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**Czechoslovak Material Aid to the Communist
“Democratic Army of Greece” in the Years 1948-1949**

Czechoslovakia became a communist state and a Moscow satellite in the full sense of the word only after the February 1948 coup. Yet ever since the first post-war years it showed an ever declining measure of objectivity both in its relationship to the power struggle inside Greece which escalated into the “third round of the civil war” from the year 1946 and in its attitude to the problems of foreign policy relationship between Greece and her northern neighbours, namely Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria. It approached the communist states in the Balkans, and the Greek communists with ever greater affability while showing ever more evident mistrust and reservations towards the post-war Greek governments. Visible manifestations of this trend which strikingly contrasted with the friendly and heartfelt relations between exiled World War Two political representations of Czechoslovakia and Greece included the support given to the territorial aspirations of defeated Bulgaria towards Greece at the 1946 Paris Peace Conference, coordinated voting with the Soviet Union and other countries of the “Slav block” in the United Nations on matters relating to Greece, the deliberate failure to reopen the Czechoslovak diplomatic mission in Athens after the second world war and the systematic effort to hamper Czechoslovak-Greek relations in all areas¹.

The above mentioned negative trend of Prague’s official approach to Athens was but one manifestation and consequence of the changes which were taking place in the development of Czechoslovakia in the years

1. For instance in connection with the signing of the Czechoslovak - Greek trade agreement of July 30, 1947 an internal instruction was circulated to the State authorities that “the range and volume of trade with Greece should be minimal. Under the agreement the Czechoslovak Republic would purchase only the most needed goods and will pay for these goods with the export of the most needed goods from Czechoslovakia. This would prevent the expansion of Czechoslovak - Greek trade”. See Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Prague (further AMFA Prague), Territorial Department (further TD), 1946-1959, Greece, box 4, no. 219.738/47/IV - 2, record from October 17, 1947.

1945-1948. The key characteristic of the said process was the strengthening power pressure from the part of the Soviet Union which had no intention of contenting with the post-war incorporation of Czechoslovakia inside its sphere of influence and which in the process of the gradual splitting of Europe into two hostile blocks intended to bring this country to the fold of its obedient satellites. Very important in this development was the fact that with the growing interference of Moscow in the internal and external affairs of the Czechoslovak state grew the aggressivity of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPCz) which represented the strongest political force in the so-called National Front, a specific coalition formation of the political system of "regulated democracy" in post-war Czechoslovakia². The CPCz took full advantage of the favourable external conditions created by the Soviet Union's interference in the country's internal development to orientate its effort to the speedy instalment of its own power monopoly in the country using all means and methods available. Prague's attitude towards Athens was also significantly affected by the fact that Czechoslovakia had to bear in mind the demands and interests of the Slav countries of the Balkans, namely Bulgaria and especially Yugoslavia. The latter used various means to induce Czechoslovakia to express her solidarity, namely by constantly appealing on it to implement "the integrity and mutual support of the Slav nations"³.

As a result of the three mentioned factors and responding to ever more frequent requests from the leadership of the Communist Party of Greece (CPG) for aid⁴ the Czechoslovak communists very early on

2. The May 1946 general election in which only six left-wing and centre parties who were members of the "National Front" stood for Parliament (the pre-war right-wing parties were banned in post-war Czechoslovakia) were won by the Communist Party gaining 37.94% of the votes cast. See Karel Kaplan, *Československo v letech 1945-1948* (Czechoslovakia in the years 1945-1948), 1, Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství 1991, p. 48.

3. For instance in connection with the preparation of the plenary session of the UN General Assembly the Czechoslovak Government instructed its delegation on January 31, 1946 to "proceed in agreement with the delegations of Yugoslavia, Poland and the Soviet Union in the effort to bring about a solution of all important issues on the basis of mutual agreement and support in the spirit of Slav solidarity". See AMFA Prague, International department (further ID), 1945-1955, box 60, unit SN 1, no. 3274/A/46 from January 6, 1946.

4. The CPG turned to the CPCz with requests for material and financial aid as early as in 1946. See for instance Archives of Contemporary Social History ASKI (further ASKI), CPG -

began to support the anti-regime uprising in Greece. They initiated and maintained a wide-ranging propaganda campaign in which they tried not to mention their party ideology but acted as defenders of democracy. According to their interpretation the widening armed conflict in Greece represented the struggle between the world of "good" and "evil" in which the "heroic Greek people" stood against the treacherous "Greek monarchofascism" and its "Anglo-American protectors". The said campaign of the CPCz was not motivated solely by "class solidarity" and the intent to support a "fraternal" party but also served to promote domestic political goals. It was to help arouse aversion towards the United States and Great Britain, those powers which enjoyed considerable popularity among the population of Czechoslovakia and to serve to discredit those political adversaries from among the non-communist parties who stood up against the totalitarian ambitions of the communists, demanded a more objective evaluation of the events taking place in Greece and supported correct relations with Athens.

The Communist party propaganda campaign was accompanied by "spontaneous" support actions in favour of the "Greek people" in its struggle against its "fascist oppressors" and "Anglo-American occupiers" and by a clandestine financial, material and organizational support to the activities of the CPG and the rebel "Democratic Army of Greece" (DAG). The said aid was handed over by "couriers", namely individuals and activists of "non-party" institutions and societies, especially by the Czechoslovak-Greek Society which was a prolonged arm of the Ministry of Information headed by communist ideologist Václav Kopecký⁵.

In spite of the fact that Czechoslovak diplomacy in its attitude towards the Greek question showed an inclination towards the Greek communists and its affinity to the requirements and interests of the countries of the "Slav block", particularly Yugoslavia, it was accused by some Slav states of "maintaining extensive contacts" with Athens⁶. The

CPCz correspondence, box 386, 20/36/1 from September 29, 1946.

5. Václav Kopecký (1897-1961), a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPCz was a Minister of Information (1945-1953), Minister of Culture (1953-1954) and Vice-Premier Minister from 1954.

