

**The British Labour government's policy
towards the Greek Colonels, 1967-68**

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Introduction

The military dictatorship that plagued Greece for seven long years (1967-1974) left its distinct mark on the history of the country as one of the three most significant episodes of the twentieth century. It would not be an overstatement to say that the impact that this period had on the social, economic and political life of Greece can be compared only to monumental events such as the Asia Minor catastrophe and the Greek Civil War. As an historic event of such magnitude, the junta (as it is commonly referred to in Greece) still has important repercussions that are being felt today, not only insofar as the obvious implications on international relations are concerned (the Cyprus imbroglio being the predominant one) but also with respect to contemporary Greeks' view of politics and history. That is why a thorough examination of specific aspects of military rule, and especially relations with other countries is of considerable importance.

However, although it is now more than thirty years since the collapse of the military regime, unequivocal answers, in particular in relation to the role of the Great Powers at the time, have not been adequately produced. Clouds of confusion continue to obscure, to a certain extent, US but also general NATO involvement in the coup that brought the Colonels to power, and the role of the British government, whether instigative, compromising, or antagonistic (both in terms of bilateral relations with Greece and within the framework of collective action), in the events preceding and following the establishment of the junta in Greece has not been researched.

An investigation of Britain's attitude vis-à-vis the dictatorship is highly important as the British role in Greek history is significant. Britain's acquired status as a 'traditional ally' has enabled it to exert her influence on Greek events on various

occasions including creating precedents for intervention (the Metaxas dictatorship, 1936-41, and the years immediately after WWII, for instance).

This paper will undertake a general review of the foreign policy of the Wilson government towards the Greek Colonels covering practically the first two years of junta's tenure; i.e. 1967-1968. Its aim is to question British involvement and reaction to major events of the period, such as the April 1967 coup d'état, the abortive counter-coup organized by King Constantine in late 1967, the expulsion of Greece from the Council of Europe and the possible repercussions of this on NATO (not forgetting its impact on matters of trade and arms supply). The paper also seeks to examine the effect of international and domestic developments on the 'love-hate' relationship between the governments of Britain and Greece at the time. Special emphasis will be placed upon the proverbial ambiguity of the British in their attitude towards the Colonels.

The first traces

A new, caretaker, government (the fourth in two years' time) was formed in Athens, under Panayotis Kanellopoulos, the president of NRU (*National Radical Union*), that is the party of the Right, in early April 1967. Sir Ralph Murray's report that time concentrated on his conviction of CU's electoral triumph and the possible expulsion of the King, which 'would have as a concomitant the danger of an anticipatory coup to prevent it'.¹ The political forecast was twofold: a) NRU would influence the forthcoming elections in order to perpetuate its hold of power (as it had

¹ PRO: FCO 9/120 Telegram from Sir Ralph Murray to Foreign Office, 6.4.67.

done in the not so distant past²) and b) there were to be ‘devices to avoid the holding of elections for some considerable time’.³

The military coup d’état, however, even without the active contribution of Britain (and without the collusion of the US, the Palace or any significant political figure, for that matter), became a reality on 21 April 1967, as a ‘pre-emptive strike’ against an unfavourable to the Colonels’ election outcome.

1967: A coup, a war and a conference

The first dispatches from the embassy in Athens to the FO after that date are quite revealing of the extent that Britain was aware of a putsch conceived by lower rank officers. Although Sir R. Murray confessed that he knew (as mentioned above) that ‘a group of extremist officers decided in January to go underground and organise military measures to solve the political problem’, information was more than blurry and he held that ‘the plotters [were] unrepresentative and that their measures [were] inexpert and [might] *not be sustained for very long*’⁴ (emphasis added). It is more than certain, though, that he and, consequently, Whitehall, was not anticipating a military overthrow of government of that type.⁵ As becomes evident from the

² The most eminent instance was the 1961 election campaign, which led to Constantine Karamanlis’, then leader of NRU, being elected Prime Minister through what seemed to be methods of ballot rigging and illegal pressure. Interestingly, when, much later, it became known that the General Staff had actually established a ‘secret committee to organise the electoral fraud’, the name of a certain Major *Papadopoulos* emerged as the secretary and leading officer behind it (Athenian. *Inside the Colonels’ Greece*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1972, p. 42).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ PRO: FCO 9/124 Telegram from Sir R. Murray to FO, 21.4.67. A month later he conceded that he ‘became aware in January of a Colonel Papadopoulos plotting, having declared that the time for military action had come’ (PRO: FCO 9/126 Memorandum on Coup in Greece from Sir Ralph Murray to Mr. Brown, 23.5.67).

⁵ Neither was the CIA, if one believes what its officials told Commonwealth representatives in the eve of the coup. As Sir Patrick Dean, the British Ambassador to the US, informed the Foreign Office: ‘the nature of the coup which has occurred was quite different from that which the C.I.A. had been expecting...they had had no warning of the ‘Colonels’ rebellion. They knew very little about the individuals concerned or how they had managed to maintain some form of conspiratorial organisation’ (PRO: FCO 9/125 Telegram from Sir P. Dean to FO, 26.4.67).

following day's telegram to London, the perpetrators of the unconstitutional coup were, as far as British were concerned, an 'unknown group of colonels...of whom we know nothing'.⁶

Anew consultations with the US concluded in dilatoriness in resuming official relations with the Colonels. Nevertheless, the Labour government considered itself to be in a position where it needed to establish at least a working relationship with the men that held power in Athens, in order to safeguard Britain's interests, the fair treatment of British subjects being the first, valid concern.⁷ So, when the issue of recognition arose in 26 April, the British Ambassador opined that he should reply to Greece's Foreign Minister's letter (an act that meant official recognition) immediately, in order not to raise the suspicions of the junta⁸. As Sir R. Murray said:

'I think one must distinguish between the existence of relations, however chilly, and the way they are conducted once they exist. We don't want this dictatorship, *however much we dislike it*, to start its life with an anti-British bias.'⁹ (emphasis added)

Of course, humanitarian concerns were not the only ones, as a mixture of Realpolitik and finance appeared to be the most persistent catalyst for not upsetting the Colonels.¹⁰

Nevertheless, though initially Foreign Office officials found that there was 'no urgent practical reason for [them] to recognise and assume a normal working relationship

⁶ Ibid, 22.4.67. Quite apparent of the embassy's lack of familiarity with the members of the newly established dictatorship was the fact that, in the same telegram, junta's Prime Minister Kollias was referred to as 'Skollias'.

⁷ Parliamentary questions in the House of Lords were particularly pressing in relation to that issue. See, for example, PRO: FCO 9/125 Parliamentary question by Lord Archibald, 27.4.67.

⁸ Inasmuch as the Easter holidays in Greece were about to start, any action taken after 27 April would reach Greek officials with much delay and would thus incite scepticism in regard to Britain's intentions.

⁹ Ibid, 26.4.67.

¹⁰ Although they overtly professed their interest in Cyprus, where British bases were operating, as the overarching one, issues of trade (that were to become more acute after the Arab-Israeli war and the devaluation of the pound) and, especially, security (support for a wounded NATO vs. Soviet expansionism in the eastern Mediterranean) loomed in Bevinite ministers' minds.

with the new regime'¹¹, again in close consultation with Americans both in Washington and Athens, the decision was taken to postpone the recognition for only a couple of days, following thus the US policy that determined to 'play it cool and burn no bridges.'¹² By 1 May, the British, as well as the Americans and the Turks, had resumed relations with Athens. A formal act of recognition was not needed since the Head of State, that is the King, to whom British officials were to show their credentials, was present when the military government was sworn in.

Furthermore, Brown told the Cabinet meeting of 27 April that, since all information entering London led to the conclusion that 'the new regime [was] firmly in control of the country and likely to remain so', the junta satisfied the criterion that Britain applied 'when deciding whether to recognise a new government or not'.¹³ It is true that this was the main British policy on the subject of recognition of governments assuming power unconstitutionally, but this was certainly without exceptions: the non-recognition for many years of states as North Vietnam, North Korea and the German Democratic Republic (all of a different ideological orientation, to put it mildly), leads to the conclusion that the 'effective control of the country' principle was merely a guideline, albeit significant, which more than once 'appeared to yield to political considerations.'¹⁴ This fact, furthermore, in conjunction with the assertion that 'there is no obligation to recognize a new government once it effectively rules the state'¹⁵ elucidated that this was a political decision, which 'as a matter of optional bilateral relations and readiness to undertake normal relations [...] depend[ed]

¹¹ PRO: FCO 9/125 Telegram from FO to Athens, 25.4.67.

¹² PRO: FCO 9/125 Telegram from Sir P. Dean to FO, 26.4.67.

¹³ PRO: FCO 9/125 Cabinet: 27 April, The New Greek Government, 27.4.67.

¹⁴ Shaw, Malcolm N. *International Law*, 4th edition, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 304.

¹⁵ Peterson, M.J. 'Political Use of Recognition: The Influence of the International System' in *World Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 3, (Apr. 1982), p. 325.

precisely on *intention*'¹⁶ (emphasis added), and as such it could be different, as, for instance, to imply a conditional recognition.¹⁷ This statement was corroborated by the change of policy by the British government to not formally recognising governments in 1980 because 'the practise ha[d] sometimes been misunderstood, and, despite explanations to the contrary, our 'recognition' interpreted as implying approval.'¹⁸ Still and all, FO officials discredited the value of pressurising the junta by setting conditions for recognition and insisted that relations should be recommenced immediately on the grounds that this way they would be able to influence the Colonels towards a return to constitutional rule.¹⁹

The next serious consideration of policy towards Greece following the coup came as an immediate response to a change of the political situation in a country considered for many (and hard) years a traditional ally. Only a week after the tanks had filled the roads of Athens, following the orders of what was to be the omnipotent triumvirate of the 'Revolution of 21 April' (as the Colonels preferred to call their criminal ascent to the long-coveted political 'throne'), George Brown, suggested to Prime Minister Wilson, that they should be thinking how to strengthen the opposition to the regime and to give support to the King, thus, securing, 'the return of a non-Communist constitutional government before resistance [became] an exclusively Communist prerogative.'²⁰ He also expressed his concern on having a second (the

¹⁶ Shaw, *International Law*, p. 96.

¹⁷ That is recognition 'subject to fulfilment of certain conditions', like the treatment of minorities or the respect for human rights (Brownlie, Ian. *Principles of Public International Law*, 4th edition, Oxford: Clarendon, 1990, p. 312).

¹⁸ Brownlie, *Principles*, p. 106.

¹⁹ Meynaud, *Political Forces*, p. 525. As Brown said: 'I don't think we can treat Greece (however lunatic its politics have been traditionally) on a par with Sierra Leone and Paraguay' (PRO: PREM 13/2140 Letter from Brown to Wilson, 28.4.67).

²⁰ PRO: PREM 13/2140 2140 Letter from Brown to Wilson, 28.4.67. This is all reminiscent of one of the most prominent instances of British intervention in Greek political life, namely during the Axis occupation and the first year following the WWII, when Britain bolstered the conservatives in their fight against the desire of the communists to gain full control of the country, in their endeavour to capitulate on their enhanced status after their successful campaign against the German occupiers.

first one being Salazar's Portugal) dictatorship in NATO and the effect that would have on the organisation itself and on feelings towards NATO in Britain. Wilson, in his reply, declared that developments in Greece were of major importance for two main reasons: first, because of Greece's 'key position in NATO and in the Mediterranean, and secondly because of Cyprus.'²¹ The Prime Minister, however, distinguished his views from Brown's saying that overt assistance to the King, and indeed, any political meddling would be inexpedient as it would lead the Colonels into further isolation and harden their stance. He, therefore, introduced what was to become the unofficial doctrine of the Foreign Office in relation to Greece for at least the next three years: that cautious and measured co-operation would modify the regime. As far as the King was concerned, the decision, taken after consultation with Dean Rusk, the US Secretary of State, was that he was to be supported fully but unobtrusively. The British government, however, remained perplexed in its effort to maintain a balanced attitude towards the fledgling military junta and its old friends in Greece (mainly the conservative politicians, who were opposed to the regime from the outset), as was demonstrated by the stress that Foreign Office ministers felt over the issue of invitations to Queen's Birthday Party that was to be held by the British Embassy in Athens.²²

In his attempt to draw a successful policy, the Foreign Secretary wished to gain access both to first hand information regarding the general attitude of the Colonels and the state of public opinion in Greece. He, therefore, regularly asked

Interestingly, Greek resistance in WWII was for many years wrongly considered 'an exclusively Communist prerogative' by both communist and their political adversaries, for, obviously, altogether different reasons.

²¹ PRO: PREM 13/2140 Minute by H. Wilson, 1.5.67.

²² The fortuitous imminent departure of Sir Ralph Murray, HMG's Ambassador, from Athens provided the government with an excuse for not holding an official party. The [Foreign Secretary](#) gave permission for only a personal farewell party to take place, and, so, managed to avoid the appearance of offending the Colonels and abandoning former friends. (PRO: FCO 9/224 Letter from Sir R. Murray, 17.5.67 & Telegram, 13.5.68)

Britain's Ambassador in Athens for an up-to-date evaluation of the political and social situation. The first major instance of such coordination of views occurred a few days after the coup d'état, and resulted in Sir Ralph Murray's advice of 'do[ing] business with the regime and try[ing] to push them into a suitable political evolution.'²³ According to him, Britain had three kinds of interests that 'pointed towards dealing with the new régime': a) commercial, b) NATO and c) humanitarian.²⁴ The Ambassador's recommendation to proceed with a *normal working relationship* on the spot was coupled with the possibility of using the strength of feeling in Britain about the coup as one way of pushing the Colonels in the right direction. Brown commented that 'that could be combined with a certain aloofness, for example in having no British Ministers visit Greece [...] until the regime had evolved into something more respectable.'²⁵ However, the repulsion that British officials felt for the military junta and its leaders, although initially muted, in official exchanges, was extremely apparent within governmental circles and the FO in particular.²⁶

This negative climate, however, did not last long (at least on the official level) and subsequent international and domestic incidents worked in favour of the Colonels. The Six Day War, whose outbreak came less than fifty days after the coup in Greece, played a significant role in allaying the fears of especially western, US and NATO, officials. The 'widespread concern' that the Defence Secretary, Denis Healey, on 31 May had admitted that all members of the NATO alliance felt, soon changed to predilection towards the junta, due to their upgraded status as the only tried-and-true

²³ PRO: PREM 13/2140 Record of a meeting between the Foreign Secretary and H.M. Ambassador, Athens, 3.5.67.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Sir R. Murray had described Colonel Papadopoulos, Brigadier Pattakos and Colonel Makarezos as 'thugs' or more precisely as "tough Greek patriots with a streak of thuggery", and had discerned that Colonel Papadopoulos especially was 'predominantly tough' and had some features in common with Nasser. (PRO: PREM 13/2140 Record of a meeting between the Foreign Secretary and H.M. Ambassador, Athens, 3.5.67)

western ally in the wider region apart from Israel.²⁷ As FO officials drafting notes for the Prime Minister's answer to Mr. Winnick's parliamentary question on NATO and Greece, wrote: 'the Greek Government were helpful during the recent Middle Eastern crisis in connection with some of our evacuation arrangements...it would be against our interests to cause trouble with them in NATO at this time, or to do anything which would disturb the uneasy situation over Cyprus.'²⁸

A look on a map of the wider region would be all it would take for a State Department official with a penchant for geopolitics to infer that Greece was the only country that could play the role of a 'buffer zone', a bastion against the expanding tendencies of communism in Europe and the rising of Middle Eastern nationalistic and independent thinking in foreign policy. Greece (and by extension Cyprus), being surrounded by isolationist and pro-Chinese Albania, Tito's Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria (Moscow's closest satellite) to the north, Turkey and Syria to the east (and Iraq even further east), Egypt (the latter three being susceptible to USSR's political and military influence) and Libya (which, after 1969, got rid of American and British facilities along with its monarchy) to the south, and always under the constant surveillance and possible threat of the Soviet naval presence in the eastern Mediterranean, was conspicuously in the eye of the vortex, or rather caught between two maelstroms

²⁷ PRO: FCO 9/148 Oral answer from Mr. Healey to Mr. Gardner, 31.5.67., Murtagh, *The Rape*, p. 155, Clogg, Richard. *A Concise History of Greece*, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 162 and Sakkas, John. 'The Greek dictatorship, the USA and the Arabs, 1967-1974', *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans* 2004 6(3), p.252. The other NATO ally in the region, Turkey, could not be considered sufficiently reliable as it was in a process of 'foreign policy reevaluation' (originating in the disillusionment in Ankara insofar as American intentions were concerned, as these were expressed in the aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1964 crisis in Cyprus), which resulted in a change in defence arrangements with the US, and in the improvement of relations with the Arabs, the EEC and the Soviet Union (which was substantiated by the economic agreement of March 1967, and corroborated by the Turkish Prime Minister's visit to Moscow later that year) (Zürcher, Erik. *Turkey: A Modern History*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1993, p. 288-90, CSIA European Security Working Group. 'Instability and Change on NATO's Southern Flank', *International Security*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Winter, 1978-1979), p. 166-167, 171).

²⁸ PRO: FCO 9/165 Speaking notes on Greece and NATO: Parliamentary question by Mr. Winnick, n.d.

deemed extremely dangerous to the West.²⁹ Since the people on the helm of Britain's external policy at the time, namely Wilson, Healey and, especially, Brown, were ardent followers of Bevin³⁰, and they had begun to see Britain as 'a medium-sized power'³¹ (or 'a major power of the second rank', as they preferred to say)³², there was not much space for a different point of view, and consequently, policy towards Greece to be formulated.³³ As a consequence, the issue of the Cyprus dispute also became a matter of priority for the Western Alliance, which made efforts, especially through the British, to persuade the two parties (i.e. Greece and Turkey at the time) to take bolder steps towards a peaceful settlement.³⁴

Nevertheless, a few months later, a considerable blow to the Colonels' already tarnished façade came from the core of one of their closest allies. On 4 October the Labour Party Conference at Scarborough (that is the conference of the party in power

²⁹ Xydis, Stephen G. 'Coups and Countercoups in Greece, 1967-1973 (with a postscript)', *Political Science Quarterly* 89 (1974), p. 524. It was, after all, only three days after the coup d'état in Athens that Leonid Brezhnev 'demanded the withdrawal of the American Sixth Fleet from the Mediterranean'. Walter Laqueur has argued that Moscow 'had little to lose from a war fought [in the region] by proxy' (Laqueur, Walter. *The road to war, 1967: the origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, [1968], p.53).

³⁰ Ernest Bevin (Foreign Secretary from 1945 to 1951) was a pragmatist and a staunch anti-communist who played a significant part in the formulation of the Atlantic Alliance, by stimulating the Truman Doctrine, the first sign of commitment on the United States' part after WWII, and participating actively in the Marshall Plan (Bartlett, C.J. *British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century*, Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1989, p. 77-8). George Brown had idolised him and even changed the arrangement of submissions in the FO to that preferred by him. As Denis Healey admitted in his memoirs, Ernest Bevin was 'a [...] powerful political influence in the Labour movement as a whole' (Healey, Dennis. *The Time of My Life*, London: Michael Joseph, 1989, p.78). Michael Stewart whenever in trouble was reminded by his advisers of Bevin's apt comments (Stewart, Michael. *Life and Labour*, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1980, p. 215), and Sir Paul Gore-Booth, the Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, before he assumed his post felt that he had to 'underline the immense admiration of all [his] generation in the service for Ernest Bevin' (Gore-Booth, Sir Paul. *With great truth and respect*, London: Constable, 1974, p. 323).

