

# **Macedonians and the Greek Civil War**



**By**

**By Naum Peiov**

**(Translated from Macedonian to English and  
edited by Risto Stefov)**

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## Foreword

The book “Macedonians and the Greek Civil War” was written by Naum Peiov, a direct participant in the liberation struggle in Greece who fought against the Nazi and Fascist occupation (against the German, Italian and Bulgarian armies), and who was given the opportunity to direct and monitor events in the Greek Civil War. As a result, Naum Peiov in this book has given the reader a brief but clear insight as to “what actually happened” during the Civil War in Greece and the role the Macedonian people played in it.

Given the fact that relatively little documentation and scant memoir material has been available, it is understandable that the author has not been able to, nor has he made claims of having covered the full course of the Greek Civil War and the entire role the Macedonian people played in it. Also, given the time that the material for this book was written (1955), this is one of the first works to come out that has attempted to examine Greek Civil War events and problems to provide us with a glimpse of what took place.

Given his personal involvement in the movement, it was not possible for the author to escape the emotional side of his experience, which can be felt in his writing style. However, regardless of the lack of documentation and narrow presentation, the reader will get the idea of what the motives were behind starting the Greek Civil War and will learn about the lies and fraud perpetrated by the leadership of the Greek Communist Party (CPG). This was the same CPG that led the liberation struggle against the German, Italian and Bulgarian occupiers but allowed the restoration of the monarchy in Greece. This was the same CPG which caused great political instability in the new Greek regime and then allowed the elements which collaborated with the fascist occupiers to emerge.

The CPG leadership demonstrated no clear political or strategic concepts in the way it led the Greek Civil War. This inevitably had dire consequences for those involved, especially for the democratic movement which supported the CPG, included in which were the

majority of the Greek people as well as all the other people living in Greece.

The oppressed Macedonian people in Greek occupied Macedonia, oppressed by the Greek authorities, massively participated in the struggle against Italian aggression in Greece. They massively participated in the Greek national liberation struggle from 1941 to 1944 and in the Greek Civil War believing that if they helped the Greeks liberate themselves they would be liberated from Greek oppression. The Macedonian people made great sacrifices, both human and material, when they fought against the fascist occupiers and against the reactionary forces in Greece. But, it seems all those sacrifices were for nothing. After the wars ended, consecutive Greek regimes refused to recognize the Macedonian contribution and refused to grant the Macedonian people their human and national rights. The Macedonian people were, once again, persecuted to no end by these inhuman Greek regimes. After the First World War ended, many Macedonians from Greek occupied Macedonia fled to Bulgaria and to overseas countries (United States of America, Canada, etc.). During and after the Greek Civil War many more Macedonians fled as political exiles and refugees, and found themselves in a number of European countries. This time they were joined by a number of progressive Greeks - patriots.

Through this book, the author has given us an interesting point of view which can somewhat help us determine the causes of the Greek Civil War and, by reviewing what happened to the population, we can indirectly observe the fate of the Macedonian people after the Greek Civil War.

Academic Mihailo Apostolski

Out of respect for the reader, please allow me the opportunity to inform you about some of the things that contributed to my effort to realize this work.

1. First, it should be known that the material for this book was written in the period between 1953 and 1955. At the end of 1955 the manuscript was given to the Institute of National History in Skopje. Meaning, the manuscript was written almost immediately after the

Greek Civil War had ended and amid sharp attacks from the then leaders of the Communist Party of Greece against the Macedonian leadership, followed by slander and innuendo.

2. While the book was being prepared for publication, its content was heavily reviewed in order to shorten it, to present new facts which became available later, and to make sure it agreed with the then “current” political situation.

3. My aim for writing this work was not to write the history of the Greek Civil War.

My objectives for writing this book were:

a) To highlight the then socio-political and military situation in Greece and in the Balkans and to outline the reasons for the course of events that led to the Greek Civil War.

b) To highlight the position, role and contribution of the Macedonian people from Greek occupied Macedonia in the gigantic struggle of the progressive forces against the fascist regime in Greece and against the imperialist interventionists.

It is important at this point to emphasize that the position, role and contribution of the Macedonian people in this war has been belittled, deemphasized and falsified by many of the Macedonian people’s so-called “friends” as well as their enemies.

Less than twenty years after the Greek Civil War ended, a new and monstrous dictatorship was introduced which completely stripped the Macedonian people of even the most elementary human and democratic rights. The war for the Macedonian people did not end but continued with people being permanently exiled, sent back to the prison camps in the dry islands, and isolated, stigmatized and cast aside in Greek society... the only fault... their political conviction or their non-Greek nationality. The Macedonian people in Greek occupied Macedonia have been stripped of their human and national rights, including the right to speak their own native mother tongue, since the Metaxas fascist dictatorship came to power in Greece just before the Second World War. This cruelty has continued to this

day. And as such, the Macedonian people in Greek occupied Macedonia were left with no other choice but to struggle for their rights and dignity.

The Author

Skopje, November 1967

About Naum Peiov

Naum Peiov was born in 1919 in the village Gabresh, Kostur Region. He was a member of the pre-war CPG. In 1939 he was arrested by the Greek police. He joined NOV in 1941. He was Commander of the Macedonian Partisan Detachment “Lazo Trpovski”. He was a member of the SNOF Kostur District Committee. He led a group of fighters who left the ranks of ELAS and fled to Vardar Macedonia in May 1944. He was Deputy Commander of the First Aegean Brigade. After the war he served in a variety of high political and social functions in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia.

## **PART ONE – The Greek Civil War 1945 – 1949 - Introduction**

During World War II, conditions were created in Greece to destroy the inhuman Greek bourgeoisie regime and to establish a popular people's government. However, because of subjective weaknesses and errors made by the resistance movement leadership in its dealings against the fascist occupiers, the national traitors and against the strong armed interference by the British imperialists, the resistance movement, led by the National Liberation Front (EAM) and its armed units in the Greek People's Liberation Army (ELAS), failed.

Even before the German occupiers had left Greece, ELAS resistance movement units came into collision with Greek government forces belonging to the exiled Greek government supported by the British army. Although this collision ended with the signing of the famous Treaty of Varkiza on February 12, 1945, it was a prelude to the Greek Civil War.

This is why it is important to look at the socio-political development in Greece during the period when the national liberation struggle was developing, resulting in the national liberation movement during the Second World War, 1941-1945, and the collision itself which took place in Athens in December 1944. In other words, it is important to understand the events that took place in Greece which led up to the Greek Civil War.

After living for four centuries of slavery under Ottoman occupation and under a long revolutionary struggle, the Greek people were finally liberated and given a state of their own by the Great Powers Britain, France and Russia, which were more interested in the destruction of the "sick man of the east" (Ottoman empire) than resolving Greek national issues.

And, as such, when Greece was first created there were still territories whose ownership was not resolved and which remained outside the newly created Greek state. This created opportunities for the big imperialist powers to play games, mixing and matching games which became dire for the social, national and political

development of Greece; games whose effects are felt by that country to this day.

When Greece first gained its national independence its territory covered Attica and the Peloponnesus. The islands in the Aegean Sea, Thessaly, Epirus and the coastal territories in Asia Minor, to which the Greeks aspired, were left outside of the Greek state. Its national revival and unity, however, would take place over a longer period of time and through extremely nationalistic and megalomaniac ideas such as the one called “Megali Elada” (Greater Greece), with aims at recovering Byzantium (recreating the Byzantine Empire). This was to be done in the interest of the imperialist power behind which stood the Greek ruling class.

Britain was the dominant influence in Greece until the mid to late 1940's, after which time and during the Greek Civil War that influence was passed on to the United States of America with the famous Truman doctrine which allowed the Americans to intervene in Greece's internal affairs in 1947.

Since it gained its national independence Greece became involved in many wars, not only for its national unification but also for the conquest of foreign lands and as an instrument serving imperial Great Power interests. In 1864 Greece acquired the Ionian Islands and, after the Berlin Congress, it acquired Thessaly. During the Balkan Wars Greece acquired Epirus and Crete.

But the young Greek bourgeoisie and the Greek palace not only worked for the liberation of Greek territories, but aspired to dominate over Macedonia and Thrace. With the help of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Tsari Grad (Istanbul) they became engaged among the Christian population in Macedonia in order to create their own positions. Later, like the other countries neighbouring Macedonia, they started sending armed bands to enforce their position. This went on until Macedonia was militarily invaded, occupied and partitioned, with Greece taking half of its territory.

The winners of World War I then validated the Greek imperialist gains, which the Greek ruling class had made during the Balkan

wars, but did not fulfill their aspirations regarding the Asia Minor coastline and Cyprus, which led to the Greek-Turkish war of 1920/1922.

Shortly after World War I, Greece declared war on Turkey. After some initial victories by the Greek army in Asia Minor, Kemal Ataturk quickly consolidated his Turkish Republican Army and hit back hard sending the Greek army into panic, resulting in a disastrous defeat for Greece. Victorious, Turkey not only kept the territories along the Asia Minor coast that it occupied after the Versailles Peace Treaty, but it also took advantage of the situation to evict a large Turkish Christian population (deemed Greek because it was Christian) out of its territory. This was done by an approved exchange of population during which Greece accepted four to five times more Turkish Christians from Asia Minor than Muslims that it evicted from Greece. About 650,000 of these Asia Minor colonists and settlers were settled in Greek occupied Macedonia. With that the demography in Greek occupied Macedonia was completely upset, creating severe social and national problems in the region.

Greece found itself in great poverty after the Asia Minor defeat. It began to look for an outlet in the most nationalistic and megalomaniac masses for ideas in order to realize the unrealized dream of a “Greater Greece”, which it thought was desperately needed to solve all the difficulties and miseries that Greece was experiencing. Greece latched on to those ideas systematically and with passion and has held on to them to this day. The ruling class of this tiny and vassal country has big ambitions and is blind to the idea that these “nationalistic and megalomaniac” notions are causing its difficulties and its inability to overcome its socio-political development problems in Greek society, in its political parties and in its relations with its neighbours. Feeling unable to achieve these ambitions alone, the Greek ruling class has become more and more dependent on the imperialist powers to help it.

Thanks to these megalomaniac ideas, foreign interference and foreign influence in the development of Greece, its day of liberation did not come peacefully and, as stated earlier, Greece became engaged in several wars which produced controversial results. To the north Greece not only “freed” its own national territories but also

spread into parts of Macedonia and Thrace. It is no small credit to the megalomaniac ideas of a “Greater Greece” that relations between the Balkan countries in past decades have created tension, imperialist aspirations and wars, including the occupation and division of Macedonia.

Economically, Greece trailed behind the other countries and became dependent on foreign capital. It did not stand firmly on the path of capitalist development but rather retained many elements of feudal social relations. Greece did not create a strong industrial capital of its own but tied its trade to foreign capital. The bourgeoisie made a compromise with the landowners and Greece remained agrarian and economically underdeveloped. The country remained a monarchy with short intervals of bourgeois parliamentary democracy. Clashes between the rag-tag liberal bourgeoisie and the dynasty were more a result of foreign influence and interests, rather than the substance of relations between the bourgeoisie and the feudal remnants. The feudalists had learned to disassociate themselves whenever a regime was endangered. The collisions for political power had no place in the socio-political life of this country. But the fact is that the dynasty in Greece, established twice in recent times, (almost without exception) was put in place with the help of all wings of the bourgeoisie. This is how it was until the most recent crisis and military junta coup of April 21, 1967.

Allow me to remind you

In 1935 the monarchy was restored and later the Monarcho-Fascist Metaxas dictatorship was established. This happened because the Liberal Party, led by Themistoklis Sofoulis, refused to cooperate with the Popular Front to block the road to Monarcho-Fascism.

In 1946, after World War II ended, the monarchy was again restored in Greece with support from all the then civil parties.

As mentioned earlier, the wars in which Greece was involved led not only to controversial territorial results but also to numerous militaristic castes which played a major role in the public and political life in this country.

Consequently, in terms of growth throughout the period between the two world wars, Greece fell into major economic difficulties. The great depression in the thirties tightened the social discord in Greece. The working class political movement, forerunner to the socialist and then to the Communist Party, grew into a strong political force in the country. That fact frightened the Greek palace and the bourgeoisie and they in turn introduced the Metaxas Monarcho-Fascist dictatorship in 1936.

Metaxas who had only a few representatives in parliament, having won the trust of the Liberal Party, formed a government; a while later he dissolved Parliament and by court order imposed a fascist dictatorship. In the process he dissolved all political parties and filled the Aegean Sea islands with prisoners, including prominent personalities from the civil parties. But his biggest gripe was against the labour movement, against the working class and most of all against the Communist Party. There was yet another factor that he was against; the Macedonian people against whom he used slogans labeling them “communists”, “a Slav menace” that was supposedly a “danger to Greece”. Slogans designed to poison the Greek people with nationalistic ideas and chauvinism. While Metaxas was fighting internal battles he left the country unprepared and defenseless against Italian and German fascism and imperialism.

There were wide gaps in the country’s foreign policy because King George II had a pro-British orientation while Metaxas had a pro-German one. (Metaxas was still alive when Italy invaded Greece in 1940, but had died before the Germans invaded Greece.)

Greece faced World War II under these circumstances. But thanks to the anti-fascist mood of the masses and the weaknesses of the Italian fascist army, Italy was kept at bay for six months, from October 1940 to April 1941. The Greek people managed to hold Italy back at the Albanian front until the German invasion and Greece’s capitulation. While the Greek King and the Greek government left Greece and emigrated abroad, Greek army officers surrendered Greece to the Germans. And as such, like in other occupied countries, the people living in Greece were left at the mercy of the occupation authorities and their collaborators.

After the Greek government fled the country and the Greek army capitulated to Germany, the Greek state machinery broke down completely. The generals who signed the capitulation orders formed a quisling government and made every effort to restore the old state apparatus, primarily the police and the gendarmerie, but without much success because they lacked an army. The occupation brought economic chaos and famine to the country, conditions which the quislings could not overcome. This created the right conditions for an armed uprising to take place, favourable conditions for the Communist Party. The first Party to organize a resistance movement against the occupiers and against the domestic traitors was the Communist Party of Greece (CPG). But it was done under very difficult conditions. With the introduction of the Metaxas fascist dictatorship in 1936, members of the CPG were subjected to persecution and much of the Party's leadership and membership was in jail. The part that was still free after Greece's capitulation took great measures to organize and strengthen its position with the people.

EAM, the Greek National Liberation Front, was formed in Athens in the fall of 1941. Many groups and individual Greek personalities took part in its formation. As such this illegally formed Party apparatus began to build a vast network of anti-Fascist organizations which, between 1941 and 1942, through armed guerillas, were responsible for carrying out diversionary actions and in 1943 constituted the regular units of ELAS.

The resistance movement had many weaknesses during the formation of the national liberation movement and even during the armed struggle against the occupiers.

Even through the resistance organization in Greece there was a mass political EAM organization with its ELAS armed force behind it. And behind that stood the Communist Party of Greece, which had the most determined fighters. The CPG leadership, unfortunately, made some crucial ideologically and conceptual errors in the way it ran things which led to a few unprincipled compromises on main revolutionary issues. This of course in due time contributed to the Party's defeat.

The CPG leadership had no clear views on the nature of the people's liberation struggle, namely that the national liberation, in the specific conditions then in Greece and Greek society, could not be separated from the people's democratic character of the uprising and the establishment of a people's democratic power, and from the CPG leadership itself. The people's liberation tasks were formulated by the CPG provisional leadership during the CPG Central Committee's 6<sup>th</sup> Plenum in 1941 and were:

1. Liquidate the German-Italian occupation in Greece;
2. Liquidate the (Greek) government - the occupation authority;
3. Provide daily support and defend the Soviet Union;
4. Consistently support all anti-fascist forces by any means;
5. Establish an interim government consisting of all parties that agree to establish democratic freedom for the people, that agree to provide bread and work, that would convene a national constituent assembly and would protect the integrity and independence of Greece from any foreign imperialist power. (Forty years of CPG - 1918-1958 - selected documents p. 468 – CPG Central Committee edition.)

Characteristic among the objectives proclaimed by the Central Committee decision made during the CPG Central Committee's 10<sup>th</sup> Plenum, held in January 1944, were the following:

“We strive to establish full integrity in Greece and implement strategic border security to defend us from external encroachments. We strive for a peaceful settlement and coexistence with the people who believe in the same principles, primarily with our neighbours.”

The same proclamation included the following:

“That is why the Communist Party of Greece (CPG) has adopted and supports the EAM Central Committee proposal to install an interim government of national unity and liberation, from all the parties, organizations, individuals, which will take over the national

struggle and, after the war, will provide free expression to the people's will." (Forty years of CPG - 1918-1958 - selected documents p. 504-506 – CPG Central Committee edition.)

It seemed that there was no need for hegemony of the proletariat or for CPG leadership after the struggle. At the same time, it seemed that there was also no need for the old and the occupying state apparatus... But there was a need to build a people's government and base of power.

There was no mention of rights for the oppressed people in Greece, particularly for the Macedonians and nothing about how the "Macedonian National Question" was to be addressed. On the contrary, the first objective in the Proclamation was about "strategic border security", an idea behind which was hidden the pretense and the Greek megalomaniac aspirations for acquiring more foreign territories.

The CPG leadership also decided to partner with a collection of former political leaders and military figures belonging to the old guard who, under the newly created conditions, were not able to influence the masses in the towns and villages.

The CPG at that time was supported by the majority of the people and yet it committed itself to partnering and dealing with criminals and the most hated people in the country. This created ideological and political confusion in the masses. The CPG violated its own principles and practice.

These so-called "concessions" which the CPG made came to the fore when the EAM highest authorities, the Political Committee of National Liberation of Greece, and the ELAS cadre composition and tactics for the armed struggle were first created. The development of the armed struggle, including its armed wing ELAS, relied on assistance for weapons and war material from Greece's Western allies, rather than developing its own hardened revolutionary army. More of the CPG's "concessions" were revealed when it agreed with Allied Command for the Middle East to allow nationalist movements to operate in Greece and to allow a "Provisional government of national unity" to be formed.

On July 18, 1943 ELAS General Headquarters Commander General Sarafis and British Mission Military Chief Colonel Edie Mayers signed a joint declaration by which ELAS was recognized as an army and was subordinated to Middle East Command. (p. 120, “ELAS” by Stefanos Sarafis.)

As a result of this “declaration”, British Command took over all developments in ELAS. The British decided what operations ELAS was going to perform and with whom it was going to partner. The British decided how ELAS was going to relate to EDES and EKKA, the Greek nationalist formations which, even though they were an insignificant force, imposed themselves as full partners. The entire army was directed by British officials. The two agreements signed were the Plaka and the Kazerta Agreements, which completely prohibited ELAS from taking any independent action of its own, even in the most decisive moments. (See “Plaka Treaty Advisory Protocol” and “Kazerta Agreement” in the attachments.)

These military agreements were the result of the struggle’s political orientation and platform. The political leadership did not orient itself towards a mass armed uprising supported by a grass roots national liberation movement, but instead it took narrow aims at achieving its national liberation. It also did not want to enter into a close relationship with the National Liberation Movements in the Balkans, especially with that of Yugoslavia. Instead, it relied on assistance from the British, while underestimating the strength of the nationally oppressed Macedonians and the other oppressed nationalities living in Greece.

PEEA, the Political Committee for National Liberation, was formed in the spring of 1944. Social Democrat Alexandros Zvolos was elected president. Headed by Zvolos, a delegation was then created and entered into negotiations with the Greek government in exile. A Protocol known as the “Lebanon Agreement” was signed on May 20, 1944. But despite explicit instructions given to the delegation to insist that 50% of the departments in the government should be allocated to EAM, the delegation agreed that EAM should occupy only five departments (see “Lebanon Agreement” in the attachments). [There is no data on the composition of the

“government of national unity” in the actual Lebanon agreement because there were contentious issues: i.e. the number of ministries designated to EAM (i.e. PEEA); which Government ministries, etc.

According to the instructions given, the PEEA delegation made requests to be given a large number of key positions as well as replacing President George Papandreou with someone else. Then on August 15, 1944, during an EAM Central Committee session, it was decided that EAM was to participate in the George Papandreou government with only five departments: finance, transport, agriculture, national economics and labour. These were the obligations undertaken by EAM and PEEA representatives just before the signing of the “National Convention” dubbed the “Lebanon Agreement”.]

Thus, after the expulsion of the occupiers in Greece in the fall of 1944, although EAM was a hugely massive organization and ELAS was a many times larger armed force than the others, numbering about 70,000 fighters, it was unable to convince the others that it should lead the “government of national unity”. Therefore the resistance movement, in December 1944, heading for an armed conflict in Athens agreed to capitulate and disarm.

Irrefutable evidence existed that Zervas cooperated with the occupiers, unfortunately the British would not only not allow his eviction out of ELAS, but they helped him in the same way they helped members of PAO. [PAO (Paneladiki Apelevterotiki Organosis - Pan-Hellenic Liberation Organization) was a nationalist organization which initially posed as a liberator. But unlike EDES and EKKA, it did not have guerrilla units whereas the other two did. Its members, however, had been covertly assigned to ELAS units with aims at undermining it from within. But when they failed, PAO openly spoke out against the guerrilla movement and organized armed bands in the services of the occupier. PAO’s armed formations were of great help to the German occupiers, especially in the fall of 1944, in the final phase of the German occupation when ELAS fought its most bitter battles.]

The Greek government in exile, based in Cairo, took draconian measures to eliminate EAM supporters from the Greek units that

fought in the allied army composition, and as such it proved that it had no confidence in them. Instead of doing that, the Greek government should have taken all necessary measures to strengthen its own armed forces and provide its support proportionally in accordance with the ratio of contribution made during the struggle. The Plaka Agreement, as well as those signed in Lebanon and Kaserta, took no consideration of the ratio of forces. Even so, the opponents refused to support those agreements in order to expand their own positions.

Relying on the rights derived from the above mentioned agreements, British Command issued an order not only to not attack the Germans in Athens, but after their departure to not even attack the quisling security battalions (quisling formations). True to its commitments ELAS did not perform any operations inside Athens and after the Germans left, on October 12, 1944, ELAS remained near but outside of Athens. British units occupied Athens right after the Germans left. A little later the Greek government arrived. No sooner had they consolidated their hold in Athens than British command and Prime Minister George Papandreou began to systematically violate the already unfavourable agreements with EAM – ELAS, apparently insisting that ELAS disarm before the other armed formations disarm. In parallel with this pressure put on ELAS, there were rapidly conducted preparations for forming and arming new units consisting of right-wing elements, vilifying and criminalizing EAM, and even shooting at demonstrators who protested against the injustices.

In order to avoid a conflict, on November 29, 1944 EAM government coalition Ministers made every effort to submit a proposal for the full implementation of the Lebanon Agreement, but unfortunately Papandreou refused to accept it.

On December 1, 1944 British Commander Scobey issued an order demanding that members of ELAS surrender their weapons. At the same time Papandreou declared that: “He could not accept the proposal put forth by EAM Ministers for the simultaneous disarmament of all volunteer units and for the formation of a unique grouping.” That same evening on December 1, 1944, late at night,

all EAM ministers resigned which then opened the doors for further conflict.

ELAS Central Committee in General Headquarters was reorganized after which a proclamation was made to the people of Athens and Piraeus to take action. In parallel with that, on December 3, 1944, a countrywide rally was organized during which the police shot at demonstrators, killing several people and wounding many others.

What followed after that was thirty-three days of bloodshed in Athens dubbed as the “1944 December events”.

The fighting spilled over into January and on February 12, 1945 the Varkiza Agreement was signed. (See “Varkiza Agreement” in the attachments.) The outcome of the fighting in Athens and the signing of the Varkiza Agreement not only failed to resolve the conflict but failed to resolve the fundamental question that had created the conflict in the first place, which meant that there would be further conflict which would lead to the Greek Civil War. The situation boiled over into a conflict because Papandreou’s interim government rushed to immediately disarm the ELAS units and bring new, fully armed formations from the Middle East. The December clash did resolve this issue but at the expense of ELAS.

Article six of the Varkiza agreement stated:

“Demobilization: The military resistance forces are to be demobilized immediately after the publication of this Agreement, especially all regular and reserve ELAS forces, as well as ELAN forces and the national militia. Demobilization and decommissioning of weapons should be carried out in accordance with the protocol details provided by a commission of experts...”

The Agreement also contained provisions that promised democratic development, but those promises proved to be empty.

There is no doubt that the political right and the British wanted to lead the national liberation movement, specifically the ELAS armed units, immediately after the expulsion of the occupier so that they could immediately disarm them when they were no longer needed.

There was no need for political wisdom, on the part of the British, to fulfill this final act. But much political wisdom was needed in developing the strategy and tactics in order to create the right conditions for it. The British feared there would be clashes all throughout Greece, and because of these fears they helped and guided the resistance movement leadership to come to the “right” conclusion. Even though the conflict was limited to Athens, the resistance moment leadership agreed to sign the Varkiza Agreement with conditions that were unacceptable to the entire democratic movement. And because this agreement was the only legal position available to the government in Athens, in which there no longer were EAM representatives, it allowed it to wage war against the democratic forces.

## CHAPTER ONE – Unilateral Civil War

### 1. The situation after the Varkiza Agreement and moves made by the political Right

When the fighting was raging on in Athens and at the time the Varkiza Agreement was being signed, ELAS was still master of the situation in the country. It had established order everywhere and was in the process of disarming the armed collaborators. However, after the Agreement was signed, while ELAS was disarming the collaborators at one end, the government was arming them at the other, unleashing furious terror against the unarmed population. There was overwhelming chaos in the country. Here is how the situation was described by the press.

About the tragedy that took place in Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, on June 15, 1945 the newspaper “Rizospartis” ended its story with the following words: “The prisons in Alexandroupolis, Ferron, Soufli, Didimotiko and Orestiada are full of prisoners arrested without having committed any crimes. Village committees often visit the Directorate of Police and the National Guard to complain about their intolerable situation. The District Governor of Thrace, who was aware of the visits, arrested the commissions in Alexandroupolis and Komotini and placed them in jail while their petitions were torn up by members of the National Guard.”

On July 13, 1945 “Rizospartis”, the same newspaper, wrote: “One hundred and fifty armed gangs consisting of 18,000 armed monarchists today are running the state.” Ironically the newspaper also quoted comments made by Damaskinos about “the great freedom in Greece” and revealed the following interesting information: “More than a hundred and fifty such armed gangs are supporting King George II’s government in all regions of the country.” Here are the names of some of the members in the King’s gangs:

“1. Peloponnesus: Papanousis, Papapanos, Karalis, Goumenos, Pilitopoulos, Dorovitsas, Christakis, Papatanos-Gorentis, Lazanis, Zorvas, Papanastasopoulos, Tsalbouras, Papadakos.

2. Rumeli: Kouzelis, Katranzis, Galouzis, Vourkalis, Lasias, Papandonis, Gerandodimos.
3. Ksiromero: Veridos, Floren, Bourvovilas, Karabekios.
4. Kefalonja: Papadimakos.
5. Thessaly: Sourlas, Tsandoulas, Bidzhis, Mermanis, Koukoudisis, Vlatiokostas, Veletas, Kalagritsas, Kalias.
6. Epirus: Pentazis, Katsos, Baloumis, Voidares, Karabinis, Makas.
7. Macedonia - Thrace: Chaoush Andon, Captain Katas, Kepetan Vangelis, Kondakos, Zisis, Prionis, Darvelas, Moumtsis, Sakas, Tsakiris, Romandas, Kostandinidis, Koukas, Koukouvanis, Harapoulos, Swan, Iliadis, Zagronis, Stefanidis, Pentazis, Zevgie, Kimeridis, Manasi, Patsouris, Zagranis, Topouzoglou, Karapanoiotis.”

Later on the newspaper provides data on the number of gangsters existing in certain areas, the means by which they are armed and how their activities assist the government army and the police.

On June 17, 1945 the newspaper “Laiki foni” wrote under the heading “Fascist members of National Guard and armed gangsters have plagued the people in Macedonia. They have raped 12-year-old girls and women over the age of 60.”

Among other things the same newspaper also wrote: “Around midnight on June 7, 1945 the former collaborator Koskinas, now an officer of the National Guard, went to Kukush and visited the widow in the home of an Albanian front victim named Nikopolitidou and tried to frighten her, with his rifle, into going with him.

Voden. The terror in that city and in that district exceeded every limit. Members of the National Guard, the British forces and the irregular forces carried out blockades and arrested many democratic citizens. Anyone caught reading a leftist newspaper was arrested and beaten to listlessness by members of the National Guard. The

shopkeepers who sold leftist newspapers were intimidated and threatened with violence if they sold such newspapers.

Leftist newspapers were forced out of circulation for more than a month...”

On June 1, 1945 the Solun newspaper “Makedonia”, organ of the Liberal Party, published an “open letter” written by Ioanis Mihail, former MP of the Solun Democratic Union, in which, among other things, it said:

“To the Minister and Governor of Macedonia, Manager of Central Macedonia and Commander and public prosecutor of the city of Solun,

Serving in the village Koufalia, in Solun Region is Lieutenant Ioanis Dragoumis, commander of the National Guard unit stationed there whose mission is to provide order and security and to keep the villagers and their properties safe. But since the day this officer was put in charge, his actions have been less than tolerable from the fear that he has unleashed on the population.

Many peasants who hosted the occupiers, but had nothing to do with the occupying forces, were arrested, intimidated and severely beaten. These peasants feared that if they reported these beatings to the authorities they would be beaten again and even worse. When those who suffered and when the village authorities did complain to Military Command and to the Public Prosecutor, Military Command sent a senior officer to investigate, but so far there have been no results. The Public Prosecutor has informed that he has no authority to intervene. And so, thanks to the indifference of the government senior officer sent to investigate, atrocities continue to be committed and the villagers are dismayed by the severe actions the government has undertaken. Even the strict orders given to the senior office by Military command seem to have no effect. Just yesterday an honest peasant named Hristos Fokas was brought to the municipal hospital in a difficult position with broken ribs from the beating he received just because he appeared as a witness to the protector and reported what had been done to two of his fellow villagers who were released by the judiciary.

I am publicly putting blame on the shameful work done by Lieutenant Ioanis Dragoumis and I am directly asking that these allegations be investigated by the relevant competent authorities, as there is no other means left to protect the rights of our citizens.

Sincerely,

Ioanis Mihail, former MP of the Democratic Alliance.”

The newspapers, at that time, were full of stories like these.

The Greek political right which, after the December events, had its hands on the legitimate government of Greece was fully aware that its authority was far from being assured and that further effort would be required in order to choke the democratic movement in Greece and to fully consolidate its power.

The international situation at the time would not tolerate solutions such as the one the Greek political right offered when it found itself in a political crisis before World War II, i.e. the introduction of the Metaxas fascist dictatorship. Exactly because of that the Greek government had to plan parliamentary elections and decide to return the King to Greece by plebiscite. At the same time the Greek bourgeoisie was well aware of which way the Greek masses were leaning. Regardless of its weaknesses, the people of Greece had developed a massive liberation movement along the lines of a people's popular front, which was totally against fascism. Therefore the Greek bourgeoisie had to create the “right conditions” before these elections and the plebiscite could take place. Conditions that would ensure the elections were won by the “right political side” and would put a “legitimate” government in Greece.

For exactly that reason it was first necessary to suppress the EAM movement, then establish, strengthen and consolidate power in the country. The political right needed to have its own state apparatus, its own armed forces and its own armed police units. Unfortunately the Greek political right had no one to rely on for this except to rehabilitate and gain the support of the collaborators of the occupiers. And that's exactly what it did. It opened the doors to

known collaborators to continue their terror against the people in the same manner that had been done during the occupation. That measure was designed to inflict the first blow against the democratic movement. The government was counting on intimidating and frightening the masses into giving it their support. This is how public and political life was in Greece all throughout 1945.

Outside of the above mentioned terror instigated by the various armed groups, another form of terror was waged against the people. This was “legal” terror waged by the very government authorities themselves, which grew depending on how it spread and widened in power from the centre to the periphery. So in no time at all the number of arrested and jailed resistance fighters in 1945 reached ten thousand. In addition to the terror waged by the government authorities and the armed gangsters, the police and the military incited right-wing elements to join the political consolidation of forces by forming various youth, professional and other organizations and various alliances.

Furthermore, the government began to intensively strengthen the police and the general state apparatus with the most chauvinistic elements in the country, consisting mostly of former members of the Metaxas police force. The government did the same in the formation of the military. The first government act was to purge the entire army of its democratically minded officers. Every military unit was placed under military police control. Mobilization was carried out through a system of referrals which allowed the government to populate the military with its own people. But in spite of all the precautionary measures taken, some democratic elements did filter into the army. These elements were labeled “suspicious” by the military police and were disarmed and used in the auxiliary services or were interned in Makronisos and other Aegean islands.

The Greek bourgeoisie, in the implementation of the above stated measures, had comprehensive material and moral support from the British military forces which, at that time, were occupying Greece. The task of organizing the Greek police and the Greek military was given to British officers. UNRA was also used abundantly for political purposes in Greece, more so than in any other country.

As a result of this one-sided civil war in Greece, which the Greek political right waged against the democratic forces in 1945, the country landed in economic chaos. There were no steps taken, not even the most basic steps, to rebuild the country and increase its production. The people survived mainly on the assistance of food and consumer goods donated by UNRA.

The Greek bourgeoisie, however, had the necessary skills to manipulate the situation in the country and turn it to its favour, at least during the first half of 1945, while the Second World War was still active and during the immediate period that followed. Every effort was made to expand terrorist tactics including waging war on the democratic forces in the country, accusing them of being “traitors” and working against “national interests”.

Once again the Greek bourgeoisie demonstrated its drastic annexation appetite towards its neighbours when, after World War II, it began to fuel the masses with the decades old chauvinistic mood for a “Greater Greece”, systematically poisoning the political atmosphere in the country.

The most important thing in the country for the political right, as demonstrated by their slogan, was “national requirements”. There was no rally, demonstration, or meeting held where the slogan “Tirana-Sofia-Moscow” was not used. Daily newspapers and special publications printed articles based on the theme “national aspirations”, filling the heads of the masses with annexation appetites. Here is the translated title page of a brochure:

“By Georgi N. Vassiliou  
e.e. m Lieutenant Colonel of Engineering”

The Greek problem  
(The way it is understood by the Northern Greeks)  
Our national requirements

Call  
From the Greek people  
From the Congress of Peace  
And our territorial claims”

The original brochure, written in Greek, contains tabled data which the author claims provides information about a “Greater Greece”, its territory and population.

The tabled data, without any doubt, lays claim to lands belonging to Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Italy and England. It also lays claim to Italian and British colonies in Africa. And finally, it makes demands that one and a half million Slavs be evicted from Greece. According to the lieutenant colonel’s opinion, the author of the brochure, Greece, according to a 1940 census, covers an area of 129,879.8 square kilometres and has a population of 7,335,672 people with 56.5 inhabitants per square kilometre. But if Greece were to be expanded as outlined in the brochure, then it would become a great country with an area of 1,745,413.5 square kilometres and with a population of 21,763,926 people, with 12.5 inhabitants per square kilometre.

A so-called “Congress for National Rights” was held on October 28, 1945 in Solun during which time two professors, Kiriakidis and Vogiazidis, submitted papers in order to explain Greek “historical” and “scientific” aspirations towards Greece’s neighbours.

