

ANTI-COMMUNISM AND AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN GREECE*

Martin Eve

Any survey of anti-Communism must include an account of the Greek experience. It was in Greece that the British first used military-force against their former allies-of World War Two—one of the more shameful incidents in recent British history—and it was in Greece that the USA most decisively extended its empire. The techniques of neo-colonial rule, first worked out in Greece were a blueprint for intervention in the rest of the world.

While this process was in its outline clearly visible to the world at the time, the story has now been told from the inside, by the careful sifting of State Department documents and other sources. This new evidence gives chapter and verse for what could only previously be surmised, confirms the general picture of US domination but in some important respects causes us to revise earlier assumptions.

Greece was no stranger to being the object of neo-colonial manipulation; from the beginnings of modern Greece the parties had reflected the interests—and even the names—of the great powers of the time: France, Britain and Russia. More recently British hegemony has been established and traditionally was operated through the person of the king—a possibility in a country where there was a royalist regime, flimsily disguised as a constitutional monarchy. This relationship had survived the Metaxas' dictatorship's flirtation with Italian and German fascism and the king continued to act as a British puppet, or 'loyal ally'.

The relations between Britain and Greece entered a new phase with the retreat of the German army in October 1944. This is not the place to relate the means by which the British restored their rule (many aspects of which are dealt with elsewhere in this volume, in John Saville's study of Ernest Bevin). What is relevant here is the way in which that rule was effected. The old pre-war method of controlling Greece through the king, or since this proved for the time being politically impossible, through the Regent, was the method favoured by Churchill. This avoided the necessity for Britain to concern itself with and assume responsibility for

* *American Intervention in Greece 1943-1949* by Lawrence Wittner (Columbia University Press, New York, 1982). The quotations are all taken from this work, where full references can be found. I am greatly indebted to Marion Sarafis for her help in preparing this review.

detailed aspects of Greek life. Britain would determine the political leadership (on British orders two prime ministers were dismissed, and a third was refused leave to resign) and work through them. This traditional view of how things should be done was at variance with that of the shrewd Minister Resident, Harold Macmillan, who devised a detailed plan by which every Greek minister would have a British 'adviser' whose advice he would be compelled to take. In addition a British Military Mission would actually nominate for all posts in the armed forces and police. This plan, put forward with some determination in 1945 (but not referred to in its author's Memoirs) was rejected for a number of reasons, including the improbability of finding a Greek politician who would humiliate himself and his country by signing such an agreement. Instead the British Ambassador in Athens would become a sort of de facto High Commissioner and would form a link in the chain of command with the Regent and Prime Minister of Greece.

This system, which had worked so well in the inter-war years, was not a conspicuous success. Two years later, the country was in the grip of a right-wing terror, prisons and concentration camps were full to overflowing with former resistance fighters, the Greek economy was in chaos and increasingly dependent on foreign aid, while in the mountains of the north a civil war had begun.

The executants of British policy, now a Labour cabinet, who had presided over the emerging situation, now wished to wash their hands of it. Not that there was significant support in the cabinet for any effective curb on the excesses of the Right; but that the Chancellor, Hugh Dalton, was gaining more and more support for his contention that Britain could no longer afford the cost of being the Protecting Power. It was in these circumstances that in February 1947 Britain despatched to the USA an ultimatum; Britain would quit Greece at the end of March if the USA did not take over their burden from them.

The suddenness of this threat—soon realised to be a bluff—caused a flurry in the State Department. Within five days a consensus had emerged as to how to take on the assignment; the question of *whether* to take it on was virtually unasked. While detailed planning went on, it was remembered that the request for aid had not come, as it happened, from Greece at all. This was soon put right; the State Department drafted a suitable request which was handed to the Greek Ambassador in Washington, and in due course transmitted from Athens. There were now two subjects of discussion: first, how the new American hegemony would be operated and secondly, how the American involvement would be 'sold' to Congress and the American people.

On the first question, there was little disagreement; the Americans would operate their version of the Macmillan plan, though it is doubtful if they knew of its existence, and appoint 'advisers' for every ministry; a

military mission of up to **40** officers would offer 'strategic' advice to the Greek Army. This modest figure of '10-40' was later to grow, but it should be remembered that British plans for pulling out of Greece did not involve the removal either of their military mission (**1,400** men) or of their regular troops (**14,000**). Though both of these figures were to be reduced, there were always more British military advisers than American, and some troops remained until **1954**.

