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TOP SECRETTOP SECRETCOPY NO. 4SNME-17 September 1946Pages 1 - 3, incl.STATE-WAR-NAVY COORDINATING SUBCOMMITTEE
FOR THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EASTU.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN GREECE

1. The enclosure, a draft memorandum for the Secretary of State presented by the War Member, is circulated for consideration by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Subcommittee for the Near and Middle East.
2. It is recommended that:
 - a. The memorandum be approved by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Subcommittee for the Near and Middle East.
 - b. The memorandum be forwarded to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for comment from a military point of view, and
 - c. After completion of a and b above, the memorandum be approved by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee for presentation to the Secretary of State as a statement of the coordinated politico-military view regarding U.S. security interests in Greece.

H. W. KARBEL,
Assistant Executive Secretary,
State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee

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E N C L O S U R E

D R A F T

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

1. The Ukrainian complaint against Greece in the United Nations, taken together with increasing reports of incidents along the Greek frontier with Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Albania, points to a crisis for Greece. If such a crisis arises, it will find Greece in a weakened internal condition due not only to the aftermath of war but also to the activities of an apparently well organized and armed Communist minority, supported by the USSR and Soviet satellites.

2. The strategic importance of Greece to U.S. security lies in the fact that Greece stands alone in the Balkans as a barrier between the USSR and the Mediterranean, in a position similar to that of Turkey farther to the east. In the broader political sense, but with important military implications, there are other important considerations:

a. Greece was an early and courageous opponent to Fascist and Nazi conquest. The fact that she resisted to the end of her strength is widely known along the Soviet perimeter from Finland to Turkey. Likewise, it is known that the clash in Greece is one between the USSR and the western powers, represented principally by Great Britain. If Greece were to fall into the Soviet orbit, there could not fail to be most unfavorable repercussions in all those areas where political sympathies are balanced precariously in favor of the West, and against Soviet Communism.

b. It is to be remembered that U.S. advantage lies in not allowing the ideological struggle now going on in the world to become one between the USSR and the U.S., or one between the USSR and the U.S. and Britain; it must remain one between the USSR and the non-Soviet world. Further,

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Enclosure

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In modern warfare the armed forces of a nation are by no means the full measure of the military strength of the nation; the U.S. is a case in point. It has become a clear and indisputable fact that the military strength of the U.S., if it is to be posed against the USSR, rests in a degree which can hardly be overemphasized on maintaining faith in the U.S. on the part of all key nations not now in the Soviet sphere. Greece is an important arena in the contest for favorable world opinion.

3. If in the process of trying to straighten out her own affairs, Greece falls into open civil war, there will certainly be outside intervention on the Communist side, although disguised as to its outside character. Such a condition will face the western powers, particularly Great Britain but also the United States, with difficult decisions as to what support can be given the established government involved in open internal hostilities. Decisions of this nature have been difficult in China, and may become more so. They were impossible in the Spanish Civil War. They may be impossible in Greece. It is vastly to the interest of the United States that the recognized government be assisted in becoming strong enough before the fact to handle its internal problems without requiring a sudden increase in assistance during a state of actual or near civil war.

4. Withdrawal of British forces from Greece, as it progresses, will leave the Greek government with the complex problem of maintaining internal order and protecting her borders under conditions where none of her Soviet-inspired neighbors wish to see her succeed. The stability of the Greek government in such circumstances must be regarded as questionable unless given vigorous external support, including probably support by the United States. If the fall of the Greek government should result in the emergence of a Communist Greece, Soviet encirclement of Turkey will have been enhanced, and Soviet prospects for entering the eastern Mediterranean will have greatly increased.