6. For instance the Czechoslovak ambassador to Belgrade Dr. Josef Korbel (father of the former USA State Secretary Madelaine Albright) reported to Prague that Yugoslav deputy minister Vladimír Velebit had told him: "we also do things that are not welcome to Yugo-

CPCz itself had to face sharp criticism, especially from the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) for allegedly giving small support to the CPG and the DAG⁷. The said critics did not take into consideration the fact that the CPCz who had captured most key positions in the state did not in fact have absolute power in the country and that Czechoslovakia despite its accommodation to Moscow's external pressure at that time was not yet a Moscow satellite.

The February 1948 coup which led to the establishment of communist dictatorial power in Czechoslovakia and to the integration of this country in the Soviet power block, obviously had its impact on relations between Czechoslovakia and Greece. Prague's attitude towards Athens became openly hostile. The new communist regime radically reduced inter-state bilateral relations also in the economic field. It among others prohibited the sale of any material to Greece which could in any fashion be used for war purposes⁸ and in the end closed down Czechoslovak office in Athens⁹ and considered the possibility of evicting the Greek diplomatic mission from Prague. It unreservedly identified itself with all steps taken by Moscow on the "Greek issue" and was fully involved in their implementation. The attitude of "post-February" Czechoslovakia towards royalist Greece came to a head while its approach to the Greek rebel forces not only broadened but was transformed into a party organized and state implemented assistance programme. However, not even the Czechoslovak communist regime, dared to give diplomatic recognition to the communist "Provisional Democratic Government" (PDG). It did, however, maintain covert contacts with it, supported its initiatives

slavia, e.g. we have concluded a trade agreement with Greece". See AMFA Prague, TD 1946-1959, Yugoslavia, box 2, unit 10, no. 2326/ confidential/47.

7. Vasilis Kondis - Spyridon Sfetas, *Emfylios polemos. Engrafa apo ta giougoslavika kai voulgarika archeia*. Thessaloniki, Paratiritis 1999, doc. 96, p. 208.

8. The ban on exports of weapons and armaments covered not only Greece but also Turkey, Iran, China and Spain. See Karel Kaplan, *Československo a Izrael v letech 1947-1953* (Czechoslovakia and Israel in the years 1947-1953) in: Jiří Dufek, Karel Kaplan, Vladimír Šlosar: *Československo a Izrael v letech 1947-1953* (Czechoslovakia and Israel in the years 1947-1953), Praha, Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR (Institute for contemporary history of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic) 1993, pp. 40-41.

9. Contrary to Greece which in 1946 reinstated its embassy in Prague, Czechoslovakia only maintained "an office" in Athens after 1945. This office of non-diplomatic status only employed one staff member. He was recalled in 1949 and the office thereby closed down.

and went out of its way to meet its needs and requirements.

One form of such assistance was participation in a programme of "rehomeing" large numbers of children which the communist "mountain government" began removing en masse in early 1948 from those parts of northern Greece which it controlled to the "friendly" countries of southeastern and central Europe. On the basis of agreements between the CPCz and representatives of the CPG almost 3 900 children were evacuated to Czechoslovakia between April 1948 and the summer months of 1949 within an operation described as "the rescue of children from the horrors of war and monarchofascist terror"¹⁰. At the end of 1949 and early 1950 another 1321 children were brought to Czechoslovakia¹¹. This was after the end of the Greek civil war and they came to this country together with adult Greek refugees, mainly from Albania and the Greek communist "commune" in the Yugoslav village of Buljkes¹². Children placed in the Czechoslovakia and in other "People's Democratic" countries were then raised in the communist spirit and in semi-military style with the aim of preparing them to complete in the near future the dwindling ranks of the DAG and in the long-term perspective to become the power elite of future communist Greece¹³.

10. Pavel Hradečný, *Řecká komunita v Československu. Její vznik a počáteční vývoj 1948-1954* (The Greek community in Czechoslovakia. Its genesis and initial development 1948-1954) Praha, Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR (Institute for contemporary history of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic), 2000, p. 26.

11. *Ibid.*

12. According to a report presented by Vasilis Bartziotas at the 3rd Conference of the CPG in October 1950 in Bucarest, Czechoslovakia ranked second in the number of accepted children (4148) following Romania with 5132 children. (In this report of course there is not a trace of Yugoslavia). See *To kommounistiko komma tis Ellados. Episima keimena. Vol. 7 (1949-1955)*, Athina, Synchroni epochi 1995, p. 482.

13. On the basis of the request made by the CPG leadership the first 250 boys from Greece were concentrated at the barracks in the town Bratislava in the spring of 1949. These boys aged between 16-18 years were to have undergone military training and then were to become new soldiers in the DAG ranks. With regard to the deteriorating relations between the Central committee of the CPG and Yugoslavia's leadership the programme was suspended in its initial stage and the boys sent back to Greek Youth Homes. The Greek government in Athen obtained certain albeit not accurate information on the planned programme and presented it in the UN. See AMFA Prague, ID, 1945-1955, box 97, unit International Red Cross, Greek children 1949-1953, no. 141325/49, record from October 4, 1949. See also Pavel Hradečný, *op.cit.*, pp. 80, 88-89; Irini Lagani: *To paidomazoma kai i ellinogiou-goslavikes schesis 1949-1953. Mia kritiki prosengisi*, Athina 1996, p. 166.

The CPCz had by now acquired political monopoly in Czechoslovakia which gave it the possibility of not only transforming its propaganda activities and so-called “spontaneous” collections of financial and material means for the “fighting Greek people” into “national” campaigns organized by State institutions and public organizations but also allowed it to meet repeated requests from the leadership of the CPG¹⁴ to start large-scale deliveries of military and other material for the DAG. Like other communist countries Czechoslovakia’s material assistance to the Greek rebel forces was to take place in such fashion as to minimize any possibility of disclosure. The leadership of the CPCz adopted a decision under which military assistance to the “fighting Greek people” was to be kept in strict secrecy not only before the general public but also before State institutions. The decision also underlined that the only people involved in the project were the staff of the Central Secretariat of the CPCz and a small group of handpicked military personnel, employees of the Ministry of the Interior and foreign trade personnel, most of whom were not informed of the real mission of the project.

