability to provide the necessary housing for the homeless, the continued use of indirect taxation structures that hurt the poor, and the raising of customs duties even while GATT was being signed. The results were continued financial problems and devaluation of the drachma that were exacerbated by the civil war, as famine and disease were common and 30% of the workforce was either under arms or refugee status.

In addition to AMAG, in April 1948, $649 million in Marshall Aid was granted to Greece. In his speech, Secretary of State George Marshall declared that “[t]he truth of the matter is that Europe’s requirements for the next three or four years of foreign food and other essential products – principally from America – are so much greater than her present ability to pay that she must have substantial additional help, or face economic, social and political deterioration of a very grave character.” The Marshall Plan, or European Recovery Program (ERP), had undoubtedly positive consequences in the short run, including combating hunger and
disease, while mules supplied to farmers helped them survive against all odds. By 1950, half of Greece’s GDP came from the Marshall Plan\textsuperscript{99} and it contributed to the development of infrastructure.\textsuperscript{100} Finally, one of the greatest successes of the ERP in Europe as the overwhelmingly positive psychological impact it had.\textsuperscript{101}

However, the Marshall Plan also had negative long term consequences as it “reinforced” the role of government planning in the economy and strengthened the “political patronage system.”\textsuperscript{102} It encouraged imports from the U.S.\textsuperscript{103} and failed to undertake a successful industrialization policy that would build the foundation for future economic growth.\textsuperscript{104} Moreover, a large amount of the American aid was absorbed by defense spending; the “civil war absorbed 84.7 percent of the cumulative foreign aid,”\textsuperscript{105} while after the war Greece spent an unsustainably high fraction of the budget on defense (from 1952-3, defense was 42\% of the budget, compared to 33\% in Turkey, and 23\% in Italy).\textsuperscript{106} Finally, the U.S. prevented Greece “from pursuing a multilateral foreign trade policy,”\textsuperscript{107} while contractionary monetary policy and wage freezes to control inflation worsened the recession and caused living standards to fall.\textsuperscript{108} Although Secretary Marshall and the State Department had recommended reforms of the “tax structure, monetary system, and civil service” early on, “in the absence of a center-left coalition government,” this was “difficult, if not impossible.”\textsuperscript{109} Both the U.S. and the Greek political forces – the military, centrist and rightists, bureaucrats, and wealthy class, intent on maintaining their privileges – are to blame for a failure in reforming the economic structure.\textsuperscript{110}

PART III – POLITICAL AND LEGAL INTERVENTION

As becomes evident from the above analysis of American military and economic intervention, the United States was frequently forced to cater to the existing power structures, often unable to implement reforms because of opposition from the ruling elite. Nevertheless, one cannot absolve the U.S., as not only did it choose to support certain governments, giving tacit approval, it also intervened directly to obtain desirable outcomes, even if this would hamper efforts at reform. Thus, the American intervention in the Greek Civil War and the overwhelming dependence of Greece on U.S. economic assistance established a “stable and effective mechanism for intervention in Greek affairs … An indirect threat to stop, cut, or delay aid was enough for Greek ministers to give in. This explains the ease with which the U.S.A could impose governments, political directions and figures, even after the end of the war.”\textsuperscript{111} U.S. policy after the civil war was influenced by two military considerations: the first was the outbreak of the war
in Korea in 1950, to which Greece sent military support, and a subsequent concern about the Western front, which led to an expansion of NATO to include Greece and Turkey in 1951.\textsuperscript{112}

In the period leading up to the civil war, the U.S. had supported Tsaldaris and the governments that followed in the fight against the communists. However, in the period following the Civil War, the U.S. took an increasingly important role in political and legal affairs. According to Miller, “With the communists vanquished and economic recovery under way, American officials confronted questions about what sort of political reforms could transform Greece from a dependent to a self-sufficient U.S. ally.”\textsuperscript{113} Nonetheless, Miller cautions that “while American officials, above all U.S. ambassadors Henry Grady and John Peurifoy, did possess the power to play a determining role in the direction of Greek postwar reconstruction, utilizing it successfully proved difficult.”\textsuperscript{114}