Among the several speeches made during the “Congress for national rights” was also General Lumbas’s speech, who in 1946 published a brochure entitled “Necessary strategic reforms to the Greek borders”. Lumbas’s speech began with the words:

“Our border to the north has been decided by the Bucharest, Neuilly and Florence Agreements. This determination was made without taking into consideration the general principles of providing favourable conditions for the security of the interested parties.”

After the General explained the “need” for border changes in order to “secure the Greek border”, he offered the following: “The Albanian border, according to the above, should go as follows: island Sasho, the line that separates the waters of rivers Shkumbata and Arian up to elevation 1425, where it meets our above mentioned line for our security against Albania”.

The Greek-Yugoslav border, according to the general, because of the existing gorges and obstacles between the current borders at Solun in Kosturino and Demir Kapia, slightly away from Solun towards the Lerin-Kozheni highlands, where there is no natural barrier and security line “towards Yugoslavia”, should be as follows:

“Along the northern upland approaches of Suva Gora and Karadzitsa, north of Veles, north of Shtip. Along the River Bregalnitsa confluence and its tributary River Zletosvska, to the Tsarevo Selo vicinity.”

There is no doubt that if the Greeks had the courage to seek border “corrections” with Albania and Yugoslavia that they would also seek border corrections with Bulgaria.

After itemizing the “arguments” for his thesis, the general concluded: “Because of the aforementioned reasons, our border security is insignificant in the districts between the Struma and Mesta Rivers and no trace of border security exists in the area between the Mesta and Maritsa rivers. Because of this, it has become an indispensable strategic necessity for us to erect our border with Bulgaria in such a way so as to prevent annexation claims against us in the future. We can only succeed in this by a general acquisition of the Pirin and Rhodopes mountain ranges because these mountain ranges, on the one hand, represent very serious natural obstacles for intrusive operations from Bulgaria against us and, on the other, by this means we will acquire the necessary depth of our endangered environment for keeping a defensive struggle”.

Another “welcomed” speech, given at the “Congress for national rights” on October 28, 1945 in Solun, was made by Lieutenant General Dimitrie Kakavos who, soon afterwards, published a special edition article entitled “Macedonia in the last 40 years and our national rights”. In this article he attempted to legitimize recent views on Macedonian history by looking at it through the prism of megalomaniac, Greek glasses and mourning that Greece was not rewarded as it should have been.

“Our frontiers pass near a branch of Mount Pirin, which is also a branch of the Rhodopes and Hemus Mountains. So, if we want a fair share of the military advantages in that territory it is important, of course, that we reach the Hemus and from there extend the line west to the Black Sea.

But if our emphasis regarding these ‘fair requirements’ is, possibly, interpreted as chauvinistic and not as taking necessary measures for the security of our state, then the only option that could be available to us is to restrict our boundary line to the upper Rhodopes, hence through Gabrovitsa, along the railway line Plovdiv-Sofia, through Panagiurishte and end at the Black Sea. Thus the area divided by Maritsa together with recently developed Greek centres Plovdiv, Stanimah, Kavakli, Burgas, Sozopol and Agatopol will become our national area.”

After briefly and falsely interpreting the two Balkan Wars, the author turned to making territorial claims against Yugoslavia (Republic of Macedonia). He said: “Considering what I said earlier, our border along the Rhodopes should pass through the Pirin and Arvin mountain ranges and run along Malesh and from there end above on the heights of Lake Ohrid so that all the mentioned Greek centres, including Strumitsa, Doiran, Gevgelia, Prilep, Krushevo and Bitola are to become Greek which, despite boosting our military security, which is pretty satisfying, these regions along with the Pelagonian valley, will also provide an economic boost to our country.”

And finally, before rounding off Greece’s imaginary border extending to the Adriatic Sea, Kakavos said: “And today, determining the extent of our border towards the Adriatic Sea, we think it should extend to the north of Lake Ohrid towards the mouth of the Skumba River so that southern Albania, which is properly called Northern Epirus, along with the developed Greek centres, the heroic Humara, Avlona, Girokastro, and Korcha, would become part of our Greek national territory”.

These are the kinds of nationalistic and megalomaniac ideas that were being spread in Greece by the Greek chauvinists after the most frightening war ended, ideas which are remembered by humanity to

this day. Given all this, what kind of relationship would one expect this government to have with the ordinary peaceful workers and peasants who were fighting for their bare existence? The bourgeoisie in Greece was set up to fall. It was set up to fall with help from imperialist forces from abroad. But when it managed to stand up again, it thrust itself ten times more cruelly against the working class and peasant labour. This is the only way one can explain the events that took place in Greece after the occupiers were ousted.

Personally, I believe that the organizers of the “Congress for national rights” and the speakers who participated in it, at least those who had some measure of understanding the reality of what they were doing, could not believe what they were doing because this was pure madness; to have such aspirations at the expense of their neighbours and to voice them openly during a peace conference. One thing was certain, however, these people were incorrigible chauvinists. The social crisis in Greece came to the fore before the Second World War started but was suppressed by the introduction of the bloody 1936 Metaxas fascist dictatorship. It then was ignited during the occupation, expressed by the National Liberation Struggle and after that it was only a matter of question. Was Greece going to transform itself or go back to its old ways? Were the new social forces going to take power or were the old powers going to return? But as we all now know, the old powers were restored in Greece with the help of foreign intervention, of course. But in order to do that, it was necessary to create a certain foundation among the people. And exactly this foundation, through propaganda, was going to be based on “national rights”. They wanted to mislead the masses with alluring slogans, to think about expansion towards fertile territories that supposedly “historically” belonged to Greece.

In 1945 the entire year was spent preparing for holding the parliamentary elections and for the plebiscite and deciding on how these would be held. Unfortunately the elections were being planned during a time of endless anarchy reigning in the country. This is when the Voulgaris administrative government was in power, which was responsible for preparing the voters lists and for the unprecedented massive fraud that followed.

After Voulgaris's administrative government did its part, in early 1946 it was replaced by the Liberal Party led by Temistokles Sofoulis. This change was of no little tactical importance, as we shall later see. It was perpetrated by the Greek bourgeoisie in its effort to create violence and fraud in order to strengthen its authority in the face of world public opinion and to be presented as a "lawful" institution.

## 2. CPG leadership opinions

The CPG Central Committee 12<sup>th</sup> Plenum was held on June 25, 1945 during which, among other things, the following resolution was reached:

"The CPG Central Committee Plenum has found that serious deterioration in the internal situation has taken place from the 11<sup>th</sup> Plenum to this day. The government has proved unable to establish internal order and has not shown that it is mature enough to handle today's critical moments. The right-wing terrorists, headed by the Military Alliance, who act in favour of the bourgeoisie and are deliberately tolerated by the government and certain circles from abroad, are supporting state authorities (the National Guard, the gendarmerie, the city police, etc.) and are ready to commit a fascist coup d'état and establish a fascist dictatorship. They are preparing for an international armed adventure. They have identified tens of thousands of democratic citizens to be killed during the first night of the coup.

Greece is the only country in Europe in which the victors are fascists, collaborators, traitors and quislings who are again stifling democracy. The resistance movement is in cruel exile. Hundreds of people have been killed and are continuously being killed. Tens of thousands are in jail. Hundreds of thousands are in exile. This is the hallmark of political adventurism in which the country is pushed towards internal and external disaster."

In a statement entitled "Salvation of the People" the Plenum said:

"The CPG Central Committee Plenum ascertained that only the democratic world coalition in the country, by taking into its hands

and managing the lands, can save the situation. The EAM political coalition of parties, which represents the largest and most democratic group of the people, should raise the flag high and resolutely fight to fit all democratic forces in an acceptable program that will protect and establish democratic order in the country. The Plenum would like to stress that, by refusing to allow former democratic and political members to participate in the most elementary democratic cooperation and to make concrete efforts that seem separated from their individual factors in order to break the democratic organizations is basically a violation of democratic principles and outside of the moral norm. Only reactionaries use these kinds of tactics and, even now, provide support and encourage insolence. We would like to emphasize that the same tactics were used in the fall of 1935, which led to a coup and to the Kondilis “plebiscite”, to the return of Gligzburk, to Metaxas taking power, to August 4<sup>th</sup>, to the betrayal and capitulation. The same danger is an obstacle again directly as a result of the dismantling of the democratic forces, which will serve Gligzburk’s return.”

After the above mentioned Plenum resolution was made, the three Great Powers (Russia, the US and Britain) made requirements of Greece that the Yalta Agreement be immediately implemented and with their intervention, by a coalition government consisting of all the parties that did not cooperate with the occupier and fight against fascism. This government was to establish political and trade union freedom, democratic order and tranquility and, within four months at most, hold free elections for a Constituent Assembly by a proportional representation system.

Later, after the above proposal for a “coalition government of all parties” was made, certain tasks, such as the government to prepare elections, were added to the Resolution.

This is how the situation in the country was at the outset. This is the position in which the resistance movement and its members found themselves. These were the means by which the democratic movement was struggling against the political right which was in power and in control of the state apparatus, the police and the military.

Tasks set by the Plenum:

“In particular, the Plenum has underlined the following tasks:

- a) That it is imperative to organize a massive self-defense campaign against the murderous terrorist activities of the political right. Every democratic man, woman and child in the entire country must break the hand of the murderers and fascists every time they pick up arms.
- b) That the primary act of the people nationwide in the mass struggles in all layers of the working people and in all the democratic masses in general (protests, strikes, meetings, demonstrations, closing of the bazaars) is to prevent specific terrorist acts perpetrated by the reactionaries.
- c) That massive countrywide political strikes be enacted and used as decisively popular weapons in order to prevent terrorist and fascist manifestations.
- d) That all democratic people must be ready to defend their lives and to oppose every fascist coup by any means possible. The people must be vigilant.”

The central motto that arose from the moment the Varkiza Agreement was signed and the first bout of the political right against the democratic masses and their vanguard, the veterans of the resistance, was the slogan “People defend yourselves by all means”. But because they could achieve what they wanted by “all means” they not only condemned the democratic movement in Greece, but also condemned the armed struggle, they in fact surrendered the fate of the democratic movement in the country and left it at the mercy of the reactionaries who in turn attacked it by “all means”, primarily by violence and force of arms. And in this lies one of the major mistakes the CPG leadership made in the period after Varkiza.

As is evident from the CPG Central Committee 12<sup>th</sup> Plenum Resolution, a bloody war was actually waged by the political right against the democratic forces in the country.

Decisions made during the CPG Central Committee 12<sup>th</sup> Plenum, as mentioned above, were officially put on a report by the then CPG General Secretary Nikos Zahariadis. Zahariadis condemned those who were against disarming the armed resistance against the political right and against foreign interventions. In his report Zahariadis wrote the following:

“The change in tactics from a war of liberation to a struggle for a Republic, after December, sent our entire movement around the corner. A new situation appeared and demanded rapid adaptation in our line, tactics, methods and slogans. Even though we here talk about a crisis for which we blame the other side, it seems we have found ourselves ideologically unprepared, something which has led us to this mess. Many of our members and staff may not be able to immediately grasp the situation but we need to seek new conditions. This confusion has resulted in some parochial squabbling within the party. Some of them, like Velouhiotis, could be dangerous but the party must act consistently.

As long as such manifestations are not directly challenged our enemy will continue to manipulate us, exploiting our ideological weaknesses. For example, some comrades do not understand that the December Varkiza Agreement was a consequence of defeat for the partisan movement, but some people want to transfer our “light” partisan struggle into a massive political struggle. They want to keep the guns and continue the guerilla warfare (Zahariadis called it “klevtopolemos” a thief’s war). This means that we want to use yesterday’s ticket today. The Party was against such thinking because it feared it would lead to catastrophic consequences for the entire struggle. Unfortunately the Party has quickly overcome all these doubts and has decisively thrown itself into a new struggle with new tasks.”

Statements made by Zahariadis are significant because they reveal the political approach taken. They reveal the correct assessment of the situation, particularly the condemnation of the emergence of the armed resistance. However, if we analyze the need for an armed resistance in light of the situation present in the country, we should be able to clear one basic question. Was the situation after Varkiza a revolutionary one or not and what form of struggle was carried out?

What was the situation and balance of power after the December events and after the Varkiza Agreement was signed in 1945?

In his own report, which he recorded during the CPG Central Committee 12<sup>th</sup> Plenum in June 1945, Zahariadis made the following assessment regarding the basic political situation in the country:

“The position taken by the reactionary right, and those who follow, support and tolerate it, was determined by the foreign aid provided and by the actions taken during the December events:

a) To spread wild terror that goes beyond any precedent in the history of our country. To force people to bend their heads down and stop resisting.

b) To initiate a libelous campaign of unprecedented falsification in order to isolate the CPG and the people’s vanguard from the people. To vilify the Party membership as “murderous traitors” in order to isolate and destroy them.

c) To divert the people’s attention from their internal problems to external problems with a single chauvinistic blow in order to place the entire weight of the anti-popular economic policy on the people and to continue the same old misery and hopelessness.”

Zahariadis’s conclusion was accurate. It clearly stated that during the December events and the signing of the Varkiza Agreement the struggle was a unilateral civil war. Therefore we need to ask the question: “What should have been done in a situation such as this?” The fatal mistake the CPG leadership made was to oppose what was happening by political means only, excluding armed resistance. When the political right waged a relentless and destructive war against the democratic forces in the country with aims at breaking the democratic organization, primarily by military means, the political left continued to resist by political means only.

However, what was actually practiced in mid-1945?

Here is an assessment of the December events according to the 12<sup>th</sup> Plenum:

“The December uprising closed one page and opened another in our history. It was a turn, a bend, a crisis. The uprising did not succeed and the movement was not defeated. This is basically what happened during the December uprising.”

This is true and confirms the fact that the Varkiza Agreement was signed after the December uprising, which removed the resistance movement as the unconditional master of the country. But the political right was well-aware of its own limited power. Namely, the resistance movement was very strong and the only way to master it was by defeating it. This is why the political right signed the Varkiza Agreement “promising” democratization of the country. The political right needed time and space to manoeuvre and the Varkiza Agreement gave it exactly that.

Meaning, the CPG leadership error was made when the CPG limited the December uprising to Athens only and did not extend it across the country. And after the uprising in Athens failed, instead of withdrawing from Athens and continuing the struggle outside the CPG marched straight to Varkiza and capitulated with no guarantees, not even for the most basic safeguards that would ensure the survival of the democratic development in the country.

The second mistake the CPG made was that it ignored its first mistake and did not take timely measures to avoid the catastrophic consequences of signing the Varkiza Agreement, which in reality was a great victory for the political right. But instead of recognizing that it made an error, the CPG leadership, in fact, declared the signing of the Varkiza Agreement to be a great victory for the people.

Another error the CPG made, after it signed the Varkiza agreement, was that it failed to organize the armed resistance in the country. It had enough experience to have known that, even as a second measure, the armed resistance should have been ready to act. But instead of looking at the reality of the situation, the CPG filled the

heads of its membership with illusions of a political struggle and denounced those who called for an armed resistance, calling them “provocateurs”. Thanks to this kind of “attitude” on the part of the CPG, the political right was able to achieve its objectives.

Even after the Varkiza Agreement was signed, the government had no power base outside of Athens and everything else it held, such as the major centres in the country, it held with British forces support. It was only after the Agreement was signed and after ELAS surrendered its arms that the government made an effort to mobilize its forces. Then, after the government took over the prison camps managed by ELAS, it freed and armed prisoners who collaborated with the German and Italian occupiers and pinned them against the unarmed resistance movement. The government then recruited the Greek nationalist units which came back from Africa, the remnants of Napoleon Zerva’s formations and other nationalist groups, and turned them into its future army. The government spared no effort to organize itself politically and militarily at all costs. In establishing its military units the government employed the system and conduct of independent National Guard battalions. These battalions were formed on a territorial basis and staffed with selected and trusted proven anti-democratic officers. These battalions were later tied together organizationally to create larger formations. This was during 1946.

By mid-1945 the government in Athens managed to establish itself in the city districts and in the larger communities. But unfortunately it was unable to efficiently manage them, particularly the provinces, with its weak military and police forces and with its destroyed road and railway infrastructure. However, as was mentioned earlier, the government used the former collaborators to do its bidding in the provinces.

Simultaneously, while the government was establishing itself and expanding its power, the former collaborators spread their terror and took measures to suppress the democratic movement, especially in the villages. In order to have legitimate representation, the government in Athens, more or less, quickly consolidated its authority as a counter-revolutionary force. In order to understand why it did that we need to consider the following points:

1. During the war Greece was a fascist dictatorship, a consolidated fascist state with fascist state organs, for a period of five full years. The rehabilitated former collaborators gave the government what it needed, devoted people who were determined to take down the democratic movement and who saw the communists as traitors.

2. The CPG was against an armed resistance and subordinated itself to the government. If the CPG's position had been different, for example if it had an active army, it would have been difficult for the government to successfully accomplish its purpose in terms of creating its military formations.

It was a fateful time and every member of the Party, EAM and every supporter and participant in the resistance movement was under attack. The impact of the devastating terror hung over their heads like the sword of Damocles. These people had had enough and were prepared to resist. It became obvious, even to ordinary members, that resisting by "political means" did not work against the devastating terror. But as far as the CPG was concerned that was their opinion and its leadership had made its position clear. The masses were well-aware of their size and strength should they be called upon to take a defensive course and organize an armed resistance in the country.

In order to clarify this we need to have a closer look at what else had been discussed during the CPG Central Committee 12<sup>th</sup> Plenum on June 25 to 27, 1945, examine the CPG attitudes adopted during the 7<sup>th</sup> Party Congress held in October 1945 and review some of the activities in which the CPG leadership participated in 1945 while attempting to consolidate its authority.

The 11<sup>th</sup> CPG Plenum was held before Zahariadis returned to Greece from exile (CPG General Secretary Zahariadis was arrested by the police when the Metaxas regime was in power and jailed during World War II. After Greece was occupied he was handed over to the Germans and taken to the Dachau camp in Germany) during which time a change was made in the way the struggle was conducted (NOD) but no serious analysis was done to find out the errors that had led to the movement's defeat. The 11<sup>th</sup> Plenum was held in early

1945 when Zahariadis was still in prison. The entire CPG membership expected that when Zahariadis returned from prison he would have decisive influence in the correction of mistakes that the previous leadership had made. As mentioned earlier, no serious analysis was done during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plenum to determine the mistakes the movement had made that led to the political right's victory. This is what was said during the Plenum about this under the title "Who is guilty":

"...But who then is to blame? With this question we arrive at the junction. Let us take a realistic look at Greece during the years of occupation. EAM in fact governed on the inside, which resolutely fought against the occupier. EAM attracted the majority, the decisive majority of the people. Other groups such as EDES, with respect to its impact on the masses, played a secondary role. Politically these other groups were isolated from the people. Gligzburg and his government, which called itself "the Greek government in exile", did not represent the people by any means and existed outside of Greece with no connection to the People's Liberation Movement and to the nation that fought against the occupiers. The former politicians who led Greece were either refugees in the Cairo court or collaborators working for the interest of the occupiers inside Greece.

Effort was made to achieve unity between EAM and the Greek government exiled in Cairo which ended in the signing of the Lebanon Agreement, which then allowed EAM to take part in the creation of an EAM government but headed by PEEA. EAM in fact was the real government because it had strength and power in Greece. The Greek government exiled in Cairo, in which EAM took part, had no real power. This was especially true after the military uprising in the Middle East, which resulted in an almost complete dispersion of armed forces abroad.

According to this inner-Greek relationship of forces, the problem of governing Greece would have been essentially solved, if the Greek factor was the only factor involved in this game. When the Red Army was advancing towards the Balkans and ELAS was fighting the Germans inside Greece, the Germans began to retreat and flee. This was the time when governance in Greece automatically and

naturally fell into the hands of EAM. If things remained the way they were, the internal Greek problem would be solved quickly, much easier and more democratically than any other country in Europe, without the need of any foreigners. The return of the Greek government from exile would have changed nothing. The only thing that would have been needed was reorganization of the government to reflect the true will of the nation. Had things stayed the way they were, elections would have been held within 2-3 months and the internal problems would have been fully solved. There was law and order inside Greece, there were police, a people's militia, strong discipline, tested triumph, solid leadership and an armed resistance. It would have taken 3-4 months for the military to consolidate its power.”

“So, where then does the fault lie? Where did things go wrong? Those who are trying to uncover the causes of the small mistakes made by the People's Liberation Movement are working in vain. Such errors are inevitable in a large scale wide and genuine effort such as this. But these errors did not affect the absolute right baseline. As highlighted above, EAM stayed on the right track from the beginning to the end of the occupation. It did nothing wrong. Neither is the Lebanon Agreement to blame. Things could have been worse but the Agreement fundamentally changed nothing. There was no shift in power in the country at that time.”

“So, where then does the blame lie?” asked Zahariadis after speaking about EAM's difficult task “to properly set up the movement in an international framework” and then said:

“Let us now try and put Greece in an international framework. Economically and politically Greece is significantly dependent on foreign capital, mainly British capital. Economically, geographically as well as politically, Greece belongs to the Balkans and to Europe and it cannot live and grow outside of its natural environment. Naturally Greece's economic content is located in the Balkans and Europe. It cannot remain alien and unaffected by the economic, political and social transformations in the Balkans and in Europe. It would be unnatural if it does and will result in isolation with many economic and political consequences. And today when the winds in the Balkans are blowing towards republics, and republics forming in

southeastern Europe became a creative influence of the great socialist republic from the north; such isolation will create serious intrigue, danger and decline in Greece. But placing Greece in today's international arena does not end here. Our country extends into the Mediterranean almost down to the African coastline and is master of the western and eastern Mediterranean, located on the road that connects Britain with the oil in the Middle East, the Suez and India and further on with China and the Pacific. Our country is located at a strategic, neuralgic and significant point, one of the most traveled arteries of the British Empire.

These arteries will exist as long as the British Empire exists and Britain will do everything in its power to keep them that way. Twice it fought to keep this artery, in 1914 and in 1939, because this artery is a pillar that holds its world. Our country is a disc in that pillar. If you deprive them of that disk it will bring down the whole pillar. We need never forget this. Besides, we must never forget that we are basically still dependent, economically and politically, on British capital.”

As was mentioned earlier, even the mildest mistakes made by the resistance movement were rejected. The CPG Central Committee 11<sup>th</sup> Plenum of April 1945 assessed that the Lebanon Agreement did not match the ratio of forces and therefore it did not promote the work of National Unity and did not provide normal democratic development. In other words, it wrongly assessed the forces utilized in the December clash and failed to use its opportunities to bring a more favourable settlement in Varkiza.

In his analysis Zahariadis places all the blame for the movement's defeat on the foreign factor, on the British engagement. It is true that British interference and armed intervention were necessary factors in order for the political right to win. This assessment, however, does not provide answers for past mistakes and still less for an open perspective for the future, for the thesis “Greek vertebra” in imperial building, for the “Greek axis” in international relations and for the need of a British presence in Greece. Zahariadis did not, without underestimating the foreign factor intervention, seriously consider one's own errors in the movement that led to the domination of the weak right wing forces, at the time, to extract valuable experience.

Thus, for example, he said that from the beginning to the end of the occupation EAM had, on these grounds, acted properly. Even if the Lebanon Agreement was worse on paper, he said it could not have affected the balance of power in the country. But he makes no mention of the Kazerta Agreement.

And exactly here lay the fundamental errors made by the CPG and EAM leaderships. EAM and PEEA, through the Lebanon Agreement, recognized and legitimized the Greek government in exile. They also allowed ELAS to be placed under the Greek government in exile and under Allied Command. Furthermore, by signing the Kazerta Agreement they agreed to territorialize the division of rule by ELAS, EDES and government forces and to create a national army. And most importantly, under the orders of Allied Command, ELAS was placed in the Middle East. It is true that the Agreements could not alter the given relationship in the forces but the Agreements did affect the course of the future, creating a legal position for the government in exile to return to Greece and, *carte blanche*, to act in the name of “the entire nation”, in the name of Greece and to work for its own selfish class interests.

A proper analysis of errors was needed in order to determine a correct line for the future, a correct orientation of the membership, a correct participation of the masses and a correct perspective for the struggle of the democratic forces in Greece. Unfortunately this was not done.

The opinions given by the CPG Central Committee leadership during the 12<sup>th</sup> Plenum, in fact, did not answer the fundamental question, namely whether there was a revolutionary situation in the country and what should be the course and basic form of struggle after the December events.

The CPG held its 7<sup>th</sup> Congress in Athens in early October 1945. This Congress was held ten months after the bloody events in December 1944, eight months after the signing of the Varkiza agreement and three months after the CPG Central Committee 12<sup>th</sup> Plenum was held, when the situation for the democratic forces in the country was increasingly worsening. It is therefore interesting to see how the Congress put things in motion.

Zahariadis presented his own political essay at the Congress. After two or three sentences of referring to the international situation, his first sentence about the internal situation began as follows:

“The violent armed Greek intervention in December 1944, which unexpectedly cut the average normal internal democratic development and brought to power the neo-Greek reactionaries, quislings and exploiters of the people, threw Greece into a deep political crisis. And today, ten months after the heroic resistance in December, our country has fallen into economic disaster, political chaos and anarchy.”

Then, referring to the “new Greek political problem” and to “the political crisis in Greece,” he said:

“The political crisis, in fact, that today eats away at our country has its roots in the violent British intervention in December in Greece, which took power from the hands of the people and gave it to the exploiters, quislings and traitors, creating hateful opposition between the majority of the people on one side and a clique of plutocrats who hold power on the other.”

The following was written in a report entitled “Relationship of the class forces in modern Greece”:

“Two political parties belonging to two separate camps and two separate streams are today essentially fighting for political supremacy in Greece. The first party is a group of plutocrats in whose ranks are gathered the quislings, the old guard, the old appointed mayors, the plantation owners and all the other exploiters of the people. They are led by the financial oligarchy as a ruling power. Politically this camp is fighting under the banner of Monarcho-Fascism, which still has some influence over remnant layers in towns and villages. As the primary means of achieving political supremacy, this group openly employs terror tactics through the Black Front, the SAN, the Ksitosi and other Monarcho-Fascist extremists. Almost the entire state apparatus including the police and military, led by special officers, are at its disposal to use for terrorist operations... From December onwards this regime has

waged a one-sided civil war against its opponents - popular democracy. It follows the following political line: the unchallenged fact that it does not have the support of the people and it never did. That is why it uses nonpolitical means to subdue a democratic nation.”

It is true that Greece in 1945 found itself in an “economic and political crisis and in chaos and anarchy”.

It is also true that there were “irreconcilable differences” and a “one-sided civil war” being waged. So, among other things, here is what was said about the aforementioned findings under the title “Unfriendly Opposition” and under the subtitle “New situation - new tasks – Britain’s responsibilities”:

“The new situation shaping before us has created a number of new tasks. There should be no doubt however, that in the centre of all political activities much effort must be made to achieve a peaceful development towards democratic elections.”

And what kind of elections were the officials preparing? One can only imagine what kind of elections were being prepared under conditions where the country was facing a unilateral civil war. But there was something said about the “upcoming elections” in a report. On page 8 of a booklet entitled “Marxist library”, dedicated to the 12<sup>th</sup> Congress, the following was written:

“But this does not exhaust the means of political supremacy which the Monarcho-Fascist reactionaries employ. British support has allowed forced isolation of the masses, terrorism, anti-democratic sentiments and other means of political supremacy. As we know, huge election fraud is being perpetrated. Today concrete forms of effort are being aimed in that direction. Everything that is boiled in London is applied here. Reconciliation between all bourgeois and other parties is achieved with British pressure. They have taken the crooked road to dividing the seats, and after December, to implement the “election” lists prepared by Bulgariis. In other words they are preparing Greece to triumph in parliamentary democracy without EAM! Unfortunately many of the democratic and socialist leaders, except for a small number who are honest, are participating

in these bargains. This is a shameless betrayal of democracy by all who lead Greece today.”

It is no wonder that the party line became blurred and illegible for the membership. Even though the political right waged an armed “one-sided civil war” against the democratic movement, the political left still insisted on following along the line of political struggle with parliamentary elections. By doing this the political left allowed the political right to destroy the flourishing democratic movement and the vanguard of the masses.

Following the Varkiza Agreement Aris Velouhiotis (Atanas Klaras), ELAS Commissar and first organizer of the partisan resistance in Greece, did not surrender his arms. In a speech he gave in Larissa, he openly condemned the political right’s shameless terrorist policy and told his audience that “he will not surrender his arms because he has not fulfilled the sacred oath he took and the promise he made to the people to bring them freedom and a happier life”. As a result he died for his ideals. Aris and a group of hundreds of fighters, who also did not surrender their arms, fled to the mountains and headed in the direction of (Greek occupied) Macedonia. In April 1945 when Aris arrived in Kostur Region in the village Kalevishta, he clashed with government troops. Not knowing the situation in the north: Koreshtata - Vicho and Kaimakchalan, he turned south towards a more familiar terrain where he acted during the German occupation. Aris wanted to know the political position of the neighbouring Communist Parties and for that reason he went to Albania. Unfortunately the authorities in Albania refused to see him and did not give him clear answers to his questions.

After Aris became active in the region around Konitsa and Dzhumerka during May and the beginning of June, he became a target for the National Guard. On June 10, 1945 the region was surrounded by two National Guard battalions and the next day, June 11, 1945, Aris and many of his close associates died fighting bravely. It is alleged that Aris shot himself to escape capture.

The destruction of Aris was a morale booster for the political right. The regional manager of Trikala immediately sent a telegram to notify the Ministry of the Interior of the “good news” in which he

wrote: “Good news, Aris’s band has been broken and destroyed. From early morning two heads are hung and publicly exposed in Trikala...”

Aris died and Greece lost the man who foresaw the consequences of the capitulatory Varkiza Agreement, the man who saw the necessity in continuing the armed uprising to its triumphant end. It is interesting to note at this point that while the EAM leadership showed care for Aris, the CPG leadership condemned him. The CPG leadership was afraid (fatally frightened) of accusing the bourgeoisie in power of being “extremist”. The EAM leadership however, as it turned out, was in the right to “sanctify Aris” which was in line with the mood of the democratic masses and the new social forces in the country that were fighting for a new Greece. These new social forces, the proletarians of the city, the poor of the villages and all those resistance fighters who were subjected to cruel persecution at the hands of the counterrevolutionary forces were convinced that only an open, determined and armed struggle, and not the “Agreements”, would lead them to their final victory; While they confidently looked to their forces, the political line tied their hands.

The Varkiza Agreement gave authorities the right to arrest, and hold in prison for 6 months, all “criminals who participated in direct crimes”. Thousands of resistance fighters were arrested and tried using this motive. Aris too, had he not died, would have been arrested and tried by this motive. The dimension of these arrests and terror had taken such a swing that even the “bourgeois-democratic centre” was protesting. At least this is how the situation for July was described in the magazine “Communist Review” (a CPG Central Committee monthly political-theoretical organ) in its August 1945 issue, in the column entitled “internal review”.

“The most important event of the month is the prosecution of the movement of the national resistance. It was found that 20,000 combatants are being held in prison. Also, on account of the Varkiza Agreement, there are people detained and in custody for more than 6 months, motivated by trumped up and silly charges like ‘robbery’, charges that in fact are not explicitly covered in the Varkiza Agreement.”

The following was written in the CPG Central Committee 1952 edition “War Chronicle” regarding the situation in the country after Varkiza: “December 1945”: “Monarcho-Fascist terrorist organization in the entire country. Over 1,000 murders were committed in the first nine months after the Varkiza Agreement was signed. The number of detainees in custody has reached over 75,000 and there are warrants issued by the courts to arrest another 65,000 people...”

Are there any obvious facts about how the political right abused the Varkiza Agreement and whether there was a need to revise the tactics of “anticipation” in requesting a “coalition government” and “free elections”?!

Since the “collision” took place in Athens in December 1944 between ELAS and the political right, which consequently led to signing the Varkiza Agreement and to adding provisions for the then constellation and the relationship of forces in Greece, it was clear that conditions were excluded for “peaceful development”, conditions for “free elections” and conditions for “forming a coalition government”. Greece adopted the line of the political right and began to wage a cruel and shameful terror war against the revolutionary forces.

### 3. The bourgeois crisis in 1945

All political parties in Greece were disbanded after the fascist Metaxas dictatorship took power in 1939. In the five-year period of this dictatorship, and especially during the occupation, fundamentally the masses lost confidence and trust in the bourgeois parties. After the occupier was ousted the two bigger bourgeois parties, the Populist and Liberal Party, known from their earlier parliamentary games in Greece, had great difficulty coming back.

The populist and openly monarchist party, with help from the government, succeeded in gathering and consolidating the remnants of the fascist Metaxas dictatorship regime, the collaborators who assisted the occupiers and the neo-fascists. The Liberal party, on the other hand, broke up into several groups with the largest group being led by Sofoulis, followed by the group led by Stilianos

Gonatas and by the group led by Sofoklis Venizelos. Later these parties were reorganized and became known as Kafandaris's Progressive Liberals and George Papandreou's Social Democrats. Other parties that came onto the scene included Napoleon Zervas's National Party of Greece and Panaiotis Kanellopoulos's National Unionist Party.

Over the course of 1945 (actually since October 1944) the government in Greece was changed six times. George Papandreou's government in exile came to Greece from Cairo on October 18, 1944. Five EAM coalition ministers served in that government. The government was reorganized on October 24, 1944. The EAM ministers resigned on December 1, 1944. After the bloody events in December, Nikolaos Plastiras took over and formed a government on January 3, 1945. This was the government that signed the armistice and the Varkiza Agreement. Less than two months later Plastira's government, which pledged to implement the Varkiza Agreement, resigned because it supposedly could not rule a country full of such lawlessness. It would appear that King George II needed a government that would best suit his contemporary needs – to relentlessly take measures against the democratic forces in the country. Such a solution was found in the establishment of Petros Voulgaris's "administrative government". Petros Voulgaris was a maritime officer and his government was an organ of the extreme right, which unleashed the political far right to carry out a general attack against the democratic organizations. His extreme measures frightened everyone, even the Liberals who began to seek other solutions. On August 11 the Voulgaris government went through some reorganization but fell flat on October 17, 1945. The regent Archbishop Damaskinos took over. Georgis Kanellopoulos formed a government on November 1, 1945 and remained in power only until November 22, when Themistoklis Sofoulis took over.

Sofoulis was leader of the Republican Party, which in the period between the two world wars was affirmed anti-monarchist, and this was by no coincidence. Even though it carried much legitimacy, it is also important to know that, thanks to CPG leadership estimations, the Liberal Party was not representative of the crown but of the petty bourgeoisie, a part of the intelligentsia, and the bureaucracy. The CPG leadership was well-aware of the following facts:

1. The Liberals, led by Sofoulis during the 1935 political crisis in Greece, had failed to agree on parliamentary cooperation between the CPG and the liberals, paving the way for the restoration of the monarchy.

2. In 1936 the Liberal caucus, under the leadership of Sofoulis, by vote showed confidence in the government of General Metaxas and, in actual fact, legalized his power to be able to impose a fascist dictatorship.

3. The so-called “Liberal Sofoulis” refused all electoral collaboration with the CPG to prevent restoration of the monarchy in Greece.

4. It was the Liberals who requested from the regency to establish the 1936 Parliament in which the Fascists participated, during which the CPG had only a few Members of Parliament.