Action *Ř* (the code name of the operation “*Řecko*”-“Greece”) was from the very beginning directed by the secretary of the Central Committee of the CPCz and the head of its International Affairs Department Bedřich Geminder¹⁵ who regularly reported to Klement Gottwald¹⁶, Chairman of the Party and President of Czechoslovakia and to Rudolf Slánský¹⁷, General Secretary of the Party on the action. The financial

14. On July 29, 1948 the Central Committee of the CPG turned to the leaderships of the “fraternal parties”, including the CPCz with the request for military and medical supplies, food, clothes and footwear and also asked them to take in wounded DAG fighters for medical treatment. Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPG Giannis Ioannidis visited Prague in September 1948 to discuss the matter. See The Main State Archive Prague (further MSA Prague), The Archive of the Central Committee of the CPCz (further ACC CPCz), fund 100/1 (General Secretariat of CC of CPCz), box 63, archival unit 509, sheet 54-55.

15. Bedřich Geminder (1901-1952) was a functionary of the CPCz and a pre-war worker of the Communist International in Moscow. He was arrested in November 1951, was sentenced to death in November 1952 in a fabricated political trial as member of the so-called antistate treason conspiracy centre and was executed on December 2, 1952.

16. Klement Gottwald (1895-1953) Chairman of the CPCz became President of Czechoslovakia following the February 1948 coup and the resignation of President Eduard Beneš in June 1948. Gottwald died in office in 1953.

17. Rudolf Slánský (1901-1952) was General Secretary of the CPCz from 1945-1951. He was arrested in November 1951, was sentenced to death as “leader of the antistate

aspects of the operation were dealt with by Deputy Minister of Finance Bedřich Spáčil and Lieutenant - General Vladimír Drnec¹⁸, Deputy Minister of National Defence for Material Affairs. The actual acquisition of arms, ammunition and other military supplies and the deployment of all deliveries to Greece was the responsibility of Stanislav Palla¹⁹, colonel at the General Staff of the Czechoslovak Army who was Commissioner of the Ministry of National Defence for the secret sales of weapons to Israel²⁰ and who as such had considerable previous experience with organizing special operations of this kind. In the initial stage free deliveries of weapons and other materials for the DAG were dispatched under the guise of the Israel operation.

The deployment of all other goods (food, equipment, tools, etc) was the responsibility of Jiří Gregor²¹, chief of the EUPEX trade company which had from its establishment in 1946 to its liquidation in 1950 dealt with international trade operations (in many instances illegal) and which had delivered its profits to the Central Committee of the CPCz. The Party had used these moneys for various purposes, among others for financing its support to "fraternal" communist parties. Material supplies to the DAG had in the initial stage also been financed from a special credit of 150 million Kčs (Czechoslovak crowns) granted to EUPEX by

treason conspiracy centre" in a fabricated political trial in November 1952 and subsequently executed on December 2, 1952.

18. General Vladimír Drnec, Deputy Minister of National Defence for material affairs (1948-1950) was arrested in 1952 and in 1954 in a fabricated trial of high ranking army officers he was sentenced to years of imprisonment.

19. Colonel Stanislav Palla (1904-1957) held less important posts after the year 1950. In 1955 he was retired.

20. Czechoslovakia, even after the February coup 1948, viewed favourably the idea of the establishment of an independent Jewish State and provided the forming State of Israel assistance and with secret supplies of weapons and armaments, allowing the emigration of its Jewish citizens and the training of their voluntary unit on its territory. Following the collapse of initial illusions that the State of Israel would become the exponent of the interests of the Soviet block in the Middle East and with the enforcement of the antisemitic tendencies in Soviet union's policy Czechoslovakia suspended its aid to Israel. This was followed by years of openly hostile policy. See Jiří Dufek, Karel Kaplan, Vladimír Šlosar: *Československo a Izrael v letech 1947-1953, op.cit.*, p. 5.

21. In connection with the "uncovering of the antistate treason conspiracy centre" he too was arrested in January 1952 and was sentenced to many years of imprisonment in 1954 for "economic crimes".

the Živnostenská bank with State guarantees in September 1948²². Only later did the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPCz decide that one billion Kčs would be earmarked from the budget of the Ministry of National Defence to be deposited on a special account coded no 101. In this manner supplies for the DAG were financed from the Czechoslovak State budget as of April 1949²³.

The actual operation of Czechoslovakia's material aid to the "fighting Greek people" took place since the Spring of 1948 to the Autumn of 1949. Like in other communist countries the preparation and implementation of the project was based on the requirements presented by the CPG and the DAG command, the possibilities and reserves of Czechoslovakia's economy and military administration and stemmed from commitments undertaken at meetings of representatives of Soviet block's communist parties dealing with mutual coordination of "Greek deliveries". The said consultations took place alternatively in different places and Czechoslovakia was represented by Bedřich Geminder and Colonel Stanislav Palla. One such meeting was held in Prague in January 1949 and Bedřich Geminder was the man who had convened and organized it²⁴.

The operation of Czechoslovakia's material aid to the DAG was from the very beginning fraught with difficulties. Some of them were directly linked with transportation problems and political complications which resulted from the ever deepening rift between the countries of the Soviet block and Yugoslavia. Czechoslovakia's "orthodox" Stalinist regime had as early as in June 1948 hesitated to send aid to the "Greek comrades" by rail across Yugoslav territory²⁵. In the summer of 1948 it had for merely political reasons decided to use a more complicated transportation

22. This granted credit was later paid out to EUPEX company from the account of the Ministry of National Defence. See Central Military Archive Prague (further CMA Prague), fund Ministry of the National defence (further MND), 1952, box 10, 94/1, no. 001765. Letter of major Václav Břečka to Minister of the National defence Alexej Čepička from April 3, 1952. See also Karel Kaplan, *Majetkové zdroje KSČ v letech 1945-1952* (Sources of the property of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in the years 1945-1952), Praha, Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR (Institute for contemporary history of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic), 2000, p. 45.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Vasilis Kondis - Spyridon Sfetis, *Emfylios polemos*, *op.cit.*, document 108, p. 219.