³¹ Coker, Christopher. 'Foreign and Defence Policy' in Hollowell, Jonathan ed. *Britain Since 1945*, Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2003, p.3.

³² As the 1969 Duncan Report asserted (Stewart, Michael. *Life and Labour*, p. 142).

³³ As the Permanent Under-Secretary of the FO revealed, British economy 'was far too vulnerable to short-term pressures on the balance of payments for a steady external policy to be planned and adhered to' (Gore-Booth, *Truth*, p. 330), and, as many scholars have argued, 'London wanted to show solidarity with the Americans, demonstrate its usefulness in the Cold War and so reinforce its own world role' (Young, John W. 'Britain and 'LBJ's War', 1964-68', *Cold War History* 2002 2(3), p. 65. See also Abadi, Jacob. 'Great Britain and the Maghreb in the Epoch of Pan Arabism and Cold War', *Cold War History*, 2002 2(2), p. 136-7, Ponting, *Breach*, p. 215 and W .N. Medlicott in Bartlett, *British Foreign Policy*, p. 122-3).

³⁴ Murtagh, *The Rape*, p. 155-6.

in Britain) voted, notwithstanding Brown's plea not to³⁵, for the expulsion of Greece from NATO.³⁶ The Greek government responded through the newspaper that was expressing its views, 'Eleftheros Kosmos' (which is Greek for 'Free World', and, consequently, a highly ironic appellation), which claimed that some members of the Labour Party were influenced by communist propaganda, and had, wittingly or unwittingly, assisted the Soviet State in the past and were now doing so again. The article concluded by suggesting that 'the British people were sensitive about democracy, but they should confine their sensitiveness to their own country.'³⁷ As a result, and under subsequent pressure from Athens, the British (Labour) government, which by then appeared to have no 'coherent, long term policy or goals', and had become extremely unpopular with the electorate³⁸, decided to ignore the resolution of the conference.³⁹ This was perfectly in line with Wilson Cabinet's disregard of conference resolutions on a variety of foreign policy issues (such as Vietnam, the Nigerian civil war and Rhodesia)⁴⁰, and the general ambience for, as Woodhouse has argued, 'throughout the dictatorship it was the various vehicles of public opinion rather than the executive authorities that sustained the resistance' to military rule.⁴¹

A matter of real interest and high importance to the British, inherited by their imperial past, was Cyprus. So, when tension reappeared once again in November 1967, due to skirmishes on the island between the Greek-Cypriot National Guard (commanded by Grivas) and inhabitants of two Turkish-Cypriot villages, London was

³⁵ PRO: FCO 9/165 Mr. Brown's speech to the Labour Party Annual Conference, 4.10.67.

³⁶ The representatives of the party seemed to be divided, however, considering that the votes were 3,167,000 for and 2,898,000 against (Vournas, Tassos. *History of Contemporary Greece: Junta – Cyprus Dossier (1967-1974)*, Athens: Ekdoseis Patakis, 2003 (in Greek), p.87-8).

³⁷ *Ibid*, Telegram from Sir Michael Stewart, 17.10.67.

³⁸ Ponting, *Breach*, p. 183.

³⁹ Governmental officials, after a meeting with Labour MPs, ruled that their hitherto policy was 'basically correct but that [they] should seek to project it more clearly' (PRO: FCO 9/165 Record of Mr. Rodger's meeting with M.P.s by R.C. Samuel, 22.11.67).

⁴⁰ Ponting, *Breach*, p. 321 and Young, *LBJ's War*, p. 82-3.

⁴¹ Woodhouse, C. M. *The rise and fall of the Greek Colonels*, London: Granada, 1985, p. 40.

watching closely.⁴² Turkey threatened to invade but the crisis was resolved with the aid of Cyrus Vance, United States' special representative, and the upshot was the withdrawal of all unauthorised Greek and Turkish troops.⁴³ The British claimed a little later that it 'was very probably Sir Michael Stewart's personal intervention with the leaders of the military junta on the night of 15 November which resulted in instructions being sent to the Greek forces in Cyprus quickly enough to restore the situation there before the Turkish air strikes which would almost certainly have taken place at dawn on 16 November.'⁴⁴ This event, which marked another instance of brinkmanship in relations between the two NATO partners, was seen by Whitehall as a vindication of its policy of maintaining a working relationship with the Greek régime, for thus it had been able to make a positive contribution to the defusing of the crisis.⁴⁵ FO officials concluded that the Cyprus question was 'not only a British interest... [but] an interest of all who wish to keep the peace in the Eastern Mediterranean which the [November] crisis so nearly shattered', and, as a consequence, British influence in Athens was imperative.⁴⁶

Royal blues

The first serious event which called for a radical reappraisal of Britain's relationship with the regime was the abortive counter-coup instigated by Constantine

⁴² Brown had questioned Grivas' being under control and had even personally warned the Greek Foreign Minister about the 'gravest consequences' any attempt to impose a solution by force would incur (PRO: FCO 9/165 Speaking notes for Meeting between the Secretary of State and the Greek Foreign Minister, n.d.).

⁴³ Only 950 Greek and 650 Turkish soldiers were allowed on the island, according to the Zurich-London agreements of 1959-60. The fact that those covertly infiltrated during George Papandreou's premiership (9-12,000, a large number in relation to the 1,500 'illegal' Turks) were asked to leave was a diplomatic defeat for Greece and the beginning of the end for a united Cyprus.

⁴⁴ PRO: FCO 9/139 Memorandum on Greece by A.E. Davidson, 20.12.67.

⁴⁵ PRO: FCO 9/139 Letter from John Beith to the Central Department, 14.12.67.

⁴⁶ PRO: FCO 9/165 Speaking notes for Socialist International Party Leaders' Conference, n.d. As A.E. Davidson, a FO official, declared: 'to break off diplomatic relations in these circumstances would be a dramatic gesture. But it would be an empty one' (PRO: FCO 9/165 Notes for Parliamentary Labour Party Meeting, 7.11.67).

on 13 December 1967, the upshot of which was that the King fled to Rome and the Colonels tightened their grip on the country. London seemed to be completely unaware of the countercoup and had difficulty even identifying what had triggered off the King's action.⁴⁷ It managed to assert, though, that, despite Constantine's 'very brave attempt'⁴⁸ and although the matter of recognition was still pending, Britain 'in practise [would] have to go on dealing with the Junta.'⁴⁹

The government, after an initial numbness, reacted through a statement by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons, saying that King Constantine enjoyed the moral support of the British people and of H. Wilson personally, in his efforts to re-establish freedom in his country. However, only one week after the Prime Minister acknowledged the King's letter of gratitude for the genuine expression of the Wilson government in his favour, the Foreign Office informed the State Department that Britain was prepared to resume doing business with the Greek (military) government.⁵⁰

This time (unlike when the Colonels seized power) the question of recognition did arise. Whitehall, following its well-established 'doctrine of effective control'⁵¹ decided to continue diplomatic relations with Athens, without further delay. A formal act was once again unnecessary as a call by the British Ambassador to Colonel (now Prime Minister) Papadopoulos would have been sufficient.⁵² Information, however, that efforts were being made to reconcile the King and the Colonels and persuade him to return to Greece, were the cause for a delay of according recognition, justified by

⁴⁷ PRO: FCO 9/139 Speaking notes on Cabinet meeting on Greece, 14.12.67.

⁴⁸ PRO: FCO 9/139 Telegram from Sir M. Stewart to FO, 14.12.67.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ PRO: PREM 13/2140 Telegram, 18.1.68.

⁵¹ The criteria for recognition of governments were set out in an office circular by Ernest Bevin in 1950.

⁵² PRO: FCO Telegram from Mr. Rodgers to Secretary of State, 14.12.67.

London's desire not to weaken the King's position.⁵³ Consultations with other NATO allies, the French, the Germans, and most importantly the Americans, in the light, however, of the anxiety lest the junta began to feel that [it] could exist without [Britain]' and, consequently, become 'less inclined in the future to pay heed to what [London said]'⁵⁴, led to the postponement of recognition until after New Year.

When January came, nevertheless, the King's position did not appear to some British to be 'so important [...] as to outweigh the considerations in favour of resuming normal dealings with the Government in Athens.'⁵⁵ London recognized the new junta government on 25 January 1968, two days after the official recognition by the United States. This decision, again taken after prior consultation within the framework of the prevailing Anglo-American 'special relationship', was justified by arguing that British ministers had reached the conclusion that 'it was no longer possible or profitable to try to hold the common line regarding recognition.'⁵⁶ [...] The policy of holding back [adopted in the context of the immediate post-21 April period], which had no doubt produced good results during the first weeks, was now in danger of being counter-productive and might lead to a serious reduction of Western influence over the regime and to the encouragement of Extremist elements.'⁵⁷

London wished to help the Colonels in power to consolidate their position, fearing that less moderate elements would prevail and convert the entire political scene of Greece into a drama staged and starred in by a group of intransigent, trigger happy, and bloodthirsty villains with chevrons. This postulation sounds like a perfect

⁵³ PRO: FCO 9/139 Telegram from FO to Athens, 16.12.67.

⁵⁴ PRO: FCO 9/139 Telegram from Sir M. Stewart to FO, 20.12.67. This is another instance of Anglo-American coordination of actions; see PRO: FCO 9/139 Telegram from Washington to FO, 20.12.67 and PRO: FCO 9/139 Telegram from Athens to FO, 21.12.67.

⁵⁵ PRO: FCO 9/132 Minute of Lord Lambton's approach to the Secretary of State, 18.1.68.

⁵⁶ Some other governments, notably the German and Turkish governments, had already taken some steps towards recognition.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Telegram from Sir E. Shuckburgh, 19.1.68.

example of irony, as some would argue that Britain, by pursuing that policy, contributed to the further establishment and deeper entrenchment of a regime of exactly the type that it wanted to prevent from getting the control of the country. Nonetheless, what could have been the consequences of overt assistance to the still weak and dispersed forces of opposition to the regime will remain forever unknown.

Furthermore, criticism that the British government was condoning military rule⁵⁸ by dealing with the new government grew and grew, only to be countered with the expression of the familiar point that ‘dealing with a government is not the same thing as approving it.’⁵⁹ This declaration marked the beginning of a series of demarcations that distinguished between adopting a tough stance towards the junta and cooperating fully with them.

1968: ‘Business as usual’

1968 opened with the Colonels signing a contract with *Maurice Fraser Associates*, a British firm of public relations consultants, in order to quench their thirst for international recognition. The firm, however, was not really dexterous in the handling of its responsibilities, leading to the worsening of the regime’s image abroad by the time the contract was cancelled in September.

Although the second year of the Colonels seemed to have started as they had wished (they had consolidated their power domestically after King Constantine ‘delivered his people into [their] hands’⁶⁰), and they had resumed normal diplomatic

⁵⁸ Attributed by the British Ambassador to ‘the pathological Greek belief that [British] are somehow responsible for every development that takes place in this country [i.e. Greece]’ (PRO: FCO 9/132 Letter from Sir M. Stewart to the Viscount Hood, 29.2.68.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Telegram, 30.1.68.

⁶⁰ PRO: FCO 9/838 Annual review by Sir M. Stewart, 10.1.69.

relations with all their neighbours and the major powers), it also had in store some of the most severe blows to be inflicted on them during their seven year rule. The first, minor, instance, occurred on 11 April when William Rodgers, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said in the House of Commons that there was ‘strong *prima facie* evidence of people having been subjected to what one would regard as inhuman treatment under police interrogation.’⁶¹ Decisive, insofar as the estrangement that followed between the British and Greek governments was concerned, was Harold Wilson’s reference, in his reply to a supplementary question in the House of Commons on 25 June, to ‘bestialities’ that had been perpetrated in Greece.⁶² Both instances received a complaint from the Greek Ambassador in London, Mr. Verykios, but the latter incident in particular provoked a strong response from the Greek government including threatened action against British commercial interests.

A week later the most seminal and oft-quoted document within the Foreign Office was produced. In his Memorandum of 2 July to the Defence and Overseas [sic] Committee, the Foreign Secretary, Michael Stewart (who succeeded George Brown and who happened to have the same first and last name as the then British Ambassador in Athens, *Sir* Michael Stewart), laid down the four main objectives of Britain in Greece. Those were:

- i) ‘to promote a return to constitutional rule and democratic liberties and conditions of stability;
- ii) to preserve, so far as possible, the military effectiveness of Greece as a NATO ally;
- iii) to protect British subjects and interests generally, and in particular to pursue our commercial interests;

⁶¹ PRO: FCO 9/835 House of Commons speech, 11.4.68.

⁶² PRO: FCO 55/80 Oral answer from the Prime Minister, Mr. H. Wilson, to Mr. John Fraser, 25.6.68.

iv) to maintain our ability to influence the Greek Government in matters of foreign policy, for example, Cyprus.’⁶³

These interests were in general terms pursued by the Labour government with success. The second and the fourth points especially, regarding issues pertaining to pragmatic politics were constantly in the mind of every British official who dealt with the Colonels’ regime. The first and the third interests, nonetheless, which did not belong to the sphere of *Realpolitik*, were arguably sometimes neglected and on other times considered conflicting. Steps aimed at methodically pressuring the Greek government to hold democratic and, by international standards, acceptable elections not only fell in to a void but Whitehall’s anxiety over the future state of the ‘plaster-covered’ country⁶⁴ was also often considered as intervention in the internal affairs of Greece, and was, therefore, dispelled.

Events, however, were to take a slightly different turn and international developments again played a significant role. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in late August to counter the impending reforms of ‘the Prague Spring’, and the increased fear of a continuing communist threat, emphasized in Greece by Soviet naval activity in the Mediterranean, which this engendered, led to a further reconsideration of Britain’s policy towards the Colonels.⁶⁵ Relations between the two countries were already at low ebb.

A month after Warsaw Pact tanks entered Prague and while the European Commission of Human Rights was in the process of examining allegations of violations of human rights on the part of Greece, some FO officials thought that it

⁶³ PRO: FCO 9/870 Memorandum by M. Stewart, 2.7.68.

⁶⁴ The head of the triumvirate, Colonel Georgios Papadopoulos, in his desperate endeavour to justify the military’s interference in the political affairs of Greece, distinctively used medical references in his rhetoric; he used to call Greece as ‘the patient’ that he and his colleagues were determined to ‘heal’ by putting it in a plaster cast.

⁶⁵ PRO: FCO 9/870 Memorandum for the Secretary of State’s meeting with Sir Michael Stewart, 7.11.68.

would be helpful if Signor Brosio, the General Secretary of NATO, *spoke* to the Greek Foreign Minister about the situation in the country.⁶⁶ Lord Hood, however, the following day said that there were certain reasons that made FCO hesitant. These were a) the fact that there was to be a referendum in Greece by the end of the month and London would like to see its result before it took action, b) the American attitude, which was then favourable to the Colonels, and c) the attitude of other NATO powers.⁶⁷ Events in Eastern Europe played a significant part, as the war in the Middle East had one year before, in Western perceptions of the Greek dictatorship. The junta was increasingly being seen in a much more favourable light, as it appeared to be a geostrategically important NATO stronghold. The affirmations of the Colonels about their uncompromising allegiance to the Western Alliance were greeted in the West as a much sought after reassurance in the face of ‘communist danger’. Britain, in particular, wanting to assert its proximity to American views, could not assume the role of the leader in a motion unpleasant to the regime in Athens. Therefore, even the idea of having Brosio merely discussing with members of the junta human rights issues was not painstakingly followed. As a result of that and in conjunction with the result of the referendum on the Greek Constitution, the Colonels, bolstered by the greater emphasis being put on NATO military preparedness in the wake of the Czechoslovakian crisis, toughened their stance and, especially, their resistance to pressure from their allies on Greek internal matters.

Britain, at the time, was suspected of maintaining an uncompromisingly hostile attitude. This feeling was sustained by the reports of Amnesty International, comments in the BBC Greek Service, and to some extent by the British press.⁶⁸ Greek

⁶⁶ PRO: FCO 9/166 Memorandum on Greece and NATO by A.E. Davidson, 17.9.68.

⁶⁷ PRO: FCO 9/166 Letter from Hood to Sir Bernard Burrows, 18.12.68.

⁶⁸ The fact that the BBC, Amnesty International, and a large number of Greeks opposed to the junta were all operating from London contributed to the feeling in Athens that the British capital was ‘an

ministers gave the appearance of being unwilling to do business with London and the Greek government in general was no longer receptive to representations from H. M. Ambassador.

Against this background, which was enhanced by the domestic successes of the regime⁶⁹, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (the Foreign and Commonwealth Offices merged in October 1968) ruled that it had to make use of ‘different tactics’ if British interests were to be successfully pursued. This decision marked the beginning of a new phase in Anglo-Greek relations, for, as a report by the Southern European Department of the FCO claimed, whereas in the first phase of relations between the two countries after the coup d’état the British government was well placed to affect the thinking of Greek leaders, British officials appeared by then to have ‘shot their bolt’.⁷⁰

The policy of making private representations to the Greek government had contributed to certain improvements in the Greek regime (for instance, the closing of the Yioura prisoners’ camp), but representations to persuade them to hasten the return to democratic rule were no longer likely to be receptive, and could even prove counter-productive. The FCO, therefore, insinuated the notion of condoning the nature and the deeds of the junta, arguing that Britain’s policy should be ‘to give pride of place to strictly British interests, bearing in mind that, however illiberal they may be, the Greek government (unlike Spain or Rhodesia) are not doing H.M.G. any

island of opposition in an otherwise decreasingly hostile world.’ (PRO: FCO 9/870 Letter from D.S.L. Dodson, 1.11.68)

⁶⁹ The Colonels had managed to capture the perpetrator of an assassination attempt on their leader’s life, to achieve an overwhelming vote for their constitution, to be in an economically strong position (chiefly through deals with Greek magnates like Aristotle Onassis, the second husband of Jackie Kennedy), and to strengthen their bargaining powers with the US, as the American decision to release certain categories of heavy military equipment for supply to Greece demonstrated, all in three months time.

⁷⁰ PRO: FCO 9/870 Memorandum for the Secretary of State’s meeting with Sir Michael Stewart, 7.11.68.

harm.⁷¹ The above proclamation is quite revealing of the disquietude that Whitehall was feeling as a result of pressures exerted on it within the general, international context of the Cold War, and by the domestic problems (predominantly economic, caused by the 1966-7 financial crises, but also political and identity problems due to the relinquishment of its East of Suez policy and role) that tantalised it.⁷² Concepts of self-preservation and self-interest seemed to be its guides in relation to the Greek issue. The so far oscillating behaviour of the British government appeared to change instantly into an open declaration in favour of the military regime, which was regarded as the sole safeguard in Greece of Old Albion's self-seeking commercial interests.