The liberal bourgeoisie in Greece in effect always took the inevitable road when the bourgeois society in Greece fell into a crisis and, at the most fatal moment, acted against the revolution. Here are Lenin’s thoughts as expressed in his paper entitled “Lessons of the Revolution” (referring to the 1905 first Russian revolution) which seem to describe Greek bourgeoisie behaviour perfectly:

“When the revolution reached the decisive battle with the king in the December uprising in 1905, the Liberals, all of them, entirely betrayed the freedom of the people and withdrew from the fight. This prompted the royal autocracy to use this betrayal to convince those who believed the Liberals to smash the workers who rose during the uprising. And when the proletariat was crushed, no Duma, no sweet words from the Cadets and no prior promises made kept the king from destroying all remnants of freedom”.

It seems that the CPG leadership had forgotten those truths. It had forgotten that the bourgeoisie and the Liberals, when it came to decisive calculations, always supported their own class position. And such decisive calculations did exist in Greece. That is why it

was no coincidence that the Liberals criticized the actions of the political far right so that it would not ignite a rebellion, the very thing that the bourgeoisie feared the most. That is why the Liberals were calling for “peace and order” and supporting CPG and EAM slogans, but only to make a “small” difference: so that EAM would not participate in the coalition government and so that the “centre” would then have the strongest voice.

After many resolutions made and articles written in hundreds of places, it was concluded that a “one-sided civil war” was raging in the country. The number of “casualties” kept increasing after the government was installed and let’s not forget the forged electoral lists that were being prepared. At the same time the CPG leadership was refusing to accept Sofoulis’s appointment as head of the government, unable to see that this was a successful manoeuvre on the part of the united political right to cause problems. This is what was briefly said about the backroom deals made during the appointment of the government in the December issue of the “Communist Review” under the column “Internal Review”:

“The government of the Liberal leader Mr. Sofoulis in principle has the support of the left, this is in accordance with several short statements made and repeated in the past by the CPG and by the EAM.”

Further on the article said: “The government that Mr. Sofoulis is putting together will run into bitter reaction and open opposition from the Monarcho-Fascist political right: the Black Front, the SAN, the Ksitosites and others. The entire democratic world, the citizens and those who are now in the armed forces, are called upon to exercise their national rights by any means possible to prevent the Monarcho-Fascist political right from exacting a coup. Listen for and follow the directives issued by the Sofoulis Cabinet.”

There is more: “As for the Sofoulis government, the CPG Central Committee Politburo stated that it will support any measures the Sofoulis government will take which will go towards establishing equality, peace and order in Greece, with the ultimate goal of having free elections as soon as possible. Knowing that the economic situation in Greece was a catastrophe, the CPG Central Committee

Politburo stated that it will support government efforts for economic stability, up to election time, if the economic weight is evenly split, i.e. if the government makes the rich and wealthy exploiters pay. The CPG Central Committee Politburo concluded that the removal of the Bishop from the regency is an essential element to internal order and tranquility and to establishing moral order in political life, out of which so many have fallen during the Bishop's regency. The CPG Central Committee Politburo has given directives to all party organizations to immediately comply with the spirit of this resolution..."

I think it was necessary to provide the above excerpts quoted from the CPG Central Committee Resolution because it expresses the CPG leadership's attitude held in late 1945. We can see the attitude held towards Sofoulis's cabinet, towards the Cabinet which ruled during the elections held on March 31, 1946, which legalized lawlessness and opened the way for the restoration of the monarchy and for the counterrevolution in Greece.

## CHAPTER TWO - Restoration of the monarchy

### 1. Parliamentary elections and plebiscites

After the counter-revolutionary forces in Greece, aided by the British occupation forces, attacked the democratic forces and delivered a strong blow, they began to prepare forged electoral lists to ensure that their side wins. Having the support of Sofoulis's Liberals the counter-revolutionaries felt ready to hold elections on March 31, 1946. Themistoklis Sofoulis formed his cabinet in late 1945.

During that time democratic forces, democratic parties and organizations struggled to revise the electoral lists, to end the terror and to involve international monitoring and control by appealing to the great powers, which included the US, the USSR, Britain and France, but without much success. Ignoring the bitter protests coming from the democratic forces, ignoring public opinion, the counter-revolutionary forces in Greece, with help from imperialist circles abroad, held elections and forcibly formed a Parliament with members who would fight for and further strengthen the counter-revolutionary cause. Thousands of democratic citizens were not allowed to vote because their names were not on the electoral lists. Greece was ruled by lawlessness and violence perpetrated by armed authorities and right-wing organizations. Terror increased and tens of thousands of people were imprisoned or persecuted during the course of the elections.

And indeed, the Greek political right achieved its aims. Because of the ensuing problems the EAM coalition, which included the CPG, Tsideros's party, Kafandaris's party, Kartalis's group, the Leftist Liberal group and Zvolos's ELD party, decided to abstain from the elections. The left coalition's abstinence unfortunately allowed for easier manipulation and falsification of the electoral lists. There was no need to prove that over 55% of the electorate abstained from voting but that did not prevent the counterfeiters from redrawing the result since there was no one monitoring them. There was a control commission sent by the UN but all that commission did was aid the counterfeiters. The elections Control Committee was not composed of the four Great Powers as requested by the democratic side, it was

composed of members from Britain, the USA and France only. The Soviet Union did not agree to participate because it did not want to be accused of “interfering in Greek internal affairs”. But even if the Commission was honest about what it was doing, how could several teams of people, scattered across the country, ensure the election would be free from interference? They could not, which further proves that the percentage of people who voted was falsified. But that did not stop the “most responsible” and “most authoritative” committee of representatives from the US, Britain and France from confirming the election results and from legalizing the illegitimate regime that took power.

The Parliament elected was composed of the following:

Populists – 131, Liberals - 84, Papandreu’s Social Democrats – 30, Gonatas’s National-Liberals - 22, Zervas’s National Party – 21, Markezinis’s Party – 18, Kanelopoulo’s National-Unionist Party – 12, The National Force – 10, Independent Parliamentary Group – 5, Independents – 15, Pan-Hellenic National Party - 1, Reformist Party – 1, Patriotic Union – 1, Worker’s Party – 1, Union of Agricultural Formations – 1 and Independent Liberals - 1.

Outside of the Liberals with 84 MP’s, among whom were camouflaged monarchists, the rest were openly monarchists. And that was how the Populist Party was able to form a government and organize a plebiscite and restore the king in 1946.

A Plebiscite was held on September 1, 1946. It was conducted under extreme conditions of anarchy and terror. First, now that the counter-revolutionaries were “legally” in power and their authority was given to them by the people in the March 31, 1946 elections, they threw themselves with even greater vigour against the democratic forces. They liquidated all provincial EAM and CPG organizations and shut down all democratic newspapers. Second, after the parliamentary elections, as terror increased to unprecedented levels, the civil war began to enter a new phase. Open armed resistance began to take shape in the country. The plebiscite to return the king back to Greece actually took place while Greece was in the midst of a civil war.

The democratic organizations and the political left in general did not abstain from the plebiscite. But who could now doubt the success of the monarchy? If falsification could succeed in parliamentary elections, then why not in a plebiscite? Indeed, on September 1, 1946 the eyes of the world were focused on Greece's second massive fraud, this time in the restoration of the monarchy.

The most gruesome moments in this period were:

- Counter-revolutionary forces systematically intensifying terror against the democratic movement;
- The civil parties and Sofoulis's Liberals, which traditionally supported the liberal bourgeoisie, went over to the monarchists. They participated in the elections and held the plebiscite to restore the monarchy, which confirms their non-solidarity with the EAM's left coalition, Kafindarisa and other groups.
- The political left shows hesitation towards possible avenues for development in Greece. Because of the terror more resistance fighters flee to the mountains.
- The "Greek question" is put before the United Nations and becomes a subject of international discussions.

## 2. Positions of the Political Left

Themistoklis Sofoulis's cabinet coming to power in November 1945, as seen immediately after its takeover, was groundlessly evaluated by the CPG Central Committee Politburo as a victory for the democratic forces. The CPG foolishly placed trust that this would hopefully lead to peace in the country, free elections and so on. For the first few months after he was given power, Sofoulis navigated around in a typical Liberal fashion sowing even greater uncertainty and illusions. Unfortunately at the same time, terror caused by the authorities not only did not stop but became even more systematic and widespread. Despite that Sofoulis continued to manoeuvre towards having the elections. He openly stood against the democratic camp when he announced that, despite objections and the ongoing terror, "elections will be held". Only then, as can be

seen from the Party's press releases, the Politburo showed some opposition. The following article was written on November 24, 1945: "About the Allied observers. Allied observers arrived in our city and will monitor the elections that Sofoulis wants to hold on March 31, 1946". ("Niki" March 16, 1946, EAM organ for Lerin.) Later on another article said: "No one to elections. Every democratic citizen from every town and village should abstain from voting so that their abstinence will become a grave for this electoral coup". ("Niki", March 28, 1946.) It should be noted that this newspaper was illegal at that time. On February 16, 1946, when it was still legal, the same newspaper published an article entitled: "Under what conditions will we participate in the elections?" and then the article listed the conditions.

On February 12, 1946, during the CPG Central Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> Plenum, Zahariadis, among other things, said:

"...Without a doubt today we need to emphasize once again that the Varkiza Agreement was entirely proper for responding to national, democratic and the people's interests."

It is clear that such an attitude was an attitude for "peaceful developments". But the real situation was somewhat different, as evidenced by a report compiled by a partisan group on Mounts Paiak and Kaimakchalan which said:

January: The people at Paiak are fighting for fair and free elections; they are fighting against British and American plans, who, by all means, are preparing for an electoral coup. It is important to take defensive action by all means and fight against these monarchic plans. An entire month has gone by without any organizational work and with no action, waiting for a situation to develop.

February: The situation in the region remains the same and the same problems remain unresolved. We are making some organizational preparations in case of a possible coup. A People's Self Defense Committee was created in Voden Region in the last ten days, which will take part in the movement to organize a self-defense strategy. Unfortunately it is difficult for the Committee to move around under

the present conditions, especially because of the uncertainty of where our own leadership stands on this issue.

March: The situation at Paiak is deteriorating. The Monarch-Fascists are leading towards an electoral coup. People are struggling under the most difficult conditions of terror. The Self Defense Committee has come to an understanding with the local leaderships and has created tasks in an attempt to create a comprehensive mass popular self-defense strategy. It began with studying the problem of obtaining and transferring arms. We are also analyzing the problem of a possible coup. We have met with the villages and are working to raise the spirit of self-defense. We are also delivering some weapons.

April: With the results of the election coup, the mad Monarcho-Fascists are exerting immense cruelty against the democratic organizations and against the democratic nation..."

From the above reports, it seems to me that the impending situation was clear and so was the top leadership's hesitation during the "development of the situation". It was by no accident that nothing was done and no armed action was undertaken before the elections. In fact the top leadership waited for the "coup" to take place while it was studying it. The "mass popular defense strategy" was put into action only after the "election coup" took place. By definition a coup is anti-parliamentary and taking control by forcefully seizing power. But it was not the Greek bourgeoisie who were experienced in playing these games that took power forcefully. This was an enacted "parliamentary coup" won by manipulating the elections.

As we have seen from the partisan group reports originating in Paiak and Kajmakchalan, preparations for armed resistance were being made since the beginning of 1946, namely since persecutions against the resistance fighters began and since many democratic organizations were shut down and made illegal all over Greece. Unfortunately no armed action on the resistance side was enacted until the end of the elections.

The democratic resistance abstained from voting in the March 31, 1946 elections but took part in an armed action. An armed guerrilla

group carried out an armed attack against the opposition at Lihtohori, a town near Mount Olympus, and thus marked the official start of the Greek Civil War; members of the political left who were in a state of exile and terror, struck back.

There were frequent armed clashes in the coming months, in all regions of Greece with guerrilla groups constantly growing. On October 28, 1946 the Democratic Army of Greece (DAG) established its General Headquarters. But even during this situation it was difficult to determine what the CPG leadership was thinking. Which form of struggle would it consider important: political or armed? Even though the CPG was not in parliament, because it voided the election results, it always thought that its time would come if “free” elections were truly held. Because of that, it did not object to having a plebiscite and in fact agreed for the political left to participate in it, even though the actual plebiscite was held under conditions of war.

In fact the CPG’s hesitation continued until October 1947. From this we can conclude that the CPG was waging a political struggle as a means to force the political right to agree to its compromises and to end its terror campaign against the democratic movement. When it failed to achieve results, the CPG resorted to indirect armed resistance, trusting a cadre who was persecuted by the CPG to do its bidding so as not to tip its own hand. The CPG’ attitude towards the armed struggle was made obvious by the following information given by Markos Vafiadis: “In October 1946 when I went to the mountains, I found one group of 65 soldiers acting in Gramos under the leadership of Mr. Gianoulis. I found another group of 350 fighters in Vicho. Besides those there were another 1,200 fighters in all of Greece... There was no CPG directive given for the establishment of the General Headquarters, established on October 28, 1946”. (Statements made by General Marcos at the CPG Central Committee 7<sup>th</sup> Plenum in 1957, published in the journal “Neos Kozmos”, April-May 1957, p. 53.)

The course the CPG was going to take was still unclear until October 1947 when, during the CPG Central Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenum, the CPG called for an armed uprising expressed by the following paragraph:

“The American intervention in Greece has closed the door to both sides for an agreement and therefore has raised the question for starting an armed struggle.” Furthermore it puts in place the goal for “liberating the entire country, ensuring its independence and its democratic development”, and the immediate task of “creating more free territory and establishing a democratic government. To this end the Democratic Army is to conduct mobilization and numerical growth; raise the fighting spirit; design a master plan for attacking and implement tactics of constant offensives; to expand and increase impact; to protect our forces...”

### 3. Events from September 1946 to September 1947

Greece restored the monarchy with a forged plebiscite held in September 1946. George II came to the throne with a bad reputation in Greek political life, but greatly influenced the counter-revolutionary circles in Greece. With the Konstandin Tsaldaris government in power, George II had only one thing in mind: suppress the resistance movement by force. Such a solution could not be achieved without violent means including war. Therefore, his tactics steered towards a calculated blow to the democratic movement on the battlefield. And in December 1946, when he turned to the UN, he began his work in accordance with that plan, namely that the “armed rebellion was supported from the outside” and a war against the democratic forces in his country was justified.

The CPG position, on the other hand, was that the armed struggle should be strengthened but without intending to take power by force by overthrowing the government, but as a means of putting pressure on the government to withdraw quietly with a parliamentary solution. This CPG leadership attitude was valid only until October 1947, which was a result of the evaluation that “the balance of power in the country allowed this and that international conditions had matured enough for a peaceful solution to the Greek question”. Unfortunately, by then international conditions had turned against a “peaceful solution” because at that time the world was being internationally polarized and the spirit of the World War II coalition was being increasingly distorted.

A targeted aim of the Tsaldaris government, after the king returned to Greece, was to accelerate the growing terror against the democratic forces, which in turn intensified the growth of armed resistance in the country, where chaos reigned and economic and labour strikes became a regular phenomenon. In the fall of 1946, agreement was reached to combine and unite the Greek Left armed guerrilla forces with those of the (Greek occupied) Macedonian People's Liberation Front (NOF) forces which had acted in conformity with the CPG. This agreement had a positive effect on amassing the armed struggle in the country. The small guerrilla groups were combined to form large and regular partisan units capable of standing up to the royal forces.

Being unable to resist the attacks on their own, the Greek reactionaries in December 1946 raised the issue at the UN. A UN Security Council Inquiry Commission was put together and dispatched to Greece in January 1947. During the time the Commission was preparing to visit Greece and during its visit, to some extent, the terror was eased and a weak image of democratic life began to show in the cities. The democratic newspapers, once again, began to publish their dailies and EAM organizations were able to acquire office space. But the moment the Inquiry Commission left Greece and with the takeover of the Ministry of Security by Napoleon Zervas, in March 1947, the mass terror was back again. Zervas filled all important positions in the Ministry with his friends and supporters. All those people who testified before the Inquiry Commission were arrested and thrown into prison. Zervas even issued orders to hunt down the central CPG leadership. The democratic newspapers were again shut down. The larger towns and cities were faced with frequent provocations disabling CPG and EAM functions.

The Tsaldaris Government used every means possible to destroy the guerrilla movement, refusing to agree to any kind of compromise or to maintain the struggle at a political level. To that end the government's activities can be summarized as follows:

a) In order to restrict the development of the partisan movement, the government conducted mass terror campaigns against all democratic appearances. It conducted mass arrests, internments, killings and

issued death sentences in order to stem the democratic and worker-peasant movements in the towns and villages.

b) All responsible positions in the state apparatus were filled with people who had distinguished themselves with their anti-people's works during the Metaxas fascist dictatorship, during the Italian and German occupation and afterwards.

c) The government used every means possible to increase and strengthen its armed forces with its own trusted people – both the army and the gendarmes. After that it began to arm the general “loyal” population and turn it into armed units.

The army was cleansed of all officers who appeared to have even the slightest democratic ideas and replaced with proven monarchists. It strengthened ESA – the military police, which stifled even the smallest democratic appearance. It mobilized new forces but this mobilization was done by personal invitation rather than by the usual general induction by year. It paid careful attention to the equipment and armament for the military. Officers and NCOs were paid well and veterans and their families were awarded assistance.

But despite all the measures taken, the monarchists, at that time, still had not developed a reliable military machine because the soldiers were not sure what they were fighting for. Also, given that they were fighting a civil war, they were expected to fight against their own people. Also, all those militant democratic elements, perceived as being a threat, were either in prison or in the mountains. That is why there was a conservative and hesitant spirit in the army. It took strong government propaganda to influence the soldiers to fight because a democratic victory was not possible... The propaganda emphasized the Anglo-American presence in Greece. Also, to avoid erosion the CPG was banned from influencing the ranks of the royal army.

In the hands of the Athens government, the police and the gendarmes were the most trusted armed forces in the country. They were privileged and well paid. They were responsible for persecuting the people and carrying out terrorist acts in the provinces. They were responsible for carrying out mass arrests in the

cities and villages, destroying democratic institutions, shutting down democratic newspapers, offices and clubs. They were also responsible for the fiercest fighting against the partisans. Included in the police and gendarme formations were many of the quisling elements and collaborators who aided the occupiers during the war. They were the people who participated in the “tagma asvalias” (battalion formations) in Greece and who fought in favour of the occupiers. With collaborator Napoleon Zervas taking charge of the Ministry of Public Security in March 1947, the police and gendarme forces were expanded and the terror and violence were increased to unprecedented heights, especially after the elections and the plebiscite.

In the course of 1947 the government began to force the civilian population to arms. This was nothing new and had been done before through “auxiliary organizations” under the pretext that “the population is arming to defend itself against the partisans”. Now that role was openly taken over by the state authorities, the military and the police. The armed civilians now became an integral part of the auxiliary armed forces in the counter-revolution. The units created were called “Monades Asfalias Ipetrou” MAI (Provincial Security Units) and played an important role as an auxiliary military and political tool for the Greek reactionaries during and after the Greek Civil War. To this day they still play an important role in Greece in the suppression of democratic rights.

The Monarcho-Fascist propaganda machine, using radio and the press, did not need a reason to attack the democratic movement and the democratic army, all it had to do was vilify them by calling them “weapons of the Slavs” who wanted to “destroy Greece”. Their propaganda also concentrated on strengthening the belief in the masses that Britain and the United States did not want the Democratic Army of Greece to win. It was very important to the US and the UK that DAG be destroyed because they did not want to lose a very important strategic position, which otherwise would fall to the influence of the USSR. This propaganda had significant impact on the masses because it was supported by actual events. Britain persistently fought in the UN to maintain the right to station troops on Greek territory and by being there they aided and intervened on behalf of the political right. The US government, on

the other hand, on top of its diplomatic and political support in international relations and in the UN, in March 1947 announced that it would give Greece material assistance, which followed immediately afterwards.

But in spite of all the effort the Tsaldaris government made to suppress the democratic movement, including increasing the government's armed forces to the extent that the government would be able to defeat the partisan resistance, it was unable to do so. The partisan movement continued to grow and strike back with increased ferocity until the Royalist General Headquarters found it difficult to operate in wide open space and came up with a plan to withdraw into a secure space. In April 1947 the royalist government issued a secret order to all its units to withdraw from open spaces and concentrate in major administrative and communication centres. Here the forces found better security and at the same time isolated these urban centres from democratic partisan movement access. The royal army's retreat into city centres was followed by a forceful civilian evacuation of many villages which gave the royalists greater economic control. These measures were accompanied by efforts made to organize a defense strategy around urban centres and communication facilities. The cities in the regions where partisan movements existed were surrounded by barbed wire (left over from the occupation), minefields, bunkers, machine gun and cannon nests, etc.

The tactics to withdraw the government forces from the most rebellious regions and place them in urban centres and the forceful evacuation of villagers from their homes (some villagers left on their own) created panic and economic chaos in the affected regions. The population in some affected cities doubled and tripled. Hundreds and thousands of refugees were forced to live in collective centres with meager assistance provided mainly by UNRA. The Athens government used the opportunity here to arm a segment of these refugees and use them to keep the rest down and to defend internal facilities.

Day by day the civil war in the country intensified and so did the never ending economic chaos and terror. Even though it was supported by six party leaders belonging to the extreme political

right, the Tsaldaris government fell in August 1947. In the next ten days that followed Tsaldaris tried to assemble a new “broad coalition” government to include the Liberals, but failed. Then on August 29, 1947, the Populists put together an exclusively one-party government but that too did not hold. On September 7, 1947 Themistoklis Sofoulis, as head of the Liberal Party, stepped up and created a new government.

The democratic forces, during this period, led a two-pronged fight against the Athens regime: one, politically and two, by militarily means through an armed partisan struggle. The political parties from the political left carried out the political struggle while simultaneously the armed struggle was carried out by the growing partisan units which later became the Democratic Army of Greece (DAG). In the meantime, EAM fought against the terror in the country, trying to preserve and extend democratic rights, the right to life, the right to work and the right for its own parties and organizations to exist and function. Agitation was the most effective weapon used in the field, mostly through the press. The Athens regime, by then, had effectively disabled most democratic organizations and arrested many of the activists working in the field and among the masses. EAM’s main position was to stay calm and continue to work with the government on compromises for a peaceful means of development and building of the country, for cleansing the state apparatus and the army of fascist elements and for conducting free democratic elections (this was the CPG’s attitude at that time).

The EAM’s position regarding the armed resistance was that “this was a result of the immediate terror in the country”. Parallel to that was the CPG’s Directive: “Whoever is afraid and in danger of being arrested is welcome to join the partisan ranks.”

When the UN Inquiry Commission was in Greece, the CPG arranged a number of visits by individuals and groups with various memoranda and complaints. The opinion that prevailed in the Party at that time was that, in international terms, conditions were mature for a peaceful solution to the Greek question.

When Napoleon Zervas took control of the Ministry of Public Safety in March 1947, he not only escalated the ferocity of terror against the democratic population but brutally attacked EAM and CPG political organizations rendering them completely mute. This pressure from the political right created an even greater objective need for the partisan units to constantly grow; new fighters joined the partisan ranks, particularly those from the ranks of the democratic organizations who were threatened with arrests by state bodies.

The resistance movement gained particular momentum after April 1947, after the Greek government General Headquarters issued the order, mentioned earlier, for the government forces to withdraw from the terrain and organize their defenses in urban centres. But even though DAG in that period was growing at a faster rate, and from time to time repelled government attacks against the “free” zones, it was still an army with a revolutionary character and unable to engage the enemy in a general offensive.

In the spring of 1947, the government army was forced to withdraw from the rebellious terrain and move to urban and communications centres in Macedonia, Thessaly and Epirus. It is important to mention here that Greece, at that time, had not yet recovered from the destruction to its infrastructure which was destroyed during the war, especially its rail links. The rail link from Solun to Lerin and from Solun to Istanbul, for example, did not work. The urban centres had no defense facilities and the morale in the government army had fallen, while the morale of the DAG fighters was growing.

It was most unfortunate that DAG did not capitalize on these “favourable” conditions to attract more fighters to increase its decisive forces for the revolution. I have no idea what the CPG leadership was thinking, while it was free to walk the Athens boulevards. I have no idea what the DAG leadership thought, sitting quietly up in the mountains. But the fact remains that conditions were most favorable for initiating an offensive and expanding the “free” territories to include all of northwest Greece - western Macedonia, Epirus and part of Thessaly.

The reasons why the political left did not take advantage of the situation expressed earlier can be explained if we consider the following points:

- The armed uprising at the time was viewed not as a means to deliver a decisive victory over the enemy, but as a means to compel the enemy to compromise.
- Even though more focus was being shifted to the armed struggle, the EAM and CPG leaderships, in their numbers, still existed legally. Because of this the revolutionary forces were divided and its leadership was not in a good position to make strong demands in favour of the needs of the revolution.
- Because of the division in the revolutionary forces, the direction in which the struggle was going to take place could not be expressed in terms of which the masses and the armed insurgents could be made aware.
- To a considerable extent, the spirit and tactics of ELAS pervaded the ranks of DAG in saving its strength.

And thus the summer of 1947 came and went without delivering the decisive blows that could have been delivered by the revolutionary forces against the state machinery. In fact the signs of a positional struggle were there. The blockade of the free regions by the Athens government, for example, and the Democratic army responding with a counter-blockade, was a tactic which damaged the revolution; an error recognized a few months later. That was all the opponent needed, just those few months to organize his defenses and safeguard a few of his critical positions. Also, this was the most ideal time for DAG to expand its forces, improve its tactics in order to gain decisive superiority over the enemy and attack and defeat the enemy's strong points. But that did not happen. In the summer of 1947 DAG, as it was then, had enough forces to deliver a crippling blow against its enemy but it didn't do that either.

This, and the fact that the Athens regime had help from the international community, is why Greece did not destabilize during the ten days in August 1947 when it was facing a crisis without a

government. But had the revolutionary forces taken the offensive during that time, during the most severe crisis in the civil war, the Monarcho-Fascist regime could not have survived.

In August 1947, during the time that the government was facing a crisis in Greece, DAG General Headquarters issued a communiqué with which it declared that Greece was an “independent republic”. Further in the communiqué it reported that DAG General Headquarters was in charge of the supreme legislative and executive powers up to the formation of a democratic government.

#### 4. International intervention

International intervention in Greece had actually started in the course of World War II when Britain, under the pretext of using the resistance movement in the country, was helping the collaborator Zervas to stifle the growth of the armed resistance movement led by EAM. But this was a hidden intervention until British intentions became clear in December 1944 when it was irrefutably asserted that the Greek political right had found itself in danger of completely losing its positions in Greece, with a high probability of being removed from power.

The December events were rekindled with the arrival of Churchill in Athens, accompanied by British Foreign Minister Eden, Commander of the Middle East forces Alexander and by Minister for the Middle East McMillan. Under the protection of British tanks the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on December 26 and 27, 1944, held a conference attended by representatives of the various political parties, the president of the Greek government that was resigning, George Papandreou, the regent candidate Archbishop of Athens Damaskinos and Nikolaos Plastiras (candidate for President of the Greek government). Attending from the CPG and EAM side were EAM Secretary and member of the CPG Central Committee Politburo Dimitrios Partsalidis. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the two allied Great Powers: US ambassador to Athens McCabe and representative of the Soviet Union Colonel Popov.

Churchill's visit to Greece by itself was a sign of British intention. The British government was led into an extremely awkward situation, both in Greece and internationally which, at the time, existed in the atmosphere of the coalition. On the other hand, this speaks loudly of the fact that the political right in Greece was bottoming out and in danger; with a chance of losing if the struggle developed nationally. There was no consensus reached at this meeting and the fighting continued and ended with the signing of the Varkiza Agreement.

After this international scene with regards to the Greek question, things went down the road with a unilateral civil war waged against the democratic movement with moral and material assistance from the British forces which remained in Greece after World War II.

The "Greek question" itself, however, never did become a subject of international discussion during 1945.

With intentions of helping the EAM coalition, which had been persecuted in the country since the beginning of 1946, a Soviet delegation at the UN, on January 21, 1946, raised the Greek question in the Security Council with a request to adopt a resolution to "withdraw the British occupation forces from Greece". This resolution, however, was met with bitter resistance from the British as well as from the American, French and other Western Power delegations which, after lengthy discussions at the Security Council, ended on February 6, 1946 with a vague resolution that read as follows: "The Security Council took into consideration statements made and opinions expressed by the Soviet, British and Greek delegations regarding the presence of British troops in Greece. The statements were entered into the Council's documents and thus the issue was considered closed."

Shortly after this, while the Greek situation was still active internationally, parliamentary elections were called in Greece to be held on March 31, 1946. EAM and some small bourgeois-democratic parties informed their supporters to abstain from voting. The elections took place anyway and, even though the results were falsified, the counter-revolutionary government was elected and legalized. The Greek bourgeoisie was in need of international factor

validation to show that “the elections were free”. On this the Greek political right received assistance from election monitors from three major powers: the US, Britain and France. In other words, it received international intervention from the Anglo-Americans because they saw this as a necessary measure to preserve their imperialist positions in Greece. After the March 31 elections a supposedly “legitimate” government was chosen which, with the September 1946 plebiscite, restored King George II to the Greek throne and continued the unilateral civil war against the democratic movement in Greece. The extended persecution by the right against the democratic movement caused a gradual increase in the democratic resistance movement, which turned the unilateral civil war into a real civil war. Feeling the pressure, the Greek government turned to the UN for help. On December 3, 1946 a Greek delegation was sent to the UN to inform the Security Council that the struggle being led in Greece was led with help from the outside, claiming that “the rebels in Greece are being helped by Greece’s northern neighbours who are in violation of international law and are endangering the peace and security in the Balkans”.

This Greek government appeal was quickly discussed in the Security Council and, with support from the Anglo-Americans, on December 19, 1946 a decision was reached to form an Inquiry Commission which was to go to Greece and examine the situation on the ground. The Inquiry Commission consisted of 11 Security Council representatives which included delegates representing the interested parties of the four named Balkan countries - Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria on the one hand and Greece on the other. The Inquiry Commission began its work on January 29, 1947 as soon as it arrived in Athens. The Commission remained in Athens from January 19 to February 15, 1946, after which time it moved to Solun with individual teams visiting one side and then the other side of Greece’s northern border. On March 24, 1946 the Commission left for Sofia and Belgrade with one team heading for Skopje, where it held meetings until April 2, 1947, conducting interviews of witnesses. The Commission also received CPG and EAM delegations, one team even made contact with General Markos Vafiadis, Army Commander of DAG General Headquarters. The Inquiry Commission then retreated to Geneva where it remained from April 17 to May 23, 1947 preparing the report of its findings.

Unfortunately the report was not impartial and therefore was not unanimously supported. But with 8 out of 11 votes, the following conclusion was reached:

“Based on evidence found, the Commission concluded that Yugoslavia, and to a lesser extent Albania and Bulgaria, did help the rebel war in Greece.”

This is exactly what the Greek regime in Athens needed in order to mobilize the UN to help the Greek government. In other words, to justify American aid and the presence of British forces in Greece on one hand, and to suppress outside assistance offered to the democratic movement on the other, all in the name of preventing the Partisan movement from “threatening the peace in the Balkans” and from “violating international law”. The Inquiry Commission report hardly made any mention of the terror that the democratic forces were facing or their opinions as to what they were fighting for and why more than 70,000 people were in prison, people who not only did not collaborate with the occupier but were fighters in the resistance movement, hundreds killed, tortured, etc. And in that sense the democratic forces took moral victory.

Based on the conclusion the Inquiry Commission delivered and even before it had completed its first survey, a new Inquiry Commission called the “Balkan Commission” was put together. This Commission, however, was not recognized by the Balkan countries - Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania; the countries that were accused of “helping the rebel war”. Even though the Commission did not visit their territories, it collected “evidence” that “Greece’s northern neighbours threatened its independence”. This Commission was the moral factor of the Greek bourgeoisie which helped them survive the major crisis in 1947.

But moral support was not quite enough to quell the partisan movement. Material assistance was also needed. However the weight of growing Greek demands on Britain was too much to bear so the United States took Britain’s place. In March 1947, US President Harry Truman openly said that he was determined to “help Greece secure its independence”. Truman announced this to the US Congress and his statement became known as the “Truman

Doctrine”, which basically was a plan to rescue the Greek bourgeoisie. Based on this the US government began to openly intervene in the Greek Civil War. In 1947 alone the US sent 300 million dollars of military aid and this practice continued throughout the entire duration of the civil war and beyond. On top of material assistance in military equipment, the US also sent military experts to train the Greek army. In the fall of 1947 a joint military staff was formed and placed under the command of US General Van Fleet and all major operational units were staffed with US officers. This intervention was deemed of “legal” character because it was there to help the “legally elected government” and the “lawful regime in Greece” against “subversive elements”. US aid came at a time when the Greek bourgeoisie had fallen into a difficult situation. Before the US had awarded this aid, part of the Greek bourgeoisie was unsure of Prime Minister Konstantine Tsaldaris’s Populist Party and the success of its dynamic policies. Themistoklis Sofoulis, head of the Liberals with his MP’s in opposition, had criticized the government and the partisan movement of being two extremes and advocated “for agreements”, “peace”, etc. But the arrival of US aid in September 1947 had such an effect on the entire liberal bourgeoisie that it entered into coalition with the government and led the war against the Democratic Army with even greater dexterity.

Based on the two reports which the Balkan Commission prepared regarding “Greece’s neighbours helping the rebel war”, the Greek government requested that this “Greek issue” remain on the Security Council agenda, which it did for the entire summer of 1947. But because the Soviet Union placed a veto on it whenever the issue was brought up, the US, on August 20, 1947, sent a request to the UN Secretary General to move the “Greek issue” to the UN General Assembly agenda. When the General Assembly convened on December 17, 1947 in New York, the item was present on the agenda under the theme “Endangerment of the national independence and territorial integrity of Greece”.

The initiation of the “Greek issue” by the US delegation in August 1947 had great significance for the Greek government and was also encouragement for the counter-revolutionary forces in the country. The major crisis that the Greek government faced in August 1947, thanks to the international factor, primarily the US, reached consent

and the leadership was assigned a mandate to put together a government headed by Themistoklis Sofoulis. For the Americans, and for the international factor, it was like it was for the domestic factor, he was last but a pretty good trump card.

The “Greek issue” was again raised in the UN General Assembly in October 1947 during which time a decision was made to task the Balkan Commission with assisting the Greek government to suppress the democratic movement. The commission, composed of representatives from the US, Britain, France, Australia, Brazil, Mexico, Pakistan, China and the Netherlands, arrived in Greece in November 1947 and, after remaining in Athens for a few days, moved to Solun where it was subdivided into teams and dispatched to various points along the Greek border. The Commission remained in Greece until May 1948, after which it moved to Geneva. The Balkan Commission became a good protector of the Greek bourgeoisie by strongly insisting that material assistance to the democratic movement by the democratic countries must be prohibited. It constantly and morally acted in favour of the bourgeois government both domestically and on the international scene. When on December 24, 1947 it was announced that a democratic government had been established in the “free territories” in Greece, with General Markos Vafiadis at the helm, the Commission was first to warn the Balkan countries that “any recognition of the Democratic Government is in opposition of UN decisions”, and so on. Thus “international intervention” regarding the “Greek issue” was actually developed in favour of the Greek counter-revolutionaries.

## CHAPTER THREE – ESTABLISHING A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

### 1. United Greek political right combating the Democratic Movement

On September 7, 1947, after going through a deep government crisis, a new cabinet was formed. It was led by Themistoklis Sofoulis, head of the Liberal Party, which until then, since the day of the March 1946 parliamentary elections, was in opposition. When Sofoulis was in opposition he continuously criticized the far political right in government of creating economic chaos, terror and so on, in the country. By doing so he was seen as the voice of “peace” and “moderation”. That is precisely what enabled him to become, being elected head of a coalition government, a danger for the democratic movement.