After the civil war, the U.S. had to deal increasingly with the machinations of the king and the army. Two episodes following the 1950 electoral victory of Plastiras and the centrists implicated the U.S., even though there is no concrete evidence of American involvement.\textsuperscript{115} Nonetheless, this perception was based on the reality that from 1950-2, “U.S. officials” often “played the frustrating, damaging and usually unsuccessful role of referee in Greece’s internal political struggles.”\textsuperscript{116} The U.S. was concerned with the constant turnover of governments and the embassy “concluded that, without new elections and a clear majority, Greece would never be able to effectively utilize U.S. assistance.”\textsuperscript{117} Thus, seeking stability, the U.S. backed a change to a majority electoral system and also gave its support to Papagos, even though the embassy agreed that a Papagos government would “interrupt gradual normalization of Greek polit[ical] life.”\textsuperscript{118} Papagos won in Nov. 1952, establishing a new era of Greek politics. During the Papagos years, 1952-6, the U.S. was more concerned with a rising leftist movement in Greece and the Korean War, and was thus apt to “downplay human rights.”\textsuperscript{119} In fact, Papagos actually expanded American bases in Greece, hoping to get increases in aid.\textsuperscript{120} Miller calls the years of 1953-63 the “golden age of U.S. relations with Greece.”\textsuperscript{121}

The most important covert intervention by the U.S. would occur following Papagos’ death. The CIA had upgraded its mission in Greece in order to gather human intelligence on the Soviet Union,\textsuperscript{122} and prepare a NATO “stay behind” response for a USSR invasion.\textsuperscript{123} The CIA worked closely with its Greek counterpart.\textsuperscript{124} After Papagos’ death in 1956, the king appointed Karamanlis, a conservative who “was skilled at … distributing patronage and ruthless in isolating potential internal rivals,”\textsuperscript{125} but also pursued economic growth, in particular of the
During the decade of rule from the right, the U.S. consistently disregarded human rights abuses. Tsoukalas describes the atmosphere as one of repression of the freedom of the press, continued operation of imprisonment camps in Makronisi and Yioura, restriction of movement, as one had to request special permission from the army, and intimidation of citizens, especially in the countryside, by rightist armed groups. In addition, although terror tactics were reduced after 1955, the state continued to use a “Certificate of Social Judiciousness” (Πιστοποιητικό Κοινωνικών Φρονιμάτων), which was necessary to hold many positions in the public and private sector, applying for a passport or driver’s license, or enrolling in a university, etc. Those unable to receive such a certificate numbered close to 1 million. Tsoukalas notes that these tactics helped suppress the opposition and keep the government in power. In many ways, Greece in the 1950s more closely resembled Eastern Europe than its Western European allies.

Although Karamanlis’ party, the ERE, won the elections in 1956, the CIA was alarmed by the growth in support for the communist EDA. As a result, the CIA and “with support from the embassy undertook a major covert-funding operation.” Having test-run such operations in France and Italy, the CIA covertly funded both Karamanlis’ ERE and Papandreou’s EK (the center party), achieving ERE victory and better performance by EK in 1961. Papandreou denounced the “rigged elections” and the military oppression which had taken place prior to the vote, skewing the outcome, while charging U.S. intervention, even though EK had also been assisted by the CIA, and condemning the “lavish spending” of the royals. The charges were generally true, and even U.S. Ambassadors thought the royal family, which also had the ear of the CIA, “supported the right and lived lavishly, in contrast to poor Greece striving for egalitarianism,” and was “out of touch with the needs of their subjects.” In 1963, after a scandal involving the murder of an EDA deputy George Lambrakis, Karamanlis resigned. After elections, George Papandreou and the EK came to power. The long period of stable yet oppressive rule from the right had ended.

Although the events following 1964 are outside the scope of this paper, it is evident that “the embassy was not enamored to a new Papandreou government” and would later try to take action against it. In large part, the U.S. would also “[share] responsibility for the events of 1967” and the Colonels coup. It is thus evident that the U.S. played a fundamental role, both in keeping the Tsaldaris and subsequent governments in power, in intervening to ensure a victory by Papagos and in using covert action to guarantee electoral victory by Karamanlis. Moreover,
during this period, the U.S. discounted the importance of human rights abuses and turned a blind eye to political oppression, in the interest of maintaining conservative governments in power that would assist the U.S. as NATO allies. Nonetheless the Greeks themselves were also active participants, and the various factions, including the centrists, rightists, and royal family would instigate events and curry favor with the Americans.