Over the second question there was more room for argument. The problems faced by the Truman administration in early **1947** were by no means the same as those of a few years later. In Congress the biggest obstacle was not opposition from liberal New Dealers chary of backing a fascistic regime, but of old-fashioned Isolationists still occupying their traditional Southern and mid-Western seats in the Senate; Byrd, Vandenberg, Talmadge, etc. were still a powerful force in Washington. For this opposition, the arguments were hastily assembled. Under the cover of anti-Communism the State Department spokesmen wheeled out a strange mixture of threats; Soviet expansion, the Communist threat to freedom, and when the ageing senators were still reluctant to move as fast as was required of them, an even starker alternative. There were two systems in the world, the capitalist and the communist; it was them or us. With the spectre of the spread of a collectivist economy to Virginia even Senator Byrd was won over. But another argument was being quietly used, and less quietly in business circles. And this line of thinking appears to be much closer to the real thoughts of the men in the State Department.

In the days when the Isolationists held sway in America, the USA had been one of the main sources of oil in the world and a net exporter. This was no longer the case. America was now increasingly dependent on the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, where the Aramco consortium had recently acquired its monopoly position, and on the other oil fields of the Gulf where a number of US oil companies were moving into a traditionally British area. The Soviet pressures on Iran and Turkey, it was argued, and the Communist threat to Greece were all part of a concerted move to cut off the USA from her vital oil supply.

This was not, however, the argument publicly advanced for the Greek involvement. Nor, after some discussion and agonising, was the anti-communist argument the one deployed for the public, in general. The State Department had conducted its own survey and concluded that **70** per cent of the population were opposed to a 'get tough with Russia' policy. Two years after the GIs and the Red Army had embraced one another on the Elbe, the American public were not disposed to respond to the call of anti-Communism. Public opinion and the press had been widely critical of the British record in Greece, and one of the problems facing the British had been US newspapermen, whose reporting had been subjected to British military censorship. For the people of America the

emphasis was placed on support for democracy, and the rehabilitation of a small friendly country. According to the State Department official who wrote the final draft

The administration recognized that taking a stand against Soviet expansion might touch off a jingoistic crusade. At least partly for that reason the President's message avoided mention of the Soviet Union and pitched United States policy on a pro-freedom rather than an anti-communist plane.

The emphasis of the Truman doctrine was rather on the extension of the US sphere of influence to Greece and Turkey, than a landmark in anti-Soviet rhetoric like Churchill's Fulton speech the previous year.

Although the British ultimatum had come out of the blue, the US had already experienced some foretaste of dealing with the Greek political leaders. More than one delegation had been sent to ask for money, and had shown a shocking lack of realism in the amounts they expected to receive.

The executives of the new imperial power, the American Mission for Aid to Greece (AMAG), hastily brought together under the leadership of Dwight Griswold, were none too pleased with what they found in Greece. Griswold reported that the Greek government was corrupt, inefficient and should be replaced. In Washington, Secretary of State Marshall and Dean Rusk agreed with him, but counselled a more careful approach, as the latter put it, 'to avoid charges of imperialism'. Although little attention was paid to this, there were problems for the Greeks in the abrupt change-over. Politicians like Tsaldaris, the Populist leader, who had become accustomed to working with the British suddenly found themselves putting their signature to a request for American aid. Soon they were expressing their gratitude:

The hearts of the Greek people are profoundly touched by the generosity and good will of the American people and by the benevolent interest of a great and friendly nation in the welfare of Greece.

Again, the message had been composed in the State Department.

In the event it took all of six months to reconstruct the government, and the result—a Liberal–Populist coalition headed by the 84-year old Sofoulis—was not entirely satisfactory to the Americans. AMAG meanwhile had been getting to work, their advisers active in every ministry. This activity can best be described under four headings: 1) the economy; 2) the trade union movement; 3) civil liberties and 4) the military dimension.

The economy

The Greek economy had suffered more than most during the war; the German occupiers had never looked to Greece as a source of industrial material, and before their total withdrawal their occupation had been confined to the larger towns. Greece's only chrome mine had been sabotaged by its miners and was out of action; the large urban populations of Athens and Salonica were dependent on United Nations Relief & Rehabilitation for their survival; British rule had not succeeded in generating any investment or getting the remains of industry going again. Even UNRRA and other aid found its way into the hands of the black-marketeers and speculators, and the only market that flourished was that in gold sovereigns. Inflation was out of control and nullified all attempts to revive the economy. Greece's only significant asset, her shipping fleet, brought little or no profit to her; the gains were made by the shipping magnates and salted away in America.