The situation, still, was, in reality, not that bleak; the British government had the national interest as its first priority, although it did not cease, throughout its term, despite some occasional and mostly superficial fluctuations, to be interested in the conditions of life of the amiable people of Greece. Although the British concentrated their efforts on 'normalising relations with the junta and recreating [their] stock of influence with the Greek government with all means open [to them]', they wished to attain that aim not merely to pursue their national interest but also in order to be in a position that would enable them to function as a lever of pressure on the Colonels re domestic matters (like the holding of general elections, the treatment of political prisoners and detainees, and human rights issues in general). Furthermore, in spite of the British government's decision to 'do everything in [its] power to improve [Britain's] export performance (including inviting the competent Greek Ministers to

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Pickering, Jeffrey. *Britain's Withdrawal from East of Suez: the politics of retrenchment*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998, p. 150.

visit the United Kingdom)', the supply of war material that could help the Colonels to repress the opposition was excluded.

As London perceived that it could not hasten Greece's return to democracy until it had been able to rebuild its influence in Athens and that admonishing the military regime in public might well do harm, Sir Michael Stewart was asked to convey to the Greek Prime Minister the British government's acceptance of the fact that 'the timing of Greece's return to a democratic system [was] a matter for the Greek government', and its synchronous anxiety 'to establish a good working relationship with the Greek government, whose importance in the Western Alliance [it] fully recognise[d].'⁷³

Another major event of 1968 was the attempted assassination of the Greek Prime Minister, Georgios Papadopoulos by Alexandros Panagoulis on 13 August. A thorough examination of the events led to the conclusion that the Cypriot Minister of the Interior and Defence, Polycarpos Yorkadjis had assisted Panagoulis, providing him with a passport, refuge, and explosive material. A few weeks after the attempt, however, a rather peculiar rumour surfaced; Colonel Rufoghallis, a Greek Secret Service man himself, was reported by the King to have claimed that 'the British Secret Service was behind the plot and had engineered it in order to make bad blood between the Cypriot and Greek governments.'⁷⁴ British officials were caught by surprise by this, to them, outrageous, allegation, and were concerned because there seemed to be 'some risk that both parties [Greece and Cyprus] will try to make "the British Secret Service" the scapegoat.'⁷⁵ The allegations were soon dispelled and the matter was completely disregarded. There has been no indication whatsoever of the British government having previous knowledge of the attempt, let alone having taken any part in it.

⁷³ PRO: FCO 9/870 Record of a meeting by D.J.D. Maitland, 22.11.68.

⁷⁴ PRO: FCO 9/830 Telegram by Sir E. Shuckburgh, 1.10.68.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

A plea to Mr. Wilson to urge the Greek regime to spare Panagoulis, made by the League for Democracy in Greece⁷⁶ and by some Labour MPs, seemed to have had some result as, according to an article in the following day's *Guardian*, 'the British government, while disclaiming any intention of intervening in Greek affairs or directly appealing for clemency, has pointed out to the Greek embassy in London that a reprieve would favourably affect public opinion [in Britain].'⁷⁷

While the trial of those alleged to have taken part in the attempt was in progress, and on the same day that the Supreme Court ratified the results of the referendum on the Greek constitution (91.87 per cent in favour), another crisis, of minor proportions, however, in Anglo-Greek relations, broke out. Mr. Papadopoulos (who had relinquished his title of Colonel when he became Prime Minister) telephoned a member of the British embassy to say that 'Greece would regard implementation of the International Transport Workers' Federation decision to expel the Greek Trade Unions affiliated to the Federation and to boycott all Greek shipping as an inimical act.'⁷⁸ The British reaction was immediate; the Chargé d'Affaires delivered a message from the Foreign Secretary saying that Whitehall had no control over the federation (which was an international organization based in London and whose General Secretary was British) whatever and had no foreknowledge of this resolution, thus, assuring the Greek government that the resolution passed by the I.T.F. in no way represented the policy of Whitehall.

The dispute over the I.T.F. resolution, though, provided evidence of Papadopoulos' personal suspicion of the British government's attitude towards Greece. As a result, British officials were worried lest the Colonels hold London responsible for the boycott of Greek ships, for the additional reason that, by an

⁷⁶ 'U.S. Plea to Save Panagoulis', *Daily Telegraph*, November 21, 1968.

⁷⁷ PRO: FCO 9/870 Telegram by Sir M. Stewart, 22.11.68.

⁷⁸ PRO: FCO 9/838 Annual review by Sir M. Stewart, 10.1.69.

unfortunate coincidence, the boycott fell in the shipping field where British interests were in direct competition with Greek interests.⁷⁹ The most important consequence of that rift would be instructions by the junta not to award government contracts to any British firms and possibly to adopt restrictions towards British exports generally.

Conclusion

The ‘diplomatic’ (to say the least) handling of the issue of the Greek dictatorship, however, was, in general terms, considered successful even by the Conservatives who chose to continue it (with some conspicuous gestures of support to the Colonels, though). British officials, clearly influenced by overriding concerns deriving from the implications of the Cold War era, ventured, during the first two years of military rule in Greece, to keep a balanced stance towards the junta, going out of their way to maintain a ‘good working relationship’ with it, but also criticizing its methods and urging it towards a ‘return to constitutional rule’ in informal, personal exchanges with Greek ministers.⁸⁰ Britain managed to condone and even to support the Colonels (within the NATO context), but was also successful in ignoring their threats and blackmail and standing up to them when considered expedient, even though it was suffering from a bad setback due to its economic and political crises. Finally, the Wilson government achieved something really important: to make Britain appear, at almost the same time, as a close and faithful ally of Greece (not of the junta), by buttressing its defence capabilities in the face of external threats, and as the principal supporter of the effort to bring democratic liberties and stability back to Greece, ‘this lively and unpredictable little country whose affairs, out of all proportion

⁷⁹ PRO: FCO 9/874 Brief by J.E.C. Macrae, 14.11.68.

⁸⁰ The doctrine of ‘disconnected responsibilities’, distinguishing between dealing with a government and approving it and between moral and pragmatic considerations, was quite indicative of the British position.

to its size, seem[ed] likely to impose themselves on the international scene for years to come.⁸¹

⁸¹ PRO: FCO 26/267 Information policy report by Sir M. Stewart, 26.6.68.

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**Perception of the facts about the coup in Cyprus
(15th of July 1974) in the Cyprus daily press**

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1. Introduction

The aim of our research was to study the way the coup was presented in the daily press, to identify evidence of ideology in the media and then draw conclusions from the found evidence about the Cypriot media landscape and the Cyprus society of that period. For the purpose of our research, three Cypriot newspapers, representative of the print media in the period around the coup, were chosen: the independent *Phileleftheros*, the left-winger *Charavgi* and the nationalistic *Machi*. These newspapers were analysed using the Content Analysis research method. The Content Analysis was carried out on two levels, an implicit and an explicit level.

Our research is important for two reasons: firstly, up to now, there has been no similar effort made in Cyprus to systematically evaluate the content and form of the modern Cypriot media. The results of our research are of special interest because the time period covered was critical in shaping the historical background of Cyprus. Secondly, because of its relevance to social science: Cyprus is a relatively small and secluded society and during 1974 daily newspapers were the most significant media channel to influence and reflect the public opinion. Due to these circumstances it is possible, by analysing its daily press, to gain insights into the Cypriot society itself.

We began our research by defining and elucidating the methodology of Content Analysis and the way it was concretely applied in this research. Thus, because newspapers were examined on their ideological background according to the political and historical facts, we provide a short overview of the relevant historical-political facts in Cyprus since 1960 until 1974. We continued with the concrete cases of our analysis and the verification of the hypothesis in both periods, before and after the coup. Finally, we summarised and presented the final results of the research.

2. Methodology: Content Analysis

We applied Content Analysis methodology to our research.¹ Content Analysis is a standard methodology used in social sciences on the subject of communication. It employs sets of formalized procedures for making valid inferences from a text sample. To conduct a Content Analysis, the text must be coded into controllable categories, which are then examined by

¹ The Content Analysis can be applied in the journalism and communication research as well as in other branches of the Social science. (Pürer 1998: 177).

quantifying and analyzing the presence of patterns, particular vocabulary and concepts (Mayring 2003: 50). Inferences are then made about the messages within the texts, the writer, the audience, and even the culture and times they were written in. In our research, we focused on the communicator and on the intentions of the newspapers and attempted to draw a picture of Cypriot society at the time.

2.1. Approach

As mentioned, we aimed to evaluate the attitude of the Cypriot Press before, during and after the coup in 1974. We examined the categorized newspaper articles for evidence of political and/or ideological views. We would then investigate the possible reasons for the biased reporting and to what level, explicit or implicit, it was created.

An important criterion for the identification of explicit one-sided coverage was to distinguish among the different genres of articles. For example, an article can be written objectively and be purely informative or it can be written expressing an opinion. Factual journalistic genres are "messages" and "reports", where a "message" doesn't develop a topic to such a level of detail as a report, which relies on more extensive information. The genres "reportage", "editorial" and "commentary" are classified as opinion genres. If a text is formally composed as a "report", nevertheless it includes the opinion of the author, then, we refer to it as a "reportage". "Editorials" are articles where the points of view of the newspaper are clearly known. They use a persuasive language and are found on the first page of a newspaper. The newspaper editorial staff report what they perceive to be the most important and newsworthy subjects through this genre. "Commentaries" are articles, which purposely demonstrate the personal opinions of a journalist or the editor.

There are two additional journalistic genres which can be classified as either persuasive or objective after textual analysis. "Documentations" contain original material only, which has not been adapted for journalistic purposes (Schönbach 1977: 48). These can be verbatim, speeches, interviews, documents and texts from press conferences. Another genre, which can not be defined without a textual analysis, is the "press commentary". A "press commentary" consists of citations from other media, selected to give an overview on currently covered topics.

Determining the genre of an article however, is not adequate evidence of one-sided reporting. The genre of an article and its content, which are not allowed to be contradictory, are often not compatible. Formal reporting articles can not have a persuasive content. Crucial

for this case is the principal of "Partition of information and opinion"² (Erbring 1994: 82). An offence against this principal through explicit blending of information and opinion can be verified through a semantic analysis of the language of the article. Schönbach considers the blending of information and opinion to be the manipulation of formal pure informative articles through the use of statements, which maintain evaluation of facts, phenomena or persons (Schönbach 1977: 26).

According to the structural semantic analysis, terms (Schulte-Sasse und Werner 1977: 63) and statements (Salamun 1981: 27) can not be studied alone, but in relation to one another. One-sided reporting can be identified by searching through the articles for formulations, which bring out ideologies. Topitsch defines formulations, which avoid every kind of logical and empirical criticism and create ideologies, as "Leerformeln" (Topitsch 1960: 233-263). "Leerformeln" appear in the form of Tautology, Zirkelargumenten (circle arguments) or contradictions and accomplish their effect by producing imprecisely defined predication, airiness, ambiguity and by claiming absoluteness (Schmidt 1972: 7). In addition to "Leerformeln" for the identification of one-sided coverage, statements can also be considered, which have the function of expressing emotions, as well as terms and statements which aim to conceal a fact and euphemisms (Salamun 1981: 27).

Apart from the explicit level of one-sided coverage, there is also an implicit level. According to Schönbach, subject matter selection within the coverage (if a subject matter appears more often in the coverage than another one) can effect an implicit blending of information and opinion (Schönbach 1977: 9). Schönbach realized also that the format of an article can result in implicit accent of a topic and simultaneously of an ideological or political principal (Schönbach 1977: 26). In order to prove an implicit one-sided coverage we must evaluate the frequency of specific topics and study the kinds of format features used in the articles, like size, placement, colours, use of pictures and wideness of the headings, for each topic.

3. Political - Historical context

It is important to outline a realistic picture of the historical events which occurred between 1960 and 1974. On 16.08.1960, Cyprus became an independent country according to

² The American Society of Newspaper Editors made in 1923 the "Partition of News and Opinion" to its principal (Greuner 1962: 179).

the Agreements of Zurich and London. After many negotiations between representatives of NATO, the USA, England, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus, a result was obtained during a conference in Zurich (05.02.1959 - 11.02.1959) which would shape the future of Cyprus. During the subsequent conference in London (17.02.1959 - 19.02.1959), the foreign minister of Greece, Averoff, and of Turkey, Zorlu, together with Makarios and the leader of the Turks-Cypriots, Dr. Kütschük, signed a treaty for the foundation of the Cyprus Republic (Tzermias 1991: 141). Not only was the constitution³ of Cyprus signed, but also the Agreements of Guarantee and Alliance between England, Greece and Turkey.

In November 1963 the President of the Republic, Makarios, proposed thirteen amendments⁴ to facilitate the functioning of the state. As a result the Turkish community responded with rebellion; the Turkish Cypriot ministers withdrew from the Government and the Turkish civil servants ceased attending their offices, in protest to the proposed changes to the constitution. Intercommunal violence was on the rise and the Turkish Cypriots withdrew into enclaves (Tzermias 1991: 303). In March 1964 the UN Security Council authorized the establishment of an international peace-keeping force to control the violence on the island (O'Malley und Craig 2001: 103).

The international community pulled together once again to help solve the crisis in Cyprus; Greece, Turkey, England and the USA began talks to find a new solution to the increasing problems in Cyprus. Makarios initially attempted to initiate the Enosis policy, which involved unifying Cyprus with Greece. However, he soon realised that this was not the appropriate solution as a unification with Greece was only possible with a simultaneous division of the island into a Greek- and Turkish parts (Τζερμιάς 2000: 476) and Makarios was not willing to risk the unity of the island. Despite the multitude of proposed solutions, the interested countries did not come up with a solution to the problems in Cyprus.

In April 1967 a coup was staged in Greece by the military Junta under the guidance of Colonel Papadopoulos. Papadopoulos and his regime wished for the union of Cyprus to Greece (Tzermias 1991: 382). However Makarios, who did not believe Papadopoulos' theory was possible, continued advocating for an independent Cyprus. Makarios and his policy won

³ About the constitution of Cyprus: Χατζηβασιλείου, 1998.

⁴ About the amendments of Makarios: Τζερμιάς (2000: 469).

the next president elections of 1968 against the supporter of Enosis Eudokas with 95% of the votes (Tzermias 1991: 392).

In August 1971, officer Grivas⁵ arrived in Cyprus and began secret, underground campaigns against the government of Makarios. For his purposes, he formed a pro-Enosis underground organization called EOKA B. Grivas demanded new elections without a candidature of Makarios (Tzermias 1991: 413). Makarios rejected this demand and as a reaction EOKA B by the end of 1972 started terrorist acts against his government (Tzermias 1991: 414). The next regularly scheduled elections in 1973 would have given Grivas und the EOKA B an opportunity to legally come to power in Cyprus. Nevertheless EOKA B chose to continue its terrorist activities und not take part in the elections. Once again Makarios, who was supported by the parties AKEL, EDEK⁶ und Enieon, won the election, which took place on 08.02.1973. There were no rival candidates.

In November 1973 Papadopoulos was overthrown by Dimitrios Ioannidis, the head of the military police. General Phedon Gizikis took over as the figurehead president of Greece. The Ioannidis regime adopted an aggressive line towards President Makarios, a move that buoyed up the nationalists of EOKA B. The cooperation between the EOKA B and the Greek Junta became more intensive after the death of Grivas on 28.01.1974. The Greek Junta in collaboration with EOKA B managed to take control over the national guard of Cyprus. On the 2nd of July 1974 Makarios sent a letter to Gizikis, accusing the junta of plotting against him and the government of Cyprus. He demanded the withdrawal of the remaining 650 Greek officers assigned to the National Guard of Cyprus (Τζερμιάς 2000: 479). After thirteen days the Greek-led national guard of Cyprus overthrew President Makarios. Nicos Sampson, a representative of the Cypriot parliament during that period in Cyprus, accepted the presidency role offered to him by the Greek officers. Makarios managed to escape and he was transported by the British first to Malta and then to London. On the 18th of July he went to the USA and on the 19th of July he addressed the Security Council in New York. In his speech he accused the Greek Junta for organising the coup in Cyprus and for supporting the EOKA B (Tzermias 1991: 448f).

⁵ Grivas was the leader of the armed straggle of EOKA (national Organisation of Cypriot struggles), which began in 1950 in order to achieve the union to Greece (Tzermias 1991: 59).

⁶ ΕΔΕΚ (Ενιαία Δημοκρατική Ένωση Κύπρου).

Under the pretence of helping the Turk Cypriots and preventing the union of Cyprus to Greece after the coup of the Greek junta, the Turkish army invaded Cyprus on 20 July 1974. The Turkish invasion was described by the Turkish government as a "peace-keeping operation." Turkey referred to the Treaty of Guarantee of 1960 in order to legitimate the invasion.⁷ The Turkish government ignored the fact that an intervention of the Guarantee Powers was only possible if all negotiations between the three Guarantee Powers had previously collapsed.⁸ Three days after the Turkish invasion, the Greek junta collapsed in Athens and Sampson resigned. Kliridis, the President of the Cyprus Parliament at that time, deputized for president Makarios until his comeback and governed in accordance with the constitution. The two Geneva conferences⁹ (25.07.-30.07.1974 und 08.08.-14.08.1974), which took place between Britain, Greece, Turkey, Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot were unproductive. Although order was restored, Turkey proceeded with the invasion.

On 14 August the Turkish army carried out a second assault. After the second invasion, the Turkish army occupied 36.4 % of Cypriot territory. Cyprus has been divided since 1974. President Makarios returned to Cyprus on 07.12.1974 and resumed the presidency.

4. The Cyprus Press (06.07.-14.07.1974 und 02.08.-11.08.1974). Content Analysis.

Content Analysis has developed over the years in many directions. The method of the Content Analysis applied in this work can be divided in three steps. In the first step the texts for research are collected and the categories are formed. The second step involves encoding of the categories and after that examination and evaluation of the encoded data.

⁷ "In the event of a breach of the provisions of the present treaty, Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom undertake to consult together with respect to representations of measures necessary to ensure observance of those provisions" (Draft Treaty of Guarantee between the United Kingdom, Greece, Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus, in Cyprus, Gmnd. 1093).

⁸ "In so far as common concerted action may not prove possible, each of the three guaranteeing powers reserves the right to take action with the sole aim of reestablishing the state of affairs created by the present treaty" (Draft Treaty of Guarantee between the United Kingdom, Greece, Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus, in Cyprus, Gmnd. 1093).

⁹ About the conferences : Ψυχάρης, 1976

Conclusions and generalizations are drawn by supporting the results from the encoding process with background knowledge (Schulz 2003: 58).

4.1. Hypotheses

Hypotheses on the coverage in the newspapers before the coup

1. *Machi* covers the political views of Makarios' one-sided and negative. Due to the fact that *Machi* is a right-wing newspaper, we expected it to criticize the measures of president Makarios against the Greek Junta and try to conceal the activities of the Junta and EOKA B.
2. *Charavgi* favours the policies of Makarios' government. The measures of the government are directed against the right-wing EOKA B and the military junta in Greece. From the official newspaper of the Cypriot right-wing party AKEL we expect a one-sided, even polemical coverage.
3. Although *Phileleftheros* was generally considered to be an independent and objective newspaper, we hypothesised it would project a political point of view.