After taking power Sofoulis announced that he would amnesty all the Democratic Army fighters who surrendered during a window of one month. He announced that he would also free a number of prisoners in order to prove that he was “consistent” in government as he was in opposition. However Sofoulis did not come to power to achieve a compromise solution, he came to power in order to continue the same oppressive policy against the resistance movement. In that sense he not only did not stop the oppressive measures conducted by his predecessors, but in the long term strengthened them by building up his armed forces with newly acquired American weapons. While building up the military he also continued with his political maneuvers, misleading the democratic movement about his intentions. During the “amnesty” period, government units operating against the Democratic Army were instructed not to perform open terror operations but to spread rumours that the Democratic Army was fighting against national interests and that the Sofoulis government was representative of true democracy which was visible through its deeds of providing amnesty, etc. The Sofoulis government knew that it could not break the Democratic Army with the amnesty. The most that it could expect from the amnesty was the surrender of a small number of those who would have deserted anyway. With the amnesty Sofoulis wanted to achieve psychological and political effect in order to

justify his predetermined line for a general strike against the Democratic Army.

After the “amnesty” window expired Sofoulis called for a “total mobilization of all national forces” to fight against the Democratic Army. In this regard the following measures were undertaken:

- He decided to deprive the masses in the country of being in contact with the Democratic Army movement. The first thing he did was ban the democratic newspapers and publications, which at that time were operating under difficult conditions and only in the large cities. This deprived the democratic masses, especially in the northern part of the country where the movement was massive, from being in contact with the resistance movement. He later passed a law banning all democratic publications. The entire democratic press, with its 28 daily and weekly publications, was attacked and liquidated.

- He continued mobilizing new armed forces because the government at that time did not have enough military strength to counter the Democratic Army. In terms of performing tactical tasks, the army was organized in two groups. The first group, created from the older folds and MAI units, was the National Guard battalions each consisting of 500 guardsmen responsible for guarding the cities. The plan was to expand these units to 50,000 guardsmen. The second group which was to grow to 150,000 soldiers, after it was equipped and armed was to carry out offensive actions against the Democratic Army. The continuation of this mobilization was announced in line with the above objectives.

- In the cities and larger towns where there was a large military and police presence, Sofoulis introduced strict military police control and controlled almost everyone’s movement. This was done with the intention of isolating the masses from contact with the free territories. A large segment of the population was mobilized in support of various government assigned tasks including transferring ammunition and food to government units that fought against DAG, guarding the highways and roads, cleaning the roads of mines, digging trenches in the cities and doing whatever else the government units required.

- After Sofoulis put measures to silence everyone except his own voice, during and after the “amnesty” period, he stepped up agitation through his so-called prominent personalities who visited towns and villages in order to develop intensive propaganda and spread it through like-minded people, slandering the neighbouring countries, primarily Yugoslavia. Precisely during the “amnesty” period Sofoulis prepared the ground for mobilizing the Monarcho-Fascist press to announce that a counter-revolution had taken place in Yugoslavia and was fighting against Tito. A little later the same press announced that “the counter-revolution rebels were fighting and occupying several places” and that “Tito’s army had joined the counter-revolution” and so on. This was done with the intent to divert public attention away from the mobilization and it succeeded.

- After the “amnesty” period expired, terror against the democratic population was intensified. Entire villages were burned down under the pretext that they were “partisan nests”. Village livestock and properties were looted under the pretext that “it was the partisans who did it!” Entire village populations near the areas where partisans frequented were moved so as not to aid the resistance movement. The military courts were issuing death sentences more than ever before.

The above were measures that the Sofoulis government undertook during the 1947 fall and winter. At the same time it conducted sabotage attacks in preparation for a large scale offensive in the spring of 1948.

But the Achilles heel of Sofoulis’s government was still the economic chaos in the country. Production was at a stand still, the same as it was during the occupation. American finished goods and UNRA assistance were the sole squalid materials and only sources of existence for more than one million destitute and unemployed people. Sofoulis was unable to establish any economic balance or stabilize the market or the money. Discontentment and dissatisfaction among the masses was tremendous, which the government strove to use for its own purposes. The starving masses were a source of recruitment for the government army. The government employed only members from the pro-Fascist

organizations and enacted laws to prohibit union activities and strikes.

All these measures, however, were not enough to fully encourage the Greek counter-revolutionary forces. It was therefore necessary to bring in the Americans. In that sense a joint staff was formed and an American officer was assigned to every major military formation that conducted operations.

This was the situation in the government camp under the Sofoulis coalition at the eve of 1948.

## 2. Formation of the Interim Democratic Government

With Sofoulis taking power in Greece, as head of the Athens government, in September 1947, the Democratic Army and the democratic movement in general found itself in a new situation. Sofoulis's political manoeuvres were not disregarded, especially if we take into consideration the opposition's view in parliament which was often praised by the democratic press. Increased American aid and measures to enhance the armed forces - army, police and armed civilians, called MAI, followed close behind these political manoeuvres.

The "amnesty" offered to the Democratic Army was truly a strong test. For as long as it lasted many individuals deserted the ranks of the Democratic Army.

In 1947, during the month of September, the government royalist army had undertaken an offensive and attacked the "free" territory of Mount Gramos. The aim behind the offensive was to place a wedge between the "free" territory in Epirus and that in Western Macedonia and to overshadow the Democratic Army General Staff's plan to declare supremacy over the "free" zones and establish a democratic government. This hostile offensive failed to take Gramos but succeeded in establishing a better position for attacking DAG with greater efficiency and with heavy weapons - artillery and aviation. The hostile attack unfortunately thwarted DAG's plan to extend the "free" territory, which would have created favourable

conditions for the realization of the envisioned political move - establishing a Democratic government.

The CPG Central Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenum was held in October 1947, during which it was noted: “The American intervention in Greece closed the door for an Agreement on both sides of the camp.” During the same Plenum, based on that assessment, it was decided to call the people to arms and start a rebellion to “free Greece and to ensure its independence and democratic development.”

The next immediate task was to create more free territory, and for this purpose the “Democratic Army of Greece was to conduct a massive mobilization in order to raise a larger fighting force and to prepare and implement a master plan for constant attacks against the enemy.”

According to decisions made by the CPG Central Committee at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenum, DAG General Headquarters was to adopt the Plenum’s recommendation to create regular military formations. The following two documents for mobilization were to be adopted prior to the Plenum:

“ORDER

Democratic Army of Greece  
General Headquarters  
Headquarters Bureau I

Protocol number 722

In connection to number 132/25. VIII. 1947 and A.P. 307/25. IX. 1947 order;

1. We call to arms, to serve in the ranks of the Democratic Army, all men and women in the following categories:

a) All citizens who have served in the ranks of ELAS as fighters and officers who were discharged after the Varkiza Agreement.

b) All citizens who served in the National Militia as officers and militiamen who were discharged after the Varkiza Agreement.

c) All those who served in the partisan supply corps and were discharged after the Varkiza Agreement.

2) Excluded from the above mobilization are those who became disabled during the People's Liberation Struggle 1941-45 (ELAS) whose degree of disability had made them incapable of military service.

3) The above-mobilized, wherever they are, must find a way to report to the nearest Democratic Army units.

Those from the mobilized groups who do not report to the Democratic Army, as requested by this order, will be regarded as unreported.

4) The Headquarters in the various areas are to issue appropriate orders to their units to take timely measures to inform all invited.

General Headquarters, 30. IX. 1947.  
General Markos.”

The following order was issued under order number 721:

“Bearing in mind the Greek people's desire to fight with all their might for freedom, democracy and an independent Greece, DAG General Headquarters calls on all democratic citizens located in towns and villages held by the enemy, to help the Democratic Army in every way possible.

All those in the ranks of the Democratic Army will be taken into account as being democratic citizens. In the towns and villages they will be gathered together in groups of three or more and they will be asked to take the Democratic Army fighter oath and will work vigorously for the successful execution of DAG's objectives.

General Headquarters, 30.IX.1947.  
General Markos.”

The tasks that the CPG Central Committee issued during its 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenum did not materialize and neither did the mobilization results expected to be derived from the publications issued by DAG General Headquarters. The enemy had strong control over the cities and villages and held them under its authority. In addition to having military and police presence, the government also had armed civilians, the so-called MAI, who strongly supported the counter-revolutionaries. Apart from these important reasons why the mobilization failed to deliver expected results, there is also the fact that, up to this point the CPG line in relation to the armed struggle in Greece was too ambiguous. But even so, the mobilization did deliver some results which numerically strengthened the Democratic Army to a point where it was not only able to repel Monarcho-Fascist advances in the Peloponnesus, Thessaly, Eastern and Western Macedonia, but was also able to go on the offensive. In the coming winter months and in the spring of 1948, DAG took the offensive all over Greece. Large partisan detachments began to appear near Athens with frequent attacks in the south - in the Peloponnesus and Thessaly as well as in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia, Thrace and Epirus. During the above-mentioned period DAG also carried out attacks against some cities including Solun, Nigrita, Negush, Sobotsko, Xanthi in Thrace and Konitsa in Epirus.

If the Democratic Army of Greece was capable of taking the initiative to implement the above-mentioned actions in the winter of 1947 and in the spring 1948, it lost that initiative in the summer of 1948 and ever since then it began to slide backwards.

Based on the assessment that “the American intervention in Greece closed the door for an Agreement on both sides of the camp.” and on the task for “freeing” a larger chunk of territory, a plan was adopted for “freeing” Western Macedonia and Epirus and for moving the front line to Thessaly. This was the minimum target set for 1948, which would have allowed for a democratic government to be established with international recognition. Unfortunately the Democratic Army failed to fulfill that task and, in December 1947, when the Provisional Democratic Government of Greece was formed, there was no large free territory and no large city to serve as its capital.

The Provisional Democratic Government of Greece was formed on December 23, 1947. The news of its formation created attention worldwide and confusion in Athens, London and Washington because its formation created a new phase of developments, with international importance, in the democratic struggle in Greece. Unfortunately its importance was denied by a course of events. While the DAG fighters and the democratic masses in Greece expected this government to be recognized as the legitimate government of Greece because it was legitimately supported and aided by a democratic mass movement, the enemy worked hard through its propaganda campaign to discredit it, until it eventually did.

In the meantime the Provisional Democratic Government of Greece adopted several internal legislative acts and created several social programs in aid of the political life in Greece. Among other things, it introduced a law for the formation of democratic people's councils, a law to carry out agrarian reforms, some legal acts to govern schools and to recognize the national minorities as equals. And in response to Sofoulis's government, it adopted a law on amnesty.

But all these laws were not enough to compensate for the fact that the Provisional Democratic Government was not recognized by external institutions as the legitimate government of "free" Greece.

Events in 1948 did not go, not in the political field and not in the battle field, as predicted by the democratic movement in the country.

First, the mobilization did not bring expected results. The enemy undertook a massive offensive in February-March 1948 and victoriously attacked a column of newly mobilized and not fully armed partisan fighters from Thessaly and Rumelia. This success gave the enemy a morale boost while delivering a military and political blow to DAG.

Second, the Democratic Army, even though it undertook offensive actions with a number of attacks on several towns across Greece, failed to realize any territorial success on schedule, or to destroy the

main enemy forces. In contrast to that, when the enemy failed to win in Gramos in the summer of 1948, it invaded Rumelia and caused undue damage to the civilian population in the “free” territories; torturing, persecuting and sending hundreds of innocent people to prison.

Third, the Cominform Resolution against the CPY and against Yugoslavia was enacted in June 1948, which had direct negative impact on the democratic movement in Greece and encouraged the enemy, which skillfully knew how to use it, in its propaganda.

Fourth, as a result of the Cominform leadership attitude towards the CPY and towards Yugoslavia, weaknesses and errors in the democratic movement during 1948 created divergence in the DAG leadership. Zahariadis’s quarrels with his opponents caused a crisis in the Democratic Army and in the democratic movement in general.

## CHAPTER FOUR - Withdrawal of the Democratic Army

### 1. Ratio of opposite forces in 1949

In 1948 the Democratic Army of Greece failed to achieve its set objectives, both in terms of mobilization of new forces in its ranks, and to deliver on the plan of expanding its free territory.

The CPG Central Committee 5<sup>th</sup> Plenum was held on January 30 and 31, 1949, during which the military and political situation in Greece for 1948 was evaluated. The 5<sup>th</sup> Plenum evaluated the military situation as follows:

“In 1948 the Monarcho-Fascists experienced a general failure in their military sector. In 1948 the Americans and the Monarcho-Fascists made versatile preparations to eliminate DAG. They created Armed Forces (Army, National Guard, Gendarmes, MAI, MEA etc.) numbering more than three hundred thousand people. They armed these forces with the best weapons available to the US military. They moved 700,000 villagers from their homes in order to isolate the Democratic Army from the villages. They used extreme terror, that exceeds any classic example, to crush the popular resistance in the cities. They developed well-organized ideological propaganda. They developed their own “spiritual mobilization” to influence and break the spirit of the masses. All these preparations were reflected in the slogan: “We will end in 1948.” This was clearly an all American, British, and Monarcho-Fascist plan aided by international reaction. But these results are refuted by all people’s enemies. The Monarcho-Fascist, American and British general strategies have failed the entire line. They failed to destroy even the most inexperienced DAG forces. They lost tens of thousands of their most elite soldiers, especially in Gramos, without any success. At the end of 1948 they saw their tactical successes of the year evaporate. Even though Tsakalatos had two corps in his possession, he still lost at Vicho. The Democratic Army now firmly holds the Pindos massif and has again taken back Gramos. Conditions have been created in the Peloponnesus that threaten to turn all Monarcho-Fascist strategic forecasts and the entire military situation in Greece...”

It is true that the Democratic Army endured difficult ordeals in 1948. But it is also true that, despite the enemy failing to subdue the Democratic Army, it did manage to thwart DAG's plan to mass mobilize and frustrated its plans to expand its free territory; items not mentioned in the above evaluation.

Exactly because of the above mentioned tactical and strategic tasks that the two opposing camps in Greece undertook in 1948, huge battles broke out in Central and Eastern Macedonia in the Peloponnesus and in Rumelia, as well as in Gramos and Vicho. These were tactical battles for supremacy, each side trying to impose itself on the other. The Monarcho-Fascists imposed themselves on the Democratic Army for a positional struggle in Gramos and in doing so suffered heavy casualties in manpower and material. And even though DAG won that round it was not without human sacrifices. After defending the region for several weeks, DAG was eventually forced to give way. It was a positional struggle in a mountainous terrain where tanks could not operate. But the enemy did use its artillery and aviation abundantly.

The fall of 1948 produced a significant victory for DAG, especially in the Mali Madi Region where DAG not only denied the Athens regime a victory but smashed two of its brigades and sent its troops running in panic. Unfortunately DAG failed to capitalize on this victory and did not occupy any of the urban centres in southwest Macedonia, especially in the Kostur-Kozheni region, mainly because the DAG leadership was not fully aware of the significance of the battle it had won.

The Monarcho-Fascists (the Athens regime) in 1949, on the other hand, were proud of their well-equipped army of about 200,000 people. They were proud of their fanatical gendarme numbering 50,000 and their armed civilian force numbering 50 to 60,000 people. This army was lavished with modern weapons. The Athens regime was successful in establishing units, which by their tactical purpose and composition would guarantee a good fight. Most vicious of them all were the so-called LOK and gendarme units.

DAG consisted of about 40,000 people armed with reasonable infantry weapons (according to DAG).

The Athens regime managed to sufficiently control and defend the towns and transport links opposed to DAG, which in 1949 lost its opportunity to work in the cities and to carry out mobilization of new fighters. DAG at this point was confined mainly to the mountainous terrain of Eastern, Central and Western Macedonia, Epirus, Rumeli and the Peloponnesus.

From a purely military point of view the Athens regime, compared to the Democratic Army, had an advantage both in numbers and in arming its military. But for a revolutionary army with a rebel initiative, such a relationship was not terrible if DAG was allowed to develop to the full extent of its revolutionary essence. But this one issue was not enough for the development of the struggle, there were other important issues including moral and political ones.

The Cominform attack, with its well-known June 22, 1948 resolution, aimed against the CPG had direct impact on events in Greece. At first not by much but the tense relations increasingly encouraged the enemy to make good use of it. This crisis was not without consequences for DAG. This is what was written in the CPG Central Committee 5<sup>th</sup> Plenum Resolution: "...to discuss the CPG Central Committee Politburo decision from November 15, 1948, about the right opportunistic break in the CPG..." This, as it was known then, was about the exclusion of General Markos and Hrisa Hadzhivasiliou from the ranks of the CPG Central Committee. It is clear that this could only have negative consequences in the ranks of DAG and the democratic movement as a whole, given that General Markos was Supreme Commander of DAG and President of the Provisional Democratic Government. That is why events in 1949 must be viewed in light of these incidents.

The following were immediate tasks set out for DAG, as registered in the January 1949 Plenum:

“a) Carry out sudden and sustained attacks to the maximum throughout the country to prevent and paralyze possible enemy preparations for 1949;

b) Stabilize and expand the liberated territories in northwestern Greece, take urban centres;

c) Rumelia and Thessaly are tasked with decisive military actions to exhaust enemy ground attack in 1949 and to create a wide free zone around central Pindos;

d) The Peloponnesus needs to destroy enemy attacks and to develop its forces and attacks so that they would practically constitute a real second front in the rear of the enemy, which would upset its strategic plans and forecasts;

e) Divisions VI and VII have, as their main task, to strengthen their attacks against the enemy, increasing progressively around Solun.”

These plans unfortunately did not materialize, primarily because DAG during this period, as it did before, could not resolve the issue of reserves, i.e. broad mobilization of new forces. This actually incorporates all elements of the uprising weaknesses in Greece. This means that this movement never developed the necessary revolutionary swing.

Here is what has been said about this issue by the CPG Central Committee during the 5<sup>th</sup> Plenum:

a) “To ensure by regions, divisions and General Headquarters, reserves according to plan. Any lag in this regard will have the same consequences as in 1948. The value of every military and political leader and all of our staff will be judged on the basis of whether they carried out this basic task.”

All efforts to mass mobilize the rebel forces in 1949 failed. This became the great and final phase of the civil war in Greece, resulting in the withdrawal of the bulk of the Democratic Army to Eastern European countries.

## 2. Most important events in 1949

According to assessments made during the CPG Central Committee 5<sup>th</sup> Plenum, attempts were made to widen the fighting during 1949.

DAG was expected to frustrate enemy preparations and use the experience gained in 1948 to prepare for a new offensive during 1949. And indeed DAG did develop a broad offensive all throughout Greece in the winter and early spring in 1949.

In the month of January 1949, DAG units attacked and overran the town Negush in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. Even though the attack and capture of Negush was a morale boosting success, DAG units could not hold onto it. One thing that DAG gained from that attack was new recruits for its ranks. This proved that a wide mobilization was possible even from the territory controlled by the enemy.

The town Karpnisi in Rumelia was also taken during the month of January and held for some time.

These attacks continued throughout the month of February with the attack on Lerin. The attack on Lerin not only failed but was catastrophic in terms of casualties, which was a morale blow to the DAG divisions fighting in this area.

The situation began to shift in favour of the Athens regime in the spring of 1949 with the Monarcho-Fascists gradually and simultaneously taking the offensive in Gramos, Eastern Macedonia and strengthening their offensive in the Peloponnesus and Thessaly. But in spite of all that, the Athens regime still failed to dislodge DAG from Gramos during its spring offensive.

The Interim Democratic Government undertook peace initiatives during the spring of 1949.

On April 26, 1949 DAG published the Interim Democratic Government's appeal on the first page of its newspaper called "Prosti niki". The appeal was entitled: "General Assembly of the United Nations, World Congress of Peace supporters and Democratic people from around the world." This is the text that followed:

"The Interim Democratic Government of Greece, during its Extraordinary Session, held on April 20, 1949, the day when the World Congress for peace began, announced the following appeal:

‘Three years have passed since the day our foreign masters with their Monarcho-Fascist lackeys forced the Greek people to pick up guns in order to defend themselves, their freedom and their independence; forced to defend their rights for a peaceful life, the right to work to support their children and for the good of their homeland.

In these three years the enemies of peace and democracy have mobilized all their forces in order to destroy our national resistance. But our people remain invincible. Greece could live calmly and peacefully today if there were no foreigners, those who stir up the fire of civil war in our place.

The three years that have passed have pushed Greece into an even greater state of chaos and poverty. Tens of thousands of men and women lost their lives during this period. The Interim Democratic Government of Greece is prepared to put an end to this tragedy. Many times it has offered to cease all military operations and to achieve a democratic agreement. But all our proposals are refused each time and so disaster and the spilling of blood continues in our country.

We today are extending our hand to our opponents. There is a need to stop the drama of one million homeless villagers who have been driven from their homes to suffer in the cities; we should stop the tragedy of hundreds of thousands of naked, hungry and abandoned children; it is time for them to return to their families, to their homes, to their fields... We have enough blood spilled in Greece. Let the fires die out.

We are ready to make major concessions in order to achieve peace and tranquility in Greece. We are willing to make this commitment even though the Democratic Army of Greece has the upper hand, has remained unbeatable and has achieved much success against its opponent. We are strictly driven by the interests of the people of Greece and we value peace over war.

We invite you all to help us in this endeavour. We are ready to stop the war immediately, as soon as Greece is ready to provide

opportunity for everyone to live without fear of death. We will stop the war as soon as the mass shootings stop, as soon as general amnesty is given and as soon as the most elementary democratic rights are guaranteed for our citizens.

Recently officials in Athens have indicated the need for Greece to hold new parliamentary elections. We accept a peaceful and democratic solution to the internal problems in Greece and we are ready to follow a plan that will stop the bloodletting. We are all for a solution that will bring peace to our people and strengthen world peace.

Free Greece, April 20, 1949.

The Interim Democratic Government of Greece’.”

I decided to publish the full text of this document in order to reveal all of its importance.

The Greek government in Athens categorically refused to accept any of the proposals made by the Interim Democratic Government. The Athens regime turned these proposals into weapons of propaganda, alleging that they were signs of weakness on the part of Interim Democratic Government, and stepped up its attacks against DAG.

After several months of fighting during the summer of 1949, the Athens regime failed to break DAG in the Peloponnesus and in Central Greece so it began to concentrate its attacks in Macedonia, Epirus and Thrace. In June 1949 it attacked DAG at Mounts Paiak and Kajmakchalan and after several days of heavy fighting it managed to evict many DAG units from their positions, forcing them to withdraw into Yugoslav territory. After this the Athens regime concentrated its forces for an attack against the two main free territory strongholds - Vicho and Gramos.

The Athens regime did not hide its preparations for an attack on the Vicho free territory.

In one of DAG’s articles entitled “Decisive super tension”, published on June 10, 1949, Zahariadis, among other things, wrote:

“Great battles are coming to Vicho. If the Monarcho-Fascists do not openly want to admit their bankruptcy, then they will be forced to carry out their great offensive at Vicho. Otherwise they have lost. They have lost the war and they have lost the peace. The moment they show how powerful and victorious they are will be the moment when they are measured against DAG. That is why they are forced to come to Vicho, pressured by their political, military and moral necessities. That is why, whether they want to or not, they will have to drink from the bitter cup called Vicho.”

In another DAG article entitled “The enemy will never set foot on Vicho”, published in June 6, 1949, Zahariadis ended with the words: “Our slogan is: Our enemy will never set foot. We will break Papagos’s wings at Vicho. Vicho will make 1949 a deceive year for our victory.”

Zahariadis’s forecast that the enemy was going to attack Vicho materialized but his wishes, according to his slogan, did not come true. Vicho was invaded and occupied. DAG did not even offer the enemy serious resistance but did suffer major losses at the straits between the two Prespa Lakes while trying to flee to Albania (at this point soldiers and civilians were not allowed to withdraw to Yugoslavia).

The DAG divisions that were driven out of Vicho were quickly deployed in Gramos, expecting that the enemy would attack Gramos next. And indeed the enemy did. It began an offensive against DAG in Gramos in October 1949, driving most of its principle units to withdraw to Albania.

Some of DAG’s units that were fighting in Eastern Macedonia and Thrace fled to Bulgaria. Some of the units fighting in Central and Western Macedonia, throughout the summer of 1949, withdrew to Yugoslavia. Only a small number of partisan groups remained in Greece by the end of 1949 and practically all of them operated behind enemy lines. These were the so-called groups of political commissars.

So, in less than five years the National Liberation Movement in Greece suffered its second defeat despite the extraordinary efforts made by the democratic forces in the country; despite the heavy fighting and sacrifices made by the DAG fighters, the misery and suffering of the thousands that were interned and those imprisoned in the Greek island prison camps.

After DAG's withdrawal, the Democratic Army Supreme Headquarters and the Interim Democratic Government issued a statement which, among other things, said: "The Democratic Army of Greece was not defeated but withdrew only to put an end to the bloodshed and to contribute to the country to move towards a peaceful development."

In connection with the above press release and with the outcome of the civil war in Greece, the reader deserves to know that long social contradictions have existed in Greece which were exacerbated to the extent that social change was required. Such change unfortunately could come from military interventions or from imperialist power meddling. Britain intervened in Greece in December 1944 and kept the bourgeois government in power, which was contrary to what the masses wanted. Then during the civil war when Britain could no longer bear the load, it invited the United States to come and suppress the guerrilla movement.

The Democratic Army of Greece was defeated with assistance from abroad, primarily from the United States. Even though the Democratic Army was forced to withdraw, the democratic movement in Greece was still not stifled. That is why the Greek bourgeoisie, after the civil war, remained closely tied to the United States and to US imperialism interests. Greece was one of the countries which participated in the Korean War alongside the United States. In 1953 Greece signed a military agreement with the United States allowing the US to build a military naval base on Greek soil. Greece also became a zealous member of the Atlantic Pact (NATO).

The price that the Greek bourgeoisie paid for the aid they received from foreign imperialists was loss of independence and dignity. Greece has become a tool in the hands of foreign imperialists...

Greece again has to fight for its independence, to throw off the yoke of imperialism and military dictatorships.

## **PART TWO - Macedonians in the Greek Civil War**

### **CHAPTER FIVE – Systematic persecution of the Macedonian people**

#### 1. Situation of the Macedonian people under Greek rule

In order to understand the situation of the Macedonian people in the Greek Civil War, it is important to know, in general terms, the situation of the people inside the borders of Greece.

Ethnically, the Macedonian nation, its culture, customs, language, etc., are not only unique, they are also foreign to Greece. For these reasons, from the moment the Greek bourgeoisie extended its authority over Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia, it adopted a policy of extermination to permanently get rid of the Macedonian identity and to change Greek occupied Macedonia's ethnological composition in its favour. It used every tool in its possession including the Patriarchate schools in Macedonia to get what it wanted. So, here is where we need to be looking for explanations regarding the measures of extermination used against the Macedonian people and for the entire anti-Macedonian Greek bourgeoisie policy towards Macedonia.

During the course of the Balkan Wars the Greek army invaded, occupied and ravaged Central Macedonia forcing tens of thousands of Macedonians to abandon their homes and flee to neighbouring countries.

After the First World War and the Greco-Turkish War of 1920/1922, Greece took more steps in the services of its basic purpose: to exterminate the Macedonian people. In November 1919 a Convention was signed between Greece and Bulgaria calling for "voluntary emigration of Bulgarians from Greece". In other words, anyone who did not "feel" Greek was asked (forced) to leave Greek occupied Macedonia. Those who left and were forced to leave were not Bulgarians but Macedonians affiliated with the Exarchate (Bulgarian sponsored) Church. The Macedonian people, whose centuries old ancestral lands Greece occupied and annexed for itself, were treated like squatters and driven out of their homes as if they

were some sort of vermin. This Convention was implemented several times in order to maximize the Macedonian exodus from Greek occupied Macedonia. As a consequence of these conventions and the military actions during the Balkan Wars and the First World War, around 95,000 Macedonians were evicted from Greece and sent to Bulgaria.

On January 30, 1923, after the Greek army was defeated in Asia Minor by the Turks, the Lausanne Convention was signed between Turkey and Greece which resulted in 538,000 Christian Turkish colonists and settlers being settled in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. This was in addition to the 100,000 or so colonists and settlers Greece had deposited in Greek occupied Macedonia during and between the wars. This brought the total number of foreign settlers and colonists deposited in Greek occupied Macedonia to 638,000 people. (This is according to an unpublished paper entitled "Migration movements in Aegean Macedonia from the Balkans to World War II" by Todor Simovski, fellow of the Institute of National History - Skopje). These numbers were also verified by other studies conducted on population movements in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia.

It was well-known internationally what Greece had done to the ethnological composition in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia and that it was done to Greece's advantage, yet no one said or did anything about it. This led the Greek bourgeoisie to continue with its actions to exterminate the Macedonian identity by any means possible, including denationalization. Ever since Greece set foot on Macedonian soil it has refused to recognize the Macedonian ethnicity, language and culture as unique and separate from the others in the region. Everything Macedonian has been treated as an anomaly. As a result, the Macedonian people have been denied their rights, tortured, tormented, downgraded, severely exploited and persecuted.

But the Macedonian torment did not end there. The Greek bourgeoisie took further action to erase every Macedonian vestige. In November 1926 Greece passed a law to change all Macedonian toponyms to Greek. This included changing the Macedonian name of every village, town, city, mountain, river, lake, etc. to Greek. This

law was published in the official Greek government gazette “Efimeris tis kuberniseos” number 332, on November 21, 1926. The Greek names that replaced the Macedonian ones were published in number 346 of the same newspaper. (See book “Around the question of the Macedonian minority in Greece” by Lazar Moisev, Skopje, 1954, p. 231.)

In 1929, when Eleftheros Venizelos was head the Greek government, Greece passed the law “on measures for security of social order to protect the freedom of citizens” (Idionimon). That law was actually the same as the Yugoslav law for protecting the Yugoslav state. Under this law anyone who was considering self-determination for anywhere other than Greece was labeled a traitor and dealt with in that respect. In fact this law was directed against the Communist Party of Greece and against the Macedonian people who wanted to be recognized as Macedonians.

When German educated, retired General Ioanis Metaxas came to power in Greece in 1936 he was dissatisfied by the existing measures taken against the Macedonian people, so he passed a law banning the Macedonian language outright and sent anyone who spoke it into exile.

This was a nightmare for the Macedonian adults who did not speak Greek. They were forced to take evening classes in newly opened schools for adults. The long term plan behind this act was to systematically suppress the Macedonian language and to completely remove it from Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. The Greek rulers went as far as to erase the Macedonian writing from everything, including the headstones on the graves in Macedonian cemeteries. They were unwilling to even leave the dead in peace. “They removed the Cyrillic writing from crosses and dug up the bones from the graves and burned them...” (Lazo Mojsov in his book “Question of the Macedonian minority in Greece” - Skopje 1954 p. 235-236, quoting Englishman W. Hill, a traveler who visited Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia in 1928. On the attitude of the Greek authorities towards the Macedonian people Hill wrote the following: “The Greeks not only persecute the living Slavs who they first called “Bulgarian” and later “Slavophones”, but also torment the dead Slavs whose graves were scattered all over Macedonia. The

Greeks refuse to leave the dead in peace. They torment them even in the grave: they delete the Slavic inscriptions from the crosses and remove their bones from the graves and burn them.”)

The kind of Greek measures taken left the Macedonian nation in economic distress and culturally and nationally backwards. Macedonian children were brought up, more or less, in the Greek spirit and were taught to speak only Greek in which they saw no future. This resulted in a mass migration abroad.

As a result of the above-mentioned discriminatory steps and measures taken by the Greek authorities against the Macedonian people in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia, during the three decades spanning from the Balkan Wars to World War II, the Macedonian people fought, endured and survived. They managed to safeguard and preserve their Macedonian identity in Central and Eastern Macedonia and on a massive scale in Demir Hisar, Enidzhevardar, Gumenitsa, Voden, Lerin and Kostur Regions. They not only preserved their way of life but managed to preserve their national identity and culture. The Macedonian people had been under Ottoman rule for five centuries and had never experienced such torment as they had under Greek rule. The Greeks proved to be more barbarian than the Ottomans. Life was harsh under Ottoman slavery but the Macedonian people were free to speak their language and follow their own Christian religion and traditions. The only things Macedonians were (are) allowed to do under Greek rule was (is) serve in the Greek army, fight on all war fronts, die for Greece, serve the Greek ruling class and pay taxes.

After the Balkan wars, after Macedonia was invaded, occupied and partitioned, the struggle for Macedonian national freedom became far more complex and difficult. As a result of this, the Macedonian national liberation movement was placed in Balkan frames. After the First World War, when Russia entered the international scene by winning the Great October Revolution, the labour movement grew and became a decisive factor in the national-liberation movements of all oppressed national and colonial peoples. The national liberation movement in partitioned Macedonia then became an integral part of the working class struggle and the poor peasantry.

Because of Macedonia's partition, the Macedonian people's national liberation movement, the level of social development in Macedonia and the development of the labour movement in the Balkans became closely linked with the wider labour movement.

The nationally oppressed and exploited workers and peasants, as well as the broader masses in Macedonia who had experience with Balkan bourgeoisie policies and practices could not ally themselves with any other social force other than the working class. This was a general feature in all three parts of divided Macedonia – the Macedonian people orientated themselves towards the labour movements and began to organize in the communist parties.

No political party in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, or Greece, except for the communist parties and the 3<sup>rd</sup> International, had given any consideration to the needs of the Macedonian people. Here you will find an explanation for VMRO's (United) attitude towards the 3<sup>rd</sup> International and the Communist parties in the Balkans. But as it is well-known, the promises made during the 3<sup>rd</sup> International and by the Balkan communist parties never fully materialized. Newly created conditions were consistently introduced all throughout the national liberation war. The only promise made and kept was that of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia under Tito's leadership. The Republic of Macedonia was constituted as part of the Yugoslav Federation. This was a result of the Macedonian people's participation in the national revolution.

The Communist Party of Bulgaria (CPB (k)) leadership had remained undecided on the Macedonian national question. This was similar to the other communist parties which supported the 3<sup>rd</sup> International position. During the national liberation wars in the Balkans, and after seizing power at home, the CPB (k) never did find the strength to remain loyal to the Macedonian revolutionary positions, apparently being forcefully influenced by strong Bulgarian nationalism. There was only one exception made and that was during the time when Bulgaria was led by the great Giorgi Dimitrov. As a true revolutionary, even during the course of the war, Dimitrov was able to perceive the enormous cataclysmic role of the National Revolution, carried out by the Yugoslav people fighting for social and political development in the Balkans. The solution to the

Macedonian national question in Yugoslavia was a fundamental part of a new Yugoslavia. The constitution developed for the Federal Republic of Macedonia was the basis for new relations between the Balkan peoples, relations based on democratic and equitable principles for all Balkan nations. Included among these nations were the Macedonian people who previously were placed at a disadvantage by the Balkan dynasties and by the Balkan bourgeoisie. More information on this great Balkan event, generated by the victory of the people's revolution in Yugoslavia, can be found in the 1947 Bled Agreement. The Bled Agreement brought about a new era of inter-Balkan ethnic relations, enthusiastically welcomed by the Balkan nations. Unfortunately in the years that followed, especially after the Cominform Resolution and after Giorgi Dimitrov's death, the CPB (k) leadership changed its position on the Macedonian national question, reverting back to the old days when it was strongly influenced by Bulgarian nationalist pressures. The old Bulgarian attitude which negated the existence of Macedonians was brought back and all gains the Macedonian people had made in Bulgarian occupied Macedonia were lost. The old bourgeois historiography, which denies the existence of the Macedonian nation, was brought back, the Macedonian people in Pirin Macedonia became unrecognized and the CPB (k) abandoned the Bled Agreement. Because of this all reliable paths to lasting cooperation and friendship between the South Slavic people and the other Balkan nations were abandoned. The Macedonian people, particularly those living in Greek occupied Macedonia, were very disappointed at the Bulgarian leadership's attitude and policies. The Bulgarian withdrawal from the Bled Agreement and their change in attitude towards the Macedonians in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia led to the heavy fighting in Greece. The Macedonians in Greece fought for their rights in armed conflicts both during World War II and during the Greek Civil War and received nothing for their sacrifices. In the years during the Greek Civil War the CPB (k), for some time, had different views on the Macedonian Question. Listed below are the CPB (k) views, as expressed in the August 1946 CPB (k) Central Committee 10<sup>th</sup> Plenum:

“1. The Bulgarian Workers' Party (communists) feels that the basic part of the Macedonian people has been organized around the state and nationally within the SFRY as the People's Republic of

Macedonia. The unification of the rest of the Macedonian people remains to be done on the basis of the Macedonian People's Republic and within the framework of SFR Yugoslavia.

