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The Role of the “Justice for Greece Committee”
for the American Involvement in Greece after World War II

1. Introduction

Scholars of American immigration have emphasized the stunning fact that many first-generation Americans have somewhat paradoxically been able “to become assimilated into U.S. culture yet still retain enough ethnic identification to pursue foreign policy objectives affecting [their] old countires” 1. Immediately after the Second World War and shortly before the onset of the Cold War the political activities of the organized Greek-Americans regarding their respective home country seemed especially promising; after all, they had loyally fought alongside their fellow Americans during the war and thus achieved a status as freedom-loving allies. Moreover, after Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s death, American foreign policy found itself in a state of instability. Roosevelt’s successor, Harry S. Truman, lacked foreign policy experience; after the demobilization of American troops in Europe there seemed to be no guidelines to determine the future role of the United States in foreign policy. A U.S. Congress more concerned with budget cuts than with foreign affairs, as well as a public opinion more engaged with domestic affairs than with overseas events influenced foreign policy-making at the top level in a way that led to sometimes contradictory decisions when it came to counteract the obstructive Soviet course of action in the European peacemaking process.

It was only after “Truman’s Special Message to the Congress” 2 of 12

March 1947, better known as Truman Doctrine, that the “postwar confusion” (Patricia D. Ward) ended. Truman, citing Communist subversion that threatened to decide the outcome of the Greek Civil War, announced a $400 million, mainly military aid package to Greece, thus for the first time effectively engaging the U.S. in the Eastern Mediterranean. This was shortly thereafter (in June 1947) followed by the Marshall-Plan, which was designed to aid in the economic recovery of non-Communist Europe, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), founded on 4 April 1949, a military and political anti-Russian defense alliance into which Greece and Turkey were included on 18 February 1952. The new concept to stand firm against the perceived Communist aggressor was labelled “containment” by George F. Kennan, whose historical analyses on the expanding nature of the Soviet Union were eagerly translated into action by the Truman administration. To justify the reckless use of the instruments of a “Preponderance of Power” (Melvyn P. Leffler), Truman employed a strategy of ideological polarization, contrasting pluralistic European democracies with communist totalitarianism (for the moment, however, without pointing his finger at the Soviet Union). The Greek Civil War, a minor political conflict in that time, was taken as an opportunity to manifest U.S. partisanship for the “legally elected” Greek government. The Truman administration was thus able to successfully awaken pre-war anti-communist sentiments (“red menace”) in the American public because it could rely on the existence of widespread, subliminal fears of a Communist conspiracy within American society that was believed to threaten America’s very social and economic system. This enemy image then lead to the demise of the liberal forces of the Roosevelt coalition and, ultimately, to the infamous “McCarthyism» which helped the American as well as the Greek anti-communist regimes to pursue any kind of internal opposition with the help of legal measures.

It is against this background that the importance of the Greek Lobby for the resurgence of the U.S. interest for Greece after World War II

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will be discussed. Whereas historians of the genesis of the Cold War thoroughly studied diplomatic, economic and social events in Greece during and after Axis occupation⁴, the role of the Greek-Americans during that time has long been neglected, although the Second World War marked a significant transformation in the political nature of the Greek Diaspora⁵. In fact, the emergence in 1945 of the "Justice for Greece Committee" — a political action committee — can be described as an early, self-styled attempt by the vast majority of the only temporarily united ethnic Greeks in the United States to support their old homeland, effectively ending uncertainties about Greece's postwar geopolitical disposition between East and West⁶.

The study is composed of four sections: 1. In order to fully understand the motives of the Hellenic Diaspora acting on issues relating to Greece it is necessary to first consider the ambiguous feelings of Greek-Americans toward their native land and how these old ties lead to the formation of the Greek lobby in the U.S. 2. It is then useful to have a close look at the extent to which World War II, consequently, changed American public opinion toward organized Greek-Americans. It was only with the help of a receptive American public opinion, it will be argued, that it was possible to launch the "Justice for Greece Committee" in 1945. 3. The ways and means will be explained with which this Committee managed to influence the public perception of the Greek postwar situation. 4. Finally, the extent will be discussed to which the


⁵ See Alexandros K. Kyrou, Greek Nationalism and Diaspora Politics in America, 1940-1945: Background and Analysis of Ethnic Responses to Wartime Crisis (Ann Arbor, 1993).

⁶ For further reference see Peter A. Zervakis, Justice for Greece. Der Einfluß einer gräkoamerikanischen Interessengruppe auf die Außenpolitik der USA gegenüber Griechenland, 1945-1947 (Stuttgart, 1994) [Studien zur modernen Geschichte; 47].
“Justice for Greece Committee” actually succeeded in contributing to the American involvement in Greece in the immediate postwar era.

2. The Formation of the Greek Lobby

The entire number of Greek immigrants until the outbreak of World War II amounts to approximately half a million. Still, compared to figures from countries like Italy, Ireland or Germany, Greek immigration represents only 1.3 percent of the entire European immigration to the U.S. The great majority of these immigrants consisted of economically underprivileged males from rural Greece. Most Greeks settled all across the urban centers in the U.S., mainly in the so-called “mill towns” of New England. Others went to major cities like Chicago or New York, where they found employment as untrained workers. In the urban centers there were soon formed Greek ethnic neighborhoods, which came to be known as “Greektowns”. Within these neighborhoods Greeks also organized their various regional societies and their Orthodox Church communities, of which there were some 400 (with about 300,000 paying members) all over the country around 1945. Organizing these topiká somateía appears to have been a Greek-American mania. The groups’ membership figures were usually closely tied to the local strength of Greek immigrants from a particular region in Greece. As was the case with other immigrant groups, a tight community centered around churches helped to retain the group’s cultural identity. Not surprisingly, the Greek Orthodox Church, a close family and those clubs became the institutions most likely to resist Americanization. At the same time, however, this kind of community life promoted social isolation of the group as a whole and thus lead to certain anti-Greek resentments among those Americans who showed little understanding for their “oriental” way of life.

Although Greek-American newspapers, reporting on anti-Greek riots, advised their readers to familiarize themselves with the American way of life, many Greek immigrants still felt a close affinity toward their

7. Roger Daniels, Coming to America. A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life (New York, 1990), 201-206. Of the major European ethnic groups Greeks had the highest proportional amount of male immigrants (87.8%) and they were also most likely to return to their home country (53.7%).
own version of an expansive nationalism as a collective identity, the *Megáli Idéa* (Great Idea). By 1907 they had already founded more than one hundred organizations of Greek expellees. That same year the first nationwide Greek-American society (The Panhellenic Union) was organized by the Greek ambassador to Washington, whose intent it was to link the Greek Diaspora closely to the government of Greece. At the time, Athens regarded the Greek colony in the U.S. as an integral part of its own Greek population; they had therefore, all the rights and duties of ordinary Greek citizens. Little was done by that Greek group, however, to aid Greek immigrants practically. With the onset of the First World War and the political turmoil in Greece the “Union” disintegrated.

During the war Greece was deeply split between two political camps and their respective leaders: Whereas King Constantine I. wanted Greece to keep a friendly neutrality toward imperial Germany, his antagonistic prime minister, the stout liberal Eleftherios Venizelos, favored a Greece more actively involved with its Western allies. He also fought for a modern constitutional republic. This schism between conservative “Royalists” (supporters of the monarchy) and liberal “Venizelists” (supporters of the republic) was well reflected among the Greeks in America and their organizations and newspapers for more than half a century. As time went by, however, more and more Greek immigrants began to appreciate the advantages of U.S. citizenship. As fellow U.S. citizens they were more easily accepted by Americans and their journeys to Greece were facilitated as they could then return to the States avoiding the strict immigration quotas (they could even take their Greek spouses with them). While around 1910 only 6.8 percent of all Greek immigrants had acquired U.S. citizenship, by 1920 the percentage had gone up to 16.6. By 1930 as much as 49.9 percent of all Greek immigrants had become U.S. citizens. Inspite of this formal integration, however, newly naturalized Greek immigrants developed a dual identity which they pitted against an ever increasing pressure to Americanize. While respecting American democratic traditions and values and supporting the U.S. during World War One financially and by serving in the U.S. army, they still retained much of their traditional way of living. Moreover, they

often followed Greek representatives and politicians unquestioningly and lobbied vehemently for their country of birth, Greece.