25. *Ibid.*, document 108, p. 219.

route. Aid to the DAG was expedited by air to Tirana via Sofia, and as of late 1948 it was sent to Albania largely via Poland. Czechoslovak material designated for such transportation was first stored in the army storage areas in Mikulovice in northern Moravia, close to the Polish border. Following stringent checks, the removal of any trade or product marks and special packaging it was then loaded onto railway cars and sent to Warsaw to the Polish army general staff. From Warsaw it was then transported in Polish railway cars to stores in the Baltic port of Gdansk which stored similar material brought there by railway via Czechoslovakia from Romania and Hungary²⁶. All of it was then loaded onto Polish maritime ships which took their cargo to ports in southern Albania. From there it was transferred by roads and field tracks to its final destination: the front in the mountains of northern Greece.

The clandestine nature of the operation and the limited sources of the required material also had negative impact on the range and speed of the Czechoslovak material aid to the DAG. Concern over any possible leak forced the representatives of the Czechoslovak regime to supply their "Greek comrades" not only with its own military armaments but particularly with captured weapons of German origin which took long to find in military depots, and which very often took long to repair or material which had to undergo the lengthy procedure of being stripped of any trade or production marks²⁷. The quality of Czechoslovakia's material aid, like that of aid provided by other communist countries to the "fighting Greek people" was significantly worsened by the fact that practical coordination between the individual states and between them and the DAG command was fraught by serious errors and misunderstandings despite the existence of consultations, plans and commitments.

There were other factors limiting Czechoslovakia's aid, namely the slowness of the bureaucratic Communist regime and the fact that the funds could have bought more material had the goods not been overpriced. Under all mentioned circumstances the Communist leadership managed to hand over to the DAG command to the end of the civil war in Greece only a fraction of the assumed amount of aid. Major Václav

26. CMA Prague, fund MND, 1952, box 10, 94/1, no. 001765. Letter of major Václav Břečka to Minister of the National Defence Alexej Čepička from April 3, 1952.

27. *Ibid.*

Břečka, one of the military men most involved in the operation, commented with some sadness that only about 20% of the planned armaments had in fact been transported to the Greek front and that machine guns, tanks and airplanes had never reached their destination²⁸.

After the end of the war in Greece, during the autumn and winter of 1949/1950 that part of the supplies which had been dispatched from Mikulovice but had remained on Polish territory and had not been expedited to Albania returned to Czechoslovakia. The major part of the armaments was returned to Mikulovice and the airplanes were placed at the military airport in Milovice in Bohemia²⁹. The smaller part of the supplies, weapons, ammunition, explosives and other material stored in Mikulovice was later put to use in the subsequent stage of the "Greek operation". This was when after the defeat of the DAG Czechoslovakia became one of the destinations of political emigrees from Greece³⁰. At the request of the CPG leadership exiled in Bucharest a special training

28. *Ibid.*

29. Of the ten "Stark" planes of German origin which were dispatched from Czechoslovakia for the DAG which at the time of the end of the civil war in Greece were still in Poland only 9 returned to Czechoslovakia and one remained in Poland. The planes were purchased by the Ministry of National Security. When this special air unit was disbanded the planes were transferred to units of the Ministry of National Defence. See CMA Prague, fund MND, 1952, box 10, 94/1, no. 001765, report of Major Václav Břečka from June 6, 1952.

30. According to data collected by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare which in 1949 assumed responsibility for the social welfare of the Greek immigrants, the total number of immigrants from Greece reached 12.095 at July 31, 1950. Of this 6.910 adults and 5.185 children. See MSA, ACC CPCz, fund 100/24 (Klement Gottwald), vol. 99, archival unit 1142, sheet 67 ff. According to estimates of the "Greek Action" Department of this Ministry roughly 30% of the total number of emigrees were Slavophonic Greeks which in period Czechoslovak documents were usually described as "Slavomacedonians" or simply "Macedonians". Among the immigrants were not only DAG fighters, members of their families and communist sympathizers but also people who were moved out of Greece with the DAG by force. A special group were prisoners of war from the ranks of the Greek National Army (some 200-300 persons) which were treated as "monarchofascists" by the CPG leadership and the Czechoslovak communist regime. A number of them tried to return to Greece and for this and other "offences", such as listening to "hostile" radio broadcasts, etc. spent many years in the prisons of communist Czechoslovakia. See Pavel Hradečný, *op.cit.*, document no. 22, pp. 141-142, no. 24, pp. 146-147, no. 28, pp. 169-171, no. 29, pp. 171-173. The last document see also in: Pavel Hradečný, *Die griechische Diaspora in der Tschechischen Republik. Die Entstehung und Anfangsentwicklung 1948-1956*. In: Evangelos Konstantinou (ed.): *Griechische Migration in Europa. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang 2000, pp. 115-117.

course was organized in 1950 in the area of the Mikulovice stores for agents which were being schooled for intelligence and terrorist activities in "occupied Greece"³¹. The stored Mikulovice goods were used as teaching aids or supplies for the course. A limited quantity of weapons, ammunition and explosives from these stores was also transported by air to Bucharest for "party needs", at the request of the CPG General Secretary Nikos Zahariadis and his colleagues³². In the second half of 1950 Bedřich Geminder, Head of the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPCz who had the authority to continue to head the "Greek action" even in its new stage decided that the Greek part of the Mikulovice stores should be liquidated. Most of the material was purchased by the Ministry of National Defence and the Ministry of National Security, the unsellable remnants were handed over free to the Ministry of National Defence³³.