2. The Bulgarian Workers' Party (communists) feels that the preparation for the necessary conditions for a union, namely the acquisition of the Pirin end to PR Macedonia, above all, is a matter for the Macedonian people and a general task for the Fatherland Front of Bulgaria and for the Federative Republic of Yugoslavia.

3. The Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists) deems it necessary, in the period up to the accession of the Pirin part of Macedonia to the People's Republic of Macedonia, to systematically work on the cultural cohesion of the Macedonian population from that region with the population of the People's Republic of Macedonia. Work needs to be done to popularize the environment, the Macedonian language and Macedonian literature. The history of the Macedonian people must be taught as it is taught in Macedonia, to facilitate the boundary between Macedonia in Yugoslavia and the Pirin part of Macedonia with wide mutual communion between the Macedonian populations from one end of the country to the other. In general, measures must be taken in line with cultural autonomy, in order to contribute to the development of the national consciousness in the Macedonian population, which would facilitate the unification with the basic part of the Macedonian people in the People's Republic of Macedonia.

4. The CPB (k) feels that the merger between the Pirin part of Macedonia and the People's Republic of Macedonia should be based on a federal agreement between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. This would determine the exact acquisition boundary of the Pirin end, taking into account the country and general interests of the Macedonian people as well as providing the right to those residents in Pirin Macedonia who want to co-opt from their Bulgarian citizenship. The return of the Western Bulgarian provinces, which are now under Yugoslavia, can then be settled with that Agreement.

5. The CPB (k) feels that it is in the interest of the Macedonian people, as well as in the interests of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, that the acquisition of Pirin Macedonia to the People's Republic of

Macedonia be done in a way that there is no customs or border between Macedonia and Bulgaria, in the same way that there is no customs or border between the People's Republic of Macedonia and other SFRY republics. The acquisition of Pirin Macedonia need not only not impede the economic and cultural ties between the Pirin part of Macedonia and Bulgaria, but rather further and strengthen ties between the People's Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria.

The CPB (k) is calling on all party members, mostly on the members of the Pirin part of Macedonia, to act and, in a practical manner, implement this Party directive. They are urged to deal with the Macedonian question by persistently urging the Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria to cooperate in strengthening the fraternal Macedonian republic as well as in preparing for the reunion between the Macedonian population in the Pirin part of Macedonia with that in the People's Republic of Macedonia, based on the alliance between the Fatherland Front of Bulgaria and FPR Yugoslavia.” (Taken from the book “Pirin Macedonia in the struggle for national liberation”, p. 302 to 304, by Dimitar Mitrev, Skopje, 1950.)

The Macedonian people in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia were a consistent ally of the working class in Greece and supported its struggle for justice, social order, democracy and national ideals. The CPG leadership however could not always find consistent force in its political action to organize and mobilize the Macedonian forces, apparently fearing the ruling bourgeois ideology and the nationalist and chauvinist ideas of a “Greater Greece” fanatically preached and instilled in Greece by the bourgeoisie.

The CPG and the labour movement had strong support in Macedonia from the Macedonian people who shared the fate of that movement.

By the mid-thirties, more accurately by 1935, the CPG position towards the Macedonian National Question was the same as the position of the other Balkan Parties and the 3<sup>rd</sup> International, i.e. a united and independent Macedonia and Thrace.

This is what was said during the CPG Central Committee 6<sup>th</sup> Plenum in January 1934 regarding “...the situation in Greece and the tasks

of the party...”: “...national self-determination for the oppressed Macedonians and Thracians, full national equality for the Jews”. (P. 347 from the CPG edition - 1918 to 1958 selected documents, November 1958.)

In the 1934 CPG Central Committee 5<sup>th</sup> Congress activities resolution report entitled “Revolutionary successes in the struggle against fascism and the war”, which was unanimously accepted by the Congress, it was stated that:

“The support and assistance provided to the national minority revolutionary organizations, even to the smallest national minorities in bourgeois-feudal Greece, to strengthen their internal organizational positions in the right to recognition and self-determination up to succession, despite the daily struggle on all issues including economic oppression, will allow them to gain confidence in the CPG and turn the oppressed minorities into allies of the proletariat in the expected revolution in our country. The CPG should strongly advocate for the suppression of Greek megalomanism and the manifestations in its ranks and in the internationalist education of the Greeks workers and farmers” (p. 363, Forty years of CPG, 1918 to 1958).

This is what was then said in the decision of the 1935 CPG Central Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenum, held in April 1935:

“After the March coup d’etat, our Party, in place of the motto “United and independent Macedonia and Thrace”, stressed the motto “Full equality for minorities”. This change in the motto with respect to the national minorities in our country does not mean negation of the Marxist Leninist principle of national minority self-determination. The replacement of the old motto “United and independent Macedonia and Thrace” entails the amendment of the national composition in the Greek part of Macedonia in close connection with the change in conditions in which the revolutionary movement in the Balkans is developing today, especially in our country. Our main task is to continue the antifascist struggle and the fight against the war” (p. 426-427, Forty years of CPG, 1918 to 1958).

After the Congress underlined the CPG's responsibilities for helping the minorities to struggle, in the same section at the end of the report the following was written: "Our party will not cease to emphasize that finally and definitely the Macedonian Question will be resolved with our fraternal victory when Soviet power comes to the Balkans, which will terminate all dishonest agreements on exchange of population and will take all practical measures to liquidate imperialist injustices. Only then will the Macedonian people find their full national establishment". (P. 426-427, Forty years of CPG, 1918 to 1958.) (In fact, the customization of the ethnological composition could not be replaced by economic principles and economic national targets.)

The CPG leadership, during the time of the National Liberation War in the Balkans, forgot about its revolutionary commitments and made many blunders in its political activities and organizational measures. This was during the Second World War, during the Greek Civil War and later. Taking into consideration that the labour movement was not immune to its own deformations and degenerations, the CPG leadership should have taken every measure to ensure that such things never happened, especially since the Party took the fate of the people in its hands. All this is now left for us to verify as was written in the Plenum and Congress Resolution paragraphs. Both the Bulgarian and Greek leaderships failed in this regard because they were both trapped in their own contradiction.

The CPG entered World War II, the occupation and the re-tailoring of the Balkans with the motto: "Full equality for national minorities." The struggle against the occupiers and for national liberation became the main preoccupation of all communist parties in the occupied Balkan countries. As a result, objective conditions were modified and new tasks set. Conditions in Macedonia were also modified and tailored with unstable but rigid boundaries. This was due to the general occupation of the Balkans by the Germans and their allies, Fascist Italy and Nazi Bulgaria. There was no consistent policy between the three occupiers regarding Macedonia, and at best there were contradictions in their policies. Despite the fact that Greece capitulated and left a part of Macedonia to the Bulgarians, it still had aspirations towards Macedonia. The national liberation movement as it began to develop refused to recognize set

boundaries and border lines. And for political and organizational reasons, revisions to the Macedonian National Question had to be made to include the newly created conditions. Here one would assume that a mutual agreement between the leaderships of all interested Communist parties would have been reached. Or at least each Communist party would have separately taken “the correct position” regarding the Macedonian National Question. But, as is well-known, that was not the case! A mutual agreement could not be reached because the communist leaders were not ready to accept the revolutionary needs of the Macedonian people. We are now well aware of the disputes on the matter between the CPY and CPB (k) leaderships that took place since 1941. The CPG leadership took advantage of these disputes and exploited them to the extreme. This certainly demonstrates that there was absolutely no willingness to properly address the Macedonian National Question, not even under the new conditions. This naturally gave the CPG leadership fertile ground to develop the Macedonian people’s struggle “in a mutual way”, from the beginning to the end of the National Liberation, even after the war was lost and after the counter-revolutionaries came to power in Greece. That is why the Macedonian people’s struggle in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia was never allowed to gain its revolutionary momentum, was never allowed to be led independently and gain its own expression. That is why the Macedonian people could not achieve their revolutionary objectives.

The CPG leadership used the authority of the Communist Party, the leadership of the National Liberation Struggle and the disciplined Party membership to systematically work on the Macedonian factor in order to prohibit it from growing and from becoming an independent Macedonian entity. In other words, the CPG worked very hard to prohibit the Macedonian people from taking their destiny into their own hands. The CPG consistently opposed the formation of a Macedonian People’s Liberation Organization. It opposed the formation of separate Macedonian partisan units and refused to appoint Macedonian leaders. With this in mind, one can see how difficult life was made for the Macedonian fighters from Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. But despite the difficulties, many attempts were made to affirm the Macedonian people’s struggle in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. The CPG was all for success and for such an affirmation but under maximum unity of

will and action. This was demanded of the Macedonian communists from Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. Both sides were also well aware that success could hardly be achieved if all organizations did not work as a single unit, a fact that the CPG leadership exploited to serve its own needs. In the fall of 1943 SNOF (Slavo-Macedonian National Liberation Front) and SNOB (Slavo-Macedonian People's Liberation Army) were created under pressure. But no sooner had these organizations been created than they were stifled and, shortly afterwards, shut down. The reason given was because EAM and PEEA program principles and agreements made with the Greek government in exile would not allow it. The communists say that it was the Greek government that did not want to recognize the existence and rights of the Macedonian people but the question is "what did the CPG do to defend those rights?" What did the CPG do to defend the rights of the Macedonian people? Did it help the Macedonians to form their own forces in order to defend their rights? No! The outcome of this policy was to deprive themselves of receiving any help from the Macedonian people during the clashes in Athens in December 1944 and afterwards - a factor that was not negligible then or later.

The objective conditions created during World War II were such that they came before a nation once in a generation. After the Ilinden Uprising failed in 1903, the objective conditions created during World War II put the Macedonian people on the agenda, not only for the liberation of Vardar (Serbian occupied) Macedonia, but for the liberation and unification of all of Macedonia. If that did not happen then we need to look for reasons in the subjective factors. The issue, we can say, was dealt in a way that required many victims; through an armed uprising and through the shortest and most revolutionary way.

During World War II and during the national liberation struggles in the Balkans, spanning from 1941 to 1945, the Macedonian people became aware that this was an historic moment for them to do something for their national cause. This, unfortunately, during 1941 and 1942, brought them into direct collision with the CPG. The first open conflict took place after the dissolution of SNOF and SNOB in Kostur Region when a Macedonian partisan battalion left for Yugoslavia in May 1944. This conflict was quickly resolved through

mutual agreement between Dobrivoje Radosavljevich, Supreme Headquarters delegate at the Headquarters in Macedonia, and ELAS Headquarters. Under this agreement, reached in July 1944, the above mentioned Macedonian battalion was allowed to return to the ranks of ELAS with the right to mobilize and form new Macedonian military units. Soon afterwards, in October 1944, a new rift between the Macedonians and the CPG and ELAS leaderships began to develop. This time the above mentioned partisan battalion plus a Macedonian partisan battalion from Voden and a detachment from Lerin withdrew from Greek occupied Macedonia and crossed over into free Macedonia (Republic of Macedonia). These units were well utilized in Yugoslavia to form the First Aegean Shock Brigade in November 1944 (later disbanded after Germany was defeated in May 1945). In addition to the formation of this brigade, a Conference was convened in Bitola which included delegates from Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia, during which a political body of 29 members was elected headed by a political committee of 10 members. Included in the political committee were Gorgi Atanasov, Mihail Keramitchiev, Paskal Mitrevski, Todor Nikolov, Naum Peiov, Lazar Poplazarov, Giorgi Turudzhov, Pavle Rakovski, Dzhodzho Urdov and Naum Shupurkov.

The requirements put forth by this committee consisted mainly of the right to recognition and self-determination for the Macedonian people in Greek occupied Macedonia. The CPG leadership unfortunately was not prepared to accept such requirements; it was not even willing to listen to such talk. And because of that the CPG and ELAS forcefully resisted all attempts to carry out this task. They did this while ousting the occupiers and during the resistance against the British after the German occupiers were ousted.

When the December events erupted in Greece (December 1944), the First Aegean Shock Brigade was ready to return and help out. The only condition it made for its participation was to be allowed to mobilize new forces. The CPG leadership unfortunately refused the offer. Looking at the situation in hindsight, even if the Brigade was allowed to return and had participated in the Athens events, it would not have made any difference. To gain ground the liberation movement needed a different strategy and different tactics, as we

have seen in the analysis of the December events and the Varkiza agreement.

In the new situation created after the December collisions and after the Varkiza Agreement was signed, which called for disarming ELAS and allowing the bourgeoisie to expand their power by allowing the bourgeois government in Athens to extend its rule throughout the whole territory of Greece, the Macedonian people were expecting a face to face confrontation with an armed enemy. After extending its authority throughout the territory of Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia, the government in Athens began a campaign of mass terror against the Macedonian people. This started the first mass exodus of civilians leaving their homes in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia and taking residence in the neighbouring democratic countries. It also started a new wave of resistance among the progressive Macedonians.

## 2. Terror in 1945-1946

For the Macedonian people from Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia history, it seems, was repeating itself every time they needed to face welcoming the Greek government and the Greek army into their country. After the Varkiza Agreement was signed in the spring of 1945, the Greek government expanded its authority in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia and unleashed extreme pressure against the unarmed Macedonian population. It is important at this point to mention that initially the Greek government, just after the Varkiza Agreement was signed, did not have enough forces to establish its authority in the entire country. To achieve this it had to resort to drastic measures. In Greek occupied Macedonia it began to mobilize the people who collaborated with the German, Italian and Bulgarian occupiers. As a result it recruited the troops belonging to Kolaras, Papadopoulos, Anton Chaush and other well-known traitors who were more than willing to rob, terrorize and murder Macedonians. It was a truly evil campaign with which future historians will have to deal. It was also a skillful maneuver on the part of the Greek bourgeoisie to create much hatred between the Greek and Macedonian people in order for the Greek element to take a foothold in Greek occupied Macedonia.

Here is what first hand witnesses had to say about this tragedy, perpetrated all across Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. (The information that follows was taken from the author's personal archives. These are the author's personal notes or notes made from statements made to him by his companions. The author collected this information from the war refugees in order to register the terror the Greek authorities perpetrated against the Macedonian population in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. Some of the statements made were used by the United Nations Inquiry Commission for their investigations when the Commission was doing surveys in the Balkans during the Greek Civil War. But once again we need to emphasize that all the suffering that took place in Greek occupied Macedonia at the hands of the Monarcho-Fascists, after World War II, cannot be measured just by these statements or just by the statements made by the Commission.)

The Macedonian people in Eastern Greek occupied Macedonia were the first Macedonians to suffer and face this new tragedy. The perpetrators that acted in this region were Andon Chaush's bands, which originally acted in the service of the Germans and were now more than able to immediately undertake the work in their new role.

“A unit belonging to the Greek government army, led by Captain Koukatis from the village Alistrati, arrived during the night on April 18, 1945 and surrounded the village Zrnovo in Drama Region”, wrote Kosta Kundakov from the same village. “At dawn the unit began to attack the houses by firing with automatic weapons to intimidate and frighten the population. Many people were beaten that day, both men and women. Two villagers were also killed. They were Dimitar Bogoev and Pando Sulov, 65 years of age.”

After the April 18, 1945 incident in Drnovo, a delegation of villagers decided to pay a visit to the English military authorities stationed in the region. When they arrived the officer in charge, with a smile on his face, told them: “Well, so you are Bulgarians eh? You must leave this place!” But when they left, when they abandoned their place of birth and indigenous homes they still had to pay blood tax. When they returned home they informed the people of what had transpired. To save their skins many loaded what little they had on their carts, and along with many women from the village Zrnovo,

left for the Bulgarian border. Most of the men had already fled on foot and crossed the Bulgarian border over the mountains. While fleeing from their homes, the villagers Katerina Bozhova and Iana Savova ran into an armed unit. The unit soldiers took everything the women had, their horses, their belongings including the clothing they were wearing. The naked women were then stabbed with knives and left there to lie on the road, where they later died.

At about the same time the village Starchishte suffered the same fate. In addition to the village being robbed and pillaged, the entire village population was terribly mistreated. The villagers Georgi Kirov, Vancho Imirov and Dimitar Zaginov were killed.

“One night during the month of April 1945, Greek government troops killed my 95-year-old father,” says Velik Giorgi Pecharov from the village Plevna, Drama Region. “That evening the troops searched the entire village and took everything they found. They burned three houses and wounded Iani Bozhinov’s wife.”

Refugee Dimitar Bogdanov told a similar story about the village Prosachani in Drama Region and so did refugee Magda Ivanova about the village Gorentsi. Old man Dimitar described his torment as follows: “I, an old man, was sitting at my home without interfering in anything. After the Varkiza agreement and after the partisans surrendered their weapons, government forces began to torment us, all Macedonians, demanding that we hand over guns, ammunition, bombs... One night in April 1945, the Burandari came to the village and broke into my house (the Greek government troops were called Burantari, after the infamous Athens commander Burandas who was well-known for the raids he conducted and the atrocities he committed against the population during the occupation). After they broke in they grabbed me and one of them put his hand over my mouth so that I would not yell. Then they beat me while dragging me on the ground. They stole 243,000 Leva from me and then took me and locked me in the barn. In the meantime they grabbed my 70 year-old wife and harassed her to give them more money. But there was nothing left to give. Because of that they stabbed both of her hands with their knives. In the meantime, while some of them were beating us the others were looting our house. In

the end, before they left, they were yelling ‘get out of here or we will kill you’.”

Similar tragedies were experienced all over Macedonia and precisely because of that people began to leave their homes en masse in the spring of 1945. Thousands of villagers deserted their homes in order to escape the terror, fearing that they would be killed.

The situation in Kukush and Solun Regions was no better. The Macedonian population was targeted everywhere, especially where it was compact. The attacks and terror were the strongest where the Macedonian population was compact. The Greeks had cleansed Kukush and Solun Regions in 1913, now they were turning their attention to other regions.

The refugees in the Barovitsa area in Gumenidzhe Region suffered the same tragic white terror and a similar fate as the rest of the Macedonian people in Greek hands. After the Varkiza Agreement was signed and ELAS disarmed, government troops and the English began to arrest people and put them in prison. The prison in Ber, which at that time had 50-60 collaborators serving their sentences, was taken over by the Greek government. Mitso Duiamov from the village Barovitsa was also serving his sentence in that prison. Control of the Ber prison was given to the English in March 1945. Soon afterwards the prisoners were freed and then armed. In June 1945 Mitso Duiamov appeared near his home, leading an armed detachment. No sooner had the detachment arrived than it began to roam around the region looting and pillaging villages and killing people, just like it had during the occupation. Maria Aidova from the village Barovitsa, who in the fall of 1946 was forced to flee to Yugoslavia, told another tragic story. This was the heartbreaking and tragic story of the tormented mothers whose sons, nine boys, were killed by the government troops. To avoid being tormented many of the men from the villages worked in their fields during the day and hid in the forest at night. Among them were young people who were members of the Organization and participants in the struggle against the occupiers. These people also hid in the forest to escape the fury of the new invader. Among the many people hiding in the forest were a number of young boys. But one day in November 1945, these boys were betrayed by someone who gave

the authorities their location. One night they were surrounded by the Monarch-Fascist army and all murdered.

Here is what Giorgi Evangelos Kehaiov from the village Barovitsa had to say about his own experience and about the experience of some of his fellow villagers: “After the Varkiza agreement, after guarantees were given that everyone would live freely, we, the participants in the resistance movement, were brutally persecuted. Every time we heard troops we ran away to escape their terror. In the summer of 1946 my cousin Giorgi Tantov, a participant of the struggle against the occupiers, was on route to the market in Gumendzhe when they killed him for no reason. The same day, the same government militia who killed my cousin came to our village and, after causing some mischief, left for the mountains to hunt down partisans. When they couldn’t find any partisans they caught two boys who were looking after their pigs not far from the village. After killing them they beheaded the boys and brought their heads back to the village. The boys were 14 year old Iovan and 20 year old Peno. While in the village, the militiamen called the entire village to assemble at the village church. When everyone had arrived the militiamen took the heads in their hands and threatened the entire village with similar violence. Then, like wild savages, the militiamen threw themselves against the peaceful villagers and beat them. After experiencing the terror many villagers left the village and crossed the border into Yugoslavia.”

Maria Betula from the village Karpi in Gumenidzhe Region, a mother of 4 children, said that she, along with other villagers, was forced to flee her village because she could not endure the terror perpetrated by the Monarcho-Fascists. When the Monarcho-Fascist government troops came to the village for the first time, they arrested her along with many others including her youngest child. But after a week of torment they released her and her child. When the government soldiers came to the village the second time, they arrested her father-in-law Giorgi Betov and her mother-in-law Velika. Both in-laws were sent to the Greek island interment camps. The Betov home was pillaged and then razed to the ground.

Here is the tragic story of 12 year-old refugee Prodi Petar Ristov from the village Kupa, Gumenidzhe Region, as he and his four

younger brothers and sisters experienced it. One night in October 1946 a government unit decided to visit the village Kupa. Each time such a unit arrived in Kupa it “visited” the home of young Prodi, frightening him to reveal the whereabouts of his father. But this time the culprits acted more forcefully. They arrested Masa, his mother, and took her to the schoolyard. Sad, her children went to her and cried begging the authorities to let her go, but they were ignored. Not only did the culprits ignore the cries of her children but they beat their mother to near death in front of them. Several days later Masa died. In the meantime the government unit burned down several houses including the home of the five children, forcing them to leave and turning them into refugees.

Murov Dionysus Atanasov from the village Breslovtsi, Karadzovo Region, has also written an account of the plight of his villagers and how his brother was crippled from being severely beaten.

Andonia Lucheva from the village Lugontsi, Gumenidzhe Region, stated that the government troops raided her village many times from the spring of 1945 to the fall of 1946, when the village, along other villages, was completely burned down and the residents were forced to flee to Yugoslavia. During one raid the culprits were firing machine guns at the villagers to frighten them into leaving, wounding young Hristofor Balchov. The same day all the villagers were rounded up, men, women and girls, and with machine guns aimed at them they were questioned about the partisans.

Refugees from the village Tsrna Reka, Gumenidzhe Region, while crossing the border, unanimously declared that: “They were running away from their birthplace, houses and properties to avoid the savage terror inflicted on them by the Monarcho-Fascists.” Iovan Bechov declared that: “I had no choice but to leave my birthplace and my property because I could not endure the Monarcho-Fascist terror. They were looking for my son but I knew if I told them where he was they would intern him and send him to the desolate Greek islands. So they continued to terrorize me and my friend. When they threatened to intern me I decided it was time for me to run.” Vangel Zharov from the same village fled because the government detachment, which was after his son, was unable to find him and threatened to arrest him. His son was a participant in the resistance

movement. Vangel was given an ultimatum to either surrender his son within a given time period or be arrested himself. On September 29, 1946 a group of soldiers set fire to Vangel's house and burned it down with everything in it. Vangel had no choice but to flee.

The village Tsrna Reka, Gumenidzhe Region, was raided on October 1, 1946 and many villagers were arrested and taken to Gumenidzhe prison.

A headquarters for a military unit and a gendarme station were established in the village Lumnita in Gumenidzhe Region immediately after the Varkiza Agreement was signed. The villagers had no right to leave the village, go to market, or even go out to work in their fields without permission from the police. Eight people were arrested in November 1946. Included among them were Dimosteni Meshi and Toma Pifa. During the month of November 1946 the gendarme and military unit were attacked by partisans. More than 100 houses were burned down during the skirmish, forcing many villagers to flee. Some fled to Yugoslavia and others fled to the town Boimitsa.

On May 8, 1945, English and Greek soldiers conducted a raid in the village Radomir in Andzhivardar Region and arrested a large number of villagers. They took the villagers outside of the village near the river and severely tortured them. Included among those arrested were Atanas Kapasuzov, Risto Kozarov, Bozhin Stamenkovski and Sotir Zhupov.

In July 1945 English and Greek soldiers raided the village Tsrna Reka in Gumenidzhe Region. While searching the mountains looking for partisans, the soldiers came across four villagers, Mino Chatkov, Risto Zharov, Giorgi Durchov and Ivan Popov, who at the time were carrying wooden beams back to the village on their ox-cart. The soldiers arrested the men, took them to the village and locked them up in one of the village taverns where they subjected them to terrible torture. After causing some havoc in the village the soldiers took the prisoners and left for Gumendzhe. The village Tsrna Reka was again attacked in October 1945. The Greek soldiers arrested Giorgi and Atanas Tanev and paraded them all through the village only because they had gone to market in Gumendzhe. They

stripped Giorgi naked and, in front of the entire village, beat him until he passed out. The same day the Greek soldiers also beat young Lisa Durcheva.

The village Evzoni in Kukush Region was surrounded and invaded by English and Greek government troops in April 1945. After the village was searched several people were arrested and imprisoned. Included among those imprisoned were Georgi and Mitko Bezirov, Pariz Tolev, Risto Ristachev and Risto Delidzhakov.

In October 1946, after the village Karpi in Gumenidzhe Region was blockaded, the government soldiers fired into the crowd wounding Maria Nasteva. They later cut off Vangel Boinov's hands.

The terror in Voden Region was no less terrifying than that of other regions. The so-called "civilized" Greeks showed their true colours here by the way they acted against the defenseless civilian population. We will only mention a few examples of the kind of terror perpetrated in Voden Region because we do not have a lot of information on the atrocities committed here.

The village Sarakinovo was blockaded in the month of May 1946. After the barbaric government troops pillaged the village and beat everyone who crossed their path, they began to attack the women. This is what refugees Gitsa Terzieva and Tina Manolcheva from the village Sarakinovo had to say: "On top of everything terrible that they did to us, they trampled on our honour... we were forced to flee to Yugoslavia..." Old lady Nusha Manolcheva, also a refugee from the village Sarakinov, said the terror was too much to bear and she was forced to become a refugee in her old age. The village Sarakinovo was also blockaded and pillaged by the Greek army in August 1946. The soldiers forced the villagers to load the loot on horseback and take it to Sobotsko. All those who led the horses were then imprisoned. Vane Manolchev, husband of Nusha Manolcheva, died that day from excessive beating. And even though the Greek government had mobilized Stoian Kraiov's son (from the village Sarakinovo) into the Greek army, it was no reason not to beat Stoian. They simply asked Stoian, "Where is your son?" but could not care less what the answer was. And even though Stoian insisted

that his son was fighting on their side, they still beat him and forced him to become a refugee.

The village Volkoianovo was repeatedly blockaded and pillaged by units of the Greek Army and the gendarme, led by officers Bafas and Talaganis.

The village Oshin was blockaded and pillaged on July 6, 1946, during which time 5 villagers were arrested and beaten. They were Iorgo Ioani, Denis Mora, Dino Murdzhov, Boshana Samara and Vasil Samara. Iorgo Ioani died from being severely beaten.

In January 1946 the village Krontselevo was blockaded by a company of gendarmes led by officer Komainous. The villagers were gathered together in the school for a trial. Many people were beaten including Efthimia Atanasova and her sister-in-law Gitsa Atanasova. Included among the many refugee survivors from the village Krontselevo who experienced the white terror were Sava Dimitrova-Stoianova and Lena Ristova-Georgieva. They described what the Monarcho-Fascists did to the people with much disgust.

On April 15, 1945 a group of 40 armed Greek soldiers, including three Englishmen, surrounded the village Strupino in Voden Region and fired several bursts of machinegun fire to frighten the people. The moment the village was being blockaded, 55 year-old Risto Kacharov came out of his house. When the approaching soldiers saw him they fired bursts of gunfire and heavily wounded him. The soldiers spent the entire day conducting searches and terrorizing the people. In the evening they took eight villagers with them as prisoners and retreated to the village Pozharsko. To avoid being arrested and tortured, this prompted a group of young people, who participated in the resistance, to flee to Yugoslavia. They became refugees on April 17, 1945. Refugee Eleftheria Hristova-Chapova, who remained in the village until the end of 1946, experienced much greater suffering. The next story was told by Petre Katsarovski from the village Pozharsko who witnessed the whole thing while plowing his field: "It was a day in August 1946 when a group of 15 Greek gendarmes were patrolling the area near the villages Gorno and Dolno Pozharsko. Not far from the village was 17 year-old Kolio Mitrev Iantsev looking after his cattle. A group of armed gendarmes

came closer and yelled at him to 'raise his arms!' Kolio did as he was asked and waited for them to search and arrest him when one of the gendarmes yelled 'Run or they will kill you!' Frightened, young Kolio ran and the gendarmes fired several bursts of gunfire. The child fell down and died instantly." The same day the same group of gendarmes arrested 20 year-old Giorgi Ristov Katsarov of Gorno Pozharsko, who at the time was working in his field. On their way to Sobotsko they executed him.

This is what Lena Dimova Krsteva from the village Gorno Pozharsko had to say about her experience with the Greek government troops: "The gendarmes came from Sobotsko on Krstovden (Holy Cross Day) in 1946 and blockaded our village. As soon as they came they began to pillage the houses and beat the people because they were anti-fascists. My 19 year-old son Traiko was returning home from work when he was arrested and later taken to Sobotsko. The next day I took my youngest child and went to Sobotsko to look for Traiko and to find out why he had been arrested. On the way there we ran into Hristo Vetskov, the mayor of our municipality, who told me that 'my boy was killed' and that 'I should be concerned with saving the living'. We did not return home after that, we fled for the mountains and headed straight for the Yugoslav border." Lena Krsteva was not alone that day. Many others also crossed the Yugoslav border both from Gorno and Dolno Pozharsko as well as from Tresino and other Voden Region villages.

Kamena Hristova-Trpkova's fate, from the village Dolno Pozharsko, was no better. She became a widow in the month of September 1946. Like every other morning, one morning in September her husband took a walk to the river that flowed near their house to wash his face. That particular morning the village happened to be blockaded by the Greek gendarmes. He was immediately arrested and mercilessly beaten until he died. Frightened by the experience, Kamena fled her home and became a refugee.

Lena Kostadinova-Kiravakova from the village Piperia, along with her entire family, became a refugee because she could not endure the terror perpetrated by the Greek authorities. She was jailed for 10 days in Sobotsko jail during the summer in 1945 where she became a mute from being excessively abused.

In May 1945 Kiriako Mariuzani, from the village Bahovo, Karadzovo Region, was brutally murdered by a government armed, civilian unit of former collaborators. Kiriako at the time was working in his field.

George Zhoglevski, from the village Zhervi, left his family with 6 young children and fled to Yugoslavia because he was not sure about his own life. The authorities wanted to arrest him because he was a participant in the anti-fascist resistance movement. On October 25 his house was looted and his wife and elderly father were severely tortured. The same day 10 women were arrested in the village Zhervi.

### Terror in Lerin Region

In June 1945 two armed gendarmes and the spy Miltiadis Dounoukas broke into Vane Rusevski's house in the village Papadia and tortured Vane, Vane's daughter Lefteria and daughter-in-law Katina. Before leaving the torturers threatened to come back again, and if they didn't find Vane's son the entire family would be arrested and jailed. Because of this Vane's entire family was forced to leave its home and native hearth and flee across the border.

On February 18, 1946 a group of five Greek gendarmes "visited" the village Dolno Kotori and made several arrests. Included among those arrested were Sultana Naumova, Katerina Papa Dimitriou, Dumitroula Stefanidi, Krsta Velianova, Mite Velianov, Tanas Papadimitriou, Ilia Nedin and Dimitrias Nedin. After they took the prisoners to the rural municipality building they subjected them to torture all night. The next day they transferred them to a prison in Lerin.

The village Besfina, in Prespa Region, was blocked repeatedly by the Greek gendarmes and the villages were regularly harassed. Sixteen year-old Todora Kotsovska went insane from being beaten badly. She was arrested and taken to the gendarme station in the village Breznitsa. Five youths were arrested in Besfina in June 1946 and taken to the gendarme station in Breznitsa where they were subjected to severe torture. Young Spiro Karov died from the ordeal.

The people could not endure the torture and terror, as a result many fled across the border to Yugoslavia. Included among those who fled were Ristana Skenderova and Stavroitsa Dukovska. Before that both women were arrested and taken to prison in Lerin. Andon Grzdanov also from Besfina, who with his family fled to Yugoslavia in July 1946, said the following about the terror in his village: “When the gendarmes established a headquarters in the village Besfina, they prohibited the people from moving in or out of the village. They were not even allowed to go to work. The farm animals in the barns outside of the village had to be brought into the village in order to be looked after. The villagers were detained and harassed until July 27, 1946. A little later they arrested young Slavka Angelova and took her to jail in the village German. They also arrested Hristo Klkovski, Vangel Traikov and Vasil Cholamov and took them to the jail in Lerin. Also arrested and taken to prison were Donevitsa Dukova, Stavrovitsa and 14 year-old Lambro Dukovski. During one of its searches outside of the village the Greek gendarmes wounded young Vane Grozdanovski while he was looking after his flock of sheep.”

As soon as the Greek authorities set foot in Prespa Region, they arrested and imprisoned 10 people from the village Bukovik. Included among those arrested and imprisoned were Pando Ristovski, his son Risto, Vasil Sekulovski, Traiko Delevski, Ilia Popov and Ilia Georgiev.

Nikola Steriov from the village Orovnik was executed for no reason.

On July 20, 1945 a Greek gendarme init blockaded the village Papli. After the entire village population was gathered in the village school, all the gendarmes could find were old men, old women and very young children. Being furious at not being able to find the people they were looking for, they beat the old men and loaded the old women onto trucks and took them to prison where they tortured them and released them two days later.

On March 31, 1946, the day of the parliamentary elections in Greece, a group of gendarmes from the Breznitsa station and a group of soldiers blockaded the village Rulia and threatened to arrest people if they did not vote. Because many of the villagers protested, the next day April 1, 1946, the village was again raided

and 15 people were arrested and taken to prison in Lerin. Included among those arrested and taken to prison were Ilia Serbinov, Ilia Toshev, Mitre Iovanov, Done Lazarov, Velian Karadakov, Spiro Serbinov, Mitre Tachkov, Lazo Rachkov and Apostol Trendafilov. On July 15, 1946 those arrested were Todor Tsvetkov, Kiro Kostovski, Lena Karafilova, Sofia Ramovska, Zora Markovska and Lozana Trendafilova. After they were arrested they were tortured in front of all the villagers. Included among those tortured were 85 year-old Kiro Kostovski and Lozana Trendafilova.