PART IV – INTERVENTION IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS – CYPRUS

The American role in Cyprus is seen by many Greeks a clear instance of U.S. intervention in Greece’s foreign policy. Although this belief finds resonance with nationalist sentiment, the reality is much more complicated. Legally, the fault lines were drawn in 1923, when under the Treaty of Lausanne “Turkey renounced her claims to Cyprus in favour of Britain.”\footnote{139} Lausanne, along with widespread popular support for eventual union (\textit{enosis}) with Greece that was often encouraged by British declarations, set the stage for confrontation.\footnote{140} The Cyprus question resurfaced in the 1950s. A possible solution would become marred in the mistakes of Greece, Britain, Turkey, and U.S., as well as Cypriot leaders.

The U.S. had various interests in Cyprus.\footnote{141} Most important were the geostrategic location of the island, the U.S. desire to maintain a strong NATO alliance in the region,\footnote{142} and the possibility of setting up U.S. bases in Cyprus, which was more likely after union with Greece.\footnote{143} Second, the U.S. had an aversion to both the British colonialist and Greek and Turkish nationalist goals, but saw the need to maintain Britain’s prestige in the Mediterranean (and nearby Middle East).\footnote{144} In the mid-1950s, both the U.S. and Britain miscalculated the ongoing importance of the issue to the Papagos government. According to Miller, a National Intelligence Estimate in 1955 downplayed Greece’s commitment to union, as well as the ramifications of Cyprus on the NATO alliance structure in the southeastern Mediterranean; “In the long history of CIA misjudgments, few analyses have been more mistaken or more pregnant with difficulties for the United States.”\footnote{145}

The outcome of Cyprus was influenced by events that took place in Istanbul and Izmir in 1955, when Turkish nationalists pursued a “brutal pogrom” against the Greek residents.\footnote{146} Nonetheless, Karamanlis was willing to pursue compromise more so than Papagos, but two mistakes by the U.S. hindered such a course of events. First, the U.S. did not aggressively denounce the atrocities in Istanbul and Izmir. Second, the U.S. blocked the UN from considering the issue of Cyprus.\footnote{147} Nonetheless, after negotiations, an agreement was reached in 1959 – the
London-Zurich Pact, which gave recognition to both minorities, to be governed under a “partnership” state, and declared both enosis and partition as illegal. The guarantors – Britain, Turkey, and Greece – could intervene to maintain the status quo. The U.S. role in brokering the deal, seen as having gained from the improved position of NATO and Britain, was denounced by Greek public opinion; “Greek-American relations would never be the same,” as “the average Greek’s feeling of betrayal was intense.”

The agreement at London-Zurich was unsustainable from the very beginning, as its demands for a division of all governing structures on ethnic lines made it impossible to set up a joint army or to govern effectively. As a result, Archbishop Makarios, the Greek Cypriot leader, demanded a revision of the Pact. George Papandreou, the Greek Prime Minister at the time, facing national elections, chose to give his support to Makarios. In 1963, “Makarios, with the support of the overwhelming majority of Greek Cypriots, guided his nation into a bloody and avoidable tragedy” and civil war began. At the same time, Makarios did not endear himself to the U.S. by continuing to support the communist AKEL party and the U.S. sought to exclude him from negotiations. President Johnson, focused on domestic elections and Vietnam, was determined to pursue a diplomatic solution. In 1964, the U.S. prevented all out war by convincing Turkey not to intervene militarily after Greece sent troops to the island. Meanwhile, Papandreou continued to support enosis and hoped the U.S. could achieve this goal by “convincing the Turks that Cyprus under Greek rule was the best way to undercut Makarios.” Having failed at this, Papandreou placed the blame squarely on the shoulders of the U.S. and Turkey. As a result of 1964, the U.S. faced greater anti-American sentiment in Greece, and shaken diplomatic relations with Turkey. The unresolved issue of Cyprus would plague the NATO allies for decades.