Czechoslovakia's aid to the DAG as a whole had not met the expectations of the DAG command nor had it fulfilled the resolutions of the Czechoslovak communist regime. This was confirmed by the fact that not even the total sum of 1 billion Kčs which had been earmarked for this purpose from the budget of the Ministry of National Defence for the year 1949 had been exhausted. The accounting which took place at July 31, 1950 showed that from the said "Greek account" of the Ministry of National Defence codenamed MNO special account no. 44600, account no. 101 842,751.172,13 Kčs had been spent on actual material supplies for the DAG, and 6,205.893,55 Kčs had been spent on transportation³⁴. Even after some subsequent funding of the "Greek operation" - such as the costs of the said "special training course" in Mikulovice there still re-

31. Information on the "spy school" leaked to the security services of Greece and appeared also in a UNSCOB report. In reply to a question verifying data contained in the deposition of agent T-203 who gave himself up to the Greek authorities in January 1951, staff member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPCz Heda Synková told the Ministry of National Security's secretary Karel Komárek that "that part of the statement which concerned Czechoslovakia fully conformed to the truth with the exception of the date of departure - February 1950. One member of the Central Committee of the CPG said that data relating to the other people's democracies were also true". See MSA Prague, fund 100/3 (International department of the CC of CPCz), box 146, archival unit 572, sheet 95-97.

32. CMA Prague, fund MND, 1952, box 10, 94/1, no. 001765 from April 3, 1952.

33. *Ibid.*

34. MSA Prague, fund 100/24, vol. 99, archival unit no. 1142, sheet 81.

mained 148,251.729,02 Kčs on account MNO no. 101³⁵. At the end of the year 1950 and in early 1951 the sum even increased by moneys gained from the sale of stored material to the sum of 247.5 million Kčs³⁶.

As for the further use of the money “saved” from the deliveries for the DAG the views of those interested differed. While functionaries of the Secretariat of the CPCz’s Central Committee mostly believed that the sum of 245.5 million Kčs should be transferred to party funds, the representatives of the exiled CPG held the view that the power of disposal should be theirs as the entire sum of one billion Kčs had been a “gift from the Czechoslovak people to the struggle of the Greek people”. Bedřich Geminder described their efforts as naive and told the “Greek comrades” that they would get all they needed but as there was no direct need, the money belonged to the Czechoslovak State³⁷. Representatives of the Ministry of National Defence pointed out that the funds which had remained from the “Greek operation” should be handed over to the military administration as they had originally been transferred from its budget. The representatives of the Secretariat of the CPCz’s Central Committee at first enforced the transfer of the 247.5 million Kčs to party hands, in January 1953 the sum was actually returned to the Ministry of National Defence’s account no 101³⁸.

The accounting liquidation of the deliveries for the DAG proceeded very slowly and was only concluded in September 1953³⁹. It was conducted just as strictly confidential as the actual “Greek operation”. Most documents related to it were deliberately destroyed immediately

35. *Ibid.*

36. Karel Kaplan, *Majetkové zdroje KSČ...*, *op.cit.*, p. 47.

37. Bedřich Geminder was also responsible for providing support to functionaries of the CPG and of other “fraternal” parties. He often did this informally. Head of the Department of Records of the Central Committee of the CPCz Karel Šváb (1904-1952) who himself became a victim of the purges and was executed on December 2, 1952 during his interrogation said that he had paid the “Minister of Justice” of “mountain government” Miltiadis Porphyrogenis 50 thousand Czechoslovak crowns several times on the instructions of Bedřich Geminder. The procedure was as follows he said: “Geminder: Do you have money. I: Yes, I do. Geminder: So give him 50 thousand. And so I did. As though I was giving him 50 crowns. I had him sign a piece of paper but no records were kept”. Quoted by Karel Kaplan: *Majetkové zdroje KSČ...*, *op.cit.*, p. 33, fn. 47.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

39. *Ibid.*

after the 1951 report had been drawn up. The remaining documents were stored on orders from the "highest places" in the most secret section of the archives of the Central Committee of the CPCz. The final liquidation of the operation to help "fighting Greek people" was significantly influenced by the period in which it took place, namely by the atmosphere of the purges and trials of "imperialist agents and class enemies" in Czechoslovakia which "cleansed" the ranks of the communist leadership of many persons who had themselves taken active part in unleashing the communist repression in Czechoslovakia. Among the victims of these trials was also Bedřich Geminder, the organizer of the "Greek action" as were other party officials who had been directly or indirectly involved in this operation. These circumstances as well as the international political circumstances made the matter of Czechoslovak material supplies to the DAG a tabooed and delicate issue in communist Czechoslovakia.

APPENDIX

Document 1

1951, September, 18th (Prague)

Letter addressed by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Czechoslovakia to the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union containing summary information on Czechoslovak material aid to the Communist Party of Greece.

Dear Comrades!

The Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia herewith sends you information on our aid to the Communist Party of Greece relating military material. Balancing deliveries of military material at the end of the year 1948¹ we found that deliveries worth 750 million crowns² (that is 15 million US \$) were dispatched. In the campaign we delivered³:

1. Weapons for the infantry: 600 pieces of revolvers, 2,500 light machine guns⁴, 670 heavy machine guns⁵, 275 signal revolvers, 3,300 rifles, 100 flame throwers, 20 mine sweepers.
2. Weapons for the artillery: 118 mine throwers of various calibres⁶, 50 anti-aircraft machine guns, 28 guns of different calibre.
3. Ammunition for infantry weapons: 35,040 signal cartridges, 48.5 million cartridges for hand weapons⁷, 74,000 hand grenades⁸ and 10,000 anti-panzer projectiles⁹.
4. Ammunition for the artillery: 123,000 mines of different calibre¹⁰,

1. This is a printing error. The correct date should be 1949.

2. Czechoslovak crowns (Kčs).

3. The data given in the document are given in general terms. Detailed data on Czechoslovak deliveries for the DAG are given in document no. 2 of this study.

4. According to the document no. 2 Czechoslovakia delivered to DAG 2,673 light machine guns.

5. According to the same document Czechoslovakia delivered only 250 heavy machine guns.

6. In reality DAG received from Czechoslovakia only 102 mine throwers.

7. According to the document no. 2 Czechoslovakia delivered to DAG only 25,946 millions cartridges for hand weapons (8,445 millions of 9-mm calibre, 11,444 millions of 7.92-mm calibre, 6,037 millions of 7.7-calibre, 5 thousands of 6.35-mm calibre and 15 thousands of 7.65-mm calibre).