Hypotheses on the coverage in the newspapers after the coup

1. *Machi* suppresses the interrelationship between the coup and the Turkish invasion in its coverage, supports the provisional government and ignores the government of Makarios. Due to the role of Nicos Sampson during the coup we do not expect *Machi* to identify the coup as the initiator of the invasion or to support the return of president Makarios.
2. *Charavgi* blames the Greek Junta and EOKA B for the result of the Turkish invasion and supports the return of President Makarios.
3. *Phileleftheros'* coverage is diplomatic and reserved with respect to the coup and the return of president Makarios.

4.1.1. Verification of the hypothesis on the coverage in the newspapers before the coup.

In the first period, 06.07.1974-14.07.1974 we examined 24 editions; each newspaper had eight editions.¹⁰ Altogether we identified and examined 228 relevant articles.¹¹ 24% (56) of the articles belonged to the left-winger *Charavgi*, 31% (70) to the independent *Phileleftheros* and 45% (102) to the right-winger *Machi*.

Verification of the first hypothesis – The coverage in *Machi*.

The coverage in *Machi* is implicit as well as explicit one-sided right-wing. A typical characteristic of *Machi's* coverage is its use of implicit blending of information and opinion. This occurs mainly through the repression of issues which were disadvantageous to right-wing policy and also through the systematical concealment and belittlement of facts which showed that the integrity of the Makarios government was threatened by the activities of the right-wing forces. *Machi* achieved this effect, by using small articles on specific topics in its last page. In this way *Machi* tried to convince its readers of an objective and extensive coverage, which in fact, did not exist.

The one-sided thematic selection in *Machi's* coverage in support of a right-wing political position could be verified with the frequency analysis.¹² *Machi* significantly repressed the issue of cooperation between the EOKA B and the Junta. The assumption of Makarios' government, that right-wing forces were a threat to the republic, was systematically undermined. A more exact analysis of the text content showed that *Machi* often reported excessively on the arrests of neutral citizens. The aim of this tactic was to leave the impression, that the government alienated the people with its own policy and to shift the responsibility on to the government for subversive activities. In addition, *Machi* also selected and presented primarily the reactions of political personalities, organisations and citizens who discountenanced the withdrawal of the Greek Officers.

¹⁰ 1974 didn't issue daily-newspapers on Mondays.

¹¹ The newspaper of the examined period had a specific structure. The political coverage was located in the first and last pages of the newspapers.

¹² According to Ritsert the frequency analysis is a methodology with which the "accumulation of text elements can be identified with the help of the categories of an analytical scheme" (Ritsert 1972: 17).

In addition to the thematic selection *Machi* achieved an implicit blending of information and opinion by often using specific kinds of articles and by purposefully placing the articles on the first or last page. *Machi* reported on the measures of the government against the EOKA B and other individuals and also on the reactions to these measures with many small articles. Such a coverage prevented access to the real facts. (Busche-Baumann 1994: 147). This effect was especially obvious in the edition of *Machi* on 10.07.1974: five articles on the arrests of individuals by government forces. All of them dealt with the same subject and they only registered the names of the affected people. The arrests were dealt with as incoherent cases, and the "dissipation" into five articles appeared as justifiable. In this way *Machi* suggested an extensive coverage while in reality giving only little real information.

The placing of the articles is also relevant for the selectivity of the coverage. The editor's choice of topic for the first page was their estimation of what was important at the time (Busche-Baumann 1994: 155). These articles arrest the attention of the readers. Despite the fact that the government measures for the safety of the integrity of the republic and the reactions on these measures were the most discussed political topics on the island, the majority of these articles were published on the last pages.

The secondary literature about the Cypriot Press, describes *Machi* as the newspaper which usually uses many creative features, such as colours, balks and frames¹³. The editions of *Machi* we examined however, surprisingly did not affirm this image of *Machi*. The coded articles did not overuse pictures and other creative features.

Our initial impression of *Machi* was that it didn't show an explicit one-sided coverage. *Machi* contained more information-stressed articles than opinion-stressed articles compared to the other two newspapers. However, our impression of the newspaper required revision after examining the distribution of topics into the different kinds of articles. Most reports and messages referred to the measures of the government against EOKA B and individuals. This newspaper achieved an implicit belittlement effect through the suggestion of an objective, extensive coverage, which was de facto one-sided right-wing. *Machi* dealt however with the topics "cooperation of EOKA B and Junta" and "reactions on measures" in an explicit one-sided manner. The few articles, which concerned these topics, were documentations and editorials, which voiced the policy of *Machi*.

¹³ Notes form an interview with Dimitris Papadimitris held on 09.09.2003 in Nicosia.

The deeper semantic analysis validated the already acquired lopsidedness of the coverage. Although, initially, 12% of the articles were formal and information-stressed, after semantic analysis, 30% of the articles turned out to be content and opinion-stressed. All of them presented the Makarios government measures in a negative light. Although *Machi* contained predominantly information-stressed articles, 18% of them offended the principle of partition of opinion and information by manipulating the language as follows:

Firstly: In the coverage of *Machi* the security of the island was put on the same level as the attendance of the Greek officers in Cyprus. This exemplifies the article "Why shall the people pay?"¹⁴ from the 11.07.1974 edition. In this article the editors of *Machi* claimed that only Turkey should be considered a threat to Cyprus. The government's argument, for the withdrawal of Greek officers, was suppressed.

Secondly: The image of the Greek Junta was positively displayed, by presenting Greece as the "national Cradle" of Cyprus. *Machi* published articles with titles like „Greece answers“(06.07.1974) and "Athens invited Makarios" (10.07.1974). In both of the articles, *Machi* supported the Greek Junta by putting the Greek Dictators on the same level as Greece.

Thirdly: *Machi* repeatedly reported on the abuse of prisoners by government forces. At that point, the editors of *Machi* confined themselves only to the statements of the prisoners and did not review the facts in detail.¹⁵

Verification of the second hypothesis – The coverage in *Charavgi*.

The coverage in *Charavgi* is to great extend explicitly one-sided. 54% of its coded articles showed by use of persuasive language that the editorial staff favoured the measures of Makarios' government. Some of these articles could only be identified as opinion-stressed after a deeper semantic analysis. *Charavgi* exhibits also implicit one-sided coverage, though not as much *Machi*. *Charavgi* extensively stressed the topic "cooperation between Junta and EOKA B" in order to legitimate the measures of the government.

¹⁴ "Τούτο θα σημαίνει ότι δεν θα είμεθα εις θέσιν να διαθέτωμεν την αναγκαίαν στρατιωτικήν άμυντικήν ισχύν εν είδει κλοιού περιξ των θυλάκων της Τουρκικής αρπακτικής ανταρσίας, ώστε να ματαιώσωμεν την επεκτατικήν της βουλμίαν [...] Διότι απαξ και αναχωρήσουν οι εξ Ελλάδος αξιωματικοί, τότε δεν θα παραμείνη παρά ο καταπληκτικώς περιορισμένος διψήφιος αριθμός των Κυπρίων αξιωματικών" (*Μάχη* 11.07.1974, p.1).

¹⁵ Compare the editorial "Suspect for 4 murders" (*Μάχη* 13.07.1974, p. 1.)

At first site the coverage in *Charavgi* left an objective impression. After classification of the formal journalistic genres, 48% of the coded articles were identified as information-stressed and only 24% as opinion-stressed. 28% of the coded articles couldn't be identified directly, because they belonged to the genres documentaries and other press releases. The deeper semantic analysis of all the information-stressed and not yet classified articles revealed that 30% of them explicitly blended information and opinion. Hence 54% of the coded articles from *Charavgi* had to be reclassified as opinion-stressed, rendering the coverage in *Charavgi* in total not very objective.

The analysis, which was conducted topic by topic to identify any explicit blending of information and opinion, showed that *Charavgi* reported on the topic "cooperation between Junta and EOKA B" almost exclusively in opinion-stressed articles. The importance of this topic for the coverage in *Charavgi* is stressed also by the fact that five out of seven editorials dealt with it.

Independently from thematically supporting Makarios' government, the editorial staff of *Charavgi* also used formulations that intended to create sympathy for Makarios' policy among the readership. We illustrate this instance with the following three examples:

Firstly: *Charavgi* criticised the Greek Junta. The coverage in *Charavgi* repeatedly emphasized that the leaders of the Greek Junta did not come to power by democratic elections but abused their military power in order to tyrannize the Greek people. The Greek Junta was characterized as "dictatorial regime", "military government" or "dictatorial government"¹⁶. Being aware of the cultural relatedness the Greek Cypriot population felt toward Greece, the editorial staff of *Charavgi* tried to distinguish between the Greek nation and the Greek Junta. For example on 10.07.1974 *Charavgi* published an article with the headline "The real Greece" (*Χαρavyή* 10.07.1974, p. 1), in which Greek politicians were introduced who were not involved with the dictators in any way and supported the Makarios' government.

Secondly: *Charavgi* also used the popularity of president Makarios, in order to defend his policy. Makarios was described as a national Hero, who headed the fight against the dictators of Greece all on his own. This is the complete contrary to the coverage in *Machi*,

¹⁶ Compare the article "The folk supports Makarios' measures" (*Χαρavyή* 09.07.1974, p. 1) and "Makarios submits to the regime of Athens: 'Give orders for liquidation of the terrorist EOKA B'" (*Χαρavyή* 09.07.1974, p. 1)

where he was presented as the trouble maker in the relationship between Cyprus and Greece.¹⁷ On 07.07.1974 the editorial staff of *Charavgi* published a commentary with the title "Cyprus' NO" on its last page. In this commentary Makarios was described as the brave leader of the Cypriot people, who because of his personal integrity dared to oppose the dictators of Greece.

Thirdly: The editorial staff of *Charavgi* used the same argument as the government of Makarios itself to legitimize its decisions. *Charavgi* accented that the Turkish government would not tolerate any coup by any pro Greek forces in Cyprus (*Χαράβγη* 09.07.1974, S. 6.).

The implicit one-sided coverage in *Charavgi* could be verified through frequency analysis. In comparison to the other two newspapers the coverage in *Charavgi* engaged significantly more on the topic of a connection between the Greek Junta and EOKA B. In detail *Charavgi* published articles dealing directly with a supposed cooperation between the Greek Junta and EOKA B as well as on the government's measures against Junta and EOKA B, which tackled the topic indirectly. Consistent to its left-wing orientation *Charavgi* referred to the cooperation as a conspiracy that threatened democracy in Cyprus, by this legitimizing all the measures of the government for the security of the Republic of Cyprus. The coverage in *Charavgi* lacks any kind of criticism of these measures.

Further analysis of the creative features of the articles on that topic and their positioning in the editions of *Charavgi* supported the above result of an implicitly one-sided coverage. On average *Charavgi* published longer articles with wider headings than the other two newspapers on the topic of the connection. Also the majority of the articles on the cooperation were placed in the first pages of the *Charavgi*, while articles, which reported on the measures of the government, played a complementary role on the last pages. These articles typically portrayed facts, which should prove to the readership that Junta and EOKA B were both acting against the Cyprus government.

Verification of the third hypothesis – The coverage in *Phileleftheros*.

Officially *Phileleftheros* was independent from any political position. Surprisingly analysis of its coded articles revealed that its coverage was not objective, as could be expected, but explicitly one-sided. The editorial staff of *Phileleftheros* supported the policy of

¹⁷ "Athens – Nicosia: the crisis rises" (*Μάχη* 06.07.1974, p. 1.).

Makarios. The rules of the information-stressed journalistic genres were often broken by formulations, which praised Makarios' policy and himself.

Similar to the results on *Charavgi*, the classification of the coded articles in the coverage in *Phileleftheros* showed that its editorial staff primarily used information-stressed genres. The information-stressed articles amount to 49% and the opinion-stressed articles to 12% of the entire coded coverage. The rest of the articles could not be classified by formal analysis. Further semantic analysis however revealed that only 37% of the coded articles truly were information-stressed. The remaining formally information-stressed articles contained formulations which expressed an evaluation. The coverage of *Phileleftheros* supported the policy of the government of Makarios very obviously. 59% of the coded articles valued the measures of the government as positive, only 4% were negative. It is remarkable that 53% of the positive articles in the coverage of *Phileleftheros* broke the rule of the partition of information and opinion, but only 23% of the positive articles were also formally opinion-stressed

Strikingly *Phileleftheros* published more documentations compared to *Charavgi*. Documentations typically indirectly convey political messages. A more direct annotation of the events in Cyprus did not fit to the image of the *Phileleftheros* as an independent newspaper. These results are in line with the conclusion, that not only an external person can use the media to exploit it for the transportation of a political position, but also the editorial staff can use political and ideological statements of external persons to propagate the political position of its editorial staff (Blömbaum 1992: 152).

Analysis of the language in the coverage in *Phileleftheros* showed that it supported the policy of the government especially by using absolute judgments. Similar to *Charavgi* the coverage in *Phileleftheros* cited two arguments to justify its political orientation:

Firstly: Makarios was presented as the charismatic leader, who chose the right policy for the security of the island. For example, in the last page of the edition of *Phileleftheros* on 13.07.1974 a press commentary was issued with title: "Leading Figure of the Greek nation is Makarios, writes the foreign press." This article was composed of extracts out of the American newspaper *The Christian Science Monitor* and the German *Spiegel*, where the policy of Makarios was praised.

Secondly: in contrary to the praise of Makarios the leaders of Greece were presented in a negative way as the "Military regime" or the "Source of the evil". In order to denounce the Junta the *Phileleftheros* published critical citations of persons, associations and parties, which

were also demonstrated in the titles of the respective articles to attract more attention. For example on 09.07.1974 the *Phileleftheros* on page 8 issued two articles with titles "The regime of Athens bears the responsibility, declare Greek politicians", and, "Parties and associations demand an end of the lawlessness from the state".

Even if *Phileleftheros* accounted for a predominantly explicit one-sided coverage, it to a minor degree also blended implicit information and opinion. As already mentioned *Phileleftheros* emphasised the complex of topics "Junta - EOKA B". Within this complex the issue "Measures against the Greek Junta" was dominant. On this issue *Phileleftheros* published predominantly positive reviews of third persons on the measures of the government. This proves implicit one-sided coverage.

The analysis of the creative features in the coverage of *Phileleftheros* didn't result in any major insights. The articles were on average longer than those of *Machi* and shorter than those of *Charavgi*. The same applies for the average width of the headings. The coded articles were evenly distributed between the first and the last pages.

4.1.2. Verification of the hypothesis on the coverage after the coup

For the second period of analysis we selected 27 editions for examination, nine from each newspaper. 694 articles were identified as relevant according to the categories and coded. 35% (250) of the coded articles belong to *Charavgi*, 31% (212) to *Phileleftheros* and 33% (232) to *Machi*. The examination of the newspapers in this period was aimed to bring out, how the press coverage dealt with the perpetrators of the coup, with the government of Makarios and if a connection between coup and invasion was made.

In order to ascertain, whether the newspapers connected coup and invasion, it was necessary to code all articles dealing with the invasion and its consequences. Due to the fact that only very few articles referred to the coup, the analysis of these articles focused on the content and not on any creative features.

Verification of the first Hypothesis – The coverage in *Machi*

After the coup the editors of *Machi* remained faithful to their right-wing position. Typical for the coverage of *Machi* is an implicit blending of information and opinion by suppressing the coup thematically. Simultaneously there were also cases of explicit blending of information and opinion identified in the coverage of *Machi*.

The frequency analysis of the coded articles in the second period showed that *Machi* almost didn't mention the coup at all (less than 1% of the coded articles), although it had

almost the same number of articles on the Turkish invasion as can be found in the coverage of *Charavgi* and *Phileleftheros*. *Machi* avoided pointedly to making the question of the responsibility for the invasion a subject of discussion. The Greek Junta and president Makarios were also less mentioned in the coverage of *Machi* than in any of the other two newspapers. It is remarkable that all three newspapers didn't report any further on EOKA B, once the coup was over.

The small number of articles on the coup in the coverage of *Machi* made Content Analysis difficult. However it was possible on the basis of two articles, to prove the explicit blending of information and opinion; these are the only articles that directly mentioned Nicos Sampson. In the article "Critical Moments for our folk. The twelve days of the Cyprus Crisis" the editors of *Machi* wrote: "23.7.1974, the president of the republic Mr. Sampson resigned, as the new president of the republic will be sworn the former president of the parliament, Mr. Kliridis" (*Μάχη* 02.08.1974, p. 3). In this way dated *Machi* the "outbreak of the crisis" on the day of the invasion, and not on the day of the coup. The second article was a short message on the return of Sampson from Greece to Cyprus after the coup. Once more Sampson was presented as the legitimate president of Cyprus between 15.07.1974 and 23.07.1974. *Machi* accused the Greek Junta of being responsible for the situation in Cyprus and annotated the collapse of the Junta by writing "Democracy is being restored in Greece" (*Μάχη* 03.08.1974, p. 3).

Another important indicator for the right-wing orientation of the coverage of *Machi* was its attitude towards Makarios. *Machi* suppressed the fact that Makarios was overthrown illegally on 15.07.1974. *Machi's* editors pointed out that Makarios' return to the political spectrum of Cyprus was not desirable on their part and supported the provisional president Kliridis as the new official president of the state instead. Makarios was declared the former president of Cyprus. As an example the documentation "The speech of the former president" can be mentioned (*Μάχη* 04.08.1974, S.5).

Verification of the second hypothesis – "The coverage in *Charavgi*"

In the second examined period *Charavgi* explicitly held the view of its party. Implicit one-sided coverage was only observed to a minor degree. The editorial staff of *Charavgi* openly pleaded for a return of president Makarios and identified the coup as the cause of the tragedy of the island. Simultaneously the editors of *Charavgi* in view of the Turkish invasion stated, that they would encourage the unity of the folk on the island in order to support stability. Therefore *Charavgi* also supported the provisional president Kliridis in its coverage

and remained moderate in demanding justice for the accomplices of the Greek Junta in Cyprus.

It was possible to identify an important thematic difference between the coverage in *Charavgi* and *Machi* with the help of thematic frequency analysis. The coup was not the daily headline topic in *Charavgi's* coverage; still it appeared more frequently in its coverage than in the *Machi's*. Compared to the other newspapers, the coup accounted for about 11% of entirety of *Charavgi's* coded articles. This rate is considerably higher than the one of *Phileleftheros* (6%) and of *Machi* (1%), a fact that illustrates the indirect blending of information and opinion in the coverage of *Charavgi*. Also the results of the thematic frequency analysis further confirm that *Charavgi's* account of the events was one-sided. The Greek Junta was mentioned very often, while the partial "responsibility of EOKA B for the coup", was completely missing. Against the background of the ongoing Turkish invasion, *Charavgi* stopped any reporting on the role of EOKA B, in order not to fuel any disunity in the Cypriot population. The examination of the thematic criterion "Presentation of Glafkos Kliridis and of the provisional government" didn't show any implicit blending of information and opinion. On the contrary *Charavgi* reported often and positive on him and his government.