The American economic advisers who arrived in March 1947 took no time to weigh up the situation and decide what to do; indeed they knew what to do before they set foot in Greece. In a refrain familiar in the monetarist 'eighties, they laid down the new laws. Greeks must stop looking to the rest of the world to feed them; they should forget their dreams of limitless dollar credits from the USA and of vast reparations from Germany and Italy. As an AMAG memorandum noted:

Greece is not only a poor country. . . but is likely to continue a poor country.

Initially some attempts were made to control the import of luxury foreign goods and to tax the ostentatious wealth of the rich; these half-hearted initiatives were soon abandoned. AMAG rejected rationing and price-controls; such war-time controls as existed on imports or on the export of capital were dismantled. A wage freeze was imposed: attempts to collect income tax were abandoned in favour of indirect taxation; against much protesting from a normally compliant government, the subsidy on bread was withdrawn, increasing the price by 75 per cent. No measures were taken to secure any revenue from shipping, so that the benefits that arose from the receipt of a gift of one hundred surplus Liberty ships were experienced only by the Greek ship owners. Budget cuts were made in the modest relief and reconstruction programmes, and the government was required to add to the problems of poverty and unemployment by sacking 20,000 civil servants. As the American member of the Currency Committee of the Bank of Greece expressed it:

The primary task was to lower the socially acceptable standard of living.

In this aim AMAG were undoubtedly successful; less successful was any

revival of the Greek economy. Only in 1950 did industrial production reach its pre-war (1938) level; Greece was still dependent on foreign aid for 47 per cent of its expenditure. Unemployment was high, and so was inflation, though it was an undoubted achievement of AMAG to have brought this down from the runaway figures of 1947. Possibly connected with the military situation was the only other success that AMAG could claim—a road improvements programme. The endemic problems of the Greek economy remained what they had been before the Americans arrived.

The trade union movement

This harsh economic policy, in particular the wage-freeze introduced in 1947 could not be implemented without a confrontation with the trade union movement. Greece had never fully achieved free democratic unions; there was a tradition of government control and interference which the **Metaxas** dictatorship had done nothing to modify. On the other hand both before the war and later, the influence of the Communist Party (KKE) was noticeable in the Tobacco Workers and Maritime unions in particular and in 1947 the prestige of the KKE was high throughout the working class. When the Americans arrived however, the trade unions were still negotiating to be allowed to elect their leadership. The general cycle of events was this: a British Trade Union delegation would arrive, negotiate a compromise deal between the Left and the other factions, which would then be sabotaged in one way or another by the government and the Right. One thing all were agreed on, if there were elections the Left would win them overwhelmingly. Some of the so-called trade union leaders of the Right had no basis of support at all, one of them, who came close to becoming the Secretary of the Greek TUC being actually a former Minister of Labour under **Metaxas**. This certainly accounted for why the Left was prepared to agree to the various compromises, confident that they would quickly regain their position once elections were held. Although AMAG introduced the American Federation of Labour expert Irving Brown, they were content to begin with to allow the British to continue to exercise their role as trade union advisers. Vincent Tewson, therefore, was sent for once again to negotiate a settlement so that the long-awaited elections could proceed. This time the Left (**ERGAS**) agreed to only six seats on an executive of twenty-one, but the deal ran into difficulties with the Americans. A difference of approach, or perhaps of aim, began to emerge between Britain and America.

We must make an effort [Vincent Tewson suggested] to convince the British labour movement we tried our best.

For the Americans

Mr Keeley actually argued that if free elections would produce a Communist executive it would be better to have none.