Americans resented these political activities of organized immigrant groups, especially if these immigrants came from European countries which had opposed the western allies during World War I. During the second decade of the twentieth century the United States, leaning heavily toward isolationism, was swept by a wave of Americanism. While officially avoiding to refer to the metaphor of the “melting pot” because it was feared that immigrants might easily link this concept to the destruction of their ethnic cultures, it was, however, widely held that immigrants were to “blend” into a superior Anglo-Saxon culture. Nativists tried to lock immigrants out of the political system as long as those had not become “true” Americans. As a result of this form of xenophobia, U.S. immigration laws increasingly stiffened between 1917 and 1924, the year in which legislation was passed to drastically reduce the further influx of Asians and Eastern as well as Southern Europeans. Newly arrived immigrants and those suspected of being subversive or disloyal to America were confronted with nativism (“Hyphenated Americanism”).

In the meantime a new supra-regional Greek-American organization tried to overcome both Greek particularism and American nativism. This organization was called “American Hellenic Educational and Progressive Association” (AHEPA) and was founded in July 1922 by Greek businessmen in Atlanta, Georgia. Its articles of incorporation and certain rites were meant to show white Anglo-Saxon Americans that the members of this association were “modern” in the sense that one respected the separation of church and state and was loyal to the United States. “Any white male” person could become a member, but only U.S. citizens could reach a position of leadership within the Supreme Lodge, the highest level of command within AHEPA. Beginning with 1924 all members of AHEPA were required to be U.S. citizens; or at least they had to be “willing to become such”. Practically, in 1928, most of the

10. By the time of World War I the American use of the Greek “yphén” (together) emphasized both the aspect of separation and the issue of distrusting the loyalty of the newly naturalized citizens (“dual loyalty”).
17,000 members of AHEPA's 192 local chapters were Greek immigrants; many were well-to-do, too. They had become members because they hoped, initially, to benefit from insurance plans. But later they also believed that membership in that voluntary organization could lead to a higher degree of acceptance among America's white middle class. Moreover, they were keen on keeping their Greekness alive. Prominent, non-Greek-Americans were welcome to join the association as long as they were willing to promote the organization and praise the continuity of ancient Greek culture and the successes of their descendants, the Greek-Americans. They were not, however, granted any real rights to shape the organization. AHEPA's main objective, according to art. II/33 of its charter, was "to promote in the U.S. a better understanding of the Greek Nation and its People and of the ideals of Hellenism". Therefore, only English was accepted as the official language within the association's public events.

In the late 1920s, AHEPA leaders organized a number of social activities: they initiated classes that taught immigration and naturalization issues and rights, they conferred upon the then Governor of New York, F. D. Roosevelt, an honorary membership, they organized charity balls that attracted the presence of senators and other government notables, and they issued numerous calls for donations. All of these social and charitable activities certainly contributed to the growing reputation of Greek-Americans. Symbolically, in 1924, the organization had already located its headquarters in Washington, D.C., where contacts with government agencies could be easier established. Political differences within the organization's leadership —leading to two permanently rivaling groups the "Venizelists" and the "Royalists"—, as well as conflicts in the Greek-American community over the best way to preserve traditional Hellenic culture ultimately resulted in the organization's indirectness until the Second World War. The association's main political activity up to then seems to have been to remind its members of their patriotic duty to vote.

In terms of domestic politics, most Greek-American voters turned to Roosevelt and the Democratic Party. Also, the fact that Roosevelt talked soft on immigrants from Southern Europe helped the Democrats

to gain the majority of these immigrant votes, although the Democrats' immigration policy differed only marginally from that of Republicans. Because of their small numbers Greek-American voters (unlike the Germans or the Italians) never had a decisive influence upon elections; however, politicians of all parties sought the Greek-American vote. While radical socialist or communist ideas and movements found supporters among some Jews or Italians or Russians, very few Greek-Americans showed sympathy for these ideas. This can be partly explained by the exclusive attention to Greece and the schism over the Greek monarchy aroused by the Greek-Americans, which cost them a lot of energy and had little to do with class conflict.

The situation changed, however, when the first Greek dictatorship (1936-1941) under Ioannis Metaxas began to make use of the immigrants and their organizations in the U.S. for its propaganda activities. Representatives of the authoritarian right-wing Greek regime, which constantly prosecuted all suspected Communist activities within the trade unions, sought close contacts with the representatives of the major Greek-American organizations, especially with the conservative part of the leadership of AHEPA, to win the support of Greek-Americans. But the homeland Greeks failed to establish a popular basis for the Greek dictator in the U.S. As a consequence, in 1939 the relationship between Athens and the Greek-American community deteriorated dramatically because AHEPA dissociated itself from the dictatorship in Greece. It was feared among Greek-Americans that Metaxas because of his fascist sympathies, would lead his country into an alliance with Nazi-Germany.

3. World War II and the Emergence of the “Justice for Greece Committee”

Until the Second World War began to affect Southeastern Europe, the American public cared little for the peculiarities of its "national minorities". This attitude, however, changed strikingly when the media pitted democracy against fascism at the onset of the war. With the unexpected, successful resistance of the Greek army opposite the Italian invaders in the Epirus mountains, Greeks were exploited ideologically. The “Greek miracle in Albania”, which began with the legendary óchi (no) of Metaxas against the ultimatum set by the Italian ambassador to
Athens on 28 October 1940—a date since turned into a national holiday in Greece—led overnight to a more positive image of Greeks in the U.S. media and among the general public. The dictator, Metaxas, turned into a Greek national hero. Life Magazine, for example, presented on 16 December 1940 on its front page a Greek infantryman (eúzonos) belonging to the elite corps of the Greek army in his traditional costume, and declared: “The Amazing Greeks Win Freedom’s First Victory”.

Greek-Americans were able to take an active interest in their old country’s affairs with full public consent. Within Greek communities at the time people said: “I’m proud to be an American and I’m proud today that I’m a Greek”12. All Greek-American organizations were united in their effort to alleviate hunger in occupied Greece. Also, many Americans of non-Greek background participated enthusiastically in the calls for donations. The Greek-American community in close cooperation with the American Red Cross thus not only saved one-third of the population in Greece from starvation but gave a blueprint for the massive American relief of Europe after 1945, too. But after the U.S. entered the war on 7 December 1941 the Roosevelt government decided to treat most ethnic groups and political migrants from occupied Europe as a political security risk. They were taken care of by a special secret service division subordinated to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the predecessor of the CIA. The Foreign Nationalities Branch (FNB) was formed on 22 December 1941 and operated between 1943 until its dissolving on 24 September 1945. This organization, which proved to be so reliable that its expertise were in high demand among all government agencies, was to report regularly on the activities of thirty-five immigrant groups within the United States, including the Greek-Americans13. This happened despite the fact that the Roosevelt government regularly and publicly placed confidence in the loyalty of America’s nationalities and their offspring (which amounted to more than a quarter

of all Americans). Thus Greek-Americans who got used to be spied on by their American neighbors, colleagues and close friends tried passionately to demonstrate that they were able to combine a commitment to America with their Greek ethnic pride. With Greece and the U.S. having become allies in the war effort it was only natural that both countries managed to reconcile their interests. Thousands of Greek-Americans joined the U.S. army; AHEPA gave out the parole “America comes first” and was allowed to sell war bonds valued half a billion dollars for the U.S. government (no other ethnic organization had been granted this privilege), and Orthodox rogation services were held for President Roosevelt in all Greek-American churches.

But no consensus could be reached among Greek-Americans regarding Greece’s future political order. Conservative “Royalists”, liberal “Venizelists” and a small number of Greek communists fought over the future role of the Greek monarch, George II., who, by collaborating with dictator Metaxas, had disavowed himself. “Venizelists” opted for a plebiscitary decision, while the “Royalists”, obviously, wanted to reinstate the monarch. To their delight the British had the same intentions and Roosevelt usually followed Winston Churchill’s advise in issues concerning Greece. Although well-informed observers reporting for the FNB were convinced that “a substantial majority” of the Greek-American community identified themselves with the “liberal Venizelists”, Greek-Americans were equally guided by a new wave of deep Greek nationalism. When the occupation of Greece by the Axis threatened that country’s territorial integrity they were busy to make sure that Greece’s post-war territorial goals were taken care of and were especially encouraged in their activities by the Royalist Greek government-in-exile in London:

“The purpose of this propaganda ... differs from the propaganda of previous governments in that it seeks primarily to use Greek-Americans to create public opinion favorable to Greek post-war claims. Greek-Americans are expected to spearhead the general American public’s demand that Greece receive [sic] adequate relief, territorial compensation, and aid for reconstruction”

14. Constantine Yavis, Propaganda in the Greek American Community. Foreign
Many Greeks in Greece and the U.S., however, demanded not only the full restitution of Greek territorial integrity but had in mind the irredentist expansion of Greece's frontiers; in fact, these claims contradicted the national interests of Greece's immediate neighbors—a reality often denied by ethnic Greeks. As long as the war was being waged the question of Greek territorial claims was more or less agreed upon on all sides because Greek-Americans wanted to win alongside the Western allies. Liberals and conservatives alike agreed also that U.S. support in liberating and rebuilding Greece was most welcome.