In July 1945 the Greek authorities arrested 10 people from the village Shtrkovo, Prespa Region. Included among those arrested were Bozhin Kostovski and his family, Pando Kostovski and Alexo Georgiev.

During the summer of 1945 a Greek gendarme blockaded the village Graždano, Prespa Region, and besides harassing the people inside the village the gendarmes fired their machine guns at the people working in the fields, wounding Atanas Ristevski.

The village German, in Prespa Region, has long been a thorn in the eyes of the Greek authorities. German was the largest village in Prespa Region and the most patriotic Macedonian place in the region, which has been difficult for the Greeks to break. As soon as the Greek authorities arrived, in the spring of 1945, they immediately established a gendarme station and a unit of soldiers in German. They were placed there to break the spirit of the people so that it would make it easier for the Greeks to master Prespa. Without losing any time, the moment the new forces were stationed they began to intimidate and terrorize the population. They ordered the people to display Greek flags in their homes. This, of course, was another intimidation tactic and an excuse to mistreat people. No one was immune to their terror regardless of age or sex. Naturally there were many who did not want to display the Greek flag and those “who did not display it properly”. The Greeks had a solution for all of that “beat everyone on sight...” In time they arrested and jailed more than 100 people. Included among those arrested and jailed were German Stoichevski, Kosta Gogarov, Kosta Doichinovski, Naum Koichevski and Mara Madzheva. In addition to arresting people, the Greek soldiers burned down several houses and 150

barns and cottages. As they had in other villages, here too they prohibited people from traveling in and out of the village. This caused great difficulty for some not being able to go to work and not being able to look after livestock outside of the village.

When Karafil Kirovski from the village Kladorabi spoke about his plight and why he and his family became refugees, he also told us that he and his family were arrested and tortured for a week. His son, in the meantime, was kept in prison for five months.

Dola Kostova-Dzgingova and Velika Aleksova-Kostova, from the village Krushoradi, were arrested in October 1946. After that they were imprisoned and tortured in the village Ofchareni. After they were released they had no choice but to flee to Yugoslavia. Included among the people from the village Krushodari who were arrested were Apostol Chekrev, Pandil Vesov, Krste Bashov, Giorgi Bashov and Boris Kostanchev. Greek lieutenant Theodoros Veneatos and the village teacher for Setna, Militiadis Dounoukos, were among the most notorious culprits for terrorizing and tormenting the local population.

Forty Monarcho-Fascist soldiers, led by officer Dalis, blockaded and looted the village Aitos in the spring of 1945. In the process 60 people were arrested, mostly elderly, women and children, and taken to the jail in Sorovich. The same day the soldiers burned down 3 houses belonging to Stefan Difov, Kolio Mirinov and Metodias Zula. From the many arrested, Doncho Naov and Mihailo Boshkov were tortured and their bodies were cut with razor blades before they were taken to jail. This information was given to us by refugee Menka Sotirova-Chontova.

With the arrival of the Monarcho-Fascists in the village Nevoleni many people were arrested and tortured. Included among those arrested and tortured were Filip Tanev-Dimitrov and his wife, Gorgi Hadziev, Chuila Iushtikova, Spiro Shtruimov, Ilia Stanichev, Georgi Bibev, Atanas Bibev, Vane Zhalev and Stoiadin Panov.

In the month of June 1945 the Greek army and gendarmes blockaded the village Banitsa several times, looking to arrest prominent anti-fascists. At the same time they conducted searches

and looted many houses. During all of this, for no reason at all, they killed forty year-old Pando Miailov and wounded Alekso Stoianov. Because of this many Banitsa residents fled Banitsa and became refugees.

### Terror in Kailari Region

The evildoer and collaborator Kolaras and his unit were especially known in Kailari and Kostur Regions. They were responsible for burning down Zagorichani, Bobishta, Mokreni and other villages. On September 18, 1944, when the Germans were still in Greek occupied Macedonia, Kolaras and his armed unit blockaded Kailari, immediately gathered the population and asked the Greeks to separate themselves from the Macedonians. After they were separated, the Macedonians were lined up and Kolaras began to harass them, asking them to hand over their weapons and stop helping the partisans. They then pulled Ilia Kodzha, Kolio Paskov and Kiro Paskov from the lineup and severely tortured them in public. After the Varkiza Agreement was signed the Monarcho-Fascists came to Greek occupied Macedonia and immediately began to hunt down the Macedonian and Greek democratic people. Many Macedonians were arrested in May 1945, included among them were Iani Velianov, Pop Hari Karavelchev and Leonid Babaloku.

In October 1944 Kolaras's unit entered the village Dorutovo and arrested and executed Trendafil Ivanov and severely tortured and beheaded his brother Boris Ivanov. The same day Kolaras's evildoers killed Trendafil's son Andrea. The evildoers then broke into houses and, besides looting them, destroyed everything inside. They then burned down 14 houses. The population was so frightened that it fled to the mountains and did not return until the village was liberated by the National Liberation Army. Unfortunately the peace in Dorutovo lasted only a short time. In the spring of 1945 Kolaras and his evildoers appeared on the scene again. On May 10, 1945 the village was once again blockaded by the collaborators and 13 people were arrested and taken to jail.

In March 1945 Dolaris, from the village Galatia, a member of Kolaras's counter-bands, and his unit of evildoers attacked the village Rakita, gathered all the villagers and demanded that they

collect and give him 150 gold Napoleons (French gold coins). If they did not deliver he threatened to call on Kolaras and his entire band to come and destroy the village. Frightened, the villagers gathered a large sum of money and gave it to him, which unfortunately did not help their situation. In May 1945 a number of Englishmen on motor vehicles, accompanied by officers from the Kailari gendarme, came to the village. They were the same officers who had come during the occupation. Many villagers were arrested that day and sent to the prison in Larissa. Included among those who were arrested and sent to prison were Stefan Chukov, Giorgi Ianev, Dimitar Kirov, Leonida Korovanov, Simo Mutsarov and Dimitar Mutsarov. In August 1945 the village was again blockaded by Dolaris and Kolaras's units and a number of gendarmes. After they plundered the village they arrested Nikola Matkarov, Vangel Monchov, Iordan Mitov, Giorgi Boikov, Stavro Kurkitov, Krum Pop Dimitrov and Giorgi Venkov. The prisoners were taken to the prison in Kozheni. After that the Monarcho-Fascists established a gendarme station in the village and put in charge a well-known Gestapo sympathizer named Manolis Karabelas. This Gestapo sympathizer committed major crimes in the village including harassing and tormenting Evgenia Gaitanova, Nevena Ilieva-Atanasova, Anthula Radenkova, Trpa Lazarova, Tola Lazarova and many other women.

After a gendarme station was established in Rakita in June 1946, many young people were arrested and tortured all throughout Kailari Region. Seventy-five young people from Rakita, one hundred and twenty young people from Palior and so on. Included among the people arrested were young people from the villages Embore, Donitsa, Koboï, Perdika, and Nalban. Mincho Minchev from the village Nalban was killed while working in his field. Mincho was president of NOO (People's Liberation Organization) during the occupation.

### Terror in Kostur Region

The village Aposkep was twice blockaded in May 1945, said refugee Boiana Anastasova-Shantanova. "The entire village population was assembled in the centre of the village. While some of the authorities were harassing the people others were plundering

our houses. After they finished plundering us they arrested many villagers. Included among those arrested were Nikola Pop Janov, Mito Vlaov, Stefan Milirov, Tode Bubev, Stefan Bubev, Trifun Bubev, Dimitar Shalevski, Ilia Shalevski, Tanas Kalaidziev and Andon Iakimov. After they were subjected to torture they were taken to jail in Kostur where they were subjected to more torture. They cut the women's hair very short. Included among the women who were arrested were Evangelia Zakova and Vena Pop Dimitrova.”

A group of Monarcho-Fascists invaded the village Grache during the night of April 28, 1945 and robbed several houses. Grache was again invaded and blockaded on May 25, 1945. The entire village population was assembled in the village centre and subjected to severe torture. Beaten severely were Sofia Kirchova and Kanza Velovska.

Similarly, the village Drenichevo was also plundered on August 28, 1945 by an armed Monarcho-Fascist group during which time they killed Pavle Dutovski while he was working in his field.

On May 4, 1945 the village Dobrolishta was blockaded by an armed gang led by Anton Amanatidis. After looting the village many men and women were tortured including Angelina Petrovska, Kaliopa Novacheva and Labria Gubienova.

Refugee Maki Tomovska, from the village Sveta Nedela, told us that the reason she left her village was terror and the uncertainty of the fate of the Macedonian people in that region. On May 5, 1945 the village was blockaded and robbed by an armed gang. Two villagers were arrested. Sidera Sokolova and a number of other women were tortured. According to Maki, included among the perpetrators who committed this act were collaborators Anastasis Stamboulidis and Antonis Anastasidis from the village Sveta Nedela.

The population in the town Rupishta also suffered from the Greek terror. Rupishta was raided on April 19, 1945 and about 50 of its residents, those who had participated in the resistance movement, were arrested. Included among those arrested were Dimitar Marovski, Leonid Dzhuvara, Iorgo Malovski and Nikola Uzunovski.

They were first taken to the prison in Kostur and then to the “Pavlos Melas” camp in Solun. Besides that, these culprits completely demolished the premises of the organizations EAM and AKE. Martula Ververi, who at the time was present at the EAM premises, was taken and beaten to unconsciousness. Included among the protagonists of the terror committed in Rupishta were Giorgi Mitrushis, Vassilis Sokolo, Nikos Maridis and Kendros Steilis.

On April 27, 1945 the village Pesiak was blocked and its residents harassed, beaten and tortured. Included among those who died from torture was Tome Dimovski. Dimitar Kolevski was beaten so badly that he, for a long time, was unable to get out of bed. At the same time the same culprits blockaded the village Markoveni and, in the same manner, tortured Hristo Manolevski to unconsciousness.

The village Setoma was twice plundered by armed counter-bands and military units, once on May 10, 1945 and then again on June 20 of the same year. Zoitsa Lazarova was among those severely beaten.

The village Tiolishta was raided on June 21, 1945, during which time the entire population was gathered together in the village centre and subjected to torture. Included among those who died from torture was Vasilka Pop Panaiotova. Katina Deleva was thrown from a balcony and suffered a broken leg. After tormenting the villagers the culprits plundered the houses, took two women with them and withdrew. The women taken were Anastasia Grezhova and Sofia Kostadinova. Included among the culprits who participated in committing the terror acts in Tiolishta were the wives of Nikolas Kolaras and Andreas Papadopoulos. The villages east of Lake Kostur and Kailari Region were also ravaged in the same manner. Included among the people who were arrested in the village Komunichevo were Samara Stefanova-Vlaova and Stefo Duevski. Gligor Pop Atanasov was severely tortured and died in Kostur prison a few days later. Dimitar Duevski died in the village while being tortured.

“A Greek military unit blockaded the village Zhupanishta on June 16, 1945, gathered all the people together in the village centre and began to harass them, especially the women, demanding that they tell them who had fled the village. Because the people did not want

to disclose the names of the men who had fled, the soldiers began to beat everyone at random. Many men and women were arrested that day and many houses were robbed. All those arrested were taken to the prison in Kostur. Included among those beaten, arrested and taken to prison were Leftera Bezova, Kostadina Lazareva, 80 year-old Haida Hristova-Vlahova, Tuvare Shishkov, Vasil Mangov, Pavle Telachkin, Kolio Koliovski, Mito Shopov, Petre Zhelin, Aleko Shishkovski, Kolio Boikin and Iordan Deliov. When I saw these men doing this to our people,” said refugee Dimitrula Lazareva, “the next day on June 17, 1945 I left the village and fled to Yugoslavia.”

When the village Lobanitsa was blockaded for the first time in the summer of 1945, the people were gathered together and subjected to harassment. Many were tortured including Pida Lazareva, Pandevitsa Mizova and Iani Markovski.

The village Dupiak was attacked by a group of armed gendarmes in September 1945, during which time 7 young people were arrested and imprisoned. Included among those arrested and imprisoned were Gligor Panov and Atanas Tozi. These two young men were subjected to severe torture in order to reveal the names of the members belonging to democratic organizations in the village. Also subjected to harassment and torture were Evgenia Pachova and her only son who later died from the ordeal.

On September 9, 1945 Kolaras’s armed gang killed 15 year old Krsto Mandzharov from the village Prekopana, while he was working in his field. Liakopoulos’s armed gang severely beat Boris Butchkov, Foti Karadakov, Kuzo Klekov and Iani Lioliov then took the men to prison in Lerin.

“Aided by Kolaras and Papadopoulos’s gangs, the village Vishina was blockaded by a Greek gendarme unit on September 10, 1946. After many houses were looted and the population harassed, a number of houses and barns were burned down. Included among those who lost their houses were Gligor Pulev, Nikola Likov, Anastas Pandov, Kosta Sholev, Stoian Pop Dimitrov and Iani Andreev. Included among those who were severely beaten were Paraskeva Andreeva, Kaliopa Sholeva and Elena Duleva. Eight villagers were arrested and taken to the jail in Kozheni. Included

among those arrested and taken to jail were Aleko Punkov, Petre Adzhiev, Aleko Tresinov, Pando Chapov, Hristaki Durov, Pando Kalkov, Kosta Kalkov and Vasil Gerginov. Kolaras and Papadopoulos's gangs were also responsible for many crimes committed in other nearby villages, including Blatsa, Chereshnitsa and Tiolishta," said refugee Viktoria Panaiotova.

A gendarme station was established in the village Konomlati (Kolomnati) which took extreme measures to harass and terrorize the population. The people there lived in constant fear. During the winter in 1946, the Monarcho-Fascists burned down 10 houses and 40 barns and arrested and jailed many people.

A number of armed civilians from the villages Sveta Nedela and Osheni invaded the village D'mbeni in March 1945 and stole 300 sheep. During the night these same armed civilians killed villagers Elena Mushki and her daughter Leftera, just outside the village. On March 25, 1946 the gendarmes arrested and took to the gendarme station (located inside the village) Hristo Trpovski, Tsilo Skivinski, Spaso Karamanov, Naso Kondov, Tsilo Ralev, Lazo Lamburov, Marko Vivkov, Mito Pachkov and others. In July 1946 Dimitar Blahov was brutally tortured to death and his body set on fire while he was looking after the village cattle outside of the village. That crime was perpetrated by the Greek army detachment stationed in the village Gabresh. A number of people were arrested and taken to prison to the island Krf (Corfu) in July 1946. Included among those arrested and taken to prison were Olga Trpovska, wife of Lazo Trpovski, a known and prominent anti-fascist revolutionary in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia, who died in 1943, Donka Kalkova, Slava Mangova, Sofa Grbova, Nusha Kenkova, Filio Ralev, Marko Vivkov, Stavro Nolkov and Pavle Kalkovski. Kolio Chochov died while being tortured. Arrested at the same time and taken to the village Konomlati were Tsilio Rizov, Krste Shekrov, Giorgi Balev, Risto Zhurchev and Andriko Kenkov. Summoned to the gendarme station in D'mbeni and tortured in June 1946, among others, were Grka Raleva, Tsveta Raleva, Dimana Trpovska, Sofa Nolkova, Lena Vivkova, Zoia Siderova, Lena Pachkova and Lina Chonkova.

The village Gabresh in Kostur Region was raided in the spring in 1946 by units of the Greek army. The villagers were gathered in the middle of the village, in the lower neighbourhood, and subjected to torture. All the men were forced to kneel in a semicircle with their arms raised skywards. The soldiers then selected several men from the semicircle and began to beat them with specially made sticks cut from a large oak tree that grew in the village cemetery. Included among the most tortured people during this blockade were Lefter Bitovski, Vancho Skenderovski and Giorgi Sholdovski, who was beaten to unconsciousness.

Included among those arrested in the village Gabresh on June 6 were Lena Makrieva, Stoia Diklova, Pando Robovski, Risto Robovski and Todor Robovski. These people were taken to the gendarme station in Konomlati and subjected to physical torture. Some were released a day later, the rest were kept in prison until the end of the Greek Civil War.

A short time later Vancho Kizevski was arrested. He was not tried or taken to prison. He was brutally beaten to near death inside the Greek army headquarters. When they were certain that he was going to die they summoned his family to take him away. He died immediately afterwards.

The following table provides incomplete data from a survey conducted by NOF regarding the white terror perpetrated against the people in Greek occupied Macedonia in the period from April 1945 to May 1947. This information was included in the report released by Mihail Keramitchiev, President of NOF, to the top NOF leadership during the May 20, 1947 NOF Conference.

(Region)	Lerin	Kostur	Enidzhe Vardar	Voden
1. Arrested	596	3,000	810	2,050
2. Sentenced	320	1,500	430	1,950
3. Convicted	285	1,200	430	1,300
4. Interned	122	500	115	550
5. Killed (no charges)	56	90	48	74
6. Tortured	1,369	10,000	1,080	1,080

7. Frantically beaten	5	5	1	2
8. Completely burned villages	-	6	-	-
9. Burned houses	110	968	-	813
10. Robbed villages	10	60	10	-
11. Robbed houses	215	1,000	100	38
12. Forcibly evacuated villages	-	10	10	25
13. Forcibly evacuated population	300	4,500	1,190	7,818

White terror was widespread; there was no peace anywhere, not on the road and not in the fields. No one was immune; there was no honour and dignity in life anywhere. The biggest terror makers of them all were the government authorities, extending all the way up to the top government officials who exercised state power.

The terror waged against the democratic forces after the Varkiza Agreement was signed was particularly fierce in Greek occupied Macedonia; it was a kind of terror not experienced since Macedonia had been invaded, occupied and partitioned in 1912, 1913. It was far worse than the terror experienced during the German, Italian and Bulgarian occupation and during the Greek Civil War. There was not a single Macedonian city, town, village, or home that was not affected. There was no Macedonian family that was not tortured and that did not suffer. Examples of the terror conducted during the period from 1945 to 1946 have shown that:

First, it shows the kind of situation the Macedonian people found themselves in after the German occupiers were ousted and after the February 1945 Varkiza Agreement was signed, which opened the way for the old Greek regime to return to Greece. A situation was created for the Macedonian people to either leave their homes or resist and fight back for their survival. This explains why the Macedonian people did what they had to do and the reason for the development of NOF in Greek occupied Macedonia.

Second, the UN Inquiry Commission, which surveyed the Balkans and Greece in early 1947, was well-acquainted with this situation but remained indifferent to the Macedonian suffering. The Greek

Monarcho-Fascists saw this as support and encouragement by the International Community to continue doing what they were doing; furiously terrorizing, torturing and jailing people in the dry Greek islands, especially the Macedonians, in an effort to drive them out and extinguish their existence. The Greeks, as a result, have committed acts that have defied the most basic human rights since human rights came into existence. As a result, thousands of Macedonians found themselves, homeless, exiled, dead, or rotting in the inhumane Greek jails and prison camps where thousands more met their tragic end.

## CHAPTER SIX - RESISTANCE TO NEW PRESSURE

### 1. Situation in the Balkans after World War II

Even before the Second World War ended, the social structure physiognomy of the Balkans was clearly expressed. No one doubted that the people's revolution in Yugoslavia would be victorious. The same was true for Albania, as well as for the final outcome in Bulgaria. The Greek political right was well aware of that fact. But in addition to that there was another important fact, a new phenomenon was on the rise which the Greek political right had to contend with; the creation of the People's Republic of Macedonia. The national revolution in Yugoslavia would not only bring new social order, but it would create a People's Republic of Macedonia, a fact which was not consistent with the imperialist aspirations of the Greek political right. The Macedonian people living in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia, who in the past lagged behind in their national struggle for freedom and independence, with undisguised sympathies, welcomed the creation of the Macedonian republic within the Yugoslav Federation of newly constituted nations. On the other hand, the internal conditions in Greece were changing. A revolutionary situation was on the rise giving birth to real democratic forces capable of defeating the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and solving the Macedonian National Question by addressing it as an integral part of the revolution's democratic tasks. So the situation in the Balkans and in Greece itself, which existed during the Second World War, created an opportunity for the Macedonian people living in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia to seek and achieve their national rights. The Macedonian people were confident and morally prepared for that, as demonstrated by their heroism when they participated en masse in the liberation front and in the Greek Civil War for which they paid with heavy casualties. This also explains the rise of NOF in the spring of 1945 in Greek occupied Macedonia with its national liberation political platform, which enjoyed great prestige before the Macedonian people and before other minorities.

On April 23, 1945 the Political Commission held a meeting (but not with the initial staff because changes were made) to assess Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia on the basis of prior activities

conducted on the ground and on the basis of the new situation in resolving the problems associated with creating a single organization. Up until then the Macedonian movement in Greek occupied Macedonia, including its political agitators and organizers, acted under several organizations and under different names. In Kostur Region, for example, the Macedonian organization was called SNOF, a name that existed since World War II. The Macedonian organization in Voden Region, on the other hand, was called TOMO (Total Macedonian Liberation Organization). A decision made during the meeting to use a single name for all organizations. It was decided to call the Organization the “National Liberation Front for Aegean Macedonia”. The date April 23, 1945 was then taken to mean the establishment of the National Liberation Front (NOF) for Aegean Macedonia. However, NOF was a continuation of SNOF and it may be more correct to say that NOF was the continuation of the Slavo-Macedonian Liberation Front, which had been in existence since the National-liberation struggle that began during World War II.

The Organization “NOF for Aegean Macedonia” was an expression of the same idea, same ideology, same politics and same national aspirations shared by the Macedonian people in their desire to create their own organization and their own fighting body, as they did during the German occupation. In addition to being an organ of the Macedonian people’s struggle against the national and class enemy personified by Athens and its counter-revolutionaries in Greece, NOF was also a challenge to the CPG’s fraudulent position with respect to the Macedonian National Question. In some specific circumstances NOF took a different approach in evaluating the struggle in Greece than the CPG leadership did.

The establishment of NOF, its political and organizational activities and later its adoption of a program and status, shows that the Macedonian people in Greek occupied Macedonia were willing to tackle the Macedonian National Question after World War II. The situation after the Varkiza Agreement, i.e. its violation by the Athenian bourgeois government, the effort to break the democratic movement in the country by military force and by terror were all factors that contributed to the revolutionary mood in the country. This could not have been seen with greater clarity than in the

territory of Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. The basis for this was in the following elements: the desire exhibited by the vast majority of the Macedonian people to realize their aspirations, the favourable situation in the Balkans, the situation where the terror caused by the reactionary forces needed to be removed and so on. But the decision to conduct an armed struggle was not made by NOF, neither were the decisions to organize and implement such a struggle. This was the work of the CPG, an organization that had the ability and resources to operate in the entire territory of Greece. The CPG leadership was of the opinion that there were grounds for parliamentary life and for a political struggle in Greece. Unfortunately the CPG's political line was subordinate in that assessment. But unlike NOF, which was an illegal organization in Greece, the CPG was a legal organization and its own assessment was that the situation was revolutionary and that an armed struggle was a form of struggle. On top of that there was a huge gap that existed between NOF and the CPG leadership regarding the Macedonian National Question, created in the course of NOD (People's Liberation Movement). That is why NOF, until almost the end of 1946, acted in conformity with the CPG leadership.

NOF, for the above stated reasons, was not free to develop its own full political and organizational initiatives before and after the Agreement was signed because of its relations with the CPG, which reflected on its political and organizational life. If we are to follow the path of development that NOF took, we can easily see the contradictions and loss of reliability which resulted from CPG interference.

## 2. NOF activities in 1945-1946

During its organizational stages, even though NOF was politically separated from the CPG, up until the October 1946 Agreement, it was still not free and independent to carry out its own program. NOF's actions and attitudes had to largely comply and harmonize with the Party line and with CPG views. After the Varkiza Agreement was signed and ELAS was disarmed, the reactionary government in Athens lost no time in expanding its control over the entire territory of the country. And the moment the bourgeois government in Athens took hold of power it began to terrorize the

democratic forces, hunting down its supporters and destroying its institutions. These actions spoke not only of the fact that the political right in Greece, which came to power, was not only not going to fulfill its obligations of providing a peaceful and democratic life for the people, but on the contrary, every day that it held power it became increasingly evident that the democratic forces were locked out of everything, including the parliamentary political fight they were expecting to fight.

NOF's organizational activities were developed exactly under the conditions stated above. On top of that NOF had to endure the Greek wrath for being an illegal organization plus a Macedonian one at that, which no Greek could stomach. It was said that before NOF got its formal name, at the time when it was acting under the title "Political Commission for the Aegean Macedonians", it had in the background its own organizers developing "living" organizational activities. But after the Varkiza Agreement was signed and the Athens government extended its reach into Greek occupied Macedonia, it took extreme measures to ensure these activities were eliminated, including those involved in them. This move, however, did not fully achieve its objectives because NOF's organizational, political and military activities greatly increased after that, resulting in the establishment of NOF in April 1945. In the course of 1945 NOF established itself in almost all the Macedonian villages and towns in Voden, Lerin and Kostur Regions. NOF also established organizational bases in many villages in Enidzhevardar, Gumenidzhe and Negush Regions and in certain regions in Eastern Macedonia. NOF had its own leadership and a number of professional staff illegally working for them in Voden, Lerin, Kostur and Gumenidzhe Regions. Organizational responsibilities were created and divided amongst the staff as well as organizational committees, not only for NOF but also for AFZH (Women's Organization) and for NOMS (Organization for the youth).

NOF could not have had proper representation of strength, authority and influence if it acted only as a frontline organization. For the Macedonians NOF was the only organization that opposed the CPG and its attitude towards the Macedonian people and that is why it was so successful in expanding its organizational network and establishing political influence over the Macedonian people.

NOF supported the moral and political mood of the masses, worked tirelessly for the struggle and rarely complaining about the sacrifices its members had to make. In the course of 1945 and 1946, after its Agreement with the CPG, NOF had the opportunity to call on its entire membership to join the armed struggle en masse. But, as we will later see, if NOF was prepared to make such a call, the CPG wasn't. As a result, because NOF was politically aligned with the CPG in regards to the armed struggle, it did not make that call.

Here are some examples of NOF's endeavours, collisions with the CPG leadership and its movements within the contradictions.

Because of the objective conditions in which organizational activities took place in Greek occupied Macedonia, and for the purpose of performing intensive organizational work in order to quickly expand in the field and to strengthen the Organization, it was necessary to hire many organizers. The number of staff with professional backgrounds in every region during the course of 1945 and 1946 was 20 to 30, sometimes up to 40 people. All these illegal workers were armed, not only with hand guns but in most cases with rifles and machine guns. In addition to that, because of the terror activities conducted by regular and irregular armed Greek bands, NOF found it necessary to form armed groups of its own. Such groups existed in Lerin, Kostur, Voden, Gumenidzhe and Eidzhe-Vardar Regions, but whose existence was disputed by the CPG leadership. So in addition to carrying the burden of having to fight against the enemy, these groups which were recruiting and growing on their own also had to contend with the CPG. NOF and its membership were in favour of the existence and growth of these groups but lacked CPG consent; the CPG leadership's line and position was against having such groups. The groups were therefore prohibited from carrying out mobilization and recruiting new fighters. And, even though arms and ammunition existed on the ground, the CPG made sure it was not available to NOF, to the armed groups, or to any other Macedonian organization. This is why a rift was created between NOF's armed partisan groups and the enemy in 1945. NOF organizers on the ground and behind the scenes were ready for an armed struggle, as they repeatedly wrote in their reports. In one of these reports, directed to the main NOF

leadership, the secretary of Lerin Region, under the pseudonym Sandanski, wrote: "In my opinion, we should make a decisive strike if we want to do more than what we did in the course of one month... The Greek government, based on local reactions, intends to occupy the most scattered settlements. That is why it is preparing to capture the border lines with intent to later conduct cleanup actions to destroy the Macedonian armed groups and to establish police stations in the mountain villages and intimidate, torture and loot the local population, just like it did before the war, to push the Macedonian people to flee to Vardar (Republic of) Macedonia. The situation is becoming very critical and if the Greek government achieves its objectives, the Macedonian people would have a great deal to lose".

But because NOF was politically aligned with the CPG, it not only provided directives or took measures to strengthen the armed struggle but, on the contrary, in August 1945 the partisans were ordered to avoid armed collisions with the enemy. As a result the enemy gained strength, improved its fighting spirit and decimated the Macedonian population. Here is what Dzhodzo wrote in a report dated August 25, 1945, on the situation in Lerin:

"Based on written and oral reports originating from the Lerin Regional Board, the situation there has been very difficult lately due to the great terror and increased hostilities perpetrated by the army and gendarmes that have been established in the villages. Their presence has encouraged informers and spies to be brazen and to multiply in numbers..." At the end of the same report Dzhodzo wrote: "Lefter just arrived and gave us this information: the number of Burandari (Greek soldiers) present in Lerin Region is about 2,000, most of whom are blacks, generally there are about 6,000. The arms they possess include machine guns, mortars, artillery and tanks. They are stationed from Daulot to Kajmakchalan, where they are mending and fixing the roads.

It is impossible to pass, that is why I will not be sending Ivana and Zivko. I will not be coming either. I will wait for Tane who has been separated from us for eight days and who we expect to be arriving the next day. They have closed off all movements for the Macedonians. They brought the sheep down from the mountains so

that no one will be allowed to leave. In the meantime they are burning down the forests. During the night all Macedonian houses are under lockdown so that no one can go out. Those who manage to get permission to work in their fields are inspected to see how much food they are carrying.

Our groups are in a desperate situation. They have to attack and fight to obtain their supplies. I sent a courier and informed them not to attack by any means.”

Sandanski’s assessment regarding the Greek government’s intentions was correct. We can also say, based on Dzhodzhov’s report, that Macedonian partisans were prohibited from attacking, even at the cost of staying hungry.

In a report sent to the NOF leadership, dated August 22, 1945, Tane Naumovski, among other things, wrote the following about the situation on the ground:

“Whole families in Kailari Region, Macedonian men and women are dragged to Thessaly on a daily basis and from there we do not know where they are taken. Free travel is prohibited in Sorovich Region. It is difficult for people in Lerin Region to survive in the mountains. It’s the same in the Lerin field. We beg of you to find a solution before November 1, 1945 because it will be difficult for us to stay out here after that. The population is starting to become frightened from the forces stationed here and from the spies; the spies are developing great courage.

...Every day they set ambushes because their spies are well-organized. We can’t shoot at them because we don’t have that right and they know it. They are starting to climb the mountains and are persecuting us, even in our strongholds. When we shoot at them, they run away...”

Based on the many reports produced at that time, the situation on the ground was the same everywhere: “Weapons were needed and a signal to start strengthening the armed struggle.” This was a result of the objective situation. But there was lack of agreement between the CPG and NOF. But regardless of that, a great rift began to develop

between the armed Macedonian partisan groups and the armed forces belonging to the Athens regime in the spring and summer of 1945, after their arrival in Greek occupied Macedonia and after the Varkiza Agreement was signed. The rift was well-publicized in the regime's newspapers in Greece. The Solun newspaper "Kakedonia", for example, on July 18, 1945 wrote: "A Bulgarian band attacked an allied automobile with machine guns. Four people were wounded..."

"Lerin – A Bulgarian armed gang, armed with machine guns, blockaded the road leading from Lerin to Solun, at the village Gornichovo. The band fired at an allied vehicle killing one Englishmen and wounding three others. Similarly, Marianti Siomou traveling in the same vehicle to Solun was also wounded.

All the bandits were Bulgarians, armed with automatic rifles and wearing Russian stars..."

Further down, the same article quoted the Director of Lerin saying that the attack was perpetrated by our "bad neighbours".

The following was written in the Solun newspaper "To Fos" on July 21, 1945:

"Bulgarian armed communist gangs are systematically attacking the gendarme stations in Western Macedonia..."

Bulgarian armed communist gangs committed terrible actions against the Greek gendarmes in Western Macedonia...

A band consisting of several armed groups surrounded the villages Konomlati - Rupisko, and attacked it with grenades and mortars, bombing the gendarme station. At the same time they demanded that the gendarmes leave the village. The gendarmes, however, managed to repel the bandits.

Another band attacked the gendarme station in the village Zagorichani, Kostur Region. The gendarmes chased the bandits who then retreated to a nearby mountain..."

Articles like these can be found in all the Greek regime newspapers, deliberately perverting the truth. The armed groups from the local Macedonian population, who rose up to defend the honour and dignity of their own people from Greek Monarcho-Fascist barbarian attacks, were labeled “Bulgarians” to mislead not only the Greek public but also the international community. However, as previously stated, the terror perpetrated against the Macedonian people was left intact especially in the rural areas, thus allowing the Greek Monarcho-Fascists the opportunity to expand their power. The Macedonian people resisted precisely as a result of the terror perpetrated against them, aspiring to ensure conditions for a better life.

From what has been stated up to now we can conclude that the armed struggle, as the forerunner of the Democratic Army armed struggle, was initiated by NOF’s Macedonian partisan groups, as a result of an objective need to initiate “a special kind of political struggle”. This should be emphasized for two reasons: first, to inform the democratic public that the Macedonian people were pushed into an armed struggle in order to defend their legitimate rights, freedom and human life. Second, for the historical truth; the armed resistance did not begin in Lithohori in 1946 as claimed by the CPG leadership.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN - RELATIONS BETWEEN NOF AND THE CPG**

### **1. Disagreements between the NOF and CPG leaderships**

Disagreements between the NOF and CPG leaderships were largely based on which form of struggle to take; armed or political parliamentary. This, unfortunately, created a series of consequences in the situation in Greece. Worst of all was NOF's hesitation on whether to step up with the armed struggle or not. Other hesitations included NOF's position on issues; it almost always waited to see which direction the CPG leadership was going to take before it made its own decisions. This is how it was when the right time came to strengthen the armed units. This is how it was on the question of certain Macedonians entering the ranks of the Monarcho-Fascist army as service personnel. This is how it was on the issue of the parliamentary elections in March 1946 and on the plebiscite in September of the same year.

NOF's position regarding the question of certain Macedonians entering the ranks of the Monarcho-Fascist army, which was in agreement with the general view of the situation in Greece, was not to go, while the CPG's position was to go. NOF's position, on the other hand, was not fully consistent because avoiding the call to serve was illegal and those avoiding it would be persecuted under the current law. So it was obey the law or join the partisan groups in the mountains. Unfortunately, as was stated earlier, the partisan groups were not allowed to recruit. And even if they did, they did not have weapons to arm the new recruits. Worse than that, as stated earlier, in August 1945 the armed partisans were ordered to avoid armed rifts with enemy formations. It was no coincidence that the Monarcho-Fascists were recruiting and mobilizing men of certain ages at exactly this period of time. So, Macedonians who were not allowed to join the partisans had to make a choice; leave the country, report to the Monarcho-Fascists, or risk being court-martialed for avoiding the draft. This, unfortunately, did not bode well for NOF.

The following, among other things, was written in a letter addressed to the NOF leadership on July 9, 1945: "We received a letter today

from behind the scenes which says a proclamation has arrived in the village Bouf, requiring all men from the draft ages 1941-1945 to contact the recruiting commission on July 18<sup>th</sup>...

The people behind the scenes want to know what to do. Please expedite your reply so that we can quickly inform our youth about this mobilization.”