8. According to the document no. 2 Czechoslovakia delivered to DAG only 40,072 hand grenades.

9. According to the same document no antipanzer grenade was delivered from the Czechoslovakia to DAG.

10. The rounded number. According to the document no. 2 Czechoslovakia delivered 123,142

120,000 antiaircraft missiles¹¹, 123,000 projectiles¹² for big guns of different calibre.

5. Explosives and engineering materials: 13,300 detonating fuses¹³, 10,000 blasting tubes¹⁴, 500,000 detonators¹⁵, 1,400 kg of dynamite and 56 crates of engineering materials.
6. Sanitary materials: 1 RTG apparatus, 2 large hospital equipments¹⁶, 200 beds, medicaments and bandages.
7. Communication materials: 10 intelligence transmitters¹⁷, 1000 telegraph apparatus¹⁸, 10,000 electric (galvanic) cells¹⁹, 500 km of telephone cable, 2 transmitters²⁰, 1 telephone exchange, 50 field switches and diverse communication materials.
8. Food: 100 tons of flour, 105 tons of pasta, 40 tons of sugar, 10 million cigarettes, 22 tons of oats, 114 tons of barley and 1000 tons of pure spirit.
9. Equipment²¹: 10,000 shirts, 10,000 pairs of trousers²², 20,000 food bowls, 20,000 pieces of cutlery²³, 5000 blankets²⁴, 2000 tents²⁵, 2000 textile

mines (53,730 of 50-mm calibre, 5,808 of 80-mm calibre, 47,604 of 82-mm calibre and 6,000 of 120 mm-calibre).

11. According to the same document were delivered only 60,150 anti-aircraft cartridges of 13-mm calibre.

12. According to the document no. 2 Czechoslovakia delivered to DAG only 71,892 artillery cartridges (61,407 of 75-mm calibre, 5,100 of 100-mm calibre and 5,385 of 105-mm calibre).

13. Missing in the Czech text relating to figure 13,000 is the description of the material, in the Russian document it reads "stopin". According to the document no. 2 Czechoslovakia delivered only 8,300 detonating fuses.

14. Document no. 2 does not speak about "blasting tubes". On the other side it makes mention of 10,000 igniters, 8,000 m match cord normal and 2,200 m match cord waterproof.

15. From document no. 2 results that Czechoslovakia delivered to DAG only 50,005 detonators (5,000 charges of 0.1 kg, 5,000 charges of 0.2 kg, 30,005 detonators no. 8 and 10,000 electric fuses with detonators no. 8).

16. This item is mentioned in document no. 2 as "hospital tent".

17. This item is mentioned in document no. 2 as "portable intelligence transmitter".

18. This item is mentioned in document no. 2 as "field telephone set".

19. In the original Czech text the figure is erroneously given as only 10. This item is mentioned in document no. 2 as "dry batteries for field telephone set".

20. Document no. 2 speaks about transmitters "Bake Fritz".

21. The numbering of groups of delivered material in the Czech text is erroneous as of this point (equipment is designated as number 10, number 9 is missing). According to the document no. 2 Czechoslovakia delivered to DAG too 13,000 of field caps, 21,541 of field cloaks, 40,419 of field blouses and 40,399 of field trousers.

22. This item is mentioned in document no. 2 as "underpants".

23. According to the document no. 2 Czechoslovakia delivered to DAG 10,000 of spoons, 20,000 of forks and 20,000 of knives.

24. According to the document no. 2 the exact number of delivered blankets was 5,005.

25. According to the same document Czechoslovakia delivered to DAG only 230 tents.

products²⁶, 70,000 pairs of footwear, 10,000 pieces of soles, 30,000 tacks, 500 harnesses for beasts of burden for military transports²⁷, 62,000 badges²⁸.

10. Transport facilities: 100 three ton lorries, 32 eight ton trucks²⁹, 5 passenger cars, 4 ambulances, 300 motorcycles, 50 car batteries, 25 crates of spare parts³⁰, 12 tractors.
11. Optical material: 55 telescopes³¹, 28 telescopes with tripods, 50 pocket compasses.
12. Miscellaneous material and tools: 1 printing press, 50 hand drills, 150 hoes³², 300 axes³³, 10 carpenter tool sets, 10 joiner's tool sets, 100 sets for barbers³⁴, 2 wooden huts, 82 transport buckets, 3000 kg of reinforced concrete³⁵, 2000 kg of nails, 2000 saws, 10,000 m² roof insulating boards, 2000 pocket lanterns, 5000 electric galvanic cells³⁶, 10 pneumatic hammers, miscellaneous office supplies, photographic material.

Finally let us inform you that on the said territory there are some 12,000 Greek political émigrés, of this 4000 children. Of the total number of people some 6000 are working in our industry and 1500 young people are attending apprentice schools³⁷ and have been placed in hostels. The children have been placed in special children's homes of which there are 20. In the Czechoslovak Republic there are some 1700 members of the Communist Party of Greece. For the Greek émigrés the newspaper *Agonistis* is published twice a week, and an information bulletin in Greek comes out twice a week. A special printing press has been established which only prints Greek material, such as books for children, school books, etc. The Czechoslovak Radio Foreign Broadcasting Service put out 4 daily Greek broadcasts (total time 70 mins). A one-year political school for party workers of the Communist Party of Greece has been

26. According to the document no. 2 Czechoslovakia delivered to DAG 994.8 m of linen for women's underwear and 1007.6 m of cloth for women's dresses.

27. In the Czech text the type of goods is missing at the number 500, in the Russian original is reads "uprezhi".

28. According to the document no. 2 the exact number of delivered badges was 62,455.

29. This item is mentioned in document no. 2 as "lorries of diverse tonnage".

30. Document no. 2 does not mention the number of crates of spare parts for cars.

31. This item is mentioned in document no. 2 as "field telescope".

32. In the Czech text 15 pieces of this item is erroneous. This item is mentioned in document no. 2 as "mattocks".

33. Document no. 2 speaks only about 200 delivered axes.

34. Document no. 2 mentions that in store remained 88 pieces of barber's scissors.

35. According to the document no. 2 was delivered 2,990 kg.

36. This item is mentioned in document no. 2 as "batteries for pocket lanterns".

37. According to the Russian text these were apprentice schools while in the Czech text the word apprentice is missing.

established and a new 6 months course is being prepared for training political workers from among the Greek political émigrés.