In the coverage of *Charavgi* an explicit blending of information and opinion is more predominating. The editors of *Charavgi* openly showed a negative attitude towards the coup of 15.07.1974. On the one hand they condemned the coup as a break of the constitution of the republic; on the other hand they showed that the coup was the cause of the Turkish invasion. Nevertheless *Charavgi* didn't explicitly name the leaders of the coup. As an example, on 03.08.1974 (p. 1) *Charavgi* wrote: "Since the 15. July experiences the Cypriot folk the most tragic moments of its long-time history. [...] Definitely there are a few persons, who are responsible for this disaster and they are known to everybody. [...] We are quiet only because Cyprus is still in flames, which threat to burn down everything and everybody. [...]"

The comments in the articles of *Charavgi* on the Greek junta were very straight. In his article P. Petritis judged: "In its collapse the fascistic Junta dragged along an agonising and suffering Cyprus to the ruins." (*Χαραυγή* 11.08.1974, p. 1). Further we could identify the attempt of *Charavgi* to support the unity of the Cypriot folk. On 03.08.1974 the editors of *Charavgi* announced, that they would refrain from any direct accusations against persons involved in the coup, in order not to add fuel to the flames.

Another example for the explicit one-sided coverage of *Charavgi* was provided in the reports on Makarios and Kliridis. In contrast to *Machi*, *Charavgi* differentiated strict between

the two main political figures of Cyprus, also in the period after the coup. Makarios was further on denominated as the president-elect of Cyprus. Characteristic for this were the editorials of the edition on 08.08.1974: "The president Makarios announces and accuses" (*Χαραυγή* 08.08.1974, p.1). In contrast Kliridis was presented as deputy of the government only.

Verification of the third hypothesis- The coverage in *Phileleftheros*

The examination of the coverage of *Phileleftheros* in the second period didn't lead to a clear picture as in the case of *Machi* and *Charavgi*. This has its reason in the fact that *Phileleftheros* didn't support any political position but regarded itself as independent. Especially the coverage on Makarios and Kliridis stayed consciously neutral. In this *Phileleftheros* did not report objectively, its editors rather tried to not take a position by publishing many documentaries and interviews.

No implicit blending of information and opinion could be identified. The thematic frequency analysis of the different issues didn't show any one-sided thematic selection. *Phileleftheros* was actually very careful in this point. The coup occurred in its coverage with a total of 6% of the coded material more often than in the coverage of *Machi*, but less often than in *Charavgi's* coverage.

A further analysis of the coded articles showed that the coup was only mentioned in the coverage of *Phileleftheros*, but not discussed. Also the coup was only limitedly linked to the invasion. The linking mainly happened through documentations. An example for this case is the documentation of *Phileleftheros* on 09.08.1974 "MAKARIOS: Some states knew in advance about the coup in Cyprus". This article was an interview with Makarios in which he elucidated the coherences between coup and invasion: "[...] the coup of the Greek Junta and its accomplices in Cyprus was a national betrayal. It ended as a national disaster for Cyprus and gave the chance to Turkey for an aggression" (*Φιλελεύθερος* 09.08.1974, p. 4.) This conscious use of documentations for an indirect transportation of opinions was already ascertained in the first examined period in the coverage of *Phileleftheros*. The editors published statements of politicians and of other persons in order to avoid publishing own commentary. In the commentaries *Phileleftheros* remained neutral: "Let us shake hands with each other" (*Φιλελεύθερος* 02.08.1974, p. 1), was the title of the commentary in the first page of the first edition of *Phileleftheros* after the coup. In spite of the common motif of reconciliation in both newspapers, *Charavgi* and *Phileleftheros*, *Phileleftheros* dealt with the crisis in Cyprus in a different way: while *Charavgi's* editors tried to elucidate the background

of the crisis, the editors of *Phileleftheros* let “others” speak for them (through documentations).

The coverage of *Phileleftheros* was interesting concerning the person of Makarios. While in the first period, before the coup, *Phileleftheros* supported Makarios, in the second period *Phileleftheros* behaved neutral. Makarios was presented in the coverage as the "archbishop"¹⁸ or "president"¹⁹ of Cyprus, sometimes also only with his name. In 81% of the articles of *Phileleftheros* in which Kliridis was mentioned, he was called as the president of Cyprus. The newspaper obviously didn't intend to present Makarios in a negative way. It seems that the editors of *Phileleftheros* wanted to remain noncommittal, until the domestic affairs were clarified in Cyprus.

5. Conclusions

The results of the Content Analysis combined with the historical and sociocultural background lead to the following insights in the press coverage of that period in Cyprus:

In spite of the independence of Cyprus in 1960 the domestic political situation grew more acute until 1974. Many Greek Cypriots were still attracted by the dream of Enosis. The radical nationalists regarded Makarios, who signed the independence treaty of Cyprus, as a traitor; however the majority of the Greek Cypriots supported his policy.²⁰ The analysis of the newspapers clearly demonstrates that this division into supporters and opposers found its manifestation in the press also, especially after Makarios demanded the withdrawal of the Greek Officers from Cyprus in his letter on 02.07.1974.

On the brink of the coup not only the radical right-wing newspapers (*Ethniki*, *Mesimvrini*, *Patris*) opposed to Makarios and his politics, but also the less radical newspapers, like *Machi*,²¹ showed a negative attitude. Simultaneously left-wing and independent newspapers like *Charavgi* and *Phileleftheros* defined their position as on Makarios' side.

¹⁸ Compare the article "Our chances" (*Φιλελεύθερος* 04.08.1974, p.3)

¹⁹ Compare the article "The statements of Mr. Kliridis about the come-back of the president Makarios in Cyprus." (*Φιλελεύθερος* 07.08.1974, p.4)

²⁰ Makarios won the relevant president elections of 1973 with an overwhelming majority.

²¹ *Machi* supported the enosis but was not ab initio against Makarios.

This division of the press cannot always be directly observed in its coverage. Both sides (supporters as well as opposers) used different ways of blending information and opinion. The editorial staff of *Charavgi* and *Phileleftheros* favoured an explicit one-sided coverage; they made no secret of their political orientation. *Charavgi* applied for this purpose often formal opinion-stressed articles, like commentary or leading articles while *Phileleftheros* issued much political, one-sided documentation. On the contrary the editorial staff of *Machi* mostly implicitly supported the opponents of the Republic of Cyprus. This implicit support was achieved by systematically highlighting isolated aspects of incidents, while omitting any background information that could lead to undesirable interpretations. Typical for the coverage of *Machi* were many brief and thematically narrowed down articles.

After Makarios was overthrown and replaced by Nicos Sampson 15.07.1974 the newspapers stopped publishing at first, due to the censorship. Only the national broadcast RIK, which was also under the control of the Greek Junta and EOKA B, officially stayed on air. Through their radio program the rebels announced on 15.07.1974 between 08:00 and 09:00 their victory: "The national guard intervened in order to solve the problematical situation. [...]. Makarios is dead". In a last act Makarios, who had managed to escape, denied his death through a private radio transmitter in Pafos, before fleeing abroad. From this point on the illegal government of Nicos Sampson controlled the media. The press remained object to censorship. Due to these circumstances, a Content Analysis of the press coverage of that period wouldn't have been particularly meaningful. Hence we restricted ourselves to a mere qualitative examination of the few newspaper editions available.

Due to censorship the editorial staff of not right-wing newspapers refused to continue publishing any newspapers at all. On 19.07.1974 and 20.07.1974 only *Agon*, *Ethniki* and *Machi* appeared in print. The few editions, which were available,²² illustrate the dramatic change of the situation in Cyprus after the coup. The newspapers were supporting the coup employing propagandistic instruments. *Machi's* leading article on 19.07.1974 had the following title: "The Government of national salvation guides the people back to cultural unity. The corrupt old regime is overthrown and finished." *Agon* and *Ethniki* also praised the rebels. *Ethniki* wrote: "After the liberating intervention of the military, the tyrant had to flee. The relief of the people is effusive." The obtainable editions of *Machi* set an example of the changes in the coverage during the governance of Nicos Sampson. His supporters in the press

²² Unfortunately not all the editions of that period exist in the Press archive of Cyprus any more.

openly deviated from the truth, deliberately omitted information and made up events. For example on 20.07.1974 *Machi* wrote: "The ambition of the new government. Peaceful solution for the Cyprus problem.", or: "The military youth placed Sampson in the place of the president of Cyprus. Waldheim²³ greeted Makarios because he approves with him." It is noticeable that, after Sampson took over the leadership, he didn't openly bring forward the topic of Enosis. On the contrary he emphasized that the status quo of the island would remain unchanged²⁴ and his aim was only to whisk away Makarios, the tyrant.

Another aspect of deliberate disinformation concerned the Turkish reactions on the coup. The preparations of the invasion were not mentioned in the coverage of the newspapers. The journey of the Turkish Prime Minister Boulent Etezeit to Britain, which aimed to convince the British to allow Turkey a military basis on the island, was not mentioned. Also the Turkish conditions for a prevention of an imminent invasion were kept secret. One of these conditions was the resignation of Sampson (Stern 1978: 151). On 20.07.1974, the day the Turkish military was deployed for the invasion; *Machi* once more assured its readership: "It is impossible for Turkey to intervene in Cyprus. Turkey's resources are limited." Sampson resigned three days later, on 23.07.1974.

After Sampson's resignation, the censorship was officially abolished, but due to the exceptional circumstances that resulted from the ongoing Turkish invasion, the first free newspapers did not regularly appear in print until after the invasion came to a halt on 01.08.1974. Only *Phileleftheros* wrote on 05.08.1974 (p.1) that the owners of the newspapers made an agreement with the provisional president Kliridis to obtain a consulting role as far as it concerned the political coverage of the newspapers. However Content Analysis of the editions of that period provided no indications for any active censorship of the political content in the newspapers.

The examination of the editions of the newspapers directly after the coup (02.07 - 11.07.1974) did not reveal the same schemata as the periods before. Had the Cypriot press been divided into two parties, it now showed three political directions. *Charavgi* remained

²³ Kurt Waldheim was the secretary general of UNO between 1972 -1982.

²⁴ "Mr. Minister announced that the foreign policy of Cyprus will not change [...] Mr. Dimitriou [Minister of the foreign affairs in the coup regime] repeated that the new Cypriot government will not promote the issue of Enosis, but will aim for a common solution to the Cyprus problem with the Turkish Cypriot 'friends', like he called them" (*Machi* 20.07.1974, p.1)

faithful to the policy of its party, though more explicit through the publication of more opinion-stressed articles. The editorial staff of *Charavgi* characterized the coup as the obvious cause of the Turkish invasion and pled for the return of President Makarios. In its edition of 01.08.1974 (p.4) *Charavgi* published the article: "Chronic of the tragedy of Cyprus", which aimed to fill all the gaps in the information which had been caused by the censorship. Only the names of the people who were responsible for the tragedy were primarily omitted. The message that *Charavgi* sent to its public was "postponed is not abandoned". Under the circumstances *Charavgi* tried to avoid provoking a new civil war with its coverage. Instead of that *Charavgi* supported the provisional government of Kliridis and the unity of Cyprus.

Phileleftheros also attempted not to add fuel to the flames during the period of the invasion. The difference however was that *Phileleftheros* did not mention the coup as often as *Charavgi* in its coverage. Consequently *Phileleftheros* avoid showing any connection between the coup and the invasion. Typical for hesitant attitude of *Phileleftheros* was also the obviously reduced support for Makarios. The editors of *Phileleftheros* awaited the stabilization of the domestic affairs.

Machi had been an open propaganda instrument during the governance of Samson. After the Invasion it reverted to its old implicit method of propaganda. In the coverage of *Machi* coup and invasion remained disconnected, other embarrassing Situations of the period 15.7.1974 - 23.07.1974, were omitted. It was also impossible for *Machi* to admit the mistakes of its owner during the coup. Sampson did never notify his failure publicly. The continuation in the editing policy of *Machi* and the continued refusal to accept the overthrown President as the legal president proved that the nationalists, even after their coup failed, were not willing to admit the failure and injustice of their own actions.

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British reactions to the ‘rape of Greek democracy’¹

As was remarked in the *Greek Observer*, a monthly anti-regime propaganda newspaper edited and published in London, ‘historic ties with the States and with Greece made Britain’s position pivotal’² during the 1967 events in Greece. In view of the well-documented British connection stemming from British interests and involvement in Greek affairs over the past two centuries, there was nothing surprising or unjustifiable in the strong manifestation of British concerns over the events that shook Greece in April in 1967. Rather, this was nothing other than the continuation of a pattern resulting from a complexity of factors associated with Greece’s long-standing significance for British interests.

The origins of British involvement in Greek affairs predate the founding of the Greek nation with the formation of the group of the Philhellenes. Their interference got established with the signing of the Treaty of London in 1830, when the newly founded Greek nation was assigned as a *protégé* under the jurisdiction of a joint triadic protectorate of which Britain, in particular, played the most notable part. British agile influence in Greek affairs continued unabated during the first part of the 20th century too. Although the close Anglo-Greek cooperation was fully manifested during the first and second world wars, the interwar years were equally significant for the strengthening of their bond. Besides, it needs to be borne in mind that the extent of British preponderance in Greek affairs was linked to the degree of British penetration

¹ Telegram, Athens 4797, Philips Talbot, American Embassy in Athens, to Department of State, Secret, Priority, 21 April 1967, Department of State, Central Files, POL 23-9 Greece, National Administration of Records and Archives, MD (NARA thereafter)

² *Greek Observer*, March 1969, p. 24

of the Greek economy; it is undoubtedly striking that in 1935 ‘half of the Greek public debt of 89,000,000 [pounds sterling] was held by private British investors’³.

British involvement in Greek affairs up until the Second World War was far from being negligible. However, its apogee was reached during the years immediately following the termination of the war. The milestone was provided with the signing in October 1944 of the infamous ‘percentages agreement’ between Churchill and Stalin, with which Greece was unequivocally assigned within the British sphere of influence. Only two weeks after its signing, this agreement gave self-invited Britain the justification necessary for pulling the strings with unencumbered ease during the Greek civil war, in the form of energetic support for the Greek Nationalists’ attempt to countenance the threat staged by the Greek Communists.

Despite the fact that by 1947, Britain, unable to afford the massive injections of foreign financial assistance had relinquished most of its responsibilities in Greece to the US, thus bringing its direct involvement in Greek affairs to a halt, its sizeable interest in those affairs was never eliminated. In short, it could be argued that at the turn of the century and beforehand Greece’s cooperation was highly valued by the British for safeguarding their route to India; in the 1930s and 1940s, it was important against Italy and Germany; and in the 1960s, although the British gradually withdrew from East of Suez following the decimation of their Empire, Greece assumed significance in view of the Russian threat in the Mediterranean and their special interest in keeping Cyprus out of the Communist sphere of influence. It becomes comprehensible why Britain’s role in Greece’s internal affairs has been widely and rightly interpreted to be one of exceptional power and influence, although there is

³ John V. Kofas, *Intervention and Underdevelopment: Greece during the Cold War*, p. 7

disagreement about the nature of the effect on the outcome of post-war developments in Greece.

The fact that the Anglo-Greek special bond had persisted unchallenged was manifested in a number of statements. For instance, the King of the Hellenes, Paul, was quoted saying during his official state visit in London in 1963: ‘the gallant British people have always come to our side in times of peril. We have experienced their bravery at close quarters. We are proud to give hospitality to their dead who fell on Greek soil in common struggles with ourselves’⁴. It could be argued that this succinct retrospective clearly demonstrated that the two countries have enjoyed ‘a special, historical and emotional relationship’⁵. Indeed, such was the intensity of their special relationship and the traditional affection felt by the British people for Greece, that there existed a widely shared belief among ordinary Greek citizens that their country’s destinies got shaped in London. It came therefore as no surprise that allegations about Britain’s tentative involvement in the Colonels’ *coup* spread rapidly and eventually became common currency.

In the light of this highly speculative climate, before proceeding with the examination of British policy towards Greece in the wake of the Colonels’ coming to power, it is crucial to investigate the validity of floating hypotheses regarding British anticipation of, or even complicity in, the April *coup*, in an attempt to piece together some of the mosaic of the political demonology surrounding it. Despite the seemingly insuperable impediment of Britain’s extreme reservation with the release of sensitive material involving intelligence information, through the implementation of a variety of different research methods, the examination of all potentially related material,

⁴ Telegram, Athens 1313, Henry Labouisse (US Embassy in Athens) to Secretary of State, Priority, 12 June 1963, Department of State, Central Files, POL 15 Greece, NARA

⁵ Memorandum by Sir Michael Stewart, UK Policy towards Greece, Confidential, 17 February 1969, FCO, The National Archives of England, Kew, Richmond, Surrey (NA thereafter)

including American sources, and the thorough assessment of a vast array of arguments, the resultant conclusions allude to the fact that the allegations regarding British involvement in the planning and/or execution of the *coup* were nothing more than mythoplastic.

However, through a rigorous process of investigation and analysis, it was also established that the British government or at least some of its intelligence officials must have received information prior to the *coup* about its planning. In 1966, for instance, in a letter addressed to Sir Ralph Murray, the British Ambassador in Athens, due consideration was given to ‘the strong likelihood of a right-wing coup’⁶. In fact, this was not considered to be a secret, as even the Greek people suspected that it might happen. It is indicative that the same report later referred to ‘the surprising equanimity with which the Greeks regarded the possibility of some extra-parliamentary solution’⁷. In another instance, a month later, Sir Ralph Murray reported to the Foreign Office that ‘such equilibrium as has been reached here is essentially unstable and sooner or later it is bound to be upset’⁸.

The citation of the above comments from the immediate pre-coup years is usefully complemented by the recent testimony of the British Counsellor at the Embassy in Athens, the late Sir Derek Dodson, who commended on the possibility of a *coup* in the following way:

...there was a period before the coup when everybody thought that there was going to be a coup... If you go back to the exchange of letters between the King and the Papandreu, ... there was a great rift between the Papandreu and the King, there were endless changes of government, ... so people thought there was going to be a coup, and this did not come as a great surprise.⁹

⁶ Letter, H. A. F. Hohler to Sir R. Murray, Confidential, 27 June 1966, FO 371/185677, NA

⁷ *Ibid*

⁸ Letter, Sir Ralph Murray to Michael Stewart, Dispatch no. 31, Confidential, 25 July 1966, FO 371/185666, NA

⁹ Interview with Sir Derek Dodson

It is undisputed that political processes in Greece were experiencing a gradual degeneration, which was especially marked in the 21-month period prior to the *coup*. In fact, a closer examination of Greece's socio-political situation before the *coup* suggests that conditions were opportune for a deviation from democracy, as the tempestuous stalemate gradually led the country to an impasse, due to a number of accentuated political rifts, exacerbated by increasing social unrest, a rash of street demonstrations, sporadic strikes and marches. Between July 1965 and April 1967, Greece was governed by a kaleidoscope of political combinations, as the position of the Premier was filled by five different politicians¹⁰, all of whom failed to secure a vote of confidence, therefore had to resign within months or even days of the inception of their premiership. The British Council in Greece, in a retrospective assessment, concluded that 'the social and industrial unrest, administrative chaos and moral confusion... has held the country to ransom'¹¹ in the years before the *coup*.