The NOF leadership was asked another question via a letter dated on December 7, 1945, written by the Voden regional leadership. Among other things, the regional leadership asked: “Will we continue to boycott the nationalist army mobilization?” It would not be in vain in this regard to emphasize a very important matter in regards to the leadership of the Organization. Due to its own reluctance to tackle certain questions, or waiting to harmonize with the CPG, NOF lacked leadership and organizational clarity precisely at the time when clarity was required. A flagrant example of this was NOF’s position after the parliamentary elections in Greece. Actually one cannot talk about NOF’s position because it did not exist. “NOF’s position was precisely aligned with that of the CPG.”

As discussed earlier, the parliamentary elections were actually held under civil war conditions amid political chaos and lawlessness while the Macedonian people and the democratic minded citizens of Greece were persecuted and terrorized. The situation that developed after the elections was a result of whether to initiate an armed struggle or not. And because NOF’s position was always for an armed struggle, then there was nothing for NOF to think about after the elections. But for certain reasons NOF’s stated position had to be in line with that of the CPG and, for as long as the CPG kept silent on the issue, particularly before the elections, NOF also kept silent.

As was also stated earlier, when it was decided to abstain from voting, NOF performed that task successfully. It would be of interest, however, to highlight some of the other tasks set out during the campaign. During its February 1, 1946 Session among the “Political Tasks” set out to be done by the Voden District Board, as per paragraph 9, was the task: “To produce electoral booklets... even though it was unknown at the time if the democratic people were going to vote or not, which was dependent on the set

conditions. Nonetheless, the issue of finding suitable people needed to be studied, particularly trusted Macedonians with authority to be candidates.”

Under item 5, entitled “Solutions”, was written: “We need to identify candidates for members of parliament in the first half of the month...”

This means that preparations were being made for possible participation in the elections. In a self-directed letter to the organizations dated March 1, 1946, the NOF regional leadership posed the question: “Regarding the election our position will be as follows: We will only participate in free elections. A necessary precondition for this is for the Sofoulis government to resign, which is accountable to the people and to the country. Then a form of coalition needs to be established, representative of the government, with broad democratic participation and not just EAM participating in the Sofoulis government. We do not support the idea of Sofoulis being in the government. Sofoulis’s government must be completely removed and replaced with a broad democratic formation. Similarly, a necessary precondition for free elections is the withdrawal of the English from Greece, who are an organ of English imperialist policies and supporters of the Greek plutocracy.

Therefore, it is necessary first for the British troops to withdraw from Greece and second for the Sofoulis coalition government to be removed...”

Here is what another paragraph in the same letter said: “The Black Front is preparing for a Monarcho-Fascist coup. We need to determine our position regarding this. If EAM and the other democratic parties call for armed resistance and to be armed en masse, we will also participate en masse in the democratic resistance. If NOF by itself cannot support a wide front of resistance then we will organize for limited armed opposition as part of the people’s self-defense initiatives. If we and the people are attacked by subversive actions with weapons from the Black Front we will rely on EAM for support, especially in case of an armed Monarcho-Fascist coup. That is why we too should be ready to go on the side of the democratic forces.”

I have included the above two quotes one after the other to show the reader the kind of problems the Organization was facing at that time. It is clear from the above statements that a battle was fought around the political issue of the elections, to which the democratic forces took a negative attitude in hopes that the elections would break down and new elections would take place under conditions set by EAM. This assumption, however, proved to be completely unrealistic because the political right in Greece and its masters abroad were well aware where such a step would lead. Also, the kind of “classic coup” NOF and the other democratic organizations were expecting to take place, for which “they were preparing”, never materialized.

It should be noted at this point that, even though there was talk of a coup, the democratic organizations made no effort to strengthen their armed forces as was mentioned in the second quote. NOF took this position because the CPG led it to go in that direction. At that time there was close contact between NOF and the CPG leaderships on the ground. After the elections they agreed to perform joint actions.

The situation after the elections unfortunately deteriorated sharply. The political right continued to strengthen its position and perpetrate unheard of terror against the democratic citizens; particularly against those who abstained from voting. The CPG, at this point, decided to deploy the partisan groups. Here is what Lazar Pop Lazarov, Secretary of NOF Lerin District, wrote to the NOF top leadership on April 12, 1946: “I came into contact with the Lerin CPG Regional District leadership, which informed me that the CPG Central Committee Politburo had decided to deploy four partisan groups in the Lerin Region terrain. This is in response to the Monarcho-Fascist attacks and in preparation for any development of a wider rebellion movement in Greece. NOF in Lerin Region had become massive and solid and had survived the crisis. It proved itself in the battle of abstinence. That is why they requested its help in the new form of struggle. I want to expose the new developments here and ask if we need to change tactics to solve the technical difficulties. We too will deploy partisan units, after we arm them and after we clarify our tactics.”

The following was written under item 5 concerning the tasks set out at the April 15, 1946 NOF Voden Regional Board meeting: “To strengthen the partisan movement with people and materials by any means possible...” (I gave more examples about the Voden Organization when it was active and persistent as was repeated by its leadership consisting of Vangel Aianovski and Mirka Ginova.)

Meaning, after the elections the CPG and NOF decided to strengthen the armed struggle. But still this does not mean that the CPG leadership opted for an armed insurrection. We saw how things were developing in the first part of this book. This attitude had impacted NOF’s position, which at that time was negotiating an agreement with the CPG. This attitude was also reflected in the decision to participate in the September 1946 plebiscite. But the plebiscite showed that the Greek political right used the parliamentary elections and the plebiscite to perpetrate fraud, not only against the democratic people but also against the entire world. The agreement between NOF and the CPG was worked out after the plebiscite, which became the basis for a strong impetus towards the uprising in Greece.

## 2. Agreement between NOF and the CPG

The interests of the struggle demanded full agreement on all issues as well as harmonization of all views and actions between the CPG and NOF. This became imperative with time, with the tightening of the crisis and with the wider fueling of the civil war. But in order to come to an agreement many obstacles had to be overcome. It was not sufficient just to agree on the assessment of the situation and to have a unified position on the question of what kind of struggle was to take place in the country. The change of attitude on the part of the CPG to begin an armed struggle, which up to now was a dividing issue between the CPG and NOF, did not resolve all the problems between the two organizations. There were other issues that needed to be solved such as relations between the two organizations, NOF’s status, the development of partisan units, etc. All these things were difficult to settle, as we shall see, mostly because of past bad experiences. NOF and the Macedonian people did not trust the CPG and the Greeks in general. On the other hand, the two year discord

between the organizations was full of unprincipled campaigns and personal insults. In 1945 the CPG leadership had developed a broad anti-NOF campaign which was very difficult to forget.

In order to erase and forget the hostilities between them, NOF and the CPG had to focus their attention on their common enemy. Only in this way they could come to an agreement. Both sides had to make every effort in good faith in order to come to common terms. The CPG, as the leading organization, had to take every measure necessary to assure NOF and the Macedonian people that it was sincere in its intentions, without any doubts. Unfortunately that was not the case. The CPG leadership did not approach this issue in the communist way. When it came to the conclusion that it was impossible to carry out a struggle without NOF; without the Macedonian people's participation in a common struggle against a common enemy - the Greek counter-revolution and foreign interventionists, the CPG decided to recognize all its previous unprincipled relations with NOF. It not only recognized its mistakes but went even further to declare that it had given up on such bad policies and was looking forward to fruitful results from this agreement.

When the CPG leadership realized that NOF had to exist in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia, it agreed to talk to its leadership in a consistent and sincere way. This was not because it was about some ideological and foreign class organization or about a temporary CPG partner; this was because it was about a people's national organization run by socialist principles with a specific purpose. The CPG leadership had to take the upper road on this question because it had made a mess in the past which had fundamentally shaken the Macedonian people's confidence in the CPG leadership as well as in the CPG itself. Exactly because of this the Macedonian people from Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia massively and solidly stood behind it and boldly defended its principles. This is why the CPG had to take a revolutionary account of these facts with honesty and without hidden intentions.

For a successful struggle against a common enemy, for successfully organizing the Macedonian masses on a broad scale and for attracting the Macedonian people's support towards the CPG, NOF

needed to be supported not only formally but also to be independent. This meant that it had to be strengthened ideologically and organizationally and its leadership had to be supported. Unfortunately the CPG leadership did none of those things. It needed an agreement with NOF in order to enter the armed struggle, which at the time was increasingly gaining pace. This, in the CPG's estimation, became a priority and a necessity which could not be avoided and demanded that NOF be unconditionally placed under CPG leadership.

Talks between members of the CPG and NOF for achieving joint political action were ongoing even during the parliamentary elections in March 1946. After that there were talks about initiating some military actions on the ground. But those talks were taking place on the ground and were mainly about tactical tasks. The agreement in principle between the main NOF leadership and the CPG Secretary for unifying the forces was not reached until the summer in 1946. Pursuant to this agreement in principle, members of the top NOF leadership pledged to implement solutions.

In the second half of September 1946 Markos Vafiadis, then party official, later commander of the Democratic Army and Chairman of the Provisional Democratic Government, informed the NOF leadership of the conditions under which the unification was to take place.

Listed here are the conditions:

1. Dismantle existing Macedonian partisan groups and order the fighters to join ELAS units. In the CPG's opinion, the existence of Macedonian partisan groups weakened the Party's control over them (only two months before that the CPG was in agreement that Macedonian units, with their own leaders, should exist in Greek occupied Macedonia, and wherever Greek units existed, they were to form a higher joint headquarters).
2. On the issue of the leadership compositions and command of the military units, the CPG reserves the right to appoint "good commanders" who can be trusted by the CPG. They could be Greeks, while the groups they lead can be entirely composed of

Macedonians, if that's what the Party finds it to be suitable. This is the CPG's position.

3. The CPG's position regarding the Macedonian NOF leadership joining the CPG leadership in the Macedonian provinces which, to ascertain extent have been influenced by the NOF leadership, is as follows: "...in the Macedonian regions, between the leading party organs we must not also have Macedonian leaders. It is important to appoint those who are more capable and who have more confidence in the Party."

Based on the kind of attitude the CPG expressed towards the Macedonians, one can easily imagine how the NOF leadership, the Macedonian fighters in the ranks of DAG and the Macedonian people in general felt. The Greeks, once again, proved themselves to be who they always were and subordinated NOF, the Macedonian fighters and the Macedonian people altering their destiny and filling it with uncertainty.

No one could agree with the imposed conditions, not the NOF leadership and certainly not the partisan fighters, but that agreement was implemented anyway.

The NOF leaders who were tasked with implementing the original agreement (that of July 1946) may have had different ideas when they went to the terrain but were met with cold pressure from the CPG representatives.

A meeting was held on August 25, 1946 between CPG District Committee representatives and NOF leaders from Mount Vicho. The NOF leaders attempted to implement the original agreement but they were refused by the CPG. The CPG representatives would not agree to create a joint headquarters and demanded that the Macedonian units be disbanded. They also demanded that partisan command personnel be appointed by the CPG and that NOF cease to have any influence in the military. This was the attitude of the CPG representatives.

The CPG attitude was no different in Kaimakchalan and Paiak. Here is what the main NOF leadership said about the situation in a report dated September 27, 1946:

“1. The CPG representative for Paiak (Enidzhevardar and Gumenitsa Regions) was our friend Stathis. As a condition for cooperation and joint military activities, Stathis initiated the dismantling of Macedonian partisan groups and their incorporation into the Greek units. We would like to note that there were 115 Macedonian partisans and 100 Greeks under Stathis’s command. This move, however, was not well received by Pavle Rakovski who then threatened to end all relations and since then does not want any co-operation. All in all, under orders from Pavle Rakovski, our organizations continue to operate because in these places there are no other organizations other than those of NOF, which function properly.

That same friend (Stathis) accused the NOF fighters of being traitors to the CPG and organs of Ohrana (a Bulgarian nationalist organization) and the Intelligence Service. He openly preaches with a clear objective to sow confusion and fanaticism among the Greek masses...

2. Our friend Panos is an instructor at the Regional Committee for Voden, Gianitsa, Gumenitsa and Negosh Regions. A few days ago this friend arrived in Kaimakchalan where about 200 Macedonian partisans and 30 Greeks were stationed and tried to break up the Macedonian partisan groups threatening to arrest Dzhodzho. At the same time Panos openly attacked the NOF leaders accusing them of being influenced by the CPY and that this would not bode well for them.

3. Our friend Tasos is an instructor at the Regional Committee for Western Macedonia, which includes Kostur, Lerin, Grevena and Kozhani Regions. During various meetings and conversations that he had with his friends, he said that he saw no reason for a separate antifascist Slavo-Macedonian organization, i.e. NOF, to exist. He was of the opinion that NOF should be broken up, ‘and it will be broken up for sure’, and that the Slavo-Macedonians should join the Greek anti-fascist organizations...

4. Our friend Fotis Papadimitriou is a CPG District Committee secretary. During a meeting Fotis had with Pavle Duvalevski, NOF District Board member of Kostur Region, Fotis, in confidence, urged Pavle to leave NOF and join the EAM and CPG. He told him that if he did leave NOF he would be appointed member of the Kostur District Committee. ‘By this means NOF will be dismantled and the organization will break up’ said Fotis to Pavle. While Fotis publicly agitated that Macedonians should organize under NOF, privately and conspiratorially he advocated that Macedonians should not organize under NOF.’”

I quoted a larger part of this report because it directly related to how the Macedonian people’s drama ended. For the CPG, NOF was never an ally in the struggle. From the way it was treated, NOF was simply an unpaid mercenary. This may sound strange but that’s the way it was!

As we have shown, the CPG leadership wasted no time in completely decapitating the Macedonian movement, something they had wanted to do from the beginning. They did not want the Macedonian partisan groups left in NOF’s hands. An organization without a military force was an organization without authority that could easily be pushed around.

Right from the beginning to the withdrawal of the Democratic Army and to the end of the armed struggle in Greece, the CPG leadership worked systematically to undermine NOF and deprive it of any independence. In fact the CPG made sure NOF was robbed of its soul. At the same time the Macedonian partisans in the ranks of DAG were oppressed and discriminated against. Those who were members of NOF who did not act in conformity with the CPG were specifically targeted and scorned. But, despite these serious flaws and weaknesses in the agreement and in the determined course of the armed struggle, we had a wide swing in the uprising. In the spring of 1947 we freed targeted areas in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. We spent 1947 in a revolutionary upsurge. This was particularly evident in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia.

### 3. NOF’s First Congress

Despite the serious shortcomings in the democratic movement and NOF's bad relationship with the CPG, the struggle in Greece managed to survive and continued to grow. In the spring of 1947, under pressure of strong blows from the partisan army, the Athens regime found itself forced to evacuate all the mountainous regions and concentrate its defenses in urban and traffic centres. In the spring of 1947, for example, it evacuated Prespa Region which was connected with the free territory in the mountain ranges Vicho and Gramos. The mountains Kaimakchalan, Zhena and Paiak were also free and so was the Karakamen (Vermion) massif. Similarly, free regions were also created in Eastern Macedonia. The armed rebellion had also successfully spread all throughout Greece, the Central and Southern Peloponnesus and the Greek islands.

Macedonian participation in the struggle was full blown. This of course was due to the favourable political condition created on January 13, 1948 by NOF during its first congress, at which time it adopted its Program and Statute.

The day the Congress was held there were a total of 10,147 Macedonian partisans in the Democratic Army, of whom 9,477 were men and 670 were women.

The Organization was supported by professional staff working behind the scenes, consisting of 25 men and 12 women organizers. There were also district organizers consisting of 61 men and 23 women, as well as 16 regional organizers working in the various sectors. The organization published its own newspapers called "Nepokoren", organ of the main board of NOF, "Pobeda", organ of Voden District, "Zora", organ of Lerin District and "Edinstvo", organ of Kostur District. Economically the Organization was in good shape (according to the data submitted to the 1<sup>st</sup> NOF Congress).

I - What is NOF?

The NOF Congress was a historical event in the Macedonian people's struggle for freedom because it adopted two historical documents: the Program and Statutes of the organization.

Explained under the heading “PROGRAM OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (NOF) OF MACEDONIANS IN GREEK (OCCUPIED) MACEDONIA”, were the conceptual basis and conditions under which the organization was founded and the foundation and objectives of the armed struggle. Here is part of the program:

“The National Liberation Front (NOF) has emerged as a nation-wide anti-fascist movement of the Macedonian people, within the terms of the open Anglo-American imperialist intervention in the internal affairs of our country and within the barbaric attacks by the Monarcho-Fascists against the democratic forces in our country and especially against the Macedonian people. The national liberation struggle that the Macedonian people have led in recent years, together with the people’s anti-fascist forces of the Greek people, is a struggle against the national oppressive policies administered by the ruling capitalist oligarchy against the Macedonian people. This struggle is a continuation of the struggle waged jointly by the Greek and Macedonian people against the fascist occupation.

## II - NOF’s main objectives

### 1. Independence and democracy

In December 1955 English imperialism crushed our national independence and democracy by armed intervention and by unleashing the Monarcho-Fascist regime to bring upon us and the people of Greece, violence, terror and destruction. These barbaric foreign and megalogreek measures are especially devastating for the Macedonian peoples who are being threatened with physical extermination by the Monarcho-Fascist reactionaries. The main objective of the National Liberation Front (NOF), as leader of the Macedonian people, fighting in alliance with the Greek people, is to fight for independence and democracy in our country.

This is a fight to rescue our people, a fight for our national and physical existence. This is a fight for free national and cultural development, for freedom and for rights for our people in a Democratic Greece.

Freeing Greece and solving the Greek people's democratic question, a purpose for which the Greek people are fighting in the ranks of the People's Democratic Front (EAM), are also NOF's priorities, politics and aspirations for our people. Peace, normalization and free democratic development in our country - things that EAM is struggling for are also NOF's basic requirements.

## 2. National equality

NOF's second major objective is to fight for ethnic equality and for the recognition of national rights for the Macedonian people.

Achieving ethnic equality will guarantee the Macedonian people and the other minorities living in our country, the possibility of preserving and developing their culture, language, customs and folk traditions. These democratic rights are sought and protected every time our people bravely fight alongside the Greek people..."

Highlighted in Chapter III of NOF's Program is the need for unity in the Greek and Macedonian people's struggle for the success of the people's revolution.

Highlighted in Chapter IV are the Organization's relations in regards to the armed struggle, Democratic Army and the People's Government.

Highlighted in Chapter V is the attitude towards the revolution's national and democratic tasks and how the social and economic problems in Greece are going to be addressed.

As we can see, NOF's action program is fully responding to the requirements of the democratic movement in Greece and is specific in what it sets out to be the basic democratic rights of the Macedonian people as a distinct nationality. After all, this is an expression of the Macedonian people's effort, actions and aims placed in the actual conditions of the time.

NOF's Statute for Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia adopted during NOF's 1<sup>st</sup> Congress contained all the organizational general

principles for an armed struggle with emphasis on democratic centralism. Of particular importance was the fact that the Macedonian people's struggle was emancipated through these documents.

NOF's 1<sup>st</sup> Congress naturally influenced many Macedonian people to join the armed struggle. The decisions made during the Congress, the tasks that needed completing and its central objective, attracted many Macedonians in the mobilization of forces in the Democratic Army and in the services of the armed struggle. NOF truly applied its forces to the fullest in adequately fulfilling their tasks. Shortly after the Congress new fighters were mobilized, both men and women, members of NOF but serving in the ranks of DAG. The number of mobilized fighters reaches as high as 20,000. They were sent to fight at the front not only on Macedonian territory but also deep in the south of Greece.

But in spite of all its achievements and commitments during its 1<sup>st</sup> Congress, NOF was dealt a serious blow by the CPG which paved the way for Zahariadis and his leadership to subjugate NOF and the Macedonian people and turn them into an obedient instrument of war. This not only crippled the Macedonian people by delivering them heavy casualties but also liquidated any chance they had of becoming independent and later the vast majority were exiled and driven out of their homes and ancestral lands.

NOF's place in the revolution, its problems and its relationship with the CPG were well highlighted in the CPG-NOF Agreement. As we stated earlier, the CPG made every effort to stifle NOF and turn it into a completely dependent body without any political and organizational independence. To ensure that, the CPG leadership did not only rely on its political and organizational relations, it wanted, above all, to win the organization from within. To win the organization from within, the CPG leadership resorted to infiltrating the Organization with controversial people, people who hated NOF and wanted it dismantled. For this purpose the CPG leadership also systematically demoted NOF staff. We can freely say that the criterion for this set-up in the military and political organization was not due to loyalty to the revolution. This was something that was closely associated with the CPG alone. These CPG leadership

tendencies could not be easily hidden from the NOF membership and staff, however, and as was often publicly manifested, small and large incidents came into play. Resistance to these incidents and to the CPG's policies, in this regard, was spontaneous among NOF members. This naturally was a result of having bad historic experiences with the Greeks.

The CPG leadership's negative tendencies towards NOF came into full expression during NOF's 1<sup>st</sup> Congress, when the CPG leadership decided that NOF should include people like Malios Gosopoulos and others like him in the NOF leadership. These were people who had nothing in common with NOF or the Macedonian people's aspirations. On top of that, these people were known to be anti NOF and very controversial. The fact that the CPG was attempting to impose these people on NOF and the fact that the CPG was attempting to undermine NOF from the inside did not go unnoticed by the delegates.

(The top NOF leadership up until NOF's 1<sup>st</sup> Congress in January 1948 rose out of the Political Commission for Aegean Macedonia, but it did not include all its members. Only the following four were included: Mihail Kiramitchiev (president), Paskal Mitrevski (secretary), Pavle Rakovski and Dzhodzho Urdov.

The weakness of this leadership is that it lacked unity and did not see to it to accommodate all the revolutionary cadres.

They developed directly opposite to the attitude of the CPG leadership in regards to the Macedonian National Question. NOF, as a young revolutionary movement, was in need of mobilizing all the cadres who firmly stood on the platform of this movement, from all regions of Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia.

Although there was effort made by some members of this leadership to correct these deficiencies, the organization in general followed sect like personal politics which severely damaged NOF. Its leaders could not grasp the simple truth that no one was able to impose their authority over the others for the simple reason that the movement was created by separate and distinct resistance groups in certain regions in Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia and that they had to

comply with all these “authorities” in a joint leadership. Such a situation in leadership – absent of so many devoted cadres and lacking unity – weakened NOF’s position in relations to the CPG leadership, which itself was internationalist.

(Pavle Rakovski was concerned about NOF’s condition and in June 1946, during a leadership meeting, strongly stressed this to the Secretary and, among other things, noted the following: “I have no experience and I do not know anything about the Kostur movement, I, however, have experience and know the Voden movement well. But now I understand that no one is present in our movement representing the seventy people from the previous Karaorman group.”

Rakovski wondered whether this was an “infantile disorder” and noted that personal politics needed to change because “this childish disease will soon turn us all gray”. Taken from Rakovski’s original personal notes located at the Institute of National History – Skopje.)

There was no unity in NOF, not before NOF acted inconsistently with the CPG and not after. There was no unity even between the NOF secretary and president. After NOF’s Agreement with the CPG, the CPG leadership nurtured this disunity to the extent that, in the summer of 1948, it expelled the NOF leadership under the accusation that it was “factionary”.)

This disunity became apparent during the NOF 1<sup>st</sup> Congress when the CPG handed NOF a list of its own candidates to be included in NOF’s leadership. Because there was no guarantee that the proposed list would be adopted, pressure was put on NOF to “rush it”. It was most unfortunate for NOF that no one objected. Not only that, there were some people from NOF who welcomed the list without understanding or caring that the proposed candidates were anti-NOF people and very controversial. By adopting this list a serious blow was dealt against NOF; in its own Congress no less.

Zahariadis’s intentions regarding this matter were well-known: by infiltrating the NOF leadership with his own people he would be able to fully subordinate NOF and its national policies and

objectives. This obviously was done to prevent NOF from becoming stronger and from winning new positions.

- Zahariadis believed that the political line taken for the form of struggle was right.

- Over 10,000 Macedonian men and women fought in the ranks of DAG.

- NOF being tightly organized was a political move necessary to motivate the Democratic Army to fight.

- Being placed under the leadership of NOF, the regions behind the scenes and particularly the free zones run by NOF were converted into workshops for DAG.

The vast majority of the delegates in the Congress were true representatives of the Macedonian people and were ready to support any initiative that followed the line to ensure true equality of the Macedonian people in this struggle. But those expected initiatives never materialized.

The NOF 1<sup>st</sup> Congress was the right place to firmly say “no” to Zahariadis and his cronies. It was the right place and time to not only reject the “loyal” CPG supporters from being appointed into the NOF leadership, but to appoint Macedonian military and political leaders from the ranks of the Macedonian people who expressed Macedonian aspirations in this struggle. NOF should have fiercely fought against allowing anyone other than loyal Macedonian military and political leaders to lead the Macedonian masses who were willing to sacrifice ten thousand and later twenty thousand partisans to fight in this struggle. Unfortunately, the hesitation and unprincipled compromise carried out during this Congress was unprecedented and proved to be fateful to events that followed.

A conflict between the Kominform and Yugoslavia broke out in June 1948, which greatly impacted the democratic movement in Greece and relations between the CPG and NOF. When relations between the CPY (Communist Party of Yugoslavia) and the CPG

were in good order, the CPG looked at NOF with some confidence due to NOF's good relations with the People's Republic of Macedonia. After the conflict the CPG stepped up its efforts to fully subdue the NOF leadership and place all its assets under its control. Using its acquired position in NOF during the 1<sup>st</sup> Congress, i.e. placing its own people in the NOF leadership, the CPG leadership, in August 1948, called the main NOF Board to a Plenum during which it suspended the entire NOF leadership and replaced it with its own supporters. This act, together with the CPG's overall policy towards NOF, evolving from its relations with Yugoslavia, proved to be negative for the Macedonian fighters in the ranks of DAG. From that moment on until DAG withdrew from the conflict, NOF was under the CPG yoke with an ongoing campaign to completely discredit it. The CPG eventually held the NOF leadership "responsible" for its defeat in the armed struggle.

Some spectacular moves were made during that period against the Macedonian people and against the NOF leadership. The NOF 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress was held under these circumstances in late March 1949 as well as other events that followed to the end of the Greek Civil War.

The following was written in the Democratic Army of Greece daily newspaper "Pros ti niki", edition 12, published on February 27, 1949 under the title "NOF Central Committee Plenum": "Portions of the solutions that will be offered during the 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Central Committee Congress discussed on February 3, 1949, at free Vicho, will be available further down.

The Plenum was also attended by CPG Secretary General Nikos Zahariadis..."

Further down, among other things, we read:

"5. It was decided to convene a 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress during March 1949. The 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress will be the congress which will proclaim the national participation of the Slavo-Macedonian people together with the Greek people in this democratic struggle. The Macedonian people with all their human, economic and spiritual power will be mobilized to participate in DAG's struggle. This Congress will proclaim a plan that will be of tremendous benefit to

the Macedonian people on a national, political, social, cultural and economic level. The 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress will be the congress which will proclaim the new NOF program principles. These are age-old principles that will fulfill an old Macedonian people's desire; to proclaim a United Macedonia, a single independent Macedonian state that will exist in the democratic federation of the Balkan people, which is the realization of a long-term bloody struggle..."

The above statement was even more spectacular when it was announced on the radio program "Free Greece". And given how things were in the Balkans then, it attracted great public interest as well as drew sharp reactions from the Athens government. NOF's 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress was held on March 9, 1949. After that NOF was forced to make a special announcement, part of which was published in the newspaper "Pros ti niki", edition 23, on March 10, 1949, in which, among other things, it was said: "There are rumours that the 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress was expected to declare the creation of a single Macedonian state that would join Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Greece together in a Balkan Communist or Democratic Federation. Our enemies always choose to say what they think will serve them best. The truth however, is different..."

The 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress was a war congress, a congress to draw assistance and not to break our unity. This was a congress to organize our victory.

Tens of thousands of Macedonian people, young and old, men and women, even children, have participated in this struggle, many with rifle in hand, fighting for unbridled freedom, for a people's democracy and for establishing full national rights for the Macedonian people. Thousands of our sons and daughters gave their lives in this struggle to expel the foreigners, to destroy the Monarcho-Fascist murderers and to provide us with a free and independent life and a people's democracy.

This was the aim of our Congress and no hostile defamation can undermine our aims or divert us from our goals.

Our people have given their all for this struggle with many great sacrifices for a common victory, which will yield freedom, public

and social order and the kind of good life that we all want - united with our brothers in friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance between all democratic nations...”

Seven hundred delegates participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress. The Congress was also attended by the then CPG General Secretary Nikos Zahariadis and by General Karagioris, representing DAG’s General Headquarters. Both men gave speeches and paid tribute to the Macedonian people for their participation in the armed struggle. The Congress also adopted a proclamation which called on the Macedonian people to further their efforts in the struggle. Regarding the purpose of the struggle, the proclamation said: “The Macedonian people with their struggle and sacrifices made to date proclaim to continue to struggle for their national liberation, for their realization of a free national and social life which they desire...” This same view, but somewhat watered down, was put forward in Zahariadis’s speech but his declaration of an “independent Macedonian state,” as was published in the newspapers before the congress took place, was abandoned because it was only a calculated political move in his strategic attacks against Yugoslavia. The 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress did not produce the expected results

The 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress was held in a tense political and military atmosphere. Mobilization of new forces in the Democratic Army was performed recruiting even minors and old men and women. The required limit in this regard was surpassed. But even the most general mobilization could not resolve the issue of required reserves for the Democratic Army.

On top of that, after the Congress was over, the unfounded attacks against Yugoslavia and against the Macedonian fighters and NOF leaders not only continued but were stepped up. Attacks were waged even against the Macedonian people who abstained from criticizing the People’s Republic of Macedonia and Yugoslavia in general. The CPG leadership went so far in this regard as to pressure the NOF leadership to join in these attacks against the leaders of the People’s Republic of Macedonia and Yugoslavia. This was especially prevalent after DAG withdrew to Albania. At this point the NOF leadership was accused of being responsible for DAG’s defeat and exposed to humiliation!

KOEM, the Communist Party for Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia was also established during this period but its leadership, in the hands of the CPG, was used as a weapon against NOF and the Macedonian people in general. Under pressure from the CPG leadership, KOEM leaders were hastened to pass a resolution against the entire NOF leadership, against the People's Republic of Macedonia and against Yugoslavia. KOEM was also pressured to grossly twist the truth exactly the way Zahariadis wanted it. (By doing this, Zahariadis managed to break NOF's already ailing unity, which had major negative consequences against the Macedonian fighters.)

These dishonest moves made by Zahariadis in 1949 become apparent in his attitude and practices towards the Macedonian emigrants in the Eastern European countries.

First when DAG withdrew from the battle grounds during which time NOF and KOEM were liquidated.

Later, the Organization "Ilinden" was established but quickly disbanded.

So the question is, "Why were the Macedonian people in emigration deprived of their organizations?" Can a people fight for its national rights without its own national organizations?!

## **CHAPTER EIGHT – MACEDONIAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE GREEK CIVIL WAR**

Due to their difficult past under Greek rule, particularly under the authority of chauvinists and masters of denationalization, the Macedonian people in Greek occupied Macedonia, decided to ally themselves with the anti-fascist forces in the liberation of Greece during which time they took active participation and sustained heavy casualties. Unfortunately they were betrayed. They were led to believe that if they allied themselves with the democratic forces and fought against the fascist occupiers they would be recognized as Macedonians with full rights and privileges. Those expectations were unfortunately never met. In fact the opposite happened. The political right, the Macedonian people's former enemy, was brought back to Athens after the February 1945 Varkiza Agreement was signed and given power to govern. This was done with the blessings of the very same Greeks with whom the Macedonian people had allied themselves. After the Athens regime took power it introduced unprecedented mass terror against the democratic forces and especially against the Macedonian people throughout the entire country.

To protect itself, in 1945, the unarmed population began to form armed partisan units under NOF. These armed units later became the core of the Democratic Army (DAG).

In fact half of the Democratic Army (DAG), for the duration of the Greek Civil War, was Macedonian. The Macedonian partisans in the ranks of DAG, both men and women, not only fought in Greek occupied Macedonia, they also fought in Greece south of Mount Olympus including in the regions around Athens.

It was the Macedonians partisans who liberated parts of Greek occupied Macedonia and who created free zones from the Albanian border in the west to Thrace in the east. The entire Greek Civil War was fought in Greek occupied Macedonia. The front line stretched practically from the western to the eastern part of the country. Because of their geographic locations, the free zones in Greek occupied Macedonia served as a backdrop for the Democratic Army. These free zones were converted into military workshops, where

young and old, male and female, were all placed in DAG's service working exclusively for the Democratic Army.

Here is what a Greek leader from the Movement wrote about the Macedonian people's participation in the armed struggle in Greece:

#### “4. Slavo-Macedonian Contribution

The Slavo-Macedonian people occupy a distinct place in this great struggle with their heroic women of the Slav-Macedonian nation, which for years has been terrorized by the tyrannical fascists. The Slavo-Macedonian people have been persecuted with even greater evil and anger by this new fascist occupation. But, the Slavo-Macedonian woman stands proud and fights, organized in her own Antifascist Front - AFZH.

The first woman in this country to fall from the bullets of the new occupation was Mirka Ginova, the hero and love of the entire Slavo-Macedonian nation and of all of Greece. Mirka with her example opened the way for the struggle. The police burned two fighters with hot irons; they were Katina and Aspasia Strezov. They were tortured to give-up information but the two died without opening their mouths... the struggle of the Slavo-Macedonian people is massive. Thousands of Slavo-Macedonian women, valued columns of the struggle, have gone from Vicho to Gramos, walking for days in the flames of fire. More than 3,500 Slavo-Macedonian women have worked on fortification facilities in Vicho under the rain of shells to turn it into a bastion of freedom.

(There is no mention of Mirka Ginova being a prominent NOF leader in a story about her in a Greek language newspaper. It simply said: ‘Irimi Gini. A young teacher convicted by a military court was executed in Ianitsa, right before the plebiscite, along with six other convicted persons. She was the first woman to be executed in recent Greek history. Many attended her Judgment and execution.’)

The Slavo-Macedonian women carry the biggest load of our struggle with patience and strength every day while their villages are being bombed to dust. Many villages have been abandoned since they became targets for enemy artillery. All the women are at the front

working now without a minute of rest. On top of that, there are those like old lady, fighter, and mother to Iovanka Mianova, who has 6 sons and 1 daughter fighting in the Democratic Army. And she, herself, works day and night, like a young bride, in support of our struggle.

There are also those who provide for the partisans and who would not hesitate to share a piece of bread, donating it to the Democratic Army. They donate their grain, their livestock and even their dowries. And when they are asked why, they say ‘everything for the struggle so that it will bring us victory!’

The Slavo-Macedonian women are worthy fighters and great contributors to the field of the people’s power. In Kostur alone, before the latest elections, there were 78 women in 53 National Councils, 53 women in 15 people’s courts, 2 women in the District Board and 1 woman in the District Court. The vast majority of these women were Slavo-Macedonians.

The Slavo-Macedonian women and the entire Slavo-Macedonian nation, with their blood, have won the right to live as they like after the liberation, creating their own independent state and existence.” (Fragment taken from a report compiled by Rula Koukoulou, Secretary of the Pan-Greek Union for Women, during a Union Conference held on March 1 to 3, 1949.)

Here is what Zahariadis himself and his associates said at the time:

“The Macedonian people, especially those in the area of Vicho, have given everything they have for the struggle and have become a real sacrifice. They have given their sons, their daughters and their entire assets. This superhuman sacrifice has caused some difficulties which we need to overcome. These difficulties have risen from the war, from the overstrained forces. These are difficulties of war. But besides them, we have other, subjective problems which are growing and creating new obstacles. The people there have given everything for the struggle. But the fighter or the theater director has come to terror and that breaks the unity.