After the "liberation" of Greece through the Western allies in October 1944, media and government in the U.S. had begun to seriously consider the situation in that country. Attention was paid especially to the impending famine which needed to be relieved by food shipments. Also of interest were Greece's economic recovery and political issues regarding Greece's future form of government, as well as the role the British were to play in all of this. Roosevelt, although publicly declaring that the U.S. was willing to help financially, also indicated his administration's intent not to intervene in Greece's internal affairs—in spite of a memorandum by the State Department dated 23 October 1944 which had recommended that Roosevelt "take a sympathetic attitude toward Greece's claims to contiguous territories and islands to which she has valid ethnic and historical claims." Both the Department of State and the media, however, took a critical, even hostile stance toward British imperial designs in post-war Greece. This British-American controversy lasted until mid-January of 1945 and was spurred in part by the U.S. press and its correspondents in Athens who had been critically documenting the British intervention. Popular sentiments in the U.S., as expressed by its media, strongly opposed any American support of British foreign policy which tried to retain the British sphere of influence in the Near East.

When the British successfully intervened in Athens and finally crushed the Communist-led revolt in December of 1944 (Dekemvrianá) traditional liberalism among Greek-Americans faded and the stout anti-

Agents Registration. War Division. Department of Justice (Washington, 21 April 1944), Manuscript Collection, Tamiment Library, New York University, 16.

communist "Royalists" began to have their hands strengthened within their ethnic group. Just as the leading figures in the OSS, Greek-Americans also perceived the revolt in Athens as a first sign for the growing Soviet threat in the Balkans. While Vournas, AHEPA's arch liberal president (and within the OSS well-known for both his anti-British and anti-communist views), tried in vain to mobilize public opinion in the U.S. against "British imperialism", the Greek-American conservative "Royalists" gathered at the time around Victor Chebithes, Harris J. Booras, and George E. Phillies in order to form an opposition in AHEPA against the ruling "Republican" faction. In a sensational pamphlet entitled "The Order of AHEPA Under Dictatorship" Chebithes warned that AHEPA was on its way to become a "one-man organization" and that the organization's democratic structure was endangered since no elections had taken place since 1942. Vournas was also attacked for his unconstitutional interventions in Greek affairs in the name of the "non-political fraternity". This opponent was seconded propagandistically by Kimon Diamantopoulos, Greece's ambassador to Washington (and, according to OSS assessments "a relic of the Metaxas regime"\(^16\)).

In the early summer of 1945 Greeks in America were surprised by news of Russian designs to secure ports in the islands of the Dodecanese and the fact that Slavo-Americans as well as Slavo-Macedonians made claims concerning an "autonomous Macedonia". Despite the fact that Belgrade had signalled repeatedly that it was "at the moment" not interested in the Greek part of Macedonia, Greek-American "Royalists" used this propaganda by Macedonian nationalists within the U.S. as a pretext to launch Greek territorial claims publicly. Closely following these political events in the Balkan region, the AHEPAns organized their annual meeting on 20 August 1945 in Washington. A new president was to be elected because Vournas was heavily criticized by the conservatives to have involved the U.S. in internal Greek affairs through his political statements in the U.S. media. The newly elected president of AHEPA, Harris J. Booras, a "Royalist", immediately announced an aid program for Greece. He had succeeded in getting the majority of the votes because he had struck the right chord with AHEPA members when he lamented that Greek demands at international post-war conferences

\(^{16}\) Vlanton, OSS, 2: 90.
had not been met and had also not found much sympathy among U.S. government officials, who were “leftist” anyway and played into the hands of a Soviet ally, communist Bulgaria. On 15 September the new president of AHEPA sent a first telegram to the foreign ministers of the five permanent members of the Security Council of the newly founded United Nations as well as to the Greek government. The message was formulated by Phillies and signed by AHEPA-President Booras in the name of “about a million Americans of Greek descent”. Referring to the principles of the Atlantic Charta, AHEPA asked those addressed to take into consideration the “just claims of Greece”. With the help of the U.S. government Greek interests were to be appropriately recognized at the decisive allied conferences.

After exploratory talks at a meeting of all major Greek-American organizations in Chicago on 14 October 1945 Booras decided to also invite representatives of a number of regional Greek-American societies such as the Panepirots, the Panarkadians and the Panmacedoniens for 30 October to Washington, D.C. The objective was to found the “Justice for Greece Committee”. To many nationalist Greek-Americans the failure of the London Conference of Foreign Ministers seemed to signify a partition of Europe; Greece was in danger to become a border country between two ideologically estranged systems. Since George E. Phillies, a lawyer in Buffalo, NY, and a personal friend of Booras, had pursued coordinated activities to convince western powers to aid Greece in its territorial ambitions ever since August 1945, and since he had gained considerable administrative experience as former president of AHEPA, he was put in charge of the newly established Committee by the convention of Greek-American dignitaries. Phillies was elected chairman and he was asked to take care of the organization’s public relations; his “Justice for Greece Committee” was to take up work under the patronage of AHEPA almost immediately.

4. Organization and Program of the “Justice for Greece Committee”

4.1. Organization

The “Justice for Greece Committee” was formed by the then Greek conservative leadership of AHEPA and a majority of the smaller, decentralized and extremely nationalistic Greek-American groups with
strong anti-communist sentiments. The organization's ultimate purpose of existence could be inferred from its name: to fulfil the historically legitimate Greek territorial claims, to have its northern boundaries "consolidated", and to create a stronger Greece as a buffer zone between the communist East and the liberal-democratic West which would keep peace in the Balkans. Because Communist Russia seemed to be the only power opposing this concept —Russia protected an "aggressive" Bulgaria— it was absolutely necessary to win over American foreign policy makers at the postwar conferences. George Phillies' election as coordinator and managing director of the Committee was not only a mark of confidence, but was intended to secure the legality of the organization's public actions. Phillies had made his election (on 31 October 1945) subject to two conditions: during the organizing phase no statement of accounts was to be made public (so that the project was not endangered by public debate), and as coordinator he was to have the final word about the recruiting of members and about the formulation of the organization's program.

Phillies, who was the only member of the Committee to need a replacement in his lawyer's office during the time of its existence, created a so-called "General Committee". This Committee he divided into two sub-units ("Greek-Americans" and American "Philhellenes") into which he placed two kinds of members (who were to serve different functions). The first unit consisted of AHEPA's entire Greek-American membership and that of all other Greek-American organizations. Phillies, the AHEPA and the Greek Orthodox Church claimed that the combined numbers of "Americans of Greek heritage" potentially backing the "Justice for Greece Committee" would exceed one million. This number, however, appears to be exaggerated. OSS figures in 1943 had estimated that between 400,000 and half a million "Greeks" resided in the United States. Being the largest Greek-American organization AHEPA, in 1945, could only present a membership of 21,345, which by 1946 had risen to 24,782.17 The actual figures for membership of the other "sectional derivative societies", as these grass roots groups of Greeks originating from different regions in Greece were officially classified, are

17. AHEPA Yearbook (Washington, 1946), Order of AHEPA, 9 and Vlanton, OSS, I: 76/77.
The Role of the "Justice for Greece Committee" far more difficult to calculate. According to estimates by the Justice Department in 1944, there may have been some one thousand local, autonomously led voluntary associations with close personal ties to the Greek-American community and its institutions (multiple membership). To gain a nationwide popularity and to carry out the donation campaigns necessary for the realization of its activities, the "Justice for Greece Committee" had to rely on the infrastructure of the hierarchically organized, local AHEPA groups. The then anti-communist presidency of AHEPA, as well as all the presidents of its locally organized groups were appointed officers. For reasons of efficiency and to save costs, the first unit was subsequently merged with a division that was to collect donations for an "AHEPA Hospital in Greece" and put under the auspice of AHEPA’s "Educational and Welfare Section" which was controlled by the conservative Booras. AHEPA carried the greater part of the financial burden and coordinated the local division's activities. The few political activists were integrated into the "General Executive Committee"; Greek-American individual donators were recognized by name in AHEPA’s monthly magazine.

To facilitate the organization’s access to the establishment of the East coast, it was intended to engage prominent Anglo-Saxon-Americans in a second organizational unit ("Philhellenes"). University faculties, church officials, journalists, and politicians were sought after, as their respective social position would help to articulate AHEPA’s special interest within the process of policy-making. Another reason to engage prominent Americans for the organization was not to gain a reputation as an ordinary "pressure group". Also, it was unlikely that an ethnic organization such as AHEPA would ever accumulate enough political power to really influence the American public and the Truman government. In order to realize his ambitious goals, Phillies organized the core of the advisory committee around people like Sumner Wells, James Mead, or Robert Taft; people who were close to the Greek-American community and were willing to cooperate without pay. The public relation managers recruited from the New York Times, however, were royally paid for their services.