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5. In the current international game of power politics, with the USSR holding the initiative, the U.S. is at a disadvantage in rendering direct support to its friends on the Soviet perimeter. It is not for consideration whether the U.S. can support the Greek government with military force; yet there can be no question that the USSR is giving direct military assistance to elements seeking to cause the fall of that government. An important part of this assistance is the maintenance of large armed forces by the Soviet Union and her satellites in countries contiguous to Greece. This military threat posed against stability in Greece makes somewhat less effective such economic and political assistance as the U.S. has to offer, but, at the same time, it makes more urgent the requirement that the assistance be offered and given now, lest the future become even less propitious than the present.

6. It is in the interest of U.S. security that Greece be supported. The most important assistance which can be given immediately is active political support in the international field -- in the United Nations, at the Paris Conference, and wherever else it can be useful. In addition to political support, there should be economic assistance in the form of liberal and unfettered credits, and direct relief to supplant UNRRA assistance. The United States should make it clear to the world that our desire to see Greece remain independent and in charge of her own affairs is no less firm than our position on Turkey. In Greece, as in Turkey, similar U.S. and British interests assure strong British support and assistance to such a policy on the part of the U.S.

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H. W. KARBEL,
Assistant Executive Secretary,
State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee

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ENCLOSURE

DRAFT

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highlight at Peace Conf
Internal disunity which may lead to military, etc.
Gov. paralysis

Part of same measures

2. The strategic importance of Greece to U.S. security lies in the fact that Greece stands alone in the Balkans as a barrier between the USSR and the Mediterranean, in a position similar to that of Turkey farther to the east. In the broader political sense, but with important military implications, there are other important considerations:

Don't want Greece to become a pawn in Soviet aggression

a. Greece was an early and courageous opponent to Fascist and Nazi conquest. The fact that she resisted to the end of her strength is widely known along the Soviet perimeter from Finland to Turkey. Likewise, it is known that the clash in Greece is one between the USSR and the western powers, represented principally by Great Britain. If Greece were to fall into the Soviet orbit, there could not fail to be most unfavorable repercussions in all those areas where political sympathies are balanced precariously in favor of the West, and against Soviet Communism.

(Against spheres of influence)

to commit aggression

b. It is to be remembered that U.S. advantage lies in not allowing the ideological struggle now going on in the world to become one between the USSR and the U.S., or one between the USSR and the U.S. and Britain; it must remain one between the USSR and the non-Soviet world. Further,

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Ammanut
advise to strengthen
politically - economically
approx Econ assistance:
Exp in bank
International Bank
other
Surplus Property sales
Direct grants where necessary

Financing

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No copies to be issued to any person in State West. without approval of Mr. Gardner

SUPPLEMENTAL CONTROL SHEET

By 2-1

- 76 1 State member (subct)
- 77 2 War member (subct)
- 78 3 Navy " "
- 79 4 Mr Cox
- 80 5 Elliott (ed) Per 9/11/46
- 81 6) Col Wood P+D
- 82 7
- 83 8
- 84 9
- 85 10
- 86 11
- 87 12
- 88 13
- 89 14
- 90 15
- 91 16
- 92 17
- 93 18
- 94 19
- 95 20
- 96 21
- 97 22 Mr Riddleberger
- 98 23
- 99 24 Col Reid
- 100 25 Capt Lawrence
- 101
- 102
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MEMO TO SNME 1 FILE:

On the morning of September 10, John Elliott of IS came to this office and requested a copy of the subject paper, saying that he, Messrs Kopper and Johnson, all of IS, were to have a conference in the afternoon with Mr. Baxter of NE and, therefore, wished to have a copy of the subject paper for reference purposes during the discussion.

I permitted him to take a copy of the paper with the understanding that in no event was it to be seen by any one other than the three people in IS mentioned above and that the paper would be returned to this office after the meeting. He agreed to these stipulations.

I subsequently called Mr. Baxter and confirmed with him that the projected meeting was to take place. He stated, however, that Mr. Henderson had changed his mind and did not wish any one in IS to have a copy of the paper during the initial stages of its consideration by the Department. Mr. Baxter further confirmed that my action was quite proper.

John P. Gardiner
John P. Gardiner

September 10, 1946