The US Embassy now demanded total exclusion of the Communists from the executive. This, British readers may be surprised to learn, drew strong protests from Bevin, as a result of which the Americans made a tactical withdrawal. Without in any way abandoning their aim of purging the Greek labour movement of all communist leaders, they returned to negotiating something like the Tewson formula. However, they undermined this compromise **later** by insisting that the Greeks disaffiliate from the World Federation (to which incidentally the British TUC was affiliated at the time)—knowing that this would be totally unacceptable to the Left. Finally all hope for settlement was finished off by the arrest of three of the six communist representatives. These arrests were the first of many, and not only Communists but many liberal trade union leaders were imprisoned or exiled. By the end of 1947, ERGAS itself was declared illegal—an action characterised by Tewson as 'indefensible'. Even less defensible was the introduction of the death penalty for striking, urged on Tsaldaris by Griswold's deputy. This was too much for world opinion, and even the AFL joined with the CIO in strong protests. AMAG now went into reverse to persuade the Greek government to repeal the law. Sofoulis and Tsaldaris resisted this counter-order, which was not carried out for a number of weeks.

The Greek trade union movement now became the arena for a squalid struggle between corrupt right-wing operators, while the government moved against the last stronghold of the Left, the Maritime Union. Ten of its leaders were executed and others (like Tony Ambatielos) were to lie in gaol under sentence of death for many years. Greek trade unions have yet to recover from the effects of this legacy.

Civil liberties

There were two central questions in the evolution of post-war Greek political life. The first was whether the hope for a democratic evolution widespread at the time of Liberation could still be realised; or whether there would be a return to the traditions of pre-war Greece and the Metaxas dictatorship. The other related to the civil war; was there to be conciliation and an attempt to find a peaceful solution, or was it to be regarded as a fight to the finish?

In regard to the first question, the American advisers had encouraged the Greek government in the destruction of the trade union movement. As with the trade unions, the government needed no encouragement to take drastic measures against its opponents. As the Minister of Public Order Zervas said to the US military chief, General Livesay:

No matter what the operations of the army, the main thing is to kill the communists in the towns.

When the Americans took over in Greece there were some 17,000 Leftists in gaol in circumstances which require some explanation. After the fighting in Athens in December 1944, there had been negotiated, first a cease-fire and then the Varkiza Agreement, signed by the organisation of the Resistance movement, EAM, and by the Greek government. EAM had tried to negotiate a full amnesty, but were forced to agree the following amnesty clause:

An amnesty for political crimes committed between the 3 December and the publication of the law establishing the amnesty. From this amnesty shall be excluded common law crimes against life and property which were not absolutely necessary to the achievement of the political crime concerned.

The questions: what was a common law crime and what was 'absolutely necessary' were therefore going to be decided by the judges in the courts. There had been no purge of the judiciary, and these were therefore the same judges who had sat dispensing fascist justice on behalf of the Greek Quisling government throughout the occupation. Thus every member of ELAS who had taken part in a military operation could be, and thousands were, accused of the 'common-law' crime of murder, frequently being accused of 'murder of persons unknown' so that there was little difficulty in securing convictions after the most perfunctory hearings. In fact the situation was worse than Wittner represents it; the Greek courts held that the provisions of the Varkiza Agreement only referred to the 'December events' and that there was no amnesty for the crime of armed resistance prior to that date. This was a threat to the liberty—and life—of every member of ELAS, thousands of whom were imprisoned for long sentences, and many executed. Along with the unrestrained reign of terror in the countryside, originated by General Grivas' 'X'-ites and other armed bands, and joined by the gendarmerie, these facts explain why so many former ELAS members went into hiding or took to the mountains, long before there was any question of a civil war.

Against this background, the Greek government in July 1947 sounded out Ambassador MacVeagh to obtain approval for further arrests, and through him Secretary of State Marshall, who replied that

we should not interpose objections.

A week later a wave of arrests began, more than 14,000 people were rounded up and exiled to the islands. This measure drew protests even from British officials, including the Ambassador; but the US showed no

inclination to stop the flow of Greeks to Makronisos and the other concentration camps.

Griswold, the head of AMAG, publicly defended Makronisos, claiming that the inmates were 'well-treated' and receiving 'indoctrination courses'. In fact the reaction of the Americans to the growing legal and illegal terror was not to attempt to mitigate it in any way, but to improve public relations so that it would not receive such a bad press throughout the world. The Greek government was urged to issue communiques explaining the executions. Criticism of widespread arrests and executions was

a political weapon of the Communists. . . to smear the Greek state.

Despite rumours to the contrary the US Embassy

had never requested the Greek government to suspend the execution of traitors.