Following the advice of both bodies, Phillies began to send more than 250 letters to the "honorary members" of the "Justice for Greece Committee" beginning 15 December 1945. 134 of those addressed were
ultimately willing to cooperate with the Committee, among them thirty-eight active senators, twelve members of the House, and six governors. There were also representatives of the judiciary system, of the Protestant denominations, of the business sector, and of the press/radio that could be secured to work for the Committee. All of these "honorary members", including the widow of former President Calvin Coolidge, originated from a group of citizens well acquainted with Greek classicism and they therefore harbored philhellenic sentiments. They all unconditionally accepted Phillies' mode of operation, either because they liked him or because they appreciated the fact that he was distancing himself from traditional ethnic interest— and left wing pressure— groups. The mutual esteem expressed by both Greeks and Americans concerning common cultural and democratic values found its way even into the official "Briefing Book Paper" of the State Department to President Truman on the eve of the Potsdam Conference: "Classical education derived through Rome from Greece ... helped to shape the republican ideas of the emergent United States". Therefore, Truman regularly invited members of the AHEPA and the Greek-Orthodox Archbishop Athenagoras to official receptions at the White House because he sincerely believed "all Greeks are Democrats".

Everyday operations in the committee were organized around opportunistic principles. The majority of non-Greek members were hardly ever consulted; only their names appeared on the Committee's letterhead, the petitions and resolutions. They thus signalled their consent to the Committee's activities. They were not even asked for financial contributions. The small number of activists moved into their bureaus in Washington, Boston, and New York and began to work. Advised by professional public relations experts and directed by Phillies, strategies were developed that were to influence the general public and government officials. Editors of the New York Times were employed to devise information material, and the then well-known radio commentator Cedric Foster (who was quite sympathetic toward Greek-Americans) was used to spread the messages via this relatively new medium. Aside

from the public relations committee a private agency was employed to efficiently distribute brochures and pamphlets. AHEPA headquarters in Washington, D.C., and its regional and local offices became clearing centers for the Committee's correspondence. The local offices of AHEPA also served as organizers of social events and advised the main office regarding local publicity campaigns. Between 1946 and 1947 a total of 61,200 copies of the information brochures were distributed within the U.S. and the English-speaking world. In his search for facts in favor of Greek demands Phillies was aided by the Greek Information Bureau in New York, which was in fact a sub-division of the Greek embassy—a fact which reveals the political proximity of the "Justice for Greece Committee" to the Greek government.

4.2. Program

In its programmatic publications the founders of the "Justice for Greece Committee" appealed to what they believed to be a philhellenic sentiment among the better educated Americans. They asked Americans to stand by a former, brave ally in a time of need. As the only Balkan State, Greece, they argued, did not stay in contrast to the U.S. in ideological or societal terms. They assured that domestic problems in Greece were merely due to the usual difficulties a nation underwent after years of occupation by a "barbaric" oppressor. Americans did not have to meddle in these "internal differences of ideology" as long as the Greek government would take care of in democratic elections, the fair and exemplary process of which Americans were invited to watch. These Greek-Americans strongly denied that the Greek Civil War had already developed into an international problem because of foreign involvement. The fact that at that time Greek Royalists —stout anti-communists ready to wipe out the Greek left— were almost certain to win at the impending elections was duly concealed from their American audience in order not to provoke distrust opposite the Greek monarchy with its sympathies to the extreme Greek right. The true extent of instability resulting from the ongoing Greek Civil War was not disclosed. The founders of the "Justice for Greece Committee" pretended to be impartial but they just spoke for the old Greek establishment. Not the "white terror" of the right extremists in Greece but the lack of American
support at international conferences was portrayed as the real cause of the "Greek problem". The legitimacy of Greek territorial claims was set forth by referring to the Greek people’s early and decisive resistance against the fascist aggression and their truly important role as war allies for the Americans. Therefore, it was only appropriate to ask for "justice". Greece deserved adequate compensation for damages deriving from the time of occupation; it justly earned massive financial aid for the recovery of its economy, and it needed assistance in boundary disputes with its neighbors, so that it could reintegrate "productive areas illegally" in the hands of some of its neighbors and thus eliminate its strategic vulnerability. The authors had in mind the "return" of the Dodecanese islands, which were held by the Italians, and of Northern Epirus, which was an integral part of Southern Albania. In the case of Bulgaria, "slight modifications" along the common border were demanded.

According to the initiators of the Committee (who referred to a Senate resolution of 17 May 1920), the general public as well as the U.S. government, ever since the establishment of the new Greek nation state, had stated their support for Greece’s wish to have the Dodecanese and Northern Epirus territories returned. They also claimed that, following historical, geographical and ethnic criteria, an "absolute" majority of the inhabitants of these territories were Greek. Even if much mingling had been going on between Greeks and Muslims in Northern Epirus, there was at most some bilingualism in this area. However, since all Greeks in Northern Epirus allegedly advocated annexation, the Committee did not go into more detail as to an exact definition of the disputed territory. That region had been an issue ever since the Balkan Wars of 1912/13, and all Greek governments had used the unsettled "Albanian Question" ever since—even against the will of the major powers. It was hoped by the Committee that the forthcoming Peace Conference in Paris (1946) would approve of both the "natural" right for self-determination of the "ethnic" Greeks in Albania and of an agreement concerning a "strategically secure" drawing of borders between Albania and Greece. To Phillies the insecurity of the existing Greek-Bulgarian border was also an established fact because since 1912 three Bulgarian invasions into the Greek plains in Macedonia and Thrace had occurred, having caused major losses among the Greek civilian population. In order to prevent further Bulgarian aggressions, Greece, according to the authors, needed to gain
control of the mountain ranges along the Greek-Bulgarian border. This, they claimed, would not result in any “serious territorial losses” for the Bulgarian state. Moreover, the inhabitants of the Rhodope-Mountains were not really of Bulgarian ethnic background, but mostly Muslimic Pomaks who could be easily integrated into Greece with its tiny Turkish-Muslimic minority. This way the “organized terrorism” along the northern borders of Greece (which was known as the “Macedonian Question” at international conferences) and the Bulgarian attempts to expand into the Greek parts of Macedonia and Thrace could be stopped once and for all.

It appears that what was in fact accomplished was to lay down in the English language the traditional foreign policy concepts of the Greek Nationalists who were ready to take control of the Greek government in the first months of 1946. The conformity in territorial and economic issues is all too obvious. The fact that Cyprus was not even mentioned is also of importance, especially because this issue had continually been brought to the attention of Greece's allies since 1942 by all Greek governments. With the help of a democratic ideology and its anti-communist rhetoric (Albania and Bulgaria were in the process of transforming into communist countries) the leadership of the “Justice for Greece Committee” hoped to convince its American addressees that only a massive U.S. diplomatic intervention would lead to a greater Greece. As a Western orientated buffer state, they argued, Greece could then oppose its communist neighbors more effectively.

5. The Addressees

5.1. The Indoctrination of the American Public

Phillies and his public relations specialists knew they had to reach editors and radio commentators and convince them to report on the Committee's activities if they wanted to gain access to the corridors of power in Washington. They also were well aware of that the targeted key figures in the media would not be taken in by simple propaganda; a fact-oriented presentation of the Greek issue, however, could do the job,

leaving to the journalists the commentary and assessments. Still, the “Justice for Greece Committee” worked like any other interest group at the time, effectively employing all available techniques of public relations. The Committee published full-page ads with a list of its members on the occasion of the forthcoming Conference of Foreign Ministers in Paris; 450 papers nationwide received portfolios full of information regarding the Committee and its activities. With the help of Democrat Senator Claude Pepper, who supported the Committee because of his Greek-American constituency in Florida (Tarpan Springs), several press conferences were held in Washington. On the occasion of Greek Independence Day on 25 March 1946 Truman —like Roosevelt before him— was presented with AHEPA’s highest order. AHEPA’s President, Booras, was aided in this affair by House majority leader John McCormack (D) who came from the same state as Booras and was a member of the “Justice for Greece Committee”. This event was followed by other festivities organized by AHEPA in May and June that same year, as well as by intensive lobbying activities of its active members which led to the passing of a Senate resolution calling upon the Truman administration to aid Greece at the Paris conference in getting control over Northern Epirus and the Dodecanese.