CONCLUSION

That the relationship between the U.S. and Greece was one of patron and client is not disputed. Disagreements arise over the extent to which the outcome of post-war Greece was the responsibility of the Greek politicians, royal family, economic elite, and army, or of the American embassy staff, economic advisers, military officers, and covert agents. Evidently, both sides played an important part. Nonetheless, the United States had without a doubt, through passive and active involvement, a profound impact on the political, economic, and military development of Greece. The U.S intervened directly in the Civil War, perhaps prolonging its
duration and greatly polarizing the two sides. Through UNRRA, but more importantly AMAG and the Marshall Plan, U.S. economic assistance helped stabilize a regime of patronage, corruption and economic stagnation, instead of implementing the necessary reforms for economic progress. In fact, such reforms would have required a progressive government. To the contrary, the U.S. perpetuated, sometimes with covert action, the rightist regimes of Tsaldaris, Papagos and Karamanlis, while tacitly accepting violations of human rights and restrictions of political freedom. Finally, “Cyprus joined the theme of “intervention” in a bill of indictment that many Greek intellectuals … and ultimately Greek public opinion were preparing against the United States, the patron that had betrayed them.”¹⁶¹ In fact, “most Americans are unaware of and are puzzled by the sense of injury that many Greeks … nurture. History, which is largely a nonfactor in U.S. public policy debate, plays an enormous role in Greek perceptions of current events.”¹⁶²

Most recently, Greece rose to the forefront of world attention in the spring of 2010 through an embarrassing exposure of the country’s dire financial straits. In fact, the roots of the current crisis are to be found in the immediate post war history of the country. The polarization of Greek society, the civil war, and the continued oppression carried out by the right literally tore the fabric of Greek society in such a way that those wounds have not healed to this day and continue to underlie Greek politics. Furthermore, as a result of economic problems and unemployment during the post-war years, Greece experienced extensive emigration, which was actively encouraged by the rightist governments. In the decade after 1955, 600,000, or 7% of the population left Greece, mostly young people and specialized workers. This resulted in a massive brain drain that shook the “socio-economic foundation” of Greece.¹⁶³ Finally, the rightist regimes, lacking true democratic legitimacy, perpetuated a policy of patronage, expanding the public sector, in order to get support. Patronage and corruption have continued to plague the country, inhibiting economic growth as well as deeply needed structural reform of the socio-economic and political system.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