It becomes therefore crystal clear that the British, and indeed those knowledgeable about Greek affairs, must have been alarmed at the apparent signs of political decay, hence suspected that an unconstitutional act was in the offing. Interestingly enough nonetheless, they were 'caught napping' at the time of the putsch. Baron Bridges, the Head of Chancery of the British Embassy in Greece, recalls the way he experienced the very first moments of the Colonels' *coup* in the night of 21st April, as follows:

My wife... heard some funny noises going on, and she came to me and said there were noises of armoured vehicles, and one passed by an alley, close to our garden and stopped and said: "Have you heard? There has been a *πραξικόπημα (coup d' état)*". So she woke me up at half past six, and a telephone call arrived from the Embassy saying "could you please come in at

¹⁰ Led by namely, George Novas (15 July – 4 August 1965), Ilias Tsirimokos (20 August – 28 August 1965), Stefanos Stefanopoulos (17 September 1965 – 21 December 1966), Ioannis Paraskevopoulos (21 December 1966 – 30 March 1967), Panayiotis Kanellopoulos (2 April – 14 April 1967)

¹¹ Representatives' Annual Report, 1967-68, the British Council, Greece, Restricted, FCO 13/92, NA

once?” So I went to the Embassy which at that time was at Loukianou, where I found most of the rest of the staff trying to find out about Greek torture going on, and particularly our military attaché was phoning up his friends and other attachés, and we were pulling what we knew together into telegrams to send off to London...¹²

This oxymoron can be attributed to the fact that most of the intelligence reports sent from the embassy in Athens to the Foreign Office paid attention exclusively to the likelihood of a *coup* planned to be carried out by Generals or Senior Officers. In fact, during the months before the *coup* there had been in Greece a good deal of idle talk about a *coup* that was being commissioned under the name *Ierax* (Hawk) by the Greek King to be executed by the Chief of the National Defence General Staff, General Spandidakis¹³. Such was the degree of anticipation of the King’s orchestrated *coup* that *The Economist*’s special correspondent in Greece argued one week after the Colonels’ *coup* had taken place that ‘what happened in Greece in the early hours of April 21st turns out to have been the wrong *coup d’état*’¹⁴.

However, while it is undoubted that most intelligence reports compiled before the *coup* pointed out the serious possibility, almost certainty, of such an act being organised by the Greek Generals following orders from King Constantine, as an attempt to pre-empt the Papandreous’ anticipated victory in the forthcoming elections, according to the convincing evidence, information was also gathered and communicated regarding the underground activities of the actual protagonists of the *coup* years before they finally took action. Hence, the officials’ professed ignorance of the executors’ identity can be questioned, as there are reports that highlighted the underground activities of the triumvirate years before the *coup*. These had been mainly composed by American intelligence, but it would be safe to conclude that,

¹² Interview with Baron Bridges

¹³ Laurence Stern, *The Wrong Horse*, p. 41

¹⁴ International Report, *The Economist*, 29 April 1967, p. 445

given the close cooperation between the two countries, particularly at the intelligence level, they were shared with their British counterparts.

More specifically, according to a memorandum drafted by Charilaos Lagoudakis, a Greek American and veteran analyst of the State Department's Office of Intelligence and Research and submitted in February 1967, intelligence officials had been warned that Papadopoulos and his entourage were conspiring for a *coup*: Since June 19, 1965, RNA [Near East Desk] has seen some 15 CIA reports from various sources on the so-called "Rightist Greek Military Conspiratorial Group"... [which] is ready to stage a military coup, when, in its view, a dictatorship would become necessary as the only alternative to Centre Union control of Parliament¹⁵.

What is also very interesting is that in one cable drafted in March 1967, General Spandidakis is reported as having stated that within the past ten days various key officers have been on unofficial alert status, the first step in implementing "Ierax (Hawk) Number Two" (*Field comment*: According to Spandidakis, "Ierax Number Two" is a plan for the military takeover of Greece contingent upon the occurrence of another political crisis. In the event such a crisis occurs, the plan outlines the role of key military units which would be involved in the take-over. See [*document number not declassified*] (TDCSDB-315/03301-66) – [not found] for additional details on this contingency plan)... Key officers on unofficial alert status are ... GAGS G-3 Chief Lieutenant Colonel Georgios Papadopoulos.¹⁶

Nonetheless, for unknown reasons, the gathering of further information about the Colonels' underground activities came to a halt just months before their long-term plans were finally put into practice in April 1967. The intelligence personnel clearly failed to adequately observe or report that the Colonels' long-monitored intentions of executing a *coup* were imminent, before the Greek King could give the green light for his own *coup*. Moreover, even more inexplicably, the recipients of still earlier

¹⁵ Laurence Stern, *The Wrong Horse*, p. 43

¹⁶ Intelligence Information Cable, Country Greece, Subject: Increased Activity of Group Advocating Dictatorship, Central Intelligence Agency, DDI Files, Intelligence Information Cables, Secret; No Foreign Dissem/Controlled Dissem/No Dissem Abroad, 9 March 1967, LBJ Library

warnings about such covert activities chose to disregard them, a fact which clearly accounts for the surprise manifested by the British government upon receiving the news. It is indicative that the Foreign Office department responsible for Greece stated in the summer of 1966 that ‘We told the Secretary of State that we had no recent indication that any right-wing coup was imminent’ and assessed that ‘EDA [Greek Democratic Left] had been fostering such ideas in order to gain support for their own policy, but as long as the King was resolutely opposed to such a coup, it seemed unlikely that the army leaders could organize one with success’¹⁷.

In fact, the undeniable surprise felt by British officials, not at the actual *coup* but rather at the *coup*’s timing and perpetrators, clears the British government of any suspicions of wrongdoing. Besides, the chances of British involvement were seriously curtailed as the British Labour government of that time, a fervent advocate of ethical foreign policy, placed emphasis on minimising interventionist policies, as its adamant refusal to join the Vietnam War proved, as well as on limiting defence expenditure and overseas commitments, while prioritising home spending instead. Finally, and in spite of the above, it should be mentioned that the one fact that could invalidate all allegations about British complicity would have been the communication by the relevant British officials of their, albeit limited, foreknowledge of the Colonels’ underground activities to the relevant Greek authorities, who could have taken the necessary measures to avert the *coup*.

Despite the lack of solid grounds to substantiate claims of British perplexity in the coming to power of the Greek Colonels, the vast majority of the data consulted confirms the view that the British government did nothing to influence the regime’s downfall, after it had assumed power. It can certainly be argued that it was not the

¹⁷ H. A. F. Hohler (Foreign Office) to Sir Ralph Murray (British Embassy in Athens), Confidential, 27 June 1966, FO 371/185677, NA

responsibility of the British government to undertake actions that could influence the evolution of another country's domestic developments – not that the policy of direct intervention in Greek affairs was unfamiliar practice to British politicians, as the recent past, especially at the onset of the Greek civil war, had unquestionably proven. However, there were apparent differences between the mid-1940s and the late 1960s, namely that Britain's world power status had considerably shrunk consequently its role in world affairs was taken over by the U.S. Furthermore, and perhaps even more significantly, the Colonels' regime was fiercely opposed to Communism, which had constituted the *raison d' être* for British interference in Greek affairs in the 1940s.

This is perhaps the most catalytic reason for which Britain chose to follow a policy of tolerance towards the dramatic Greek events of 21st April 1967. The British government's first reactions to the *coup* at policy level, are best summarised in one word, 'consultations'. In fact, one of the immediate actions of the British government was to call Ralph Murray to return to England for consultations. Meanwhile, a series of consultations took place not only among British officials, but also with their foreign counterparts with whom the British opened direct channels of communication. For instance, there is reference in the files to the British ambassador's lengthy call, the day after the *coup*, to his American counterpart. Furthermore, as was cited at a Cabinet Meeting, 'we [the British] were in close touch with the United States and the Federal German governments, whose views were in accordance with our own'¹⁸.

The underlying reason behind those lengthy deliberations was the need to acquire a better grasp of the events. For many hours after the *coup*, most officials were trying to gather information regarding the identity of the *coup* perpetrators. This

¹⁸ Cabinet Conclusions (67) 28th meeting, 4 May 1967, CAB 128/42, NA

is not surprising because, as has already been discussed, the widespread belief prior to the *coup* held the King to be the only possible executor of such an act.

Meanwhile, the British government made every effort to keep in close and constant contact with King Constantine and concentrated its efforts on restoring his influence. According to American sources, during the fateful fourteen hours that followed the communication of the news of the putsch, the United States and the British envoys met the King, to whom Sir Ralph Murray strongly recommended to refuse to accept the *fait accompli*. Another unassailable proof of the British government's dissatisfaction was its emphasis on making public knowledge the fact that the King had gone along unwillingly with the new government, a line that they encouraged the BBC and the British press to take, and emphasised in Parliament by clarifying that the 'King Constantine had not been a party to the revolt'¹⁹. As Sir Patrick Dean, British ambassador in Washington, told Secretary of State Rusk, 'in background briefings to British press and to BBC, Brit Govt sources had discreetly supported King'²⁰. This was done in the belief that 'this will protect [the] image of [the] monarch and at the same time assist him retain political leverage vis-à-vis new government'²¹.

In addition, it was also repeatedly mentioned, when the opportunity arose during the heated debates in both Houses, that Her Majesty's Government had made clear to the new rulers in Greece that 'recent events have placed a strain on Anglo-Greek relations' and that they hoped that 'advances towards the restoration of

¹⁹ Cabinet Conclusions (67) 23d meeting, 27 April 1967, CAB 128/42, NA

²⁰ Telegram, State 187449, Rusk, Department of State to American Embassy in Athens, Secret, 3 May 1967, Department of State, Central Files, POL 15 Greece, NARA

²¹ Telegram, State 180756, Katzenbach (Dept of State) to American Embassy in Athens, Secret, Limited Distribution, 23 April 1967, Department of State, Central Files, POL 15-1 Greece, POL Greece-UK, NARA

democratic procedures and civil liberties will make our relations easier'²². According to another report,

[British] Ambassador in Athens had told both the Greek Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister that the Foreign Secretary, George Brown, had impressed upon him, while he was recently in London for consultations, the strength of public opinion here [in Britain] in regard to recent events in Greece, which must have their effect on our future relations with that country.²³

In the meantime, they refrained from contacting Greece's new rulers right away²⁴. In fact, immediately after the *coup*, they maintained only working-level consular contacts with the new regime and thoroughly froze all other direct dealings with *coup* officials and new ministers. For instance, the embassy deliberately abstained from its customary joining of the Greek authorities for the celebration of Easter, three days after the new regime's coming to power.

This 'distinctively chilly diplomatic situation'²⁵ crystallized, despite the regime's constant assurances about its genuinely democratic intentions. Everett, the British Embassy official responsible for NEA described the British stance towards the new regime 'as one of "extreme reserve"' and mentioned that 'British Amb Athens is under instructions... not to approach new govt although Embassy officers have had "informal" contact with officials new government'²⁶. Furthermore, it was promptly decided to 'freeze all, if any, exports of arms to Greece for the time being'²⁷.

The British government consistently expressed in Parliament concern for the Greek people. The first statement of sympathy in Parliament on behalf of the British

²² Parliamentary Records, House of Commons, Vol. 750, 20 July 1967

²³ *Ibid*

²⁴ Telegram, London 8690, Bruce, American Embassy in London to Secretary of State, Unclassified, Priority, 22 April 1967, Department of State, Central Files, POL 23-9 Greece, NARA

²⁵ *The Times*, 25 April 1967, p. 5

²⁶ Telegram, State 180756, Katzenbach (Department of State) to American Embassy in Athens, Secret, 23 April 1967, Department of State, Central Files, POL 15-1 Greece, POL Greece-UK, NARA

²⁷ Cabinet Conclusions (67), 28th meeting, 4 May 1967, CAB 128/42, NA

government came three days after the *coup*, and mentioned *inter alia* that ‘to see a friend and an ally go through this kind of problem, it is as much of concern to us as it is to them’²⁸. Two weeks later, another Cabinet Minister, namely Richard Crossman, speaking on behalf of his government, remarked: ‘I personally am deeply shocked by and profoundly alarmed at what is happening there, as are all members of the Government... It is a shock for us that Greek democracy should be treated in this way’²⁹. It should be born in mind that this was a Labour government, so not only did it feel natural distaste for the unlawful imposition of a military regime in Greece, but, most importantly, it had to publicly manifest it. Hence, British officials by issuing statements of sympathy wished to eradicate any suspicions regarding their feelings about the events in Greece.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that, despite its given displeasure with the developments in Greece, the British government made no statement outside Parliament, even of the most delicate nature, regarding its stance towards the Colonels’ regime; this was true not only during the first hours after the *coup*, when the situation was still in flux, but even several days or indeed months after the *coup*. Instead, it confined itself to defending its policies among strictly political circles in a vague and notably laconic fashion. As they argued during a debate at the House of Lords, ‘there is time to speak and there is time to be silent. I think it is possible to argue that this is time to be silent, or at least to be discreet, and to let the fruits of our private diplomacy make their appearance’³⁰.

Besides, there was always the danger, they estimated, that factions within the Greek army might feel encouraged to initiate resistance, thus sparking off a civil war. In fact, such action was considered by a few as potentially hazardous, especially

²⁸ Parliamentary Records, House of Commons, Vol. 745, 24 April 1967, c. 1160

²⁹ Parliamentary Records, House of Commons, Vol. 746, 11 May 1967

³⁰ Parliamentary Records, House of Lords, Vol. 283, c. 515, 8 June 1967

immediately after the *coup*, on the grounds that it could indirectly incite serious violence against the new government, a possibility which was decried. The fear of contributing, even unintentionally, to the potential outbreak of civilian clashes was taken very seriously into consideration by the British Government. This concern was reflected in one of the comments made by George Brown, which read as follows:

It is easy to talk about supporting the working classes of Greece in overthrowing the regime. It is easy to talk about expelling Greece from here and there. The fact of the matter is that if that ended in murder and bloodshed which we were in no position to help or to avert, we would have a hell of responsibility on our heads for those who would then have to suffer and pay the price for it.³¹

Nonetheless, their passive policy constitutes by itself an initial indication of the British government's reluctance to create rupture with the regime for reasons that shall be explained in due course. It is indisputable that the forcible imposition of a military regime in Greece was not a welcome development for the British Government. This is a point embodied in the British government's hesitation to openly liaise with the regime in the immediate aftermath of the *coup*. Even the idea of breaking off its diplomatic relations with Greece was one that was put on the table of negotiations.

However, the verdict that was unanimously reached in the Cabinet did not favour the adoption of this course of action. This was seen as counter-productive, as it would alienate a country whose close cooperation was deemed ultra-significant within NATO and would, in response, lead to unwelcome retaliations. In fact, it was not long before British officials started to yield to pressures for sustaining a working relationship with the regime and accede to the idea that, despite the fact that the nature and practices of the newly emerged military regime in Greece were fundamentally contradictory to the ideological stance of the British Labour tradition, as long as it

³¹ Ms.Eng.c.5019, Bodleian Library, Modern Political Papers

satisfactorily served, from a pragmatic point of view, British national interests, there existed no crying need to disrupt their traditionally close dealings with Greece; in fact quite the contrary, since hard core political considerations clearly favoured the continuation and indeed furtherance of their military cooperation and commercial exchanges with the new regime.

In other words, in spite of its serious doubts about the potential of the Colonels, whom the British Ambassador described as ‘political eunuchs’³², showing thus his low appreciation, and its distaste for their repressive methods, as a result of which it had decided to remain aloof from the new regime in the first days following the *coup*, the British government informed its American colleagues that it intended to resume working relations on April 27. At the Cabinet Meeting on 4 May 1967, the belief was expressed that Britain could achieve ‘the most favourable results possible in the circumstances, if we continue to do business with the regime’³³. In view of this decision, ‘the British Ambassador ... congratulated him [Mr. Kollias] on his accession to power and... expressed his understanding of the change which had occurred’³⁴, according to a report published in *The New York Herald Tribune* on 9 May 1967.

In Parliament, the British government presented its decision to resume normal relations with the Greek regime in the following way:

we have assumed official relations with the new regime. Had we not done so, we would not have been able to make the strong representations...A further reason for the assumption of official relations was to enable us effectively to protect British subjects and interests in Greece which are the Government’s first concern. But this action in no way implies approval of the regime’s policies³⁵.

³² Memorandum of Conversation, Subject: Greek Situation, Secret, 24 April 1967, Department of State, Central Files, POL 23-9, NARA

³³ Cabinet Conclusions (67) 28th meeting, 4 May 1967, CAB 128/42, NA

³⁴ Parliamentary Records, House of Lords, Vol. 283, c.498, 7 June 1967

³⁵ Ms. Wilson. c.889, 8 May 1967, Bodleian Library, Modern Political Papers

However, in view of the likely obloquy that such a decision could have caused, not only in the public sphere but also within the Labour Party itself, the Foreign Secretary considered it wise to try to justify their resumption of business with the Greek regime. The first argument that they employed was that ‘the question of formal recognition does not arise in the case of Greece since there has been no change in the Head of State’³⁶. Similarly, George Brown suggested to the Cabinet that, ‘we [the British government] could avoid any question of recognition of the new regime or approval of it, if we took the line that we were merely continuing relations with a government whose Head of State was unchanged’³⁷. It can be argued with the certainty that the future course of events confirms, that this argument was used as a *façade*, as the British government continued to recognise the regime, even when the King fled into exile, following his failed attempted abortive *coup*.

Moreover, the Foreign Secretary claimed during a Cabinet Meeting that ‘it was our normal practice to have diplomatic relations with Governments which were effectively in power whether or not we approved of them’³⁸. In other words, it was argued that it was customary for the British government to be on good terms with fellow governments, regardless of their nature, on the grounds that they were in firm control of the country. As Sir Patrick Dean epitomized it, ‘British believe that coup govt is firmly entrenched for immediate future and nothing would be served by repeated condemnation of coup’³⁹.

It is actually true that the British Crown had for centuries adhered to the conservative doctrine of the *de facto* recognition of foreign regimes. Obviously the fact that overall control of a country could be achieved by a government in a number

³⁶ *Ibid*

³⁷ Cabinet Conclusions (67), 23d meeting, 27April 1967, CAB 128/42, NA

³⁸ *Ibid*

³⁹ Telegram, State 187449, Rusk (Department of State) to American Embassy in Athens, Secret, 3 May 1967, Department of State, Central Files, POL 15 Greece, POL Greece-US, NARA

of undemocratic ways did not seem to worry them. Hence, it is ironic how this can constitute a fundamental condition which the British Labour government devised in order to choose with which governments it would do business.