In February 1946 Booras learned that General Alexandros Papagos, the Greek war hero of the 1940 “miracle of Albania” (where the Greeks succeeded to halt the Italian invasion temporarily), had accepted an invitation by AHEPA to come to the U.S. Papagos, it was known, was not only popular among Greek Royalists because he supported the return of the Greek king, but could also count on a friendly welcome by Greek-Americans. Booras planned to have Papagos as a guest of both AHEPA and Truman around 10 July, after which he would tour the U.S. and direct the public’s attention toward the glorification of the Greek contribution to the allied victory against the former common enemy, fascist Italy. Representative McCormack (D) and Senator McCarran (D) spoke on behalf of AHEPA at the end of June at the White House. The President, however, denied any official invitation to Papagos because such formal gestures were exclusively reserved for heads of states. Still, it was agreed that “every courtesy” was to be extended to this “distinguished foreign visitor”. At the White House reception, Papagos met President Truman and received a medal of bravery from the hands of the popular Com-
mander in Chief of U.S. troops in Europe, General Dwight D. Eisenhower. He was also received by both Houses of Congress, where he was introduced by Booras. According to an internal note sent to Truman's advisors by the State Department, American diplomats had voiced "no real objection" regarding Papagos' and AHEPA's visit to the White House. However they did point out that there existed several other Greek-American organizations besides AHEPA and asked: "... does the White House wish to favor this particular one? No", was the answer from the White House, written with a pencil and dated 8 July 21.

During the first six months of the Greek-American Committee's campaign U.S. media reaction was rather sparse. The New York Times featured two brief stories in March/February of 1946 on the program of the "Justice for Greece Committee" (fully in accordance with Phillies' wish not to disclose the Greek-Americans operating behind the scenes). Sumner Welles proved to be an active member of this ethnic interest group, asking for American intervention in his regular and detailed commentaries in the New York Herald Tribune on the occasion of the meetings of Foreign Ministers and the forthcoming peace conference. He, too, wanted "to make sure that ... Justice [sic] is done to Greece" (6.3./10.4.1946). Of the local or regional papers, the Buffalo Courier Express was first (on 23 February 1946) to carry the "Justice for Greece" appeal on its editorial page. The Greek-American press, of course, euphorically celebrated in its editorials even the scantiest mentioning of the "Justice for Greece Committee" in the general press. Toward the end of August, Phillies intensified the campaign, regularly contacting by mail or phone the editors of the leading national papers urging them to comment on the issue as defined by the Committee. AHEPA members were asked by Booras to write letters to the editors of their respective local papers.

The major papers, although generally willing to "seriously consider" the Committee's requests, could not be convinced, however, by the "information" presented to them to fight the Committee's cause and support Greek territorial claims. Even if the number of reports on the Committee and the Greek question increased over the second half of

1946, American journalists preferred to discuss ideological rather than territorial issues. It was as the one remaining democracy in the Balkans (and surrounded by hostile communist neighbors) that Greece was of interest to them. Regional and local papers, however, were much more sympathetic toward Greece’s territorial ambitions. In these papers, editors lauded the Committee for being a factor in the successful cultural approximation between Greek-Americans and old-established Americans, thereby overlooking the relevance of some of the real issues the Committee was trying to advocate.

In contrast to the optimistic reports released by the “Justice for Greece Committee” itself, in which the impression was given that since 1946 the U.S. media were clearly supportive of the Greek point of view, the efforts by Greek-Americans and their Anglo-American supporters were of little consequence. At no time did they really succeed in gaining the attention of the nation’s leading papers’ front pages. One of the reasons why the organization was unable to reach a broader U.S. audience had to do with the nation’s general unwillingness to react toward foreign policy issues at the time. Another factor was that the difference in evaluating the situation in Greece among members of AHEPA and U.S. opinion leaders. American politicians and opinion makers usually set up moral guidelines for the nation’s foreign policy whenever U.S. interests were not directly involved—as was the case with Greece. Therefore it was possible at times to describe Britain’s policy in the Balkans as “imperialistic power politics” and temporarily deny the British any further credit funds. It was left to Winston Churchill, then a private citizen, to direct the attention of the American public opinion to Soviet expansionist ambitions and the growing polarization between Soviet Russia and the Western democracies in his momentous “iron curtain” speech delivered on 5 March 1946 in Truman’s home state Missouri; the term “Red Menace” became socially acceptable again. The “Greek problem” could now be seen in a different light; in the U.S. media, the Greek Civil War turned into an arena of ideological dispute where communist and democratic interests clashed. After the Paris peace talks, the demands for a territorial compensation of postwar Greece by the “Justice for Greece Committee” appeared to the U.S. media out of question; they did not fit the image of a “freedom-loving” Greece “with its immortal glories” that was taking on by communists. “Justice for Greece” became a different
meaning to many in the U.S. press. The New York Times, for example, called on 27 August 1946 Greece “the only citadel of freedom east of Russia’s iron curtain”. Truman accepted Churchill’s rhetoric because he intended to shift his administration’s course of action toward a more assertive foreign policy. The enemy image of an aggressive Soviet Union came in quite handy. Nor surprisingly, George Phillies and his Committee, during the second half of 1946, tried to utilize this new anti-communist trend to fulfill their mission of Greek territorial expansion.

5.2. The Anti-Communist Congress

Although the “Justice for Greece Committee” officially intended to exert only “indirect” pressure on Congress and the Truman administration, they did, however, early on secure the cooperation of twelve House members and thirty-six Senators, all of which agreed to become a member of this Greek-American interest group. Since the majority of cooperating members of Congress were on the Democratic side in the election year of 1946 (21 Democrats vs. 13 Republicans), and since it was expected that the number of Republicans in Congress would rise after the election, AHEPA feared that they would lose some of their influence. One of the most active supporters of Greek territorial ambitions in the U.S. Congress was Democratic Senator Claude Pepper from Florida. Ever since August 1944 Pepper had unsuccessfully attempted to introduce a resolution in support of a Greek annexation of the Italian occupied Dodecanese (which were inhabited mainly by Greeks). In February of 1945 he added Northern Epirus (including Korytsa) to his resolution No. 82, but he was again unable to officially introduce it in the Senate. Senate Resolution 82 had its historical roots in a similar resolution (No. 324) introduced by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and passed without objection on 17 May 1920. At that time, a number of Greek immigrants based in New York had initiated that resolution. Senator Pepper’s sympathy for Greece can be explained primarily by the fact that his electorate consisted to a considerable degree of immigrants from the Dodecanese who had settled in Tarpon Springs, Florida, since 1905 transforming the place into the biggest sponge trading center in the U.S. 22. Those wealthy Greek-Americans vehemently argued for the

22. I. K. Hassiotis, Episkopisi tis Istorias tis Neoeilinikis Diasporas [A Survey of the
annexation of their islands by Greece. Also, in 1945 Pepper had seen firsthand the destructions in Europe and had spent a few days in Athens. At his return to the U.S., Pepper asked President Truman that the U.S. aid Greece economically and support its territorial claims. Moreover, when visiting the Nuremberg war crimes trials, Pepper had closely listened to General von Brauchitsch’s historically doubtful claim that it had been due to the Greek and Yugoslav resistance that Germany’s attack on Soviet Russia had to be postponed for at least six weeks, meaning that the resistance proved to be invaluable for the allied cause, as the German campaign subsequently ran into the Russian winter. Pepper therefore considered Greek territorial claims as a just compensation for its soldiers’ “brave” war efforts. A member of the eroding left wing of the Democratic Party and ironically referred to as “Red Pepper” by political opponents, Pepper decidedly opposed Churchill’s confrontational policy. He got himself into trouble with the State Department because after having personally met Stalin he had turned into a believer in the dictator’s “peaceful” ambitions and had later on teamed up with Truman’s former secretary of trade Henry Wallace to oppose the military part of Truman’s aid package to Greece. In close cooperation with the Greek ambassador to Washington, Kimon Diamantopoulos, the “Justice for Greece Committee” decided in February 1946 to support Pepper’s resolution —despite the fact that the border changes between Greece and Bulgaria fought for by the Greek-American interest group were not even mentioned in the resolution.