September 18, 1951

With comradely greeting³⁸

Státní ústřední archiv Praha (Main State Archive Prague), Archive of the Central Committee of the CPCz, fund 100/24 (Klement Gottwald), volume 99, archival unit 1142, 1, sheets 99-100 (the typewritten copy of the Czech wording of the letter), sheets 108-110 (the typewritten copy of the letter in Russian).

Document 2

/1950?/39 - The total sum of delivered and stored Czechoslovak goods⁴⁰ within the operation for the DAG.

*The total value of the delivered and stored goods**

<i>Commodity</i>	<i>Value of the delivered goods</i>	<i>Value of the stored goods</i>
I. Weapons	143,979.537,20	29,892.161,-

38. The signature is missing.

39. The document lacks any title and it does not state who drew it up and who was the addressee.

40. In addition to these goods were stored in Czechoslovakia also following materials, which have remained from foreign deliveries for DAG (probably Hungarian and Romanian):

<i>Commodity</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Approximate value in Kč</i>
120-mm Mine thrower	9	1,800.000,-
60-mm Mine thrower	19	650.000,-
20-mm Machine gun anti-aircraft	14	1,190.000,-
Telephone cabel	31.581 m	80.000,-
20-mm Anti-aircraft cartriges	40.000	4,100.000,-
9-mm Cartriges	600.000	1,500.000,-
7,92-mm Cartriges	2,312.500	9,200.000,-
120-mm Mines	50.328	106,500.000,-
81,4-mm Mines	31.000	38,000.000,-
60-mm Mines	44.845	25,000.000,-
Hand grenades	18.000	2,000.000,-
Aggregates	10	300.000,-
Barbed wire	100.000 m	140.000,-
Horseshoes	5 tonnes	31.000,-
Waterproof linen	3.893 m ²	50.000,-
Reinforced concrete	10 bunches	
Copper sheets	2 pieces	
<i>Total value</i>		190,541.000,-

See MSA Prague, ACC CPCz, fund 100/24 (Klement Gottwald), vol. 99, Archival unit 1142,1, sheets 94-95.

II. Ammunitions	558,981.147,80	196,767.124,05
III. Explosives	990.471 -	253.600,-
IV. Sanitary materials	5,843.379,25	491.059,50
V. Telecommunications	5,033.074,62	-
VI. Food	12,537.193,30	-
VII. Equipment	47,001.784,44	1,436.604,21
VIII. Transport facilities	62,440.939,60	8,706.164,71
IX. Optical material	3,070.293,80	2,576.010,70
X. Miscellaneous material	2,873.351,12	1,536.570,32
<i>Total value</i>	842,751.172,13	241,659.294,59

* The total value of the delivered goods also includes the value of stored goods. This is because the goods were delivered and then returned for storage. To the value of delivered goods should be added the costs of transportation and overheads which totals a further 6,205.893,55 Czechoslovak crowns /Kčs./

<i>I. Weapons</i>	<i>Delivered</i>		<i>Stored</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>
6,35-mm Revolver	100	33.690,-	-	-
MG 34 Light machine gun	2.550	59,823.000,-	547	12,832.620,-
Brenn Light machine gun	670	10,298.000,-	-	-
Heavy machine gun with tripod	481	28,769.595,-	231	13,816.687,50
50-mm Mine thrower	50	1,747.193,-		
80-mm Mine thrower	4	351.833,20		
82-mm Mine thrower	32	2,324.230,40	-	-
120-mm Mine thrower	32	6,485.707,20	16	3,242.853,60
13-mm Machine gun anti aircraft	50	4,250.000,-	-	-
75-mm Mountain gun	12	4,675.269,-		
100-mm Field howitzer	12	9,952.175,60		
Signal revolvers	275	489.700,-		
Rifle with telescope	300	2,142.000,-		
Rifle P - 18	3.000	6,120.000,-		
7,65-mm Revolver with 200 pieces of cases	500	392.684,-		
Flame thrower	100	676.000,-		
Mine sweeper	20	404.000,-		
105-mm Mountain howitzer	4	5,044,459,80		-
<i>Total value</i>		143,979.537,20		29,892.161,10
<i>II. Ammunition</i>	<i>Delivered</i>		<i>Stored</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>
Signal cartridges	35.040	2,416.560	-	-
9-mm Cartridges	25,902.000	68,692.104,-	17,457.000	46,295.964,-
7,92-mm Cartridges	16,500.000	65,637.000,-	5,055.955	20,112.588,99

7,7-mm Cartridges	6,037.024	24,812.700,-		
6,35-mm Cartridges	5.000	7.821,-		
7,65-mm Cartridges	15.000	30.600,-		
50-mm Mines	53.730	30,106.066,-		
80-mm Mines	5.808	7,201.180,20		
82-mm Mines	47.604	52,456.950,60		
120-mm Mines	16.000	33,911.060,-	-	-
13- mm Anti-aircraft cartridges	120.150	12,360.000	60.000	6,180.000,-
75-mm Cartridges	81.387	136,029.393,50	19.980	33,394.172,40
100-mm Cartridges	36.312	94,679.074,60	31.212	81,381.232,44
105-mm Cartridges	5.385	16,154.157,90	-	-
Hand grenades	74.449	9,444.380,-	34.377	4,361.066,22
Antipanzar grenades	10.076	5,042.100,-	10.076	5,042.100,-
<i>Total value</i>		558,981.147,80		196,767.124,05