...The people have other difficulties. One of those is the mobilization of young women. You must all understand that no one looks at this work with a good eye. It is not right to send young women to get mutilated. It is not natural, nor is it humane, but such a measure proved necessary in the interest of our two people and in the interest of the struggle. This measure, due to its great displeasure, is abused by the enemy. But in the struggle for freedom we must give it our all. The Macedonian people should be looking at the greater aims of this through a prism. They need to draw new courage and focus their pain in the interest of the struggle.

Other difficulties are hunger, bombings, suffering, cold etc...”  
(Taken from Zahariadis’s speech given at the 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress, published on March 30, 1949, in the Democratic Army daily newspaper “Pros ti niki”).

DAG representative General Kostas Karagiorgis also spoke at the 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress and, among other things, said the following:

“The Slavo-Macedonian nation with its struggle, with its victims, with its participation in this great anti-imperialist liberation struggle of the Greek people has practically earned the right to self-determination and freedom...” (Taken from Karagiorgis’s speech given during the 2<sup>nd</sup> NOF Congress, published on March 29, 1949, in the Democratic Army daily newspaper “Pros ti niki”).

The Macedonian people’s participation in the struggle was truly massive and was accompanied by heavy human and material losses. It would be very difficult for a publication to provide detailed information about this, particularly about the pain and suffering in such an experience, but we will try.

All throughout the conflict effectively half of DAG’s fighters were Macedonians. If we consider that DAG’s numbers reached 40,000, and half of those were Macedonians, it means that 6 to 7% of the Macedonian population (280,000-300,000) participated in DAG, while the figure for Greeks amounts to no more than 0.40%. This information alone illustrates the massive Macedonian involvement in DAG.

(Greek authorities do not recognize that during WW II, during NOF's time and during the Greek Civil War, there were 280,000 to 300,000 Macedonians recorded as living in Greek occupied Macedonia. Official Greek statistics unfortunately have recorded these Macedonians as Greeks who speak a foreign language, i.e. "Slavophone Greeks" who numbered about 40,000, while other Greeks put this figure at 80,000. The same types of statements were also made by Greek officials. However, according to objective research, the number of Macedonians living in Greek occupied Macedonia at the time numbered from 280,000 to 300,000 or even 330,000. If that number was only 40,000, or even 80,000, they would not have made it to the end of the Greek Civil War. They would not have posed any significant threat and certainly could not have numbered 20,000 in DAG's ranks and that is without counting the many thousands that became casualties of this war. If not against the Macedonians, then against whom were the draconian Greek measures, the denationalization measures and the persecution measures directed? If the situation was the way the Greeks portray it, then the Greek rulers must be Don Quixote! But it is not so. Macedonians existed and still exist in large numbers. The thing is, Greeks refuse to accept that and continue to contradict themselves in their conduct, propaganda and destructive genocidal policies).

Furthermore, it should be underlined that, as a national group, the Macedonian people have experienced many destructive processes including persecution, denationalization, terror tactics and ethnic cleansing. In addition to these atrocities, committed by the Greek authorities in the past, they suffered even more casualties as armed fighters in the ranks of the Democratic Army. Practically speaking, the Greek Civil War has left no Macedonian family untouched. Immediately after the Greek government was established in Athens in 1945, as we have shown in this write-up, regular and irregular armed forces were put in power in every village and town. With their arrival came raids, terror, beatings, arrests, jailing and all forms of torture, perpetrated to annihilate the Macedonian population. The numbers of Macedonians sent to the Greek prisons, deserted Greek islands, etc., were in the thousands.

During the armed struggle a battle line stretched right through the entire region of Greek occupied Macedonia, which caused severe

destruction and turned many Macedonians into casualties and victims of war.

Because of the conditions created by the Greek Civil War, in order to avoid becoming victims from enemy attacks, especially by enemy aviation, thousands of children were evacuated from Greek occupied Macedonia to distant Eastern European countries in 1948 and 1949. Some of these children were babies and later could not recognize their parents. Even today there are still remnants of these children, now old adults who have still not met their parents.

During and before the end of the Greek Civil War in 1949, there was a mass migration leaving Greek occupied Macedonia. The number of Macedonians who left for Yugoslavia and Eastern European countries exceeded 50,000. They all left their homes and properties behind.

The following 46 Macedonian villages with a combined population of 20,913 inhabitants, which were mentioned in the 1940 census were not mentioned in the official 1951 statistics.

No.	Name of Village In Macedonian	Name of Village In Greek	Residents according to 1940 official census
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#### Drama Region

1.	Izbishta	Agriokerasija	160
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#### Seres Region

2.	Gorno Metoh	Ano Metohion	152
3.	Turpesh	Makriotisa	130
4.	Trnka	Damaskinon	55
5.	Raikovtsi	Kaknotropos	146
6.	Rupel	Klidion	304
7.	Lehovo	Karasohorion	545
8.	Dragotin	Promahon	1,382
9.	Eleshnitsa	Feapetra	325
10.	Liposh	Filira	400

## Kukush Region

11. Golema Livada	Megala Livadia	1,493
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## Voden Region

12. Gorno Rodivo	Ano Korifi	326
13. Gorno Pozhar	Ano Lutrakion	185
14. Sbarsko	Pevkoton	292
15. Kornishor	Kromni	448
16. Tushin	Aitohorion	1,015
17. Lugontsi	Langadia	540

## Lerin Region

18. German	Agios Germanos	2,170
19. Grazhdano	Vronderon	507
20. D. Drobitishta	Daseri	75
21. Rudari	Kalipera	379
22. Oorovnik	Karpi	169
23. Drenovo	Kranie	150
24. Smrdesh	Kristalopigi	624
25. Medovo	Mileon	209
26. V'mbel	Moshohorion	483
27. Bukovik	Oksia	147
28. Papadia	Papadia	149
29. Prekopana	Perikopi	545
30. Orovo	Piksos	489
31. Vineni	Pili	207
32. Setina	Skopos	1,131
33. Tarnovo	Angatoton	84
34. Besvina	Svika	294

## Kostur Region

35. Labanitsa	Agios Dimitrios	217
36. Chuka	Arhangelos	201
37. Ianoveni	Gianohorion	467
38. D'mbeni	Dendrohorion	794
39. Kosinets	Gieropigi	507

40. Marchishta	Kato Perivolion	43
41. Dolno Paprasko	Kato Pteria	191
42. Novoselani	Korfula	151
43. Omotsko	Livadotopian	211
44. Pilkati	Monopilon	297
45. Bapchor	Pimenikon	859
46. Krchishta	Polianemon	270

(Only a few villages, those deemed to be uninhabited in the 1951 census, with a very small number of inhabitants, were later shown with residents who probably had returned from the prisons or were evacuated during the Greek Civil War.)

According to the same census, the number of Macedonian residents fell in most Macedonian villages. (See charts in the next chapter).

(Please note that, following population movements in the villages inhabited by Macedonians and villages inhabited by Greeks and immigrants from Asia Minor, one can conclude that, for the same period of time and in the same areas, the villages populated by Greeks and settlers from Asia Minor grew in numbers in 1951 as compared to 1940.)

When we take into account all that was said, we can reasonably argue that the Macedonian population in Greek occupied Macedonia experienced genocide.

Even though they paid a heavy price, the Macedonian people did not achieve their goals. They fought in the armed struggle to win national freedom, democracy and justice in Greece, but they lost. They not only lost their freedom they also lost their homes and native lands and became permanent refugees. But even so, the Macedonian people will never give up their struggle for their rights, no matter where they live.

## ATTACHMENTS - REVIEW

Villages in Aegean Macedonia, which show decrease in the 1951 population census compared to the 1940 census

No.	Name of Village In Macedonian	Name of Village In Greek	Residents according to official census		
			1928	1940	1951

### I Drama Region

1.	Lainerdzhik	Adriani	1,741	2,065	1,837
2.	Volak	Volaksi	913	2,267	1,097
3.	Gramenitsa	Grameni	391	701	678
4.	Giuredzhik	Granitis	573	577	193
5.	Gornitsa	Kali Vrisi	1,204	1,678	1,318
6.	Egri Dere	Kalitea	1,432	1,764	1,392
7.	Zrnovo	Kato Nevrokopion	2,268	3,290	2,702
8.	Kobalits	Kokinogia	1,341	1,786	1,335
9.	Karlikovo	Mikropolis	2,176	3,169	2,116
10.	Drianovo	Monostirakio	676	707	676
11.	Tserneshevo	Pagonerion	341	592	445
12.	Plevna	Petrusa	2,760	3,635	2,569
13.	Prosochani	Prosocani	6,035	7,011	6,277

### II Seres Region

1.	Chuchuligovo	Anagenisis	767	1,000	910
2.	Gorno Brodi	Ano Vrondo	887	1,118	348
3.	Gorno Frashtani	Ano Orini	133	216	198
4.	Gorno Hristos	Ano Hristos	450	370	318
5.	Gundeli	Vanvakusa	368	547	461
6.	Dautli	Eleon	317	479	297
7.	Turitsa	Trias	435	558	441
8.	Kapli Koi	Hionohorion	248	413	272
9.	Klepushna	Agriani	716	881	777
10.	Grachani	Agiohorion	478	668	598
11.	Alistratik	Alistrati	3,786	4,124	3,267
12.	Trstenitsa	Kriopigi	182	228	210
13.	Drachevo	Levkotea	311	361	340
14.	Mandilevo	Mandilion	416	535	489

15. Chengelevo	Angistron	1,240	1,915	441
16. Gorno Poroi	Ano Poroia	2,173	2,506	2,143
17. Krushevo	Ahladohorion	1,459	3,045	1,961
18. Hadzhi Beilik	Vironion	882	1,227	833
19. Dolno Poroi	Kato Poroia	986	1,265	1,006
20. Vetren	Neon Petricion	2,611	4,903	3,978
21. Demir Hisar	Sidirokastron	6,349	8,635	7,182
22. Staroshevo	Stavrodromion	242	423	145
23. Chiflidzhik	Strimonohorion	738	918	758
24. Todorova	Teodorovon	165	369	273
25. Nigrita	Nigrita	7,199	8,462	7,926

### III Kukush Region

1. Sveta Petka	Agia Paraskevi	486	781	140
2. Lelovo	Agios Andonios	265	416	154
3. Mirovo	Elinikon	244	379	239
4. Ravna	Isoma	551	748	389
5. Akandzhali	Muris	342	641	491
6. Gumendzha	Gumenica	4,433	4,927	4,528
7. Shliopintsi	Dogani	180	191	124
8. Sehovo	Idomeni	532	542	422
9. Tsrna Reka	Karpi	846	1,110	763
10. Barovitsa	Kastaneri	680	945	632
11. Kupa	Kupa	445	622	300
12. Ramna	Omalon	145	216	144
13. Pedgas	Pendalofon	266	319	294
14. Liumnitsa	Skra	647	886	446
15. Tushilovo	Statis	309	622	389

### IV Solun Region

1. Peizanovo	Azvestohorion	2,705	2,732	2,519
2. Zarovo	Nikopolis	499	674	*
3. Visoka	Osa	1,626	1,703	1,399
4. Suho	Sohos	3,694	4,082	3,861

\* It was resettled in 1944 and settled with Greeks from neighbouring villages in 1951

### V Voden Region

1. Chegan	Agios Atanasios	1,024	1,395	772
2. G & D Grama A & K Gramatikon		788	1,423	540
3. Gugovo	Vrita	523	556	466
4. Gervais	Zervi	304	457	260
5. Teovo	Karidea	525	708	509
6. Krontselevo	Kerasea	474	579	338
7. Rusilovo	Ksantogia	497	607	405
8. Volkoianevo	Liki	228	217	114
9. Mesimer	Mesimerion	691	1,145	706
10. Nisia	Nision	497	607	533
11. Kamenik	Petrea	516	722	626
12. Lukovets	Sotira	384	431	290
13. Gorno Cherneshevo	Ano Garefion	485	513	485
14. Oshin	Arhangelos	800	980	879
15. Gabrishta	Dorotea	630	888	691
16. Straishta	Ida	503	738	640
17. Dolno Rodivo	Kato Korifi	501	599	65
18. Dolno Pozhar	Kato Lutrakion	1,282	1,580	752
19. Strupino	Likostomo	684	984	355
20. Bizovo	Megaplatanos	503	623	312
21. Kardalovo	Milea	668	982	904
22. Tresino	Orma	1,172	1,534	457
23. Berislavtsi	Periklia	272	413	178
24. Baovo	Promahi	1,160	598	1,549
25. Sarakinovo	Sarakini	760	868	318
26. Kozhushani	Filotia	476	716	561
27. Fushtani	Fustani	1,160	1,311	776
28. Tsakoni	Hrisa	772	724	402
29. Radomir	Azvestarion	389	566	380
30. Asarbegovo	Droseron	636	779	531

#### VI Ber Region

1. Ianakovo	Ianakohorion	229	461	418
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#### VII Lerin Region

1. Sveta Petka	Agia Paraskevi	546	687	644
2. Patele	Agios Pandeileimon	1,501	1,747	1,498

3. Aitos	Aetos	941	1,189	1,056
4. Buf	Akritas	1,760	1,989	766
5. Armensko	Alonas	855	991	682
6. Zhelevo	Andartikon	1,136	1,345	1,040
7. Gorno Kotori	Ano Idrusa	316	526	375
8. Srebreno	Asprogia	647	813	652
9. Krapeshtina	Atrapos	543	598	466
10. Ahil	Agios Ahilios	113	100	33
11. Krushoradi	Ahlada	690	967	120
12. Makroni	Varihon	924	1,247	798
13. Breznitsa	Vatohorion	605	770	232
14. Banitsa	Vevi	1,995	2,450	2,062
15. Dolno Kotori	Kato Idrusa	846	974	541
16. Gornichovo	Keli	1,095	1,577	1,336
17. Turie	Korifi	411	443	198
18. Rulia	Kota	491	586	218
19. P'pli	Levkon	518	422	196
20. R'mbi	Lemos	547	738	466
21. Leskovets	Leptokaris	294	378	327
22. Sakulevo	Marina	329	488	370
23. Voshtareni	Meliti	1,388	1,759	1,666
24. Asanovo	Mesohorion	639	866	787
25. L'k	Mikrolimni	360	316	96
26. Neokazi	Neohorakion	585	828	654
27. Bitisha	Parorion	490	556	491
28. Liubotino	Pedinon	308	367	264
29. Kuchkovo	Perazma	645	878	783
30. Strkovo	Plati	253	268	58
31. Klabuchishta	Poliplatanon	742	969	932
32. Neret	Polipotamon	1,697	1,533	1,046
33. Tarnaa	Prasino	404	376	128
34. Kobasnitsa	Proti	683	802	743
35. Nivitsi	Psarades	585	770	433
36. Zelenich	Sklitron	1,347	1,342	1,153
37. Nevoliani	Skopia	1,478	1,731	1,522
38. Lagen	Triandafilea	492	468	210
39. Trsie	Trivuno	611	629	99
40. Oshchima	Trigono	421	482	56

## VIII Kostur Region

1. Radigozhde	Agia Ana	129	152	46
2. Churilovo	Agios Nikolaos	140	154	75
3. Breshtani	Avgi	265	433	271
4. Gorno Drenoveni	Ano Kranjona	278	230	107
5. Zhupanishta	Ano Lefki	471	507	155
6. Gorna Statitsa	Ano Melas	501	198	91
7. Mangala	Ano Perivolion	104	123	80
8. Aposkep	Aposkepos	360	377	270
9. Bela Tsrkva	Asproklisia	273	410	360
10. Shkrapari	Aspromerion	47	114	57
11. Zagorichani	Vasilias	735	1,247	720
12. Bobishta	Verga	155	198	131
13. Visheni	Visinea	642	684	472
14. Doleni	Zevgostasion	207	177	87
15. Kalevishta	Kali Vrasi	392	305	85
16. Dobrolishta	Kalohorion	455	634	585
17. Orman	Kato Levki	176	267	247
18. Setoma	Kefalarion	371	563	311
19. Tikveni	Kolokitu	220	282	204
20. Dolno Drenoveni	Kato Kraniana	472	472	317
21. Drenichevo	Kranohorion	305	372	160
22. Semasi	Kremaston	46	77	65
23. Ludovo	Kria Nera	82	124	41
24. Staricheni	Lakomata	290	434	201
25. Kumanichevo	Litia	642	821	427
26. Chernovishta	Mavrokombos	328	332	199
27. Konomlati	Makrohorion	802	946	438
28. Dolna Statitsa	Kato Melas	564	495	238
29. Chetirok	Mesopotamia	1,083	1,552	1,271
30. Kondoropi	Metamorfsis	235	326	189
31. Slimishta	Milica	303	406	390
32. Nestram	Nestorion	1,888	2,677	1,767
33. Blatsa	Oksia	218	277	122
34. Galiste	Omorfoklisia	406	569	270
35. Zhelengozhe	Pendavriso	597	888	645
36. Ezerets	Petropulakion	235	310	54
37. Lichishta	Polikarpi	585	735	605
38. Izglibe	Poria	205	271	188
39. Grache	Ptelea	333	462	83

40. Gorno Paprasko	Ano Pteria	181	312	275
41. Sheshtevo	Siderohorion	628	609	315
42. Zhuzheltsi	Spilea	240	368	140
43. Bomboki	Stavropotamos	220	295	125
44. Stensko	Stena	148	204	25
45. Tiolishta	Tihion	697	844	801
46. Pozdivishta	Halara	676	738	450
47. Zhelin	Hiliodendron	440	621	511
48. Tsakoni	Cakoni	341	448	386
49. Osnichani	Kastanofiton	253	349	106
50. Tsereshnitsa	Polikerason	328	397	87
51. Slimitsa	Trilofo	343	343	7

(According to an unpublished paper located at the Institute of National History - Skopje “Migration and movements in Aegean Macedonia from the Balkan Wars to World War II” - affiliate of the Institute for national history – Skopje, Todor Simovski ).

## **THE PLAKA PROTOCOL**

To comprehensively and solely lead a national struggle against the occupiers and their organs, to contribute to the success of the Allied struggle, to liberate Greece and ensure freedom for the people and ultimately to create lighter conditions in an effort to unify the Greek insurgent army, as has been decided by the below signatories and Greek unity negotiators:

1. Accepted is the EAM-ELAS proposal to stop hostilities between ELAS and EDES forces.
2. EAM-ELAS and EDES units are to hold onto the positions now held.
3. EAM-ELAS and EDES organizations are to deploy all their forces in their respective regions to act against the occupiers and their collaborators or act together in common regions.
4. In order to better counter the occupier, command of the forces in Epirus and the two organizations (EAM and EDES) will soon propose a joint plan of offensive or defensive action, which will determine the manner of possible maneuver of units for each organization in order to put pressure on the enemy in the region, as required by military means.
5. If the units of an organization withdraw from certain positions, because of German or German associate penetration, they will return to their former positions after the enemy is ousted or has withdrawn.
6. A mixed military commission consisting of representatives from ELAS, EDES and EKKA will ensure that everyone complies with this Agreement and resolve any eventual disputes. The Commission can work with both of its members until an EKKA representative arrives.
7. The allied military mission is appealing to Middle East Command to supply Greece and its largest organizations with the means to participate in the operations against the Germans.

8. Since the German penetration and since these Organizations were formed, the victims of this conflict have expressed desire for immediate assistance from all organizations. They are especially appealing to Allied Command to immediately come and help them.

9. With the signing of this Agreement, all those people held as prisoners or hostages on both sides, regardless of their political differences, will be released and allowed to go where they choose. This excludes those charged with national offenses like treason and those who have committed grave crimes. These people should be pointed out to the appropriate organizations and judged by existing military courts in the presence of a representative of the organization concerned. Desire has been expressed to proceed with the adjudication as soon as possible. The hostages and prisoners should be released within fifteen days.

10. This goes into effect immediately.

Somewhere in Greece 29. II. 1944.

EAM-ELAS Delegation: Stef. Sarafis General,

EDES Delegation: Kom. Piromaglu, P. Nikolopoulos (col),

EKKA Delegation: Mr. Kartalis

Allied Military Mission: Chris p. colonel Englishman

United States of America Delegation: Vainc, major.

(Source: "Historical Archives - National Resistance", Volume A, April 1958 - March 1960 – Athens.)

# THE LEBANON AGREEMENT

## PART ONE

Reorganization and compliance of the Greek armed forces in the Middle East under a Greek flag

Everyone is in agreement that the rebellion in the Middle East was a crime against the homeland. Everyone is in agreement that the investigation should continue and that the instigators of the rebellion should be punished according to their responsibility. Their excuse that this was triggered by the National Unity Government cannot exempt them from their responsibility, because if in wartime the mass voices around the government legalize the rebellion then the Albanian epic would not exist.

In what spirit should the reorganization be carried out? We have unanimously concluded that there is no need to apply political criteria. Only national and military criteria will be applied, under which the reorganization of the armed forces will take place.

Similarly, we have agreed that the slogan calling for military discipline should be absolute and should make it impossible for political views to exist in the military, because the army does not need to think. This slogan will be made public on the same day that the government of national unity is formed. The military must carry out government orders.

## PART TWO

All partisan formations in free Greece, as well as all combat forces, will be united and will obey the commandments of the unity government in the fight against the occupiers.

I believe that after this problem is solved opinions will be completely eliminated because we accept that it is impossible in the future for partisan bands to be permanent and they should soon enter the national army and be free of any political party or organizational influence. They will all belong only to the homeland and will take orders only from the government. But we all accept, especially after

receiving a letter from Allied Command for the Middle East stressing that change must not lead to the weakening of the resistance and that the immediate purpose of the resistance should match the needs of the struggle. One side agrees that the partisan bands cannot be a permanent state. The other side believes that it is impossible for them to immediately meet that goal.

### PART THREE

Stopping the terror in the Greek province and strengthening the personal safety and political freedom of the people will take place when and how the occupier is driven out.

The category “terror” is confirmed by one side and challenged by the other. It is not necessary to clean it up. The general conclusion is that the province will ensure order, personal and political freedom. We will also endeavour to eliminate terrorist phenomena in the cities.

Ministers of the unity government will find their way to free Greece who will be charged with managing the military forces and the liberated Greek population.

Full compliance has finally concluded that the Government’s mission is to be in contact and lead the Greek people.

None of us wants to be immigrants. We all want to be comrades and leaders of our people. That is where we belong. The only question is timing. We all agreed that, when the time comes and when a real chance is created that will allow our presence in Greece, we will take that chance and we will go home.

The fact that the political factors favoured negation rather than presence – absence, was a mistake.

The spirit of the new government will not be a denial but confirmation, not absence but presence.

### PART FOUR

There is constant concern for food products and pharmaceuticals in occupied Greece and in the mountainous regions.

## PART FIVE

Providing security, along with the liberation of the homeland delivered by the allied forces, will bring order and freedom to the Greek people so that they, free of material and psychological pressures, can decide on the regime, social system and government that suits them.

First proposal. Given that there is a government of national unity, provisions for security, order and freedom for the Greek people during the liberation of their motherland will be provided by the Greek people themselves with assistance from the allied forces. And this will certainly be guaranteed to the good people of Greece.

Second proposal. It then asks the question when will the people decide on the regime and government?

We are all in agreement that this should be decided in the shortest time possible, but also in the cleanest manner and in conditions of complete freedom.

The people of Greece have stated that Greece had no government respected by all the people and no defined regime.

Third proposal. Concerning the supreme rule in Greece. It seems that the entire political world in our country has an opinion which, of course, remains despite the existence of the national unity government. Therefore this declaration is one of the goals of the national government.

But I also want to add that while I attach great importance to the above statement, I provide very little new of what is required.

## PART SIX

There is need to impose harsh penalties against the traitors of our fatherland and against the exploiters of the suffering of our people.

We all agree on this issue. Part six, however, leads to the examination of another subject because it is the part “after the liberation”, the question is whether it is possible for a national government to function under these circumstances.

This fact assures us that it is unnecessary to clarify it because the national unity government will last only until the liberation. Because in such a case it would not be able to fulfill its promises for bringing order and freedom during the critical transition from occupation to liberation, with all the fervour that it expected from the Greek people.

There are, of course, other aspects to be taken into account. Therefore we believe that the best course to take would be to build confidence, national conscience and political assessment in the new government.

## PART SEVEN

We need to focus on providing material goods for the Greek people as soon as possible after the liberation. We need to prepare a plan for post-war economic recovery. We are in full compliance with this. This highlights the need to raise morale in the force for introducing the Allies in order to secure priority in rebuilding. We are in full compliance with this. It needs to be noted that we will need funds for the reconstruction to be donated and not as a loan.

Greece, with its heroism in Albania, either assured success in this war or shortened it by one year. Rebuilding its ruins will be a small recognition for their part.

It is noted that the rebuilding should be done with favourable treatment of our precious products. It is further noted that the nation’s economic recovery should be carried out by Greeks not leaving for distant countries, where the second generation loses its feelings, but in neighbouring countries that are known for centuries and where their presence turns them into a reservoir of the same nation, from which they draw forces for the state. We are in full compliance with that.

## PART EIGHT

Full national rights. Great merit and great sacrifices, the sacrifices that country made cannot have less of recognition than creating a new and great, free Greece.

I think the second sentence in this part clarifies the first. It will therefore be possible by all of us to specifically consider formulating our national requirements. Full national implementation and complete security of our borders is our new Panhellenic request.

Gentlemen,

I have the impression that we have come to full concurrence on our views on the national issue related to the imminent formation of a national unity government.

If that is so, I suggest the text of the national program as explained here be regarded as a national convention to be signed by all representatives.

May 20, 1944

(Signatures of the 25 representatives)

(Source: “Struggle Chronicles, Weapon Chronicles. Historical Archives - National Resistance”, p. 195-200 publishing house Gianakos.)

(Prime Minister G. Papandreou, after reading this Agreement, gave a copy to each member of his party.)

## THE KAZERTA AGREEMENT

Minutes of the decisions made at the meeting held at AFHG on September 26, 1944.

The meeting was chaired by the AFHG Mediterranean Front Allied Command Commander and attended by the Greek Prime Minister, Greek government members and General Sarafis and General Servas, leaders of the Greek guerillas.

“1. All guerilla groups operating in Greece are to be placed under the orders of the Greek national unity government.

2. The Greek government is to place all these forces under the command of General Scobie, who is appointed by the Allied supreme commander as the general who will command the forces in Greece.

3. According to the proclamation issued by the Greek government, the leaders of the Greek guerillas are to prohibit units under their command from attempting to take matters into their own hands. Such acts would be considered a crime and those committing them will accordingly be punished.

4. As for Athens, it will take no action except under the direct orders of General Scobie, commander of the forces in Greece.

5. The security battalions are to be regarded as organs of the enemy. They are to be considered as enemy formations, unless they surrender pursuant to orders given by the general who commands the forces in Greece.

6. In order to put an end to the discords of the past, all Greek guerilla forces are committed to creating national unity in order to coordinate their activities in the greater interest of the common struggle.

7. After being received by the Supreme Allied Commander, as authorized by the Greek government, General Scobie is to issue orders for the operations.

Following are short orders for the operations issued by the general who commanded the forces in Greece:

1. The general who commands the forces in Greece has stated that his objective is to free the country and be able to bring the Greek government home. And at the same time to provide the people with material support.

2. The military organization related to the forces acting in Greece will be as follows:

a) General Zervas will continue to act within the territory governed by the Plaka Protocol and will cooperate with General Sarafis to prevent German withdrawal in the area that lies between the northern limits defined by the Plaka Protocol and Albania.

b) General Sarafis will continue to act in the rest of Greece, except:

I. The area in Athens. General Spiliopoulos will command all the armies in the Athens area and will act in close cooperation with the Athens government, supported by a liaison officer who will be appointed by General Sarafis. He will be under the orders of the 140<sup>th</sup> force.

II. In the Peloponnesus. The armies in this area will be commanded by an officer nominated by General Sarafis with the approval of the Greek government and will be assisted by an English mission liaison. They will be under the orders of the 140<sup>th</sup> force.

III. Later, Thrace (encompassing the city Solun) will be put under the command of an officer nominated by the Greek government.

3. Objectives:

a) All commanders are to hinder German withdrawal and neutralize German garrisons.

b) During the liberation of the territory all commanders will personally report to the commander of the 140<sup>th</sup> force:

I. Maintenance of law and order in the territories within their acting powers.

II. Avoid civil war and the killing of Greeks by Greeks.

III. For the avoidance of any kind of penalties and unjustified arrests.

IV. For their help in establishing legal political power and granting aid.

4. A map marking the boundaries of the operations is given to all commanders.”

“Communiqué.

A meeting was recently held in AFHG. It was chaired by the Supreme Allied Commander and attended by General Scobie commander of forces in Greece, the Greek Prime Minister Papandreou along with other members of the Greek government and by two guerilla commanders Generals Sarafis and Zervas.

The two generals, commanders of the Greek guerilla forces, confirmed that they will absolutely accept orders from the Greek government and from the allied supreme commander, under whose orders the Greek government has placed all Greek forces operating in Greece.

All are in agreement with the decisions made regarding the coordination of the struggle and the possibility of freeing Greece as soon as possible.”

(Source: “Struggle Chronicles, Weapon Chronicles. Historical Archives - National Resistance”, p. 205-208 publishing house Gianakos.)

(The Kazerta Agreement was signed by General Wilson, Commander of Allied Middle East Command, Mr, Papandreou, President of the Greek government, General S. Sarafis,

representative of ELAS and General N. Zervas, representative of EDES).

## **THE VARKIZA AGREEMENT**

The signatories below, on one side I. Sofianopoulos, N. Ralis and I. Makropoulos from the Greek government delegation and on the other side G. Siantos, CPG Central Committee Secretary, D. Partsalidis, EAM Central Committee Secretary, and I. Tsirimokos, ELD General Secretary forming the EAM Central Committee delegation. The two groups met in Varkiza and together explored the means and manner by which to terminate the civil war and bring reconciliation to the Greek people. The following agreements were reached:

The government delegation expressed strong will to end the sorrowful internal crisis without further bloodshed and restore unity, internal peace and political order. Only then would the Greek people undertake a creative effort to rebuild the country from the ruins caused by the heavy fighting with external enemies and from the fratricidal war.

In order for the Agreement to receive impartial and moral character, expressing the words of the Greek people's political conscience, the government delegation recommended that the Agreement be proclaimed as the resolute will of the Greek people for the development of free and normal political life, whose main feature will be respect of political opinion for the citizens, peaceful campaigning, the spread of political ideas, respect for freedom and respect for the Atlantic Charter Proclamation and the Tehran Decision in good conscience for the peoples who have fought for it.

The meeting concluded with full consent of these views and principles by the EAM delegation.

### Article 1

#### Agreement

The government, in accordance with the Constitution and ruling Democratic principles, will ensure that every party has the right to freely express its political beliefs. The government will abolish former laws that prohibit freedoms and will ensure personal

freedoms such as freedom of gatherings, association and of the press are not inhibited. The government will establish full freedom for trade unions.

## Article 2

### Abolition of military law

Military law will be lifted immediately after signing this Agreement. With the abolition of military law, a constitutional protocol similar to KD will come into effect, thus permitting the abolition of article KD included in the Constitution.

The validity of Articles 5, 10, 12, 20 and 95 of the Constitution will be immediately postponed with decrees. The postponement will continue until administrative, judicial and military authorities in the country are fully established. Whatever is considered more special up to Article 5 must be postponed in Athens and Piraeus together with their suburbs and neighbourhoods. Especially again, for those arrested to date, it is determined that Article 5 of the Constitution does not apply. They will be released as soon as possible by sending the necessary orders to the competent authorities.

EAM supporters arrested and held by other organizations will soon be released.

## Article 3

### Amnesty

All political offenses committed from December 3, 1944 to the signing of this Agreement will be amnestied. Excluded are ordinary offenses committed against life and property that were not necessary for the successful execution of political offenses. The applicable laws will be published after the signing of this Agreement. Excluded from the amnesty are those members of ELAS, EP and ELAN who are obliged to surrender their arms and who do not surrender them by March 15, 1945. This last provision, after confirming that ELAS has surrendered all its weapons, will no longer be justified and will be abolished.

Guarantees and details for the amnesty will be provided for in the present bill now being drafted.

#### Article 4

##### Hostages

All citizens arrested by ELAS or EP will be immediately released.

#### Article 5

The national army, except for the professional officers and NCOs, will consist of citizens of draft age. Reserve officers, NCOs and soldiers of existing formations who are especially trained on new weapons will remain in service. Ieros Lohos will remain as it is while it is under the direct command of the Allied Headquarters and then will be merged with the national army in accordance with the basis set out above. Effort will be made to expand regular recruitment throughout Greece in accordance with the technical opportunities and emerging needs. After demobilizing ELAS, those fighters who would be invited annually in accordance with the attached plan, will enter existing units. The rest will be released from duty. All active staff of the national army will be evaluated by the Commission under Article 7 of the Constitutional protocol. Political and social beliefs of the mobilized citizens will be respected.

#### Article 6

##### Demobilization

Armed resistance forces, specifically ELAS, regulars and reserves, EAM (probably refers to ELAN) and the National Militia are to be demobilized when this Agreement comes into effect. Demobilization and decommissioning of weapons will be carried out according to a specifically planned protocol planned by a technical committee.

The state will regulate requisitions made by ELAS. Requisitioned items by ELAS, including livestock, automobiles, etc., will be handed out by the state according to the modalities laid out in the shaped protocol and, as of now, will be regarded as requisitions made by the Greek state.

## Article 7

### Purging officials

A government appointed commission or board shall commence the purge of civil servants, NPDD officials, city and municipal officials, etc. The criteria for purging will be - qualification, character and morality, cooperation with the enemy and the use of official authority as an organ of a dictatorship. Officials who belonged in the above categories during the occupation and who joined the resistance will be returned to their former place and evaluated the same way as other employees. The same board will also evaluate officials who participated or cooperated in the December 3, 1944 events, after the signing of this document. There will be opportunities for promotions to be determined by the government that emerges from the elections.

## Article 8

### Security unit purges

Purging of security units, gendarme and police units will be done by a special board as soon as possible in the same manner and using similar criteria for civil servants. All officers and fighters of the aforementioned units that fall under the provisions of the amnesty law, which entered the ranks of ELAS, ELAN or EP during the occupation, will return to their posts and will undergo assessment by the purging board the same as their colleagues. All officers and fighters mentioned, from the formations until the signing of this Agreement, will be placed on standby and their final position will be determined by the board which will be formed by the future government resulting from the elections.

## Article 9

## Plebiscites and elections

In full freedom and purity, a plebiscite will be held as soon as possible, certainly in the course of this year, which would finally put an end to the problems for the regime, subjecting all of the decision of the people. Soon after that, elections for the Constituent Assembly will follow in order to draft a Constitution for this country. Both delegations agree in terms of the purity of the decisions of the people's will to call the major allied powers to send observers.

This agreement was duplicated with two identical copies. One was given to the government delegation and the other to the EAM delegation.

Athens Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 12. II. 1945.

Government delegates:

1. I. Sofianopoulos
2. P. Ralis
3. I. Makropoulos

EAM delegates:

1. D. Siantos
2. D. Partsalidis
3. I. Tsirimokos"

(Source: "History of the Civil War years 1945-1949" (Second guerilla movement), Volume II by Fivos Neok. Grigoriadis.)

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