Every week between November 1945 and April 1946 Phillies spent three to four days in Washington to present before more than fifty senators his point of view. The senators were mainly interested in ideological and strategic issues. To them, Greece was an “out-post in the outer defenses of democracy”23. Of considerable help to Phillies were two Greek-American aides to Democratic senators, Jerry Dragonas and Michael Manatos, the last of which was to work his way up into the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. Together with Pepper, Robert A. Taft (“glad to do honor to good soldiers”), and other senators, they officially intro-

History of the Modern Greek Diaspora] (Thessaloniki, 1993), 105.
duced the resolution to the Senate and were able to pass it on 27 March 1946, two days after AHEPA had honored Truman at its banquet. But because of the forthcoming Conference of Foreign Ministers in Paris the House Congressional Resolution No. 136 was not immediately made public. Phillies contacted important senators between 23 and 25 July and found out that Senator Barkley had voiced certain objections regarding the resolution (he was referring to statements by Secretary of State James F. Byrnes). Phillies then asked Pepper to talk this issue over with Byrnes. Finally, on 29 July, two days before another meeting at the Paris Peace Conference took place and four days before the Senate’s summer recess, Phillies was finally able to have the so-called “Pepper-Resolution” (Sen. Res. 82) passed without any adverse vote. Exaggeratingly hailed by both Greek diplomats and Greek-Americans alike as “the most potent force from America at the Peace Conference”, Phillies had pushed the resolution through the Senate systematically, employing every classic means of lobbying: festivities (organized by AHEPA), letters, telegrams, ad personal interventions. And by having introduced the resolution only very shortly before the Senate’s summer recess, Bulgarian-Americans and Albanian-Americans had virtually no chance to respond or intervene in time.

The Greek-American action committee was successful again in its efforts when both Houses of Congress passed a common resolution in favor of Greece and the Greek-Americans. Much rhetoric accompanied these declarations, especially in the House, where Representatives Chester E. Merrow (D) and William H. King (D) —both having already shown their sympathies toward AHEPA in the previous years— outspokenly argued for more “justice for Greece”, relying heavily on the publications by the “Justice for Greece Committee”. Their speeches were included in the CR, as was a petition to both Truman and the Senate initiated by Phillies and introduced by Senator Mead (D). In it, the U.S. government was urged to support Greece’s territorial claims at the Paris Peace Conference.

The Senate's most influential addressee of Phillies was undoubtedly Republican Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, then a member of the influential Committee of Foreign Relations. Vandenberg, having turned into an outspoken internationalist after the war (he had been an equally outspoken isolationist before) with deep anti-Soviet feelings, heavily influenced by the East European ethnic mixture of his home state, had made himself known as the architect of a so-called "bipartisan foreign policy" (David R. Kepley). This consensual approach in foreign policy issues between Republicans and Democrats was maintained for the time being because of his close cooperation with Senator Tom Connally (D), the Secretary of State, Byrnes, and the President. Consensus was thus reached often before an issue had reached the legislative level. Vandenberg strongly felt that the U.S. was only able to convincingly demonstrate its role as super power opposite Moscow and avoid a renewed world war if the President was backed by Congress in foreign policy issues. Ever since his speech on 27 February 1946 on the Senate floor, Vandenberg was in accord with Truman and Byrnes — by ahead of public opinion — when he asked "for a new policy of firmness toward the Soviet Union". Being the Republican's foreign policy spokesman, he took part in the constituting session of the United Nations. Both he and Connally had represented the U.S. at the Paris Peace Conference of 1946. The Truman administration regularly consulted him; the State Department played up to him, trying to evade his potential criticism and seeking his cooperation (since November 1946 Republicans, many of them anti-communists, had the majority in Congress and Vandenberg became chairman of the Senate Committee of Foreign Relations).

Even if most Greek-Americans traditionally leaned toward the Democrats, the Greek "Royalists" Booras and Phillies knew full well that their cooperation with Vandenberg was of great significance, for Vandenberg, as of 1947, was not only the Republican majority leader in the Senate but he also stood a fair chance of winning against Truman at the 1948 elections. What better ally to have? Vandenberg, however, thought it "unwise" to formally join the "Justice for Greece Committee" because he did not want to appear as politically biased. Early in March of 1946 Phillies and Vandenberg had begun an intensive exchange of letters in which the senator proved to be a skilled tactician. Vandenberg managed to fit the interest group's program into his view of the world
The Role of the "Justice for Greece Committee"

while at the same time adjusting the organization's program to his needs. He promised to work for the solution of the Greek issue as long as this did not interfere with U.S. security interests opposite an ever expanding Soviet-type world communism. In his correspondence with Phillies, Vandenberg slowly but surely managed to push the issue of Greek territorial ambitions into the background, instead putting the emphasis on Greece's political integrity. To him, "Justice for Greece" could best be achieved by a well-meaned rhetoric of Anglo-American politics: "Since I met those two Greeks [Phillies and Booras], I have become a Greek myself." Phillies for his part recognized Vandenberg's intentions and at the end of May in 1946 opportune used them for his discussion of the issue, attributing to the territorial claims an ideological meaning. His warning of what would happen if these claims were not taken seriously were in vain, however:

"In pleading it [the case of Greece] as an American who has primarily America's future and her best interest in mind, I sincerely believe: 1) That henceforth America and not Great Britain will be the Master of, and responsible for, the "Seven Seas" [...] 2) It behooves American [...] economy and security to have these routes kept open for trade and safe [...] 7) Everybody knows that Greece is the border line state, and, as such, the proving ground of the two ideologies which vie for predominance. 8) The Greek people are fundamentally democratic. They love America. They want to be America's proud friends. But the little nation is seething with infiltration of Soviet propaganda and influence. [...] 10) It is a historic fact that Greece has been wronged in the last war. The communists will use the argument as their clarion call if Greece be wronged again. 11) [...] there are bound to be political dislocations and economic upheavals in Greece if her Delegates return to Athens empty-handed or simply with the rocky Dodecanese as a token satisfaction. 12) In that event the brave ally of America and Great Britain [...] will go communistic [sic]. 13) Please keep the "swinging door" of Eastern Mediterranean

open for our American boys and our American way of life”27.

At the Paris Peace Conference, Vandenberg consequently argued for Greece's wish to annex the Dodecanese Islands —against strong Russian opposition. Concerning the tiresome issue of Northern Epirus he and Secretary of State Byrnes pleaded for an adjournment in order not to unnecessarily challenge Albania, which was not treated as an enemy state although representatives of the Greek government furiously opposed this decision. Vandenberg also had his hands in efforts to make Italy and Bulgaria pay reparations to war-torn Greece. Yet on 29 November 1946, after the official closing of the conference (the New York Conference of Foreign Ministers was still under way) and after he had clearly won the Michigan elections to the Senate, Vandenberg suddenly halted his support for Greece's territorial claims. A subdued Phillies wrote to Vandenberg: “Your personal advice and guidance will be appreciated”28. Still, as Phillies was to learn only later, Vandenberg remained a significant player in this issue even on the eve of the Truman Doctrine. When President Truman met secretly with Congressional leaders on 27 February 1947 to ask for their support for a massive aid program to benefit Greece and Turkey, Vandenberg demanded that the President personally speak before both Houses of Congress and publicly link the program to the Soviet-style communist expansion threatening the free Western world.

5.3. Greek-American Anti-Communism and the Truman Doctrine

Around February 1946, members of the “Justice for Greece Committee” began to mail “information” about their organization to the White House and the different government departments. The recipients regularly forwarded these messages to the Near Eastern Division of the State Department, as this administrative unit was in charge of the peace negotiations. Early in February 1946 Phillies and Chauncey J. Hamlin, the Anglo-American “chairman” of that Greek-American Committee

27. Phillies to Vandenberg, 28 May 1946, in George E. Phillies Papers, Box 4, Manuscript Collection, Harry S. Truman Library (hereafter cited as Phillies Papers). Emphasis in original.
who also happened to be Phillies' close friend from Buffalo, personally visited officials of this division at the “Old State” to informally discuss their programmatic ideas. At this occasion they also met Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, as well as some of their staff. Their talks were rather informal. Later, however, while formally seeking advice on how to proceed in the Greek territorial question at the State Department, Phillies gave to understand the position of his Committee “[...] that the State Department will not act correctly with respect to the interests of Greece unless public pressure is brought on the Department”29. The bureau chief of the Near Eastern division at the time, William Baxter, assuring Phillies that he, too, preferred a “strong, independent [and] democratic Greece”30, acknowledged the receipt of the informational material, but otherwise avoided any further comment.

This reaction did not prevent Phillies from telegraphing the State Department on 22 March 1946, listing the reasons why Greek-Americans would insist on carrying out their territorial ambitions: the allied victory would not have been possible without the assistance of Greece and a number of smaller states; rejecting the territorial claims would shake Greek-American confidence in the great powers’ fairness; a pragmatic Russia wanted to see friendly and strong states at its periphery—a factor of insecurity for Greece opposite its northern neighbors; the impending passing of Resolution 82 stood in direct relationship to the new “policy of firmness”, as proclaimed by Byrnes at American Russian negotiations over Greek territorial claims. Moreover, Greece’s strategic location, its ideological reliability, its traditional economic ties to the Balkans and the Near East, as well as its natural resources should provide enough motives for the U.S. to take an active interest in a “strong and secure Greece” that would “guarantee” peace in the Balkan region31.

