



MILITARY JUNTA THREATENS DEMOCRACY IN GREECE

PEOPLE DEVELOPING
UNITED STRUGGLE
TO SAVE DEMOCRACY

BY BETTY AMBATIELOS

In the summer of 1963, the huge demonstrations in London on the occasion of the state visit of late King Paul and Queen Frederika, reflected the solidarity of the British people with those of Greece whose heroic struggles had brought down the hated government of Karamanlis.

Within a few months, Mr. G. Papandreu of the Centre Union formed a government and proclaimed "Democracy has won".

Karamanlis had already left the country under an assumed name; the fascists now drew in their horns; gendarmes, police and fascist thugs who for years had intimidated, arrested, framed, tortured and murdered democrats, appeared like lambs. People began to breathe again. Hundreds of political prisoners were freed. The balmy air of democracy wafted over Greece.

But if the fascists reeled under the people's blows, this was not for long and, in the eighteen months since, encouraged by a compromising Centre

Government, they have been going over to the offensive. Today democratic progress in Greece stands in jeopardy.

This is not to say there have been no positive steps. After years of rabid propaganda against the northern neighbours, an agreement has been signed with Bulgaria. (Numbers of Greeks have joined in excursions to Sofia and returned full of praise for the industrial progress and the civilised state of the villages.) Relations with Yugoslavia have also been improved. On the home front, for the first time, education has been made free. Foundation stones have been laid for new universities.

But the main tasks which faced the new government have remained untouched. Democracy had won; the moment had arrived to drive home the attack on the demoralised forces of Karamanlis and fascism, dissolve organisations like the powerful I.D.E.A.—the illegal organisation of fascist officers—and root out fascists from the state machine where they had entrenched themselves.

This, followed by the ruthless exposure of the former regime—which robbed the people of their independence, economic progress and human rights, was behind the assassination of the first Marathon Peace marcher, Dr. Lambrakis and imposed the sell-out of Cyprus to the imperialists in 1960—would have made a fascist comeback almost impossible. Democracy could have been fully restored.

First steps for the restoration of democracy called for the release of the remaining political prisoners, the right of repatriation for the 60,000 political refugees abroad, the legalisation of the Greek Communist Party (KKE) and the lifting of the Special Measures dating from the civil war.

Had these steps been taken democracy would have been strong and the government could have embarked on bold new policies based on true independence, freedom from the NATO stranglehold, support for Cypriot self-determination to raise the standard of living and lift Greece out of the list of underdeveloped countries.

In fact, none of these vital steps was taken and power has remained with a political-military clique or junta. This is backed by the U.S. and the Palace and has now launched its offensive to turn back the clock and bar the road to democratic progress.

Some of the leading figures in this Junta have been named. They include, said left-wing daily, *Avgi*, of 13th June, Mr. P. Garoufalias, the Minister of Defence, known as "America's man in the government", Major-General J. Gennimatas, who in 1961 elections was prominent in the terror operation which returned Karamanlis to power and, more recently, was the man who issued the orders for the army to intervene in the Third Marathon Peace March of 23rd May, 1965. These orders, said Centre daily *Vema*, "could and probably would have led to bloodshed" if not stopped in the nick of time. He was kept, however, by Mr. Papandreu as Chief of the Army General Staff! Major Arnaoutis,

Aide to the King and General Grivas (extending the Junta's activities to Cyprus) have also been named.

Its political wing represented by the National Radical Union (ERE) founded by Karamanlis and now led by Mr. P. Kanelopoulos, has been busy "discovering" "communist threats", whilst its military spearhead, I.D.E.A., has been active against democratic officers in the army.

The Junta's plan was to create a suitable anti-communist atmosphere and overthrow the government. Early this year, the ERE and the pro-fascist press alleged there was a "communist threat" to Greece. Thanks to the able fight of the United Democratic Left (EDA) and its fine Parliamentary group, this "threat" was exposed as a fascist myth. A threat to democracy *did* exist, said EDA, but it came from the fascists.

Allegations followed regarding the formation of an illegal organisation of left officers in the army. Once again EDA turned the tables and showed that this was a very thin story designed to hide the undoubted existence of the fascist officers secret organisation, I.D.E.A. The noise had not died down on this before "communist sabotage" was suddenly discovered (by a Junta Army leader) in units in Northern Greece. This blatant frame-up was quickly exposed but not before several soldiers and civilians had been arrested—on military orders—and "confessions" obtained under torture. (The civilians have since been released and all charges of sabotage dropped.)

EDA has led the fight against the Junta and exposed the real dangers threatening democracy. At the same time, it laid open to the light of day the criminal record of the previous Karamanlis regime. It was EDA's initiatives which compelled Premier Papandreu to reveal that the actual plans—prepared by the previous regime for "Operation Pericles" for terror and fraud in the 1961 elections—were in the government's possession. EDA proposed motions to Parliament for



THE FUNERAL OF DR. LAMBRAKIS THE FIRST MARATHON PEACE MARCHER



A POLITICAL PRISONER IS RELEASED



CROWDS OF POLICE AT THE TRIAL OF GORGOPOTAMOS RESISTANCE HEROES VIRTUALLY PREVENTED A PUBLIC HEARING



LAST YEAR'S MARATHON PEACE MARCH

the committal to a Special Court of Karamanlis and his ministers, for their criminal waste and shady handling of public funds and secret allocations. In both these cases, Mr. Papandreou rescued Karamanlis—undenied press reports say, at the request of King Constantine—by asserting (wrongly) that the period in which those responsible for these offences could be committed to a Special Court had expired.