ENDNOTES

1 Miller, p.x
2 Kofas, p.3
3 Woodhouse, p.236
4 Woodhouse, p.239
5 Woodhouse, p.238
6 Woodhouse, p.242-251
7 Woodhouse, p.251
8 Tsoukalas, p.80
9 Tsoukalas, p.80
10 Judt, p.18
11 Tsoukalas, p.80
12 Kofas, p.8-10
13 Kofas, p.11-12
14 Kofas, p.13
15 Kofas, p.17
16 Woodhouse, p.252
17 Woodhouse, p.253
18 Woodhouse, p.254
19 Woodhouse, p.254
20 Woodhouse, p.255
21 Woodhouse, p.256
22 Tsoukalas, p.79
23 Tsoukalas, p.80-81
24 Kofas, p.40
25 Tsoukalas, p.82
26 Kofas, p.41, numbers also corroborated by Tsoukalas, p.82
27 Kofas, p.41
28 Tsoukalas, p.86
29 Tsoukalas, p.85
30 Tsoukalas, p.85
31 Tsoukalas, p.87
32 Woodhouse, p.257
33 Woodhouse, p.257
34 Kofas, p.35
35 Ambrose and Brinkley, p.79
37 Woodhouse, p.257
38 Ambrose and Brinkley, p.71
39 Ambrose and Brinkley, p.79
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41 Ambrose and Brinkley, p.82
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43 Kofas, p.90
44 Ambrose and Brinkley, p.83
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47 Miller, p.31
48 Tsoukalas, p.87-88
49 Judt, p.120-121
50 Judt, p.101
51 Woodhouse, p.252
52 Kofas, p.39
53 Woodhouse, p.258
54 Judt, p.141
55 Tsoukalas, p.88-89
56 Kofas, p.75
57 Kofas, p.64
58 Tsoukalas, p.90-92
59 Kofas, p.63
60 Tsoukalas, p.98
61 Woodhouse, p.259
62 Tsoukalas, p.98
63 Tsoukalas, p.97
64 Tsoukalas, p.100
65 Tsoukalas, p.99
66 Tsoukalas, p.99
67 Tsoukalas, p.101
68 Tsoukalas, p.102
69 Judt, p.35
70 Judt, p.35
1. Tsoukalas, p.102
2. Judt, p.35
4. Kofas, p.18-22
5. Kofas, p.42
6. Tsoukalas, p.87
7. Kofas, p.18-22
8. Kofas, p.18-22
9. Kofas, p.28, quoting Howard K. Smith
10. Kofas, p.28
11. Kofas, p.27
12. Kofas, p.23
13. Kofas, p.23-4
14. Kofas, p.26
15. Kofas, p.25
17. Kofas, p.29
18. Kofas, p.91
20. Kofas, p.104
21. Kofas, p.103
22. Kofas, p.102
23. Kofas, p.105
24. Kofas, p.102
25. Kofas, p.105
26. Kofas, p.105
27. Kofas, p.93
28. Judt, p.96-7
30. Judt, p.96-7
31. Kofas, p.120
32. Miller, p.32
33. Kofas, p.123
34. Kofas, p.120
35. Kofas, p.126
36. Kofas, p.116
37. Kofas, p.111
38. Kofas, p.111
39. Kofas, p.112-2 and p.115
40. Kofas, p.73
41. Kofas, p.132
42. Tsoukalas, p.94. Direct quote in Greek: “Η βοήθεια των ΗΠΑ, πέρα από το ύψος της και τις επιπτώσεις της στην ελληνική οικονομία, προσέφερε έναν σταθερό και αποτελεσματικό μηχανισμό παρεμβάσεων στις ελληνικές υποθέσεις... Αρκούσε μια έμμεση απειλή διακοπής, περικοπής ή και επιβράδυνσης της βοήθειας για να γυνωτετήσουν οι Έλληνες υπουργοί. Έτσι εξηγείται η ευκολία με την οποία οι ΗΠΑ μπορούσαν να επιβάλουν κυβερνήσεις, πολιτικές κατευθύνσεις και πρόσωπα, ακόμη και μετά το τέλος του πολέμου.”
43. Woodhouse, p.261
44. Miller, p.21
45. Miller, p.24
46. In the first, Plastiras was criticized as a communist by Van Fleet, the chief U.S. military adviser in Greece, after he attempted to implement reconciliatory policies with the communists, and was replaced with Venizelos by the king. The U.S. was seen as responsible, even though Ambassador Grady had refused to assist the king in this plot, while Venizelos resigned claiming American involvement. (Miller, p.27-8 and 34) The second was when Papagos, who was subsequently in power, resigned after a disagreement with the king and a military uprising took place which Papagos himself helped pacify. Although no evidence exists, “[f]or many Greeks, the episode confirmed their belief in dark connections between U.S. “services” (the CIA) and IDEA.” (Miller, p.36)
47. Miller, p.33
48. Miller, p.35
49. Miller, p.37
50. Miller, p.31
51. Miller, p.42
52. Miller, p.66
53. Miller, p.73
54. Miller, p.74
55. Miller, p.73
56. Miller, p.68
57. Miller, p.70
58. Miller, p.70
59. Miller, p.130-134
60. Miller, p.73
61. Miller, p.74-5
62. Miller, p.76-7
63. Miller, p.78
64. Miller, p.80
65. Miller, p.82
66. Miller, p.83
67. Miller, p.112-3
68. Miller, p.123
69. Miller, p.123
Miller summarizes the decision-making process in the U.S., as well as the various sides of the Cyprus issue, by quoting a (somewhat humorous in its elucidating simplicity) discussion by Eisenhower and Dulles: “In a rare discussion about Cyprus, the two men sketched out the parameters of their policy: “The Sec[retary] said the Greek-Turkey thing was a mess. The Pres[ident] said the Greeks were demanding [that] unless we take their side, they will be tough. The Sec[retary] said … the British … dragged the Turks in and got them excited so the issue is considered Greek-Turkish and not Greek-British. The Pres[ident] said Cyprus never belonged to Greece.” (Miller, p.59-60).