The policy of executing their political opponents came to a climax in early 1948 when the Minister of Justice, **Ladas**, planned to execute 2,961 prisoners. Most of these had been in prison since the Liberation and their crime was participation in the Resistance. **Ladas** prepared a secret plan for the executions to avoid unfavourable publicity, but after the assassination of **Ladas** these were carried out openly as a 'reprisal'. This produced an international outcry; in Britain Bevin protested strongly and even Churchill privately expressed his disapproval of the practice of shooting prisoners. Faced with these pressures, **Ladas'** successor at the Ministry began to back down. In this he was bitterly opposed by the US chrgt. There now began an argument between the Americans on the spot who were encouraging the Greek government to murder their opponents, and the State Department which was feeling the blast of foreign disapproval. Ambassador Grady (successor to **MacVeagh**) continued to defend the death sentences, including those on Manolis Glezos (who had achieved international fame by tearing down the Nazi swastika from the Acropolis in 1941) and on a number of Jehovah's Witnesses who had refused call-up. In the outcome a hundred prisoners were executed not the three thousand proposed, but this owed everything to world opinion and nothing to the 'advisers' of the Greek government.

These were not the only attacks on civil liberties; measures were taken to purge the Church (the Bishop of Kozani who had figured in the Resistance was defrocked), and there was a wholesale purge of Leftists in government service. The illegal harassment of the left-wing press gave way to a full-scale assault. So much so that **Sofoulis** complained about these 'fascist measures'—measures which he, as Prime Minister, was powerless to prevent.

On the second question—that of conciliation and attempts to end the civil

war by agreement—the American record was the same. In the early stages it is true that the US were urging an 'amnesty' policy on the Greek government. But this proposal for individual unconditional surrender was taken seriously by no-one, least of all by the soldiers of the Democratic Army who knew how the government forces treated their prisoners. As the American Porter wrote, the programme

looked plausible on paper. . . The appointment of General Zervas as Minister of Public Order completely destroyed anyone's inclination to take it seriously.

The point, however, was not amnesty but the conducting of negotiations for a settlement, and for this there was beginning to be a groundswell of international opinion. The men and women of the Democratic Army had not taken to the hills in order to overthrow the government in Athens, but first, to avoid being arrested or murdered and secondly to claim a legitimate place within political society, similar to that enjoyed by their French or Italian comrades. This should have been clear, not only because Marcos, the Commander of the Democratic Army, constantly reiterated it in a series of peace initiatives from the mountains, but from other indications besides. The Americans noted that the Democratic Army imposed on itself, or had imposed on it, a man-power ceiling; they knew, but ignored the fact that the Democratic Army was receiving no aid whatsoever from the Soviet Union, in contrast with the vast amounts of aid they were giving to the government side. They also ignored the signs that Moscow was distancing itself from Yugoslavia, the chief backers of the Democratic Army; and when, in June 1948 this came to an open rift, they still ignored the diplomatic possibilities and continued with the war relentlessly. As George Kennan said:

The problem in Greece is merely one of cessation of aggression and does not call for discussion or negotiation of any kind.

This was not the view taken by the world community, and among other initiatives through the UN was a particularly promising one from Australia. This called for an end to the fighting and for internationally supervised free elections with other guarantees. Supported by several countries, this was made public in late 1948. The US, having failed to stifle the initiative privately, did succeed in crushing it publicly. General Marcos' serious proposals for a settlement (July 1947, September 1947, April 1948), a peace feeler from Moscow to Tsaldaris—these moves from the other side were ignored; while those in Athens who were in favour of conciliation, Tsouderos, Sofianopoulos and others, were actively discouraged. So the war dragged on.

Military involvement

When the British had demanded that the US take over responsibility for Greece, it was essentially an economic burden that they had in mind. The civil war was seen primarily as an additional drain on resources which it was beyond Britain's ability to meet. At first, therefore, the American plan was to hand over to the Greek Army large quantities of weapons and supplies and leave them to get on with the job of putting down the rebels. Two years after the end of the Second World War, the US held enormous stocks of surplus weapons and supplies which could be handed over at a fraction of their original cost, thus ensuring a modest budget to get through Congress. A suspicious Congress had been assured that the number of US personnel would be minimal—an advisory mission of 10–40 under General Livesay. At this time the Greek Army (GNA), swollen with the recruitment of the collaborating Security *Batallions*, was already a force of 120,000 men facing a rebel army of only a few thousands. Not only this but the British, while sloughing off their financial commitments, had not withdrawn their large military mission and substantial number of troops.