Charles Merriam, Baxter’s successor, in his answer to the “Justice for Greece Committee” on 15 April 1946, promised: “It is the firm intention of this government that Greece’s claims be given thorough

29. Phillies to Baxter, 12 February 1946, RG 59, 868.00/2-946, National Archives (hereafter cited as NA).
30. Baxter to Phillies, 14 February 1946, RG 59, 811.001 Truman (MISC), NA.
31. Telegram Phillies’ to Rockwell, 22 March 1946, RG 59, 868.00/3-2246, NA.
consideration at the final peace settlement." At its own expenses and without identifying the source, the Committee immediately published this answer in the Congressional Record, treating it as an official statement by the State Department. Merriam contacted the legal branch of the State Department to explore whether the publication could be legally challenged. The lawyers, however, were unable to find any violation of the law by the Greek-American interest group. More letters and telegrams to Byrnes and Truman followed, in which it was pointed out that the Greek people were worse off than others in postwar Europe.

Both the "Justice for Greece Committee" and the newly elected Greek Royalist government in Greece under Konstantinos Tsaldaris hoped that the Anglo-American delegates to the second meeting of the Foreign Ministers on 25 April (which was to prepare the peace treaties with the former German allies) would put Greece's territorial claims on the agenda. At the beginning of the conference, Secretary of State Byrnes, having shown his sympathy for the Greek position in Paris, was reluctant to take on this issue, as he needed more time for consultations with Vyacheslav M. Molotov, his Russian counterpart. But the correspondent of the New York Times, Cyrrus L. Sulzberger, reported on 17 April that the U.S. delegation was prepared to talk tough with the Soviets in order to secure at least the Dodecanese Islands for Greece. As the Greek delegation in Paris was not allowed to participate at the Foreign Ministers Conference and the newly elected Royalists in Greece had committed their foreign policy to gaining control over of what the Greeks traditionally call Northern Epirus (Southern Albania) and the Islands of the Dodecanese, Phillies and Hamlin were approached at the end of April 1946 (probably by the Greek foreign ministry) and asked to travel to Paris and facilitate there contacts between the Greek and U.S. delegations. Hamlin then contacted the only American newspaper in Paris, the New York Herald Tribune, and on 11 May the paper featured a long article (actually an interview) which effectively familiarized Western Europeans with the "Justice for Greece Committee". A large reception for the Greek delegation was organized by the

32. Merriam to Hamlin, 15 April 1946, RG 59, 740.00119EW 4-1546, NA.
33. CR 1946, 92/2, 689, 785.
American Cathedral Church on 17 May, the main purpose of which was to discuss how to present effectively the Greek problem on the agenda of the Paris Peace Conference. As a result, a number of American businessmen, supported by the traditional Greek business community in Paris, formed the American Delegation for the "Justice for Greece Committee". In an ad placed in the Tribune, 200 "prominent Anglo-Americans" were presented as members of this interest group. Additionally, 25,000 promotional brochures were printed and distributed (in both English and French). In the meantime, Phillies contacted the Greek and American delegations. On 9 May he met with Byrnes' advisors. They informed him about the Americans' position that Greece could well survive economically without Northern Epirus. Still, Phillies was assured that the U.S. will support Greece. On 13 May the Greek ambassador to Washington, Kimon Diamantopoulos, lodged a complaint with Phillies: neither Vandenberg nor "the others" had shown any willingness to talk to the Greeks. He asked "his last hope", Phillies, to act as mediator. This worked out, and Phillies met Vandenberg privately for an hour, as both resided at the same hotel. The Senator, his re-election in Michigan in mind, confidentially promised Phillies: "We will fight to get for Greece substantial reparations [...] We will support Greece in her Bulgarian boundary claim but that is a matter for the Peace Conference. Greece will have a better chance there". But Russia, according to Vandenberg, was not interested in a peace conference: "I have in mind that Russia seeks to force Greece into Communism". Therefore, he continued, the question of Northern Epirus had to be shifted to the peace conference (which was to follow the Conference of Foreign Ministers). On 16 May, shortly before his departure to the U.S., Vandenberg apologized for not having conferred with the Greeks, but stressed that his position should have been clear to Phillies: "I am for Greece. I will help Greece to get, what she asks for deserving to have". He pointed out that he had, at one of the secret meetings, sternly defended Greece's position when a Russian delegate had put Bulgaria's territorial claims regarding the Greek part of Thrace on the table. According to Vandenberg, his intervention

36. Phillies, Report, 84.
had been the first favorable action on Greece.

Phillies then had several other meetings with members of the U.S. press, such as the ones with Sulzberger on 17 and 19 May, where he talked about the conferences he had organized between U.S. and Greek advisors. Sulzberger told Phillies of the poor impression the Greek delegation had made on him. Their territorial claims lacked a clear definition. They needed to be better prepared if they wanted to convince the Americans. To Sulzberger, Vandenberg was the one person whose support Greece needed: "Greece will have a chance if he supports her case", because Greece was in no case to be lost to the communists. On 21 May the Greek ambassador to France, Raphael, told Phillies and Hamlin that he had received two telegrams from Moscow, from which it could be inferred that the Russian news agency Tass and Russian print media had been reporting unfavorably on the "Justice for Greece Committee". The American delegation had been also accused of territorial expansionism in favor of the Greek government.

At the end of May 1946, Phillies left Paris and travelled to Athens, where he was enthusiastically welcomed by the Greek nationalist press and members of the ruling parties. Many Greeks, in fact, set great hopes in AHEPA and its Greek-American representative. However, it is likely that neither Phillies nor the Greek people were aware of certain information already available to the Greek government at the end of May (presented by the U.S. Department of State to the Greeks after a Greek diplomatic initiative on 6 April 1946). In judging upon the real strategic value of Northern Epirus and the Greek's border dispute with Bulgaria, U.S. military experts had concluded that redrawing the borderlines between Greece, Albania and Bulgaria would not result in any strategic, economic, or political advantages for Greece, but would instead endanger the peace in the entire Balkan region. Already on 7 May, at the conference of the Allied Foreign Ministers, it had been agreed upon that with the implementation of a Bulgarian peace settlement the borders set in 1941 were to retain their validity. Nevertheless, Anglo-American delegates wished to enable Greek delegates and representatives of other

37. Phillies' Diary, 16 May 1946, Phillies Papers.
38. Phillies' Diary, 19 May 1946, Phillies Papers.
countries in the Balkan region to present their respective cases at the public part of the Paris Peace Conference. But the U.S. government, as of May 1946, clearly felt that its own security interests were incompatible with Greece’s territorial claims opposite Bulgaria and Albania. Solely the issue of the Dodecanese remained a bone of contention between Byrnes, Vandenberg and Molotov. In February 1946, the Russian ambassador to Greece had offered the Greek government urgently needed supplies in change for a naval base on one of the Dodecanese islands. This was completely rejected by the Greek government. Finally, on 27 June (at the second session of the meeting of Foreign Ministers), Molotov surprisingly gave in: “Very well; we agree that the Islands shall go to Greece”\footnote{FRUS 1946, 2, 661.}. For the Soviet foreign minister there was apparently not much to be gained if the issue remained on the table. Molotov’s new position, however, confused Vandenberg, who remarked that “everybody is speculating tonight as to what it means”\footnote{Vandenberg Diary, 27 June 1946, Sen. Arthur S. Vandenberg Papers, Michigan Historical Collection, University of Michigan.}.

Greeks living in Greece and Greek-Americans alike were delighted when hearing that the Dodecanese Islands were finally to be united with Greece. Nevertheless, as of June the “Justice for Greece Committee” kept on sending countless memoranda to the State Department, reiterating its remaining demands: annexation of Northern Epirus, changes along the border with Bulgaria, and adequate reparations. Referring to Resolution 82, this Committee warned on 26 July: “Without more American support [...] the Western Powers will virtually throw Greece in the lap of Russia who thus will form a solid and impenetrable block in the Balkans”\footnote{Phillies to Baxter, 26 July 1946, Phillies Papers, Box 3.}. Also, the Committee vainly protested efforts to formally include Albania into the United Nations. Just as the government in Athens, the Greek-American Committee regarded communist Albania as an enemy, since that country, together with Italy, had attacked Greece in 1941. Albania therefore was to be excluded from any international organization. American Philhellenes took the same stubborn position as the Greek delegation at the peace conference. The Greek government, grossly misjudging the international situation, simply did not want to accept the fact that an annexation of Northern Epirus was clearly not in
the interest of either the British or the Americans. Doggedly they sought to talk the Americans over. But for U.S. diplomats, the Albania question was "[...] to be settled on political grounds, possibly as a matter of Conference tactics [...]". All that Byrnes was still willing to do was to back Greece to present its arguments. At the end of the Paris Peace Conference, on 11 October 1946, the Western allies agreed upon a compromise regarding Greece: It was assured reparations (to be paid by Italy and Bulgaria), however at a far lower level than previously demanded. Despite a Soviet veto, Greece's border with Bulgaria was to be demilitarized. The open question of Northern Epirus was passed on to the Council of Foreign Ministers, as the issue could not be debated at the Paris Peace Conference because Albania was not treated as an enemy state by the four allies. This, however, was meant by Anglo-American delegates only as a rhetorical concession to the Greek government. Greece was formally asked to depart her position opposite Albania. In sum, the U.S. Ambassador to Greece, Lincoln MacVeagh, commented upon the outcome of the peace conference, the U.S. had treated Greece fairly, and this in full accord with U.S. interests.

Because of continuing border unrests along Greece's borders with Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, the "Justice for Greece Committee" and the Greek government, as of 12 November 1946 (eleven days prior to the Conference of Foreign Ministers in New York), renewed their demands for a revision of Washington's position toward the question of Northern Epirus and asked to have the issue put on the agenda in New York. "A weak Greece will not survive long the intensive aggression of Pan-Slavism and Communism". The State Department, however, refused to treat Albania as an enemy state and continued to regard the question of Northern Epirus as settled. Phillies, aided by Representative John McCormack, managed to get an appointment with Under Secretary

43. General Norstad to Bonesteel, 1 September 1946, RG 319, P & O 092, Section IV, Case 44/2, NA.
44. FRUS 1946, 3 (Washington, 1970), 616. Neither Italy nor Bulgaria ever compensated Greece fully. Athens kept being with Tirana formally in a state of war until 28 August 1987!
46. Phillies to State Department, 12 November 1946, RG 59, 740.00119 EW/11-1246, NA. Emphasis in original.
of State Dean Acheson, which took place on 20 November 1946 and included the Director of the Near Eastern Division, Loy W. Henderson, and three delegates from the “Justice for Greece Committee”. The basis for their talks was an express letter from the Committee to Byrnes from 12 November, in which the U.S. government was urged to rethink its position regarding Greece’s territorial claims. When Acheson asked the members of the Committee to specify their demands, William Dinsmoor, an American Philhellene, admitted that what was meant was the annexation of Northern Epirus and of certain mountainous regions in Southern Bulgaria. Without these territories, he added, Greece would not be able to recover economically. Phillies noted that Greece might very well fall to communists should her territorial demands not be heeded. Again, Acheson referred to the upcoming Conference of Foreign Ministers where the Greek government would be able to have its demands discussed. But then, according to notes taken on 20 September 1946, Acheson gave a first, serious hint that the U.S. might support in the near future Greece’s claims more substantially:

“[...] in the opinion of the Department it would be advantageous to Greece if that nation would devote its energies towards achieving Greek unity and to promoting economic reconstruction. He [Acheson] assured the delegation of the deep and sincere interest of the United States in the future of Greece and of the determination of the United States to do everything proper and possible to aid Greece in this time of need. He described the various measures which already had been taken by the U.S. to assist Greece financially and economically, mentioning among them our plans to send an economic mission to Greece in the near future. Mr. Acheson added that we were contemplating additional measures for assisting Greece economically and financially.”

Members of the “Justice for Greece Committee” were therefore probably the first outsiders to learn from Acheson that a wide ranging

47. Justice for Greece Committee to Byrnes, 12 November 1946, 868.014/11-1246, NA.
48. Memorandum, 20 November 1946, RG 59, 868.014/11-2046, NA.
aid package for Greece was already being laid out at the State Department. Further letters by Henderson and Francis H. Russell in December 1946 and January 1947 confirmed Acheson's statement (Acheson was decisively involved in the conception of the Truman Doctrine). When President Truman, on 12 March 1946, declared before both Houses of Congress that "the United States has formally committed itself to whatever assistance, economic and military, is necessary to preserve Greek freedom", an overwhelming majority of organized Greek-Americans unequivocally supported Truman's program. After all their efforts since 1944, organized Greek-Americans had finally reached their goal: the U.S. was on its way to entangle itself in Greek affairs for good. AHEPA and its "Justice for Greece Committee" were proud that they had again successfully managed to help out their old home country independently.

"Even if it is a voice in the wilderness [...] this organization, which is American first, last and always, has a letter "H" in it. It is American-Hellenic. And in that letter "H" which has given us the [...] crown of preserving the land where democracy was born AHEPA has a responsibility [...] to pay tribute to that little country"49.

With the Truman Doctrine at their side, the majority of Greek-Americans was in a position to declare their loyalty to Greece without any longer having to fear societal repressions. Greece had officially been linked to U.S. interests. After Truman's message, former Greek immigrants ceased to be hyphenated Americans. They were united with all Americans in their feelings against communism. But "AHEPA Blends Americanism With Hellenism"50 not only meant that the leading Greek-American organization would follow Truman's foreign policy, but it would also introduce the so-called "McCarthyism" in its own ranks: the new so-called "liberal" leadership, aside from immediately disbanding the "Justice for Greece Committee", decided to check all new applicants for membership in their organization for any possible subversive activi-

50. The AHEPAN, March/April 1948, 12.
ties. Future members of AHEPA were to be free of any communist background. The transformation process of the Greek-American community which had started in World War Two was thus accomplished: By assuming voluntarily the prestigious role as national protector and advocate of the Greek cause, organized Greek-Americans responded to the traumatic experience of the Greek Civil War with its apparent threat of communism and fear of territorial dismemberment. As a consequence, they shifted in their Weltanschauung from their traditional pre-war liberalism to political conservatism, supporting the Greek king and lobbying for Greek national interests as loyal anti-communist Americans in the emerging East-West confrontation. Thus, the historically divided community overcame its own antagonistic particularism and reached a degree of internal unity rarely experienced before.

6. Conclusion

The relevance of the "Justice for Greece Committee", however, does not lie so much in the field of foreign policy. While the organizers of that Committee were involved in the process of transforming traditional U.S. foreign policy in Southeastern Europe from its "non-policy" (Geir Lundestad) toward a gradual acceptance of responsibility since 1946 (culminating in the Truman Doctrine), in that they acted as mediators between the Greek position in the open territorial questions and regarding massive economic, financial and political aid, Greek-American attempts to seriously influence U.S. foreign policy against American national interests did not prove successful, even if their publications and internal communications claim otherwise. American security interests in the Eastern Mediterranean were clearly superior and were at best rhetorically compatible with the territorial ambitions by Athens (and these territorial claims were not even undisputed within Greece, so that they could not really be presented convincingly at the Paris Peace Conference). Thus, the Greek Lobby achieved relatively little in terms of their ambitious territorial program, even if after 1947 the Dodecanese Islands were finally handed over to Greece and the question of an annexation of Northern Epirus by Greece was kept open at the United

51. AHEPA National Conferences, Proceedings, 1947, 549.
Nations (against Albania’s interests).

But the public activities of the “Justice for Greece Committee” had a lasting effect on American domestic politics. After the disappointing results of the Paris Peace Conference in May 1946 and at a time when the traumatic Greek Civil War was in its second phase (the Greek monarchists fought alongside with Great Britain—still regarded a colonial power by the American public—against leftist/communist opposition forces supported by all Greece’s communist neighbors), the founders of the “Justice for Greece Committee”, strengthened by off-record remarks made by Senator Vandenberg and the Truman government, turned to anti-communist rhetoric as a last resort. Phillies and his Committee, along with the official rhetoric of the Truman administration (which was then positively reflected by the media), openly accused the Soviet Union and its Balkan satellites to be fully responsible for the constant internal and external threat of the only (at least formally) democratic regime in Southeastern Europe, Greece. While the “Royalist” Greek-American free riders hoped in vain to get rewarded for their political opportunism with new territories for their old Heimat, they helped to publicly identify the adversary of American internationalism—Soviet-style communism. The U.S. was supposed to help the ruling Greek Royalists to successfully terminate the Civil War and at the same time get rid of their left wing and Communist foes. Anti-communism smoothed the way for the all-American public support of the Truman Doctrine for Greece and, less enthusiastic, for Turkey. In fact, from 1947 to 1949 the Truman administration heavily supported the legal Greek government of the political right wing with dollars, advisors and, especially, with military equipment to contain and destroy the falsely so perceived Communist revolt.

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