III. Explosives

	<i>Delivered</i>		<i>Stored</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>
Detonating fuses	13.300 m	319.466,-	5.000 m	120.100,-
Match cord normal	8.000 m	17.200,-	-	-
Match cord water proof	2.200 m	5.720,-	-	-
Primer caps	10.000	39.000,-	-	-
Blasting apparatus	50	133.500,-	50	133.500,-
Charges of 0,1 kg	5.000	83.000,-	-	-
Charges of 0,2 kg	5.000	125.000,-	-	-
Detonators n. 8	30.005	89.000,-		
Electric fuses with detonator n. 8	10.000	36.000,-		
Engineering materials	56 crates	142.585,-		-
<i>Total value</i>		990.471,-		253.600,-

IV. Sanitary materials

	<i>Delivered</i>		<i>Stored</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>
Medicaments and bandages	diverse	5,137.532,75	diverse	210.378,40
RTG apparatus	1	47.709,60	-	
Hospital tent	2	139.385,80		
Bed with outfit	200	238.070,-	-	-
Equipment of the health service's personell- set	9	280.681,10	9	280.681,10
<i>Total value</i>		5,843.379,25		491.059,50

V. Telecommunications

	<i>Delivered</i>		<i>Stored</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>
Portable intelligence transmitters	10	371.967,-		
Field telephone set	1.000	2,199.400,-		
Dry batteries for field telephone set	10.000	296.260,-		

Telephone cabel	500 km	1,276.500,-
Transmitter "Bake Fritz"	2	371.348,50
Telephone exchange	1	90.840,12
Field switches	50	330.799,-
Diverse radiomaterial		95.960,-
<i>Total value</i>		5,033.074,62

VI. Food

	<i>Delivered</i>		<i>Stored</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>
Flour	100.000	449.478,-	-	
Pasta	105.00	1,000.156,70		
Sugar	40.000	573.068,-		
Cigarettes	10,000.000	9,828.858,80		
Oats	22.250	65.195,-		
Barley	114.790	318.406,80		
Pure spirit	1.000	302.030,-		
<i>Total value</i>		12,537.193,30		

VII. Equipment

	<i>Delivered</i>		<i>Stored</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kč</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>
Made field caps	23.137	437.023,-	10.137	169.425,-
Made field cloaks	21.541	6,727.200,77	-	-
Made field blouses	40.627	5,242.798,07	208	26.841,57
Made field trousers	40.627	3,619.038,60	228	20.310,24
Shirts	10.000	1,053.700,-	-	
Underpants	10.000	510.492,-		
Food bowls	20.000	905.054,20		
Spoons	10.000	37.240,-	-	-
Forks	30.000	136.464,-	10.000	50.000,-
Knives	30.000	582.868,80	10.000	209.120,-
Blankets	5.005	2,196.900,-	-	-
Tent parts	1.870	612.550,-	1.870	612.550
Linen for female underwear	994,8 m	33.457,90	-	-
Cloth for female clothes	1.007,6 m	257.23420		
Footwear(pairs)	70.000	19,624.780,-		
Soles	10.000	81.758,-		
Tacks	30.000	437.585,20		
Tents	230	186.597,20	-	-
Harnesses for beast of burden	500	4,046.640,-	50	338.980,-
Badges	62.45	272.402,50	2.150	9.377,40
<i>Total value</i>		47,001.784,44		1,436.604,21

VIII. Transportation facilities

	<i>Delivered</i>		<i>Stored</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>
3-tons lorries	100	26,373.500,-	-	

Lorries of diverse tonnage	32	14,276.879,70	-	-
Passenger cars	7	2,232,899,-	2	804.578,-
Ambulance cars	4	420.751,30	-	-
Motorcycles	300	8,147.340,-	-	-
Car repair garages	2	342.176,30	2	342.176,30
Airplanes with spare parts	10	8,111.052,90	9	7,299.847,11
Storage batteries	50	125.683,20	-	-
Spare parts for cars		545.720,-		101.962,-
Tilts for cars	20	95.401,30	20	95.401,30
Barels for petrol	100	53.100,-	100	53.100,-
Rubber boats	20	9.000,-	20	9.000,-
Tractors	12	1,707.435,90	-	-
<i>Total value</i>		62,440.939,60		8,706.164,71

IX. Optical material

	<i>Delivered</i>		<i>Stored</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kč</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>
Field telescopes	700	1,655.487,80	645	1,525.412,10
Artillery compasses	50	912.518,-	50	912,518,-
Telescopes with tripods	28	356.940,-	-	-
Pocket compasses	1.000	145.348,-	950	138.080,60
<i>Total value</i>		3,070.293,80		2,576.010,70

X. Miscellaneous materials

	<i>Delivered</i>		<i>Stored</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value in Kčs</i>
Printing press	1	72.054,-	-	-
Hand drills	262	8.890,57	212	6.720,-
Mattocks	500	16.460,00	350	11.522,-
Shovels	1.000	23.798,31	700	16.658,82
Axes	1.000	41.817,90	800	34.300,-
Bricklayer's tool set	30	4.513,80	20	2.426,-
Joiner's tool set	20	126.104,90	10	56.196,50
Shoemaker's tool set	70	283.167,70	70	283.167,70
Sets for barbers	100	69.952,-	88 scissors	10.192,-
Safety razors	3.000	152.840,-	3.000	152.840,-
Razor blades	10.000	20.125,-	10.000	20,125,-
Decimals	10	17.460,-	10	17,460,-
Wooden huts	4	1,230.961,20	2	702.993,80
Transport buckets	82	35.472,20	-	-
Reinforced concrete	2.990 kg	11.481,-		
Nails	2.000 kg	14.467,-		
Saws	200	27.446,40	-	-
Roof insulating boards	25.800 m ²	305.543,30	15.800 m ²	210.041,30
Blacksmith's tool set	4	11.926,05	4	11.926,05
Office material		194.727,30		-
Filing cartons		5.752,20		
Photographic material		65.491,60		
Pocket lanterns	2.000	48.835,50		

Batteries for pocket lanterns	5.000	31.085,-	
Pneumatic hammers	10	52.977,-	-
<i>Total value</i>		2,873.351,12	1,536.570,32

Státní ústřední archiv Praha (Main State Archive Prague), Archive of the Central Committee of the CPCz, fund 100/24 (Klement Gottwald), volume 99, archival unit 1142, 1, sheets 82-93, typescript, original, 12 p.