It is noteworthy, nonetheless, that in a previous exchange of views between David Bruce at the American embassy in London and Alan Davidson, Head of the Central Department of the Foreign Office, which took place only three days before the British government decided to resume normal working relations with Greece on the grounds that it had justified the criteria for recognition, Davidson was recorded as having expressed the opinion that ‘neither condition yet met in Greece’⁴⁰. Another interesting point is the reaction of the State Department, upon notification of the British government’s decision, which was recorded as follows: ‘at this end we do not see the need for this haste’⁴¹.

In a further attempt to justify their chosen policy, the British government’s representative reaffirmed during a debate in the Commons his government’s belief ‘that it is more effective to make our views known in this way than by making public pronouncements and protests which would be likely to drive the regime to extremes and thus frustrate the very purposes which we all have in common’⁴². As the Foreign Secretary said on another occasion, ‘certainly my view at the moment, and my colleagues’ view at the moment, is that we stand the best chance of influencing events by maintaining relations and by maintaining the contacts in the various ways in which they exist, both direct and through other associations and groups’⁴³. Otherwise, it was feared that the British Government would forfeit its influence. It was also reiterated

⁴⁰ Telegram, London 8713, Bruce, American Embassy in London to Secretary of State, Subject: Greek coup, Secret, Priority, 24 April 1967, Department of State, Central Files, POL 23-9 Greece, NARA

⁴¹ Telegram, State 183175, Department of State to American Embassy in Athens, Secret, Flash, 27 April 1967, Department of State, Central Files, POL Greece-UK, POL Greece-US, NARA

⁴² Ms. Wilson.c.889, 8 May 1967, Bodleian Library, Modern Political Papers

⁴³ Aigram A-1183, Unclassified Re: London 2638, Bruce (American Embassy in London) to Secretary of State, 7 October 1967, Department of State, Central Files, POL 12-UK, NARA

that ‘the fact that we have diplomatic relations does not in any way imply approval either of the political complexion of the Greek Government or of its position’⁴⁴.

In other words, although British officials were under no illusions regarding the real intentions of the Greek rulers, they proclaimed that it would be better if they were on good terms with it, so that they could influence its rapid return to democratic rule. This argument, nevertheless, served more as a pretext for continuing to do business with the regime for the sake of avoiding imperilling the associated vital stakes. Although the Cabinet did try to privately influence the regime, with some notable successes, they definitely failed to make Greece’s democratisation their uncompromising priority.

Instead, it can be certainly claimed that it was considerations of *Realpolitik* that made it imperative for the British to resume normal relations with the Greek regime. This may well be a legitimate calculation for the prophylaxis of British national interests, but it leaves no room for doubt that the government’s pompous declarations of its high-priority intention to contribute to the regime’s rapid democratisation were nothing more than a mere attempt to pay lipservice to it for public consumption. The British government chose a pragmatic foreign policy, substantially influenced by the stringent dictates of the devaluation and Cold War eras, and determined largely by American strategic interests. Buttressed by the American government, they opted for the continuation of full diplomatic relations and dealings with the Greek regime, in perfect awareness that such action would be used by the Greek rulers as a way of strengthening their claim to legitimate power.

The genuinely catalytic factors determining the British government’s decision to resume ‘business as usual’ with Greece varied and were variably prioritized by

⁴⁴ *Ibid*

different individuals. Overall, they included British concerns, for both moral and strategic reasons, over the fate of Cyprus and the importance of preserving Greece's cooperation with NATO. In addition, given Britain's anaemic financial state, officials were preoccupied with safeguarding British commercial interests in Greece.

One of the most frequently quoted considerations behind avoiding upsetting the Greek regime, regardless of its nature, was its utmost strategic importance to NATO, of which Britain was an integral member. British officials were emphatically conscious of Greece's pivotal importance for the prosperity of NATO's 'underbelly' and the consequent crucial necessity of being on good terms with it. The military facilities agreement signed in 1953 'authorised the construction, development, use and operation of military and supporting facilities in Greece necessary for the implementation of, or in furtherance of, approved NATO plans'⁴⁵. The established and expanded facilities following this agreement 'strengthened the NATO forces in the area, provided important communication links, a staging area and supply depots for US and NATO air and naval forces and permitted surveillance and monitoring of the activities of Soviet forces in the Eastern Mediterranean'⁴⁶. They also served the purpose of safeguarding NATO interests not only *vis-à-vis* the Soviet threat, but also those raised by Middle Eastern and North African countries; for instance, from 'the base at Hellinikon in Athens, surveillance planes had carried out flights over Libya, whereas the base at Iraklion monitored communications from Libya and the Middle East'⁴⁷.

It does therefore become quite self-explanatory that Greece was contributing both armed forces and a brilliant infrastructural base both of which were

⁴⁵ Yiannis Valinakis, *The US Bases in Greece: The Political Context*, in Thanos Veremis, *US Bases in the Mediterranean*

⁴⁶ *Ibid*

⁴⁷ *Ibid*

indispensable to the West's common defence of the area, because it hosted combat and logistic forces capable of accomplishing assigned tasks in accordance with strategic objectives, and granted overflight access, staging and base rights. This necessity was something that the American government, in the light of its even greater strategic interests in Greece, made sure did not escape Britain's attention. Hence the British government, desperate to sustain a common front with the Americans due to the associated benefits, allowed for the determination of its own interests in accordance with American needs. In short, the vital significance of preserving stability within NATO's southern flank, especially in view of the various developments that threatened the overrunning of the Mediterranean countries by the Soviet Union (most seriously the build-up of the Soviet fleet), dictated only one possible British policy, namely cooperation with Greece.

Besides, it should be always borne in mind that the year of 1967, when the Colonels came to power, witnessed many Cold War peaks in areas geographically related to Greece's position. In fact, it can be argued with certainty that the repercussions of Cold War incidents both in the European continent, such as the Prague Spring and in the Mediterranean, such as the Six Day War, had steadily boosted the strategic importance of Greece for the alliance. In other words, Greece's above-cited excellent ports and repair and communications facilities assumed paramount significance for NATO in view of the Cold War rivalries in the Mediterranean and the Near and Middle East, where Greece's position was pivotal.

Britain's interest in maintaining friendly relations with Greece was the result of another parameter too, namely the financial benefits that could be potentially derived by a close cooperation with Greece. As one Treasury official categorically claimed, according to the Ministry's financial perspective during a Cabinet discussion

a few weeks after the *coup*, it was imperative for Britain to ‘maintain working relations with the new regime so that British interests be protected’⁴⁸. In other words, it was considered important, in view of Britain’s mounting financial problems, not to risk losing its exports to Greece, and, in the light of the urgent ‘export or die’ principle, for its government to exploit the possibility of entering into new commercial deals with Greece. The British government was encouraged by the fact that the Greek Embassy in London had approached the Foreign Office in order “to emphasise their desire that commercial and financial relations should be maintained undisturbed”⁴⁹.

In addition, the concerns of the Treasury regarding Britain’s relations with Greece were also associated with the abeyances stemming from previous Anglo-Greek dealings that included the settlement of inter-governmental and administration of the bonded debt, as well as the issues of British Aid to Greece within the NATO framework and of the OECD Consortium aid. Hence in view of the potential benefits Britain’s liaison with Greece could afford the former, it was suggested by the Treasury that

in matters of trade, finance and investment our [the Treasury’s] wish was for completely normal relations with Greece and that... the criteria by which Greek investment or other projects to be financed by long term credit were judged in London were purely those of economic and financial viability.⁵⁰

In short, the Treasury, for the sake of the protection of its interests in Greece, chose to disregard the political complexion of the new Greek government, and favoured the continuation of its normal interactions with it. In view of these preoccupations, it was decided that ‘we [the British] must keep ourselves in a position

⁴⁸ Brief for the Financial Secretary, The Situation in Greece, R. S. Symons to Hay, 5 June 1967, T 312/1867, NA

⁴⁹ Restricted Saving Telegram, FO to UK Director IMF/IBRD, Washington, UK/Greek Intergovernmental debt, 3 November 1967, T 312/1866, NA

⁵⁰ *Ibid*

to take as full advantage as possible of development opportunities in Greece⁵¹. In fact, officials were aspiring to take advantage of their friendly relations with the military regime to enter into negotiations for new commercial deals.

Moreover, what was seen as a far more crucial factor was the need to safeguard the continuation of sustained negotiations regarding the possible supply by the UK Atomic Energy Authority of a nuclear power station to Greece, a deal that was estimated to be worth £20 million⁵². It was for the purpose of discussing this possibility that the Greek ministers of industry and foreign affairs had visited Britain in the previous May. There was noted anxiety among British officials, who in the archives present themselves as ‘interested in seeing this expensive project go ahead’⁵³, and anxious about succeeding in winning ‘this very valuable order’⁵⁴. In view of the above-mentioned substantial interests at stake, the Treasury concluded its argument by claiming the following:

on the basis of the existing issues pending settlement and the hope that commercial agreements could be enforced, and in conjunction with Britain’s poor financial state, the British government had to try to be on good terms with its Greek counterpart⁵⁵.

Thus, the British were fully aware that if they opposed the regime, they would not be able to derive any financial gains. This belief sprung from the fact that the Scandinavian countries were, in retaliation for their hostile attitude towards the Colonels, threatened by them that Greece would ‘break off all commercial relations with them, unless they revise their hostile behaviour towards the new regime’⁵⁶.

Furthermore, the debate about whether Britain should refrain, on ideological grounds, from selling arms to Greece was concluded by recognizing that, in view of

⁵¹ C.C. Lucas to Owen, 6 October 1967, T 334/144, NA

⁵² Interview with Alan Davidson

⁵³ C.C. Lucas to Owen, 6 October 1967, T 334/144, NA

⁵⁴ R. W. James (FO) to W. I. Luscombe (Office of the Minister without portfolio), 4 August 1966, FCO 371/185666, CE 105215, NA

⁵⁵ FO to UK Director IMF/IBRD, Washington, 3 November 1967, T 312/1866, NA

⁵⁶ *The Times*, 4 September 1967, p. 3

the need for ameliorating the balance of exports and avoiding jeopardising British labour in the armaments industry, Britain could not impose a ban on the overall sale of arms to Greece. Instead, British officials decided to closely monitor them so that they could forbid the sale of those which could be used against the civilian population, an argument that, as has already been proven, could be easily rendered spurious.

In tandem with the already mentioned factors, British officials did not desire to see the deterioration of their working relations with the Greek military government because they had an interest in keeping the channels open for cooperation over the Cyprus issue. Cyprus was undoubtedly an extremely critical and contentious issue for Britain, because, although it had granted the island its independence following the signing of the Zurich agreement in 1959, it had become along with Greece and Turkey, as a result of the Treaty of London in 1960, the guarantor of the island's security.

In view of this, the much aspired and long awaited solution to the problem of Cyprus was considered attainable only through the productive collaboration of all parties involved. As one Foreign Office official put it even before the *coup*, thus signaling the necessity of being on good terms with Greece, 'we have always taken the view that progress towards a solution of Cyprus dispute can only be achieved by negotiations between the parties concerned'⁵⁷. This concern was particularly relevant in 1967, as by that time a number of crises during recent years had unmistakably proven that irredentism, shared by both Turkey and Greece claiming legitimacy over Cyprus, was a contaminating issue with potentially explosive dimensions.

⁵⁷ R. W. James (Foreign Office) to W. J. Luscombe (Office of the Minister without Portfolio), Anglo-Greek relations, 4 August 1966, FCO 371/185666, CE 1052/5, NA

Moreover, Britain's feeling of responsibility over the maintenance of peace in Cyprus was not the only reason for which its government was placing such an enormous emphasis on being in close cooperation with the Greek government. There existed additional stakes linked to the fact that Britain, in spite of having withdrawn long ago its political presence from Cyprus, had a very strong military presence principally in the form of their Sovereign Base Areas and the Retained Bases, whose core it maintained even after the island had become independent. Consequently, Cyprus, with its essential offensive bases, had emerged as the only remaining safe British asset for the defence of the region, which was utterly significant for Britain.

A memorandum drafted in 1967 by the Joint Intelligence Committee defined British interest in the region along the following lines:

- (a) the maintenance of conditions in which peaceful and orderly development can proceed
- (b) the prevention of Soviet expansion and communist penetration
- (c) the protection of our material interests (predominately our oil interests and supplies)
- (d) the preservation of our transit facilities, both civil and military, by sea and air⁵⁸

The factors determining the great significance of Cyprus in the eyes of British officials were succinctly summarized in a joint memorandum drafted in July 1965.

According to this,

Cyprus is important to the UK for three reasons. She is a member of the Commonwealth. The Cyprus dispute affects our relation with Turkey and Greece. Our Sovereign Base Areas in the island play a large part in our CENTO and other commitments and provide the jumping-off point for the CENTO air route through Turkey and Iran to the Persian Gulf and the Far East.⁵⁹

Unsurprisingly, therefore, Britain had showed unwillingness to demonstrate its displeasure with the Athens regime as it was determined not to risk the degree of basic *rapport* required by its responsibilities *vis-à-vis* the Cyprus problem and

⁵⁸ 1967 Reports, Memos, Cabinet JIC series, Soviet policies in the Middle East and North Africa and their likely development, CAB 158/66, NA

⁵⁹ Joint Memorandum by the Secretary for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, Subject: British interest in Cyprus, OPD (67) 65, 26 July 1967, FCO 28/67, NA

jeopardize its valuable assets, facilities and sites in Cyprus, in view of their assessment that they 'could not be effectively provided elsewhere'⁶⁰. This undoubtedly strengthened further Britain's belief in the great benefits from a friendly relation with Greece.

Extensive evidence has, nonetheless, suggested that British officials were not just reluctantly cooperating on the Cyprus issue with the Greek government. On the contrary, they seemed quite confident and rather pleased with the Greek regime's handling of it. This became more apparent towards the end of 1967 when the regime appointed as its Foreign Secretary Panayiotis Pipinelis, a well-respected Greek politician who, according to various hints, was considered as a great Anglophile. As Xanthopoulos-Palamas related 'Pipinelis was ideologically attached to the Western monarchical tradition and politically followed the lines of close cooperation with the Anglo-Saxon powers and above all London'⁶¹ An additional bonus of the Greek government for Britain was that it was fiercely anti-communist, and would therefore minimise the possibility of Cyprus becoming the 'Cuba of the Eastern Mediterranean'⁶².

In short, in the light of the afore-mentioned considerations, the British government decided, albeit reluctantly due to ideological reservations, to continue 'doing business as usual' with the Greek regime. Furthermore, as the maintenance of good working relations with the Greek Colonels constituted an ideological discrepancy on the part of the British Labour Government, it infuriated the vast

⁶⁰ Amendments to C.O.S. 1591/9/3/64, DEFE 11/445, undated in Alan James, *Keeping the peace in the Cyprus crisis of 1963-1974*, p. 58

⁶¹ Christos Xanthopoulos-Palamas, *Diplomatiko Triptycho: Exoterike Politike, Hellenike Exoterike Politike, ta Prosopa kai ta Pragmata, semeioseis apo ta perasmena, stoicheia apo ten sychrone historia (Diplomatic Triptych: foreign policy, Greek foreign policy, the persons and the things, notes from the past, elements of contemporary history)*, p. 220

⁶² DO 161/5, dispatch no. 8 from Sir A. Clark (High Commissioner) to CRO, para 31, 23 November 1962 in Alan James, p. 44

majority of the government's own backbenchers. It is also noteworthy that not all members of the government were at ease with the implemented governmental policy. Some Cabinet members, like George Brown, who 'was under the control of the Americans'⁶³, were keener to do 'business as usual'. Perhaps the most discontented individuals among Cabinet members were the Prime Minister himself and also Richard Crossman, both of whom were reported as encouraging the Labour backbenchers to continue criticising the government⁶⁴.

The main problem of the British government was not whether they should continue to have normal contacts with the Greek regime, but rather how to publicly justify their doing business with such an ideologically incompatible regime, especially given the British people's perception, albeit erroneous, of Greece as the bastion of democracy. In pursuit of the protection of their national interest that could be defined in strategic, commercial, and domestic terms, as well as in view of the need to sustain a common front with the US, they implemented a broad policy of maintaining a good working relationship with the Greek Government, while avoiding being seen as provocatively embracing it. They were therefore faced with the almost insuperable task of striking a balance between safeguarding those stakes and easing the public's pressure for a tougher line of policy towards the regime.

The following extract from a report drafted by Foreign Office officials provides a good overview of British foreign policy towards the Colonels' regime, from roughly a week after it assumed power and through most of the remaining part of 1967:

...our own policy, following our assumption of an official relationship with the new government on 27 April, is to deal with the new regime, but to avoid taking actions (e.g. visits by British Ministers to Greece) which might be interpreted as signs that we approve of it. We

⁶³ Interview with Brigadier Baxter

⁶⁴ Interview with John Fraser

share the misgivings so widely expressed in this and other countries about Greece's reversion to military rule and suspension of many essential elements of democratic life. But an overdose of official condemnation might well have the wrong effect on the government which is still in a formative stage. We do not want to drive it into greater extremism... In answering any criticisms that we are condoning the military rule in Greece by dealing with the new government, [we] should make a familiar point: that dealing with a government is not the same as approving it. We are dealing with the Greek Government both because this is necessary for the protection of interests (e.g. British subjects who have been under detention) and because by doing so we have a better prospect of influencing it⁶⁵.

To sum up, this study has proven that the Labour government's policy towards the Greek Colonels was a synthesis derived from the consideration of a number of multifaceted issues and challenges. This is why, although the motives behind British policy can be easily spelled out, the policy itself, during the period under examination, could be summarised as ambiguous. In the light of the hugely adverse political climate, the British government's biggest challenge was to avoid giving any appearance of condoning the regime's internal policies.

In other words, it was not a question of what policy to follow, but instead the problem was to maintain their cooperation with the regime without appearing to condone it. It is self-explanatory that it was extremely uncomfortable for a Labour government to be seen as liaising with dictators whose illiberal practices were totally unrelated to the ideological credentials of the British government. There is no doubt that it seemed ironic and even, as often suggested, hypocritical that a social democratic government was conducting business with a military regime. In an attempt to harmonise the cacophony of this paradox, they employed a number of justifications in order to account for their 'unheroic stance'⁶⁶ towards Greece. However, these were not always sincere and hence not convincing either.

⁶⁵ Guidance No 96, Foreign and Commonwealth Office to Certain Missions, Confidential, Priority, 9 May 1967, FCO 9/227, NA

⁶⁶ Conclusions of a Meeting held at the FCO, 17 February 1969, FCO 9/871, NA

The extent of this incongruity can be easily proven by pointing out that, had Labour been in opposition, it would have bitterly criticised and adamantly resisted a British policy of cooperation with the Greek military regime. It could be undisputedly argued that, given the general displeasure of the overall British political spectrum with the dictatorial features of the Greek regime, British policy towards the regime could have been much more hostile, had it not been for the protection of their vital interests. However, it needs no further elaboration that once in power there are a variety of factors and considerations that a government needs to take into account. This is exactly what happened with the Labour government at that time.