Parliament and public opinion demanded that the army be purged at last of its fascist leadership, and that General Gennimatas be sacked immediately. Mr. Garoufalias, however, said, "No".

Premier Papandreou asked for Mr. Garoufalias' resignation. Again he met with a blunt "No".

He then asked the king to dismiss Mr. Garoufalias and declared that he, Mr. Papandreou, would take over the Ministry of National Defence.

The king replied he would agree to the dismissal of Mr. Garoufalias, but he would not allow Mr. Papandreou to take over the Ministry.

Since the King persisted in his anti-constitutional attitude, Mr. Papandreou told him on Thursday evening, July 15, that he would resign next morning. But the royal plot was already in operation.

Without waiting for the formal resignation of his Premier, King Constantine immediately called Mr. Athanassiades-Novas, the Speaker of Parliament (who was waiting in an ante-room), to form a new Government.

Mr. Papandreou and the people at once denounced

Mr. Novas' Cabinet as a "Government of traitors" and Palace stooges.

On the following Friday and Saturday Athens saw scenes of police brutality on the same scale as the murderous attacks of the Karamanlis police against the people. Over 100 citizens were injured.

The Confederation of Labour called a 24-hour general strike against the Palace coup. The EDA (United Democratic Left) Party urged the people to form a united democratic front to smash the plot and overthrow the Palace quislings.

Naturally the Americans are supporting the plotters. A few days ago the Athens press reported that the King and Mr. Garoufalias had promised Washington to send a contingent of Greek troops to South Vietnam.

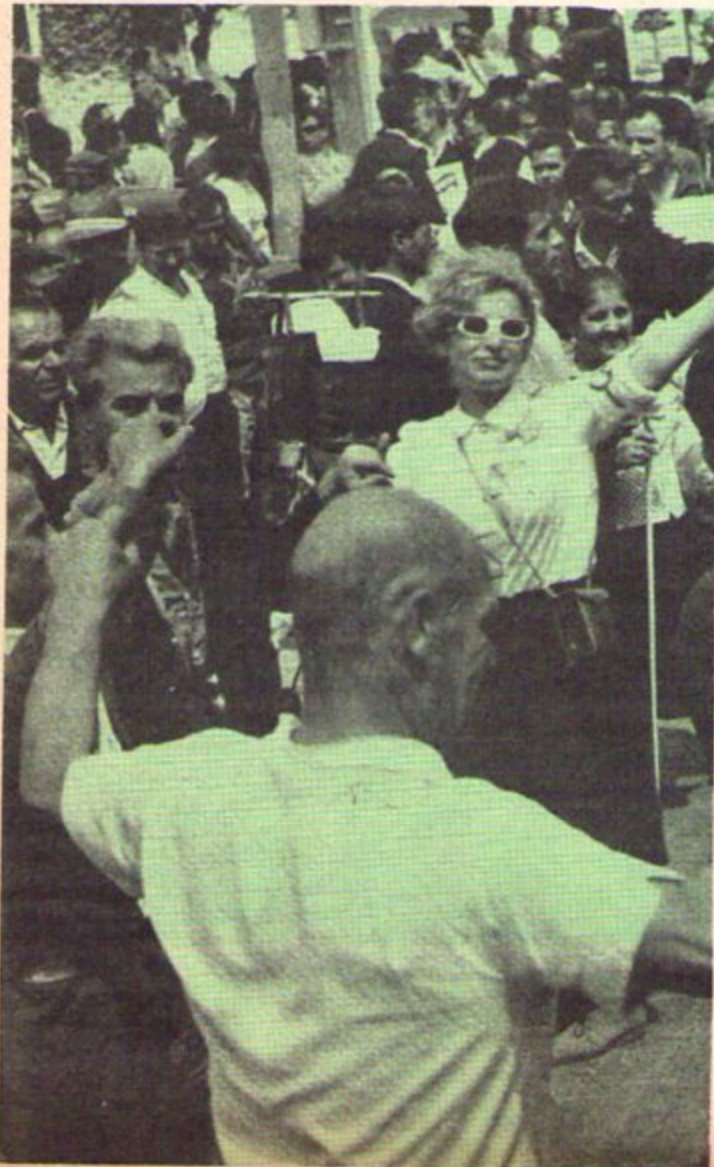
Mr. Papandreou, when asked, did not deny the report. Washington expects that the new Government will try to carry out the King's promise.

Washington also expects that Mr. Novas' administration will try to "settle" the Cyprus problem, according to British, American and Turkish wishes.

Such a settlement would provide for a Turkish and a nuclear NATO base in Cyprus under the cloak of a sham union of the island with Greece.

Once more a very difficult, fateful struggle lies ahead of the Greek people.

They hope that democrats all over the world will assist them in their fight. And they expect that once again the democrats of Britain will be on their side.



Above: BETTY AMBATIELOS AND HER HUSBAND TONY AFTER RELEASE FROM HIS LONG IMPRISONMENT, WITH WILLIAM GALLACHER

Left: ON THE SECOND PEACE MARCH MARATHON—ATHENS