It soon became clear that the first-stage strategy was not working; rebel activity was spreading to all parts of Greece. The Greek government was asking for an increase in their *army*—i.e. for more money to pay for an additional 20,000 troops. General Livesay turned this down and pointed out that what was required was not more troops but more effective use of the existing numbers. As the first American commander reported

there is nothing wrong with Greece that time, forceful US guidance and American dollars will not correct.

The dollars were already flowing, it was the turn of the forceful *guidance*. The '10–40' military advisers began to grow in numbers and in activity; in September 1947 another 150 were requested and the question was raised of American 'operational advice'. By the end of 1947 this had been agreed, Livesay was replaced by the more aggressive General Van Fleet, and the Greek Army was now, in fact, being led down to divisional level by American officers. This army was swollen to the enormous number of a quarter of a million troops, not counting the right-wing armed groups in the villages; but despite this more than ten-to-one superiority over the Democratic Army, not to mention their superiority in weaponry, the military situation showed no sign of improvement. Behind the scenes two discussions were taking place. One concerned the possible deployment of American fighting troops, and this came very close to being implemented. The other, more discreet, discussion concerned contingency plans if the civil war should be lost.

The pattern which was to become familiar elsewhere in the world was

here drawn out in blueprint; heavy dollar support, a foreign army being armed, trained and led into battle under American direction. The basic difficulty faced in Greece was soon recognised—the reluctance of the GNA to engage the enemy. During 1948 and 1949 the GNA was reorganised to replace the rifle with artillery and combat planes. The enemy could now be engaged at longer range. But these methods did not, during 1948, bring the desired result; to American dismay

the operations of the Greek armed forces. . . have not resulted in any substantial reduction of the guerilla threat.

Van Fleet acknowledged that anything that had been accomplished had been 'done by air and artillery'. The Americans, in Washington or in Athens had no new recipe for changing the situation in their favour; a more draconian regime in the GNA was instituted under General Papagos, with dismissal of many officers and increased use of firing squads. New weapons were deployed, including for the first time anywhere, Napalm.

The situation changed dramatically in August 1949. What had been a few months earlier a critical situation for the Greek government became a total defeat for the Democratic Army, the remains of which withdrew across the Albanian frontier. The Americans were able to claim that their massive resources, their weaponry and their leadership—and without the participation of American troops—had brought victory, and this was the lesson they learned for the future. The reality, as was realised by less blinkered observers at the time, was otherwise. The US policy makers seem to have ignored the consequences of the break between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. As this rift widened, the fate of the Democratic Army became more precarious. Contrary to the general belief, Yugoslav aid had been measured and restrained; for instance, many Slav-speaking refugees from Macedonia and others were being held in Yugoslavia, and conspicuously *not* being armed and sent back across the frontier. Yugoslavia, in dispute with the British over Trieste, now found itself totally isolated by Soviet hostility. It could not be expected that in these circumstances the involvement on the Greek frontier would be long continued. (Still less so when Zachariades and the leadership of KKE came out strongly in support of the Cominform). On the other hand, Stalin had never shown any enthusiasm for a civil war in Greece, which conflicted with his plans for the division of the Balkans into spheres of influence. The Albanians and Bulgars were accordingly called into line, a line which was now almost exclusively preoccupied with bringing down Tito. For this policy the civil war was an embarrassment, and Stalin ordered its winding up.

In Greece the USA had inherited a neo-colony from Britain; the mechanisms of control were already in existence, and were taken over

and used without restraint. Lawrence Wittner shows how the techniques of remote control over Greek political development, over the economy and in the military sphere were perfected—in parallel with the techniques of managing Congress and manipulating the media in the US itself. Using the documents available he has built up a devastating case against his country's rulers. These documents do not include any of the reports relating to the CIA's activities, all of which have been 'weeded' from the public record. The picture that he paints is thus only of the respectable or clean area of US policy. One can only surmise how the dirty end will appear when that story is ultimately told.

Despite its manifest importance, Wittner's work has received not a single review in Britain, and has been badly underestimated in the USA where it was published. It is a book not just for the Greek specialist (for whom, incidentally, it is invaluable) but for anyone attempting to understand the nature of Cold War politics and how under the cover of anti-Communism the USA imposes its control over its clients. The apparent success of the American intervention in Greece led to the same methods being applied in Guatemala, El Salvador and, with disastrous results, in Vietnam.