In conclusion, the policy chosen by the Labour government was founded on a fair degree of pragmatism and even conservatism. This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that there was no rancor or disharmony in the policies consecutively adopted by the Labour or the Conservative governments towards the Greek Colonels, but instead a remarkable continuity. Thus it could with safety be argued that the Greek episode, like all analogous cases, fully illustrates the problems a Labour Party has always faced when coming to power, namely a constant clash between the preservation of its values and the safeguarding of the interests of the country, an unrelenting struggle between idealism and pragmatism. But in the case of Greece, as in most analogous cases, the classic dilemma between the expedient course of action and the morally correct one, ended up in the former prevailing yet again.

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**BETWEEN ITALY AND GREECE: RESISTANCE, DICTATORSHIP
AND THE *UNFREEZING COLD WAR* (1967-1974)**

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Paper Presented at the 2nd PhD Symposium on Modern Greece
London School of Economics and Political Science
10 June 2005

Work in progress. Comments welcome

Introduction

In this presentation I will be discussing the nexus between *national* and *international* factors in historical perspective by comparing the cases of Greece and Italy in the period of *détente*. I will be arguing that a fruitful comparison between the two national realities is possible under precise prerequisites. It is then possible to draw some conclusion about the nature and limits of the impact that foreign factors have been playing during such a crucial period. The research is divided into two main parts. In the first part I discuss the historical national heritage of Greece and Italy since the end of the respective civil wars until the late Sixties. The second part is subdivided into two sections: in the first an overall picture of presence and activity of Greek resistance in Italy will be drawn. In the second I intend to describe the political *rendezvous* between PAK (*Panellinio Apeleftherotiko Kinima*) one of the most influent group of Greek resistance, led by Andreas Papandreou and PSI (Italian Socialist Party) in historical perspective.

1. A Greek-Italian joint effort against dictatorship

The first archival nucleus at the base of my research consisted of the complete collection of the review “Grecia” kept at the National Central Library “Vittorio Emanuele II” in Rome. “Grecia” was published in Italy in Italian language by Greek members of PAK in close collaboration with Italian socialists. On the whole, this review is organized in fifty-five irregularly monthly issues consisting in seventeen double issues and one triple issue and it covers the period December 1969-July 1974. “Grecia” is composed of sixty-six regular features, many of which were suppressed in the course of the publication while several others were born *in itinere*.

Most of the articles of “Grecia” are anonymous in order to protect the security of both senders and receivers but it has been possible to assess

their political belonging through the Italian signatures of the few signed articles as well as from the names of the two directors plainly reported on each issue. Furthermore, articles origin was confirmed to be PAK by several interviews I conducted with those directors as well as with previous journalists of “Avanti!” (PSI newspaper) – in charge of the collection and translation of the Greek original articles – and at the same time they gave more insight about the joint political effort between PAK and PSI members. Last but not least, the sole work written by a PAK member regarding resistance activity in Italy reports the following: «GRECIA (ΕΛΛΑΔΑ), monthly review, legally published in Italy [...] It reflects PAK thesis»¹.

2. Greece and Italy from civil wars to late Sixties

On the political level, the evolution of alliances inside both countries shows common traits as well as peculiarities during the period 1950-1967. Alexandros Papagos (1952-55) and Kostantinos Karamanlis (1955-63) conservative governments in Greece and Christian-democrat *Centrism* in Italy led their countries during the period of reconstruction and economic “miracles”². The parties of the left were one-sidedly excluded from any governmental coalition in both countries. This one-sidedness was undisputable in Greece while it was not in Italy. This discrepancy was due to the different outcome and heritage of the respective civil wars.

In Italy the Left was politically represented by PCI and PSI and was defeated in the pivotal election of April, 18th 1948 but it played a substantive role in the national political system nonetheless. The confirmation of this can be found in the birth of the organic Centre-left with PSI entry into the cabinet (1963-68) and in the second Centre-left (1969-74) in which both Aldo Moro’s DC and Francesco De Martino’s PSI opened up

¹ Nikos Kleitsikas, *To elliniko foititiko kinima kai o antidiktatorikos agonas stin Italia*, Anghelos Sideratos, Athens, 2000, p. 413.

² For a description of Italian centrism see Mario Del Pero, *L’alleato scomodo*, Carocci, Rome, 2001.

to at least consider involvement of Enrico Berlinguer's PCI into the action of the government.

In Greece the legacy of the civil war induced a radical polarization into the political system. On December, 27th 1947 the special law n. 509 banned any communist form of association and propaganda (ban that lasted until 1974). The most handicapping effect of this exclusion was that of depriving Greece of any chance of starting a positive dialogue between a conservative front and a liberal one, dialogue that most of Western Europe (Italy as well) was experiencing³. Moreover Greek Right shared the ideology of *ethnikofrosini*, a national mind marked by ultra-patriotism and anti-communism. This ideology drove the civil war victors to distinguish two categories in the nation: the first included anti-communist conservatives and populists stirred by this national mind while the second comprised communists, socialists and liberals in a broad sense⁴.

The years spanning from the late Fifties to the early Sixties were characterized both in Italy and Greece by a strong social thrust towards the modernization of political and economical institutions, thrust that no governing coalition was able to realize and bring about. This inertia opened new political grounds that had to be filled by subjects able to accommodate these instances of modernization. In Italy it was the Centre-left to emerge

³ John Koliopoulos, Thanos Veremis, *Greece. The modern sequel. From 1831 to the present*, Hurst & Co., London, 2002, p. 99 and Giulio Sapelli, *L'Europa del sud dopo il 1945. Tradizione e modernità in Portogallo, Spagna, Italia, Grecia e Turchia*, Rubettino Editore, Soveria Mannelli (Catanzaro) e Messina, 1996, p. 259.

⁴ Koliopoulos, Veremis, *Greece. The modern sequel*, quot., p. 139. The concept of *ethnikofrosini* is very wide and it is not limited to the political sphere but extends to the social one, to family and individual. Polymeris Voglis explains this concept as follows: «The political crime was transformed as a crime against the nation, and, therefore, the division was no longer between the Left and the Right, but between the “traitors” or “EAM-Bulgarians” and the *ethnikofrones* (national-minded). Just as *ethnikofrosini* (national conviction) became the principal element of the post-Civil War dominant ideology, communists were depicted as completely alien to the nation». Cfr. Polymeris Voglis, *Becoming a subject: political prisoner during the Greek civil war*, Berghan Books, New York, 2002, p. 66.

while in Greece EDA (with 25% of votes in the election of 1958) but above all EK rose to stand up to this challenge⁵.

I suggest here the possibility to consider EK as a “Greek Centre-left” since both its composition in terms of political personal (notables of the traditional *politikos kosmos* as well as the group around Andreas Papandreou) and its reformist programme resemble the situation of “Italian Centre-left”. However, in both countries several social, economic and political sectors opposed such changes that would have altered balances entrenched since the end of the respective civil wars.

One common feature to Italy and Greece appeared when their social tissues showed a growing and spontaneous mobilization and suggested the possibility to give birth to new government opened up to the Left. In Greece it is the case of the period between July, 15th 1965 and April, 21st 1967 that is to say from the “resignation” of the prime minister George Papandreou until the outbreak of the dictatorship. In fact the murder of EDA member Grigoris Lambrakis in Thessalonica (May 1963) may be included in such developments⁶. At the wake of the election on May, 28th 1967 (never happened for the colonels’ intervention) in the Centre Union, the role and importance of Andreas Papandreou was stronger and stronger and this was considered a menace and threat for the group of the putschist colonels⁷. Instead in Italy it is the case of the aforementioned second Centre-left coalition with Aldo Moro’s “strategy of attention” towards PCI.

⁵ For a historical picture of European political dynamics between the Fifties and the Sixties see Charles Maier, “I fondamenti politici del dopoguerra”, in Perry Anderson, Maurice Aymard, Paul Bairoch, Walter Barberis, Carlo Ginzburg, (eds.), *Storia d’Europa. I. L’Europa oggi*, Einaudi, Turin, 1993, pp. 333-339. It must be noticed that the few attention paid to Greece is not even completely correct, to the point of describing the old Papandreou «socialist» and assessing that «The Greek generals left ingloriously powers on 1973 following the failure of conquering Cyprus».

⁶ Christos Sartzetakis, magistrate in charge on the murder of Lambrakis, shed light after long and troubled investigations on the responsibility of the Palace as instigator and the execution of members of extreme right groups. See Antonio Solaro, “Gli ammutinati del Velos”, *Diario*, 13 giugno 2003, p. 87.

⁷ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Directorate of Intelligence (DOI), Intelligence memorandum (IM), “Military takeover in Greece”, Situation report n. 2, 21 April 1967 and CIA, DOI, IM, “The situation in Greece”, 6 July 1967.

The important feature shared by the two countries consisted in the emergence of a season of high social unrest due to indiscriminate terrorist actions against civilians as well as acts of military sabotages: it is the phenomenon of the “strategy of tension”. Beyond this common trait, the outcome of the season of the strategy of tension is dramatically different since in Greece it brought to military intervention in politics while in Italy it continued with killings and suspicions and attempts of military interventions.

3. 1967-1974: crucial years

In this section I briefly discuss the political developments in Italy and Greece during *détente* and colonel’s dictatorship stressing the similarities and connections between parties and groups either in favour or against the colonels’ regime.

The *strategy of tension* becomes subject of scholarly research and of historical interpretation only recently in Italy suffering nonetheless the unavailability and – at best – the incomplete declassification of institutional sources such as intelligence reports. Moreover it is not easy to reconstruct and give an interpretation to the events of such a long and troubled period because of the variety of subjects involved in this phenomenon (National and foreign Services of intelligence, State sectors, extreme right) and above all their recourse to secrecy and sidetracking.⁸

In spite of these difficulties, this phenomenon has been recently placed in the international context of *détente* and in the American reassessment – in the first half of 1970 – of its foreign policy in the Mediterranean basin with

⁸ Franco Ferraresi, *Minacce alla democrazia. La destra radicale e la strategia della tensione in Italia nel dopoguerra*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1995. Giovanni Fasanella, Claudio Sestieri, with Giovanni Pellegrino, *Segreto di Stato. La verità da Gladio al caso Moro*, Einaudi, Turin, 2000. Paolo Cucchiarelli, Aldo Giannuli, (eds.), *Lo Stato parallelo. L'Italia “oscura” nei documenti e nelle relazioni della Commissione Stragi*, Rome, Gamberetti, 1997.

particular regard to Italy and Greece. Indeed, on June 1970 a National Security Council (NSC) meeting resolved to resume heavy military aids to Greece and most likely it extended this «interventionist» option to Italy in order to get the Christian-democrats to abandon the Centre-left cabinet and to get back to Centrism according to Kissinger's desire. More precisely, it seems likely that among the initiatives pursued to this goal there were also an *at least indirect* economic and political support to men and forces involved in the strategy of tension and in the aborted *coup d'état* in December 1970⁹.

The politics of Centre-left in this period were characterized by new lines both on the internal level – the so-called “strategy of attention” conceived by Aldo Moro, supported by Francesco De Martino's PSI and addressed to Enrico Berlinguer's PCI – and on the foreign side with a more independent stance from US guidelines in the Mediterranean area and more concerned with Italian national interests¹⁰.

It is in this context that the political vicissitudes of a variety of Italian and Greek subjects significantly overlapped: the Greek resistance found ideological and material support – the relations between PAK and PSI show it clearly – and at the same time the Greek regime established a widespread network of surveillance and repression of Greek resistance activity in Italy. More precisely, in those towns that were seats of the principal universities of the country, local branches of ESESI (*Ethnikos Syndesmos Ellinon Spoudaston Italias*) are set up officially to help first-year Greek students to solve problems related to accommodation and settling but are in fact a front for the exertion of violent repression and menacing of students of the resistance, in joint effort with radical and neo-fascist groups of the Italian

⁹ Roberto Gualtieri, “The Italian political system and *détente* (1963-1981)”, *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 9(4), 2004, pp. 428-449.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

right such as Ordine Nuovo, organization connected with the neo-fascist party MSI¹¹.

A dramatic proof of this repressive activity is the death of Kostas Georgakis, 22 year old student at the university of Genoa and member of EDIN (EK Youth Organization) who committed suicide setting himself on fire on September, 19th 1970 in a central square of the town after suffering severe aggression and menaces by members of ESESI, menaces that were also addressed to his family living in Kerkira¹².

Andreas Papandreou established PAK on March 1968 and his movement found in Italy political and economic support by PSI. At that time the Italian socialist party was marked by inner divisions into factions but in spite of this all the principal socialist leaders – Pietro Nenni, Francesco De Martino, Riccardo Lombardi and Sandro Pertini – supported PAK as it clearly appears from the several public statements, from the columns of "Avanti!" and "Grecia".

PAK experienced a turning point in its political tasks and personnel between the end of 1969 and the first half of 1970 together with the new awareness that for the toppling of colonels' regime it was not sufficient international pressures of both European democratic governments and collective institutions such as ECC and the Council of Europe. This new phase is characterized by a dual course of radicalization of political aims and of expulsion from PAK ranks of the more moderate elements – substantially previous Centre Union members – replaced with radical intellectuals and students¹³.

¹¹ Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Ministero dell'Interno, Dipartimento di Pubblica Sicurezza, G10/27/2, box 378 and G100/6, box 141.

¹² Constantinos Papoutsis, *To megalo nai*, Kastaniotis, Athens, 1996.

¹³ Michalis Spourdalakis, *The Greek socialist party*, Routledge, London, 1988, pp. 52-53.

Andreas Papandreou's leadership in the political discourse of PAK is undisputable as well as it is in the PASOK during the *metapolitefsi*¹⁴. In the same period (mid 70's) PSI is subject to an epoch-making shift in its leadership with the victory of the generation of the "forty-year-old men" at the XL National Congress on March 1976. These young cadres superseded the old notables who had been keen advocates of socialist support to the Greek resistance. It is the beginning for the Italian socialist party of the so-called "Craxi era", Bettino Craxi being the leader who will rule the party until 1992¹⁵.

This part of the research is open to possible developments through a comparison between two personalistic and socialist paths towards government: the Greek one with Papandreou and PASOK and the Italian one with Craxi and PSI.

Conclusion and developments of the research

The basic assumption for a meaningful comparison between the Italian and Greek political developments both in internal and in foreign policy lies in the clear comprehension of similarities as well as peculiarities of their own relevant social, economic and political tissues. This is the prerequisite to move then to the second step of the research, consisting in focusing on American foreign policy towards Italy and Greece, two allies in a similar geopolitical context and during the phase of *détente* of the relations between East and West, a phase marked by the relaxation of ideological and military tensions typical of the first period of the Cold war.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* and Nicos Mouzelis, "Continuities and discontinuities in Greek politics. From Eleftherios Venizelos to Andreas Papandreou", in Kevin Featherstone, Dimitrios Katsoudas (eds.), *Political change in Greece. Before and after the colonels*, St. Martin's press, New York, 1987.

¹⁵ Maurizio Degl'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI. III. Dal dopoguerra ad oggi*, Laterza, Bari, 1993, pp. 418-420.

The common membership of Italy and Greece to the Western block and to NATO has had some aspects that still need to be defined such as for instance the exact rationale of the use of NATO plans worked out for defensive purposes and nonetheless applied with internal aims.

In the Greek case there are two emblematic events in this sense: the use of the so-called “Pericles” plan to influence the outcome of the election on October 1961, publicly revealed by George Papandreou on February 1965 and above all the application of the plan “Ierax II” by the colonels on 21 April 1967. In the Italian case the menace of military intervention in politics happened on June 1964 with the so-called “Solo” plan managed by general Giovanni De Lorenzo and on December 1970 with the so-called Borghese *coup d’etat* (from the name of its organizer Junio Valerio Borghese). This initiative was suspended when one among the groups involved in the action had already reached the inside armoury of the minister of Interior¹⁶. Nonetheless, in Italy it was more than rumours especially in military and rightist circles the resort to a possible *lisi a la ellinika* to the political crisis between late ‘60s and beginning of 70s.

Scholars usually deal with these problems in the general context of the *military intervention in politics* and the points I want to develop in the research are the following:

- 1) to explain the reasons at the base of the fact that while in Greece the military interventions into politics turned into reality twice (1961, 1967) in Italy neither the menace of intervention (1964) nor its harbingers (1970) ever brought to an actual change to authoritarianism.
- 2) to assess the weight of the international factors (Atlantic loyalty, ECC membership) on these developments¹⁷.

¹⁶ The Greek military interventions in politics are well described by Nikolaos Stavrou, *Allied politics and military intervention: the political role of the Greek military*, Papazissis, Athens, 1976. For the Italian case see Fasanella, Sestieri, with Pellegrino, *Segreto di Stato*, quot.

¹⁷ Historian Mario Del Pero recently upheld that the ECC members promoted an «integrative» solution to manage the mid 70’s political crisis in Italy. This solution was

Another aim of this research is to assess the impact of the *international* factors on the *national* dynamics in the broad topic of the *transition to democracy*. It regards Greek transition to democratic rule and its rationale lies in the central role of the Cyprus question on July '74 in the collapse of the Ioannidis regime.

The American policy for Cyprus and the Middle East in general seemed to have played a decisive role in the developments after the coup against Makarios and the Turkish military invasion of the island. The events of summer '74 brought indeed to the solution for the Cyprus question in line with the so-called *double enosis* or *taksim*. The collapse of Ioannidis regime is followed by a solution in Cyprus which resembles the American settlement proposed in 1964 with the Acheson plan, solution which was covertly pursued at the same time by the Papadopoulos regime in spite of his public statements to the contrary¹⁸. Moreover a comparison between Greek resistance expectations and goals for the *metapolitefsi* and its actual outcome is one topic of this PhD proposal.

Finally, the part of the research devoted to the description of Greek resistance ideology and initiatives in Italy aims to explore the following themes:

- 1) how the Greek groups presented themselves (self-representation)
- 2) how their Italian supporters – primary the socialists – perceived them
- 3) which relations (if ever) the Greeks perceived between their resistance and that during Nazi-fascist occupation

pursued through the EC institutional means and according to Del Pero was significant in curbing the American tendencies (and Henry Kissinger's ones in particular) to resort to the "Chilean way" for Italy. See Mario Del Pero, "Distensione, bipolarismo e violenza: la politica estera americana nel Mediterraneo durante gli anni Settanta. Il caso portoghese e le sue implicazioni per l'Italia", in Agostino Giovagnoli, Silvio Pons, (eds.), *L'Italia repubblicana nella crisi degli anni Settanta. Tra guerra fredda e distensione*, Rubettino, Soveria Mannelli, pp. 142-143.

¹⁸ Theodoros Couloumbis, *United States, Greece and Turkey. A troubled triangle*, Praeger, New York, 1982 and Constantine P. Danopoulos, "The Greek military regime (1967-1974) and the Cyprus question. Origins and goals", *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, 1982, n. 10, pp. 257-273.

4) what was the weight (if any) it had on the Italians the fact of being partisans and exiles in the Italian civil war

This part of the research takes advantage of the oral sources, interviews conducted with members of resistance and political leaders. Oral sources need to be managed by the methodologies worked out by “oral historians” for preparing, executing, collecting and interpreting them.