

## THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE IN PERSPECTIVE

March 12, twenty years ago, marked a decisive turning point in modern Greek history and inaugurated a new era in American-Greek relations. The prospect of American aid which President Truman's historic speech suddenly disclosed to the Greek people, staved off the collapse of the Greek government, and the arrival of this aid later that year and its continuation the following two years helped the Greeks defeat the communist-led guerrillas who were trying to seize power in Greece, to set up a "People's Republic"<sup>1</sup> there, and to draw into the Soviet orbit a new satellite.

The participation of Greece in the Marshall Plan, which was but a continuation of the Truman Doctrine with other means and in other, less threatened European countries,<sup>2</sup> and the accession of Greece to NATO in 1952, which was another and legally more binding by-product of the new American policies the Truman Doctrine had inaugurated, meant that the Greek people, during the two decades that followed the Doctrine's enunciation, were able to recover from the material devastation and the economic, social and political chaos which the Axis occupation during World War II and its three-year aftermath of a not-so-cold war had inflicted upon them. It meant, too, that, in spite of the strong neutralist trends which the Cyprus question and the example of certain other NATO members have engendered even among normally pro-Western Greek people since 1954,<sup>3</sup> Greece remained a

---

1. S. G. Xydis, *Greece and the Great Powers 1944-1947* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1963), pp. 89, 93.

2. J. M. Jones, *The Fifteen Weeks* (New York: Viking Press, 1955), emphasizes the connection between the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. While recognizing this connection, some Americans, Archibald MacLeish, for example, dislike the Truman Doctrine, because it was based on containment, but believe that the Doctrine "was justified by the Marshall Plan, which had a creative and characteristically American purpose of its own." *New York Times*, January 21, 1947. D. Brandon, *American Foreign Policy* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts), p. 5, emphasizes the point that all three measures were part of the same "courageous and farsighted statesmanship," as did Vyshinsky in the United Nations, without, of course, any adjectives of approbation.

3. T. A. Couloumbis, *Greek Political Reaction to American and NATO Influences* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 131-132.

nation allied with the West. In a process that might be termed the internationalization of foreign policy, this alignment is indirectly suggested even in the Greek Constitution of 1952.<sup>4</sup>

Between 1946 and 1966, Greece, largely thanks to \$ 1,556,600,000 of economic grants from the United States, not to mention \$ 338,400,000 in loans (of which \$ 68,300,000 or 20.2 per cent are soft loans, repayable in drachmas), was able successfully to tackle problems of relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and budgetary deficits, while free military aid, likewise from the United States, to the tune of \$ 1,854,300,000, ensured the country's delicate security position without imposing too heavy a defense burden on domestic resources. Indeed, especially during the eight years of relative political stability enjoyed under the four successive governments of Premier Constantine Karamanlis between 1955-1963, Greece managed to enter something resembling the take-off stage of economic development, while greatly lessening its reliance of American aid. As a result, AID grants came to an end in 1962, though from then until 1965 grants totaling \$ 30,100,000 were made under Public Law 480. And, in spite of a new period of political instability that began in 1964-1965, this least developed of developed countries or most developed of developing countries seems to have continued—and it is hoped will continue—along the road of rapid economic and social progress that will enable it to become a full and prospering member of the European Economic Community.

Other speakers in this symposium, however, will deal with relations between the United States and Greece, and with the political, economic, and social progress that occurred in Greece during the two decades which elapsed since the Truman Doctrine was announced that momentous day of March 12, 1947. Some speakers, too, will touch on the difficult problems of modernization that Greece still faces, together with other political societies based on political pluralism rather than on political monism, in maintaining this delicate system against internal political groups that favor monism rather than pluralism, and within an international environment that exerts continuous pressures designed to undermine the pluralistic process and to exploit it for other ends. This speaker, therefore, will examine the

---

4. Article 16, paragraph 2, of the Constitution of 1952, provides that in all elementary and intermediate schools teaching shall be aimed at the ethical and intellectual instruction and the development of the national conscience of youths on the basis of the ideological principles of Greek Christian civilization.

5. The figures provided by the State Department, include UNRRA and Post-UNRRA aid as well as Surplus Property Credits, starting from 1946.

Truman Doctrine in the perspective of postwar American foreign policy and of the broader historical background of American policy in world affairs as a whole since the establishment of the United States.

The beginnings of American foreign policy in the age that dawned in that sunlike flash that eerily illuminated the New Mexican desert around Alamogordo on July 16, 1945, are to be found in the events that took place in the Balkans, the Middle East, and Europe, with Greece as the focal point, a testing ground, a symbol between 1944-47.<sup>6</sup> As the French communist leader Jacques Duclos foresaw late in November 1946, three months before the Truman Doctrine was proclaimed, the fate of Europe was being decided in Greece.<sup>7</sup> The Doctrine marked an essential turning point in postwar American foreign policy and in world affairs generally, since American foreign policy is inevitably world politics as well. It was hailed at the time as the diplomatic equivalent of the atomic bomb.<sup>8</sup> It transformed postwar American-Soviet relations, which, in spite of fervent American hopes for harmonious postwar co-operation with the Soviet Union inside and outside the United Nations, had been in uneasy suspense since early 1946, into a publicly admitted and proclaimed rivalry. This rivalry, as is well known, has been ever since a basic feature of world politics, even though it has varied in intensity from lows such as those registered during the Geneva and Camp David "spirits" to highs such as those registered in the crisis over Berlin, Korea, and Cuba. But the Truman Doctrine also marked the beginning of a more realistic appraisal of the relative capabilities of the two main organs of the United Nations, the Security Council and the General Assembly, to fulfill in a bipolar world the peacekeeping and security functions mentioned in the Charter.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, it testified to America's willingness to assume heavy responsibilities for maintaining international peace and security in the postwar world even outside the United Nations. Finally, illustrating again the process of internalization of foreign policy, the Truman Doctrine, with all its implications

---

6. Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg sensed that the problem of Greece was probably symbolic of the worldwide ideological clash between Eastern Communism and Western Democracy, Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

7. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 429.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 489.

9. Because of Soviet vetoes in the UN Security Council in 1947, the Greek question was taken off the Council's agenda and placed on that of the General Assembly, inaugurating a trend toward use, for peace-keeping, of the latter organ of the UN in a process that culminated in the "Uniting for peace Resolution" of November 3, 1950.

and consequences, had repercussions even in the realm of American domestic affairs.<sup>10</sup>

It is, of course, beyond the scope of this symposium to survey the main events that led to this fundamental turning point in American postwar foreign policy. However, an extremely selective review will be made here of those particular happenings that were closely connected with the Greek arena or centered on it and which, as we know from documentary material available, came to President Truman's attention and, in some instances stimulated certain presidential decisions which, together with many other decisions concerning other areas of the world, culminated in the momentous statement of March 12, 1947.

When Truman became President on April 12, 1945, the war in Europe was ending and the United States was getting ready to throw its full military weight into winning the war in the Pacific. Neither Greece nor Turkey, both beneficiaries of Lend Lease aid, seems to have had any saliency in the new President's perspective of the international environment. In the Balkans, the chief concern of the American government, which, militarily, had been altogether indifferent to the area, centered on the operation of the Allied Control Commissions set up in Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary for implementing the respective armistices with those former Axis satellites. With regard to Italy, where American troops were still fighting against the Germans, how to forestall Yugoslav occupation of Venezia Giulia and Trieste was the gravest problem. And in American-Soviet relations the Polish question had already become the primary source of friction between the two allied powers.<sup>11</sup>

With regard to the Balkans, it will be recalled, Truman's predecessor in the White House, in late spring 1944, had allowed Churchill and Stalin to settle between themselves respective spheres of wartime action through the then highly secret but today famous agreement which Churchill and Stalin

---

10. For instance, Truman's loyalty order 9835 of March 21, 1947, was one symptom of this internalization of the "cold war" as were the security measures of the Eisenhower administration and certain Supreme Court decisions. The creation of the National Security Council, the CIA, and the decision to beam to the USSR in peacetime Russian-language programs were other symptoms of the entire climate within which the Truman Doctrine germinated, providing new instruments and techniques for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy in the nuclear age. In American life, other symptoms were Henry A. Wallace's third party attempt the McCarran act of 1950, and the McCarthy era.

11. *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman*, vol. I, *Year of Decisions* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1956), pp. 15-16 (Special information for the President from the State Department, April 13, 1945) (cited hereafter as *Truman Memoirs*).

formalized in percentages in Moscow on October 9, 1944.<sup>12</sup> When Churchill, later that same year, enforced in Greece this secret agreement by ordering stringent military measures against the communist-led ELAS rebels, President Roosevelt initially assumed an aloof, a neutral stand, although in the end he supported him in his effort to reach a political settlement.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, at Yalta, only Stalin and Churchill referred to Greece, and this in the most fleeting of fashions.<sup>14</sup>

Likewise at the Crimean Conference, the Big Three issued the Yalta Declaration on the Liberated Countries of Europe. This implied British and Soviet recognition of the legitimacy of America's interest in postwar European affairs, Balkan affairs included. The Big Three also agreed that the future regime of the Turkish Straits should be discussed by their respective Foreign Ministers.<sup>15</sup> It was on both these matters that new friction soon arose between the United States, under the new President, and the Soviet Union.

Toward the end of April, when President Truman conferred with Edwin C. Wilson, the American Ambassador in Ankara, he agreed with him that because of America's interests in the Middle East and generally in world security and cooperation, Turkey should be supported against Soviet diplomatic pressures which had become formally manifest since March, when the Soviet government announced that it was not prepared to renew the Turko-Soviet Treaty of 1925.<sup>16</sup> Then, on May 2, the President received General John A. Crane and Brigadier-General Cortland T. van R. Schuyler, the American representatives of the Allied Control Commissions in Sofia and Bucharest, respectively, and listened to the latter informing him about the Soviet determination to control Bulgaria and Romania through communist governments in a completely totalitarian way. Romania and Bulgaria were test cases, Schuyler asserted. If the Soviet Union were able to get away with its program in those two countries it would be encouraged, General Schuyler

---

12. Xydis, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-48, 57-58.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 76. Under this treaty of December 17, 1925, each party would maintain neutrality in the event of military action by one or more other powers directed at one of the parties. Neither party would participate in any alliance or agreement of a political character with one or several third parties directed against the other party. Had not the Soviet government denounced this treaty, Turkey's accession to NATO in 1952 would have been harder, from the legal viewpoint.

believed, to try the same game in every other country in Europe as far as it could penetrate.<sup>17</sup>

Eight days later, on May 10, after President Truman listened to Assistant Secretary of State Joseph C. Grew's expressions of concern over the situation in Venezia Giulia and Trieste, and his views that the Russians were undoubtedly behind Tito, he stated that the only solution was to throw the Yugoslavs out. This, he was aware, was a complete reversal of the position he had taken on April 20, when he had stressed that he did not intend to have American forces used for fighting Yugoslavs or involved in Balkan political questions. As a result of this decision, American troops were rushed to Trieste.<sup>18</sup> The first postwar act of containment took place—before that word had acquired its Kennanesque overtones. In taking this decision, Truman feared that if Tito were successful in that sector, he would put forward demands not only for Austrian territory but also for parts of Hungary and Greece.<sup>19</sup>

On July 4, before leaving for the Postwar Conference, President Truman gave his blessing to American participation in the observation of the first postwar Greek elections. This was a step Churchill favored but Stalin opposed.<sup>20</sup> Although rationalized on the basis of the Yalta Declaration, it had been suggested earlier than the Yalta Conference, by Ambassador Lincoln Mac Veagh,<sup>21</sup> during the December 1944 communist-led uprising in Greece. Did the President read the pair of briefing-book papers on Greece, of June 29 and 30, respectively, which the State Department had prepared for him in view of the upcoming Potsdam Conference? It would seem so, judging from his actions both at that Conference and later. These briefing-book papers revealed the dawning awareness of the United States that Greece had become a valid object of American concern and that something ought to be done to help that country to adapt itself to the postwar world. The United States, according to the first of these papers, should play the role of an "active mediator" between the other two great powers in the part of the world that

---

17. *Ibid.*, p. 580. When sent to Romania late in 1944 as U.S. representative on the Allied Control Commission in Bucharest, General Schuyler had asked for instructions from the State Department. He was only told that he should be careful to keep friendly relations with the Russians (conversation with author).

18. *Ibid.*, p. 82. In *Truman Speaks* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 70, Truman underlined this strong action as part of the foreign policy of the United States that included the Korean action.

19. *Truman Memoirs, Years of Trial and Hope*, vol. II, p. 247.

20. Xydis, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-92, 106-107.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 65. See also *Foreign Relations of the United States 1944*, vol. V, 145.

centered on Greece and reorient its policy toward Greece and demonstrate in this way its determination to play in the postwar world a role commensurate with its strength and commitments.<sup>22</sup> At this time, too, the American government decided to consider granting an Export-Import Bank loan to Greece.<sup>23</sup>

During the first plenary meeting of the Potsdam Conference, on July 12, the day after the first atomic bomb was successfully detonated at Alamogordo, President Truman vainly proposed to Stalin that interim governments in eastern Europe and especially in Bulgaria and Romania, should be helped to conduct elections along lines similar to those that were needed in Greece.<sup>24</sup> Then, on July 23, at the conference's seventh plenary meeting, in spite of evident Soviet opposition, he proposed that any new regime for the Turkish Straits "should be guaranteed by all of us." Indeed, the Straits should be a free waterway open to the whole world. In an evident fit of atomic euphoria,<sup>25</sup> he linked this problem with that of the entire peace settlement. He declared that he wanted an economically sound Europe, a Europe that could support itself and would make Russia, England, France, and all other countries happy.<sup>26</sup>

After the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay, President Truman, in response to certain British demarches in autumn with the American government for providing American financial help to Greece, authorized the State Department to enter into discussions with the British government on terms of economic aid to Greece.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, in January, as the Export-Import Bank was granting the first postwar American loan to Greece of the order of 25 million, the President himself approved the sending of a note to the Greek government urging it to apply itself to a program of economic stabilization, offering expert advice, and implying that more economic aid would be forthcoming, if economic and political stabilization were achieved.<sup>28</sup> Incidentally, a week or so earlier, Truman, in a long-hand letter which, he writes, he read to Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, expressed lively annoyance at the Soviet government's behavior. He now had the report his special representa-

---

22. Xydis, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-106.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

25. R. D. Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors* (Garden City, N.Y. Doubleday, 1964), pp. 273, 275.

26. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

27. *Truman Memoirs*, vol. II, p. 99; Xydis, *op. cit.*, pp. 144 ff.

28. *Truman Memoirs*, vol. II, p. 99; Xydis, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-150.

tive, Mark F. Ethridge, had prepared after a fact-finding visit to the Balkans. It indicated that the Yalta Declaration was defunct as far as Romania and Bulgaria were concerned. There was no doubt in his mind that the Soviet Union intended to invade Turkey and seize the Straits. "Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language, another war is in the making," he wrote. He was tired of "babying the Soviets."<sup>29</sup>

By this time the Great Power struggle for Greece was on. Stalin felt that, since the war was over, his secret percentages agreement with Churchill on the Balkans was no longer valid, at least as far as Greece was concerned. While Britain was seeking to maintain its presence in Greece and was providing economic aid to the Greek government and military equipment to the Greek armed forces, the Soviet Union was trying to get rid of that presence, for instance by its recourse to the UN Security Council on the "Greek Question" on January 21, 1946. And the Communist Party of Greece had decided to launch what later became known as "the Third Round." For its part, the United States, still playing the role of the third party, started to taking certain measures of its own in support of Greece, and, indirectly, of Britain's position there, too.

Early in March, when American-Soviet tension had arisen considerably because of the continued presence of the Soviet military forces in northern Iran beyond the deadline agreed upon between Britain and the Soviet Union in 1942,<sup>30</sup> President Truman, whose firm stand during this crisis<sup>31</sup> eventually brought about the only rollback of Soviet military forces ever to occur in the postwar era, received Ambassador MacVeagh in the White House. Among many other matters presumably, the Ambassador emphasized the morale-building effects in Greece of the impending visit to Athens, in April, of the battleship bearing the name of the President's home state, Missouri.<sup>32</sup> This visit, which was meant to symbolize America's growing interest in Greece, focussed the attention of the Greek people on this interest as well as on the might that lay behind it.

On July 12, President Truman, who, on this occasion, was, perhaps, acting in his role of party leader rather than of chief diplomat, received in the White House General Alexander Papagos who was visiting the United

---

29. *Truman Memoirs*, vol. I, pp. 551-552.

30. Xydis, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-172.

31. *Truman Memoirs*, pp. 93-95. In *Truman Speaks*, Truman says he sent a message to Stalin that he would move the fleet as far as the Persian Gulf. However, the State Department has no trace of such a message.

32. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

States not in an official capacity but as a guest of an organization of Americans of Greek origin. The President, who had been proclaimed an honorary citizen of Athens during the U.S.S. *Missouri's* good will visit to the Greek capital two months earlier,<sup>33</sup> referred to America's interest in Greece since the time of the Greek War of Independence. As for the General, who was to lead the Greek army to victory in 1949 as he had led it in 1940, he mentioned that a street in Athens had been named after President Franklin D. Roosevelt and expressed the wish that Truman's name, too, would have a place in Greek history. President Truman responded by expressing the hope that he would deserve that honor.<sup>34</sup>

On August 9, the first direct Presidential contact occurred with an official Greek mission, an economic mission composed of several Greek members of Parliament, headed by Sophocles Venizelos, an Opposition leader. This mission had arrived in Washington after Constantine Tsaldaris, Premier of the government which had emerged from the internationally-observed elections of March 31, 1946, ascertained, in a visit to London from July 6 to 16,<sup>35</sup> that Britain, (in spite of the loan of \$ 3,750 billion it was getting from the United States), was reluctant to undertake any further financial and economic commitments toward Greece and favored Greek approaches to the United States and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for further aid.<sup>36</sup> President Truman, on this occasion, had the opportunity of listening to these politicians who emphasized not the Greek territorial claims at the peace settlement as Papagos had, but the dual character—economic and social—of the Greek problem and who underlined the threatening developments which were then occurring around Greece in the Balkan peninsula. Because of the continuing worsening of economic conditions and the propaganda which subversive elements were conducting, the social order in Greece was imperilled, they told him. (The "Third Round" had already begun on March 31<sup>37</sup>). The President noted that the entire \$ 25 million Export-Import Bank credit had not yet been used up but said that the American government was willing to furnish further aid on the understanding that the Greek people would do their utmost to contribute toward the rehabili-

---

33. *Ibid.*, p. 186. On May 29, 1963, Premier Karamanlis unveiled a statue of President Truman in Athens, a gift from the people of Greece and Americans of Greek descent.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 613-614.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 238-256.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 243.

37. G. D. Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 232.

tation of their country. He also stressed the great friendship that linked the Greek with the American people, his admiration for the heroic sacrifices of the Greek nation during World War II, and his appreciation of the critical strategic location of Greece in the eastern Mediterranean. Incidentally, on the occasion of their Washington visit, the Greek politicians, among whom was the future Premier of Greece, Karamanlis, had a glimpse of the fact that the administration was far from being of one mind concerning the Soviet problem. When they conferred with Dean Acheson and emphasized the international danger of leaving Greece to her fate, because of the situation which had developed in the Balkans along Greece's northern borders, the American Under-Secretary of State showed considerable understanding of the communist threat. He warned them, however, against taking a similar line when they conferred with Roosevelt's former Vice-President, Henry A. Wallace, who was now Secretary of Commerce.<sup>38</sup>

In the march toward the Truman Doctrine a major turning point was reached likewise in August. The crisis involved, however, not Greece, but its eastern neighbor. The Soviet note of August 7 to the Turkish government concerning the Straits triggered backstage in Washington a presidentially-backed American commitment that was of absolutely major importance. This note reiterated the views which Molotov had put forward at Potsdam on July 22, 1945, namely, that the USSR should be given a privileged status in any new regime for the Turkish Straits by the exclusion of all non-Black Sea Powers from any role in that regime and by the setting up of a joint Soviet-Turkish base in that strategic waterway.<sup>39</sup> On receiving this note the Turkish government, as it had done during the Straits crisis of 1945, sent an anxious message to Washington asking not for material aid but for advice on the stand it should take in response to this ominous note.

Before taking any decision, the President wanted to get "everybody's" advice, so on August 15, he gathered in the White House the heads or acting heads of the Departments of State, War, and Navy, as well as the joint chiefs of staff. After listening to their views, he decided to take a firm position.<sup>40</sup> As a result, the State Department advised the Turkish government to reply firmly but unprovocatively to the Soviet government's note and, in a note of August 19 to the Soviet government, it reiterated the views it had expres-

---

38. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 262. Karamanlis to author.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

40. *Ibid.*, pp. 284-286. General Lauris Norstand, who attended this meeting, viewed this White House decision as the birth of the Truman Doctrine (conversation with the author). *Truman Memoirs*, vol. II, p. 97.

sed in its note to Turkey of November 2, 1945, stressing that the matter of revising the Montreux Convention of 1936 was not the exclusive concern of the Black Sea powers and adding a proposal Ambassador W. Bedell Smith had made to Stalin on April 4, 1946, namely, that in the case of an attack or the threat of an attack, the UN Security Council should be competent to deal with the situation.<sup>41</sup>

A paramount result of this new commitment was that American relations with Britain in the eastern Mediterranean now became closer than they had been before. The new American-British relationship now featured American, not British leadership, in countering Soviet pressures against Greece and Turkey through the diplomatic channel and a "war of nerves" waged in the area, for example, through the introduction of the Ukrainian complaint to the UN Security Council, on August 24, against Greece, or through the recall of the Soviet Ambassador in Athens two days later.<sup>42</sup>

On the basis of the available record, the next presidential contact with the realities of the area that by the Truman Doctrine was to cover occurred in October, after the Soviet Union, by its veto of September 20 in the UN Security Council, had had paralyzed the possibility of any UN investigation of the situation along Greece's northern borders which had greatly deteriorated because of the intensified guerrilla activities in northern Greece, activities Greece's three northern neighbors were supporting.<sup>43</sup> That month, the President advised Athens through the diplomatic channel that the United States regarded Greece as a country of vital interest to the United States. To enable Greece to fight for its independence and the preservation of its territorial integrity, it was prepared to grant substantial aid and supplies. The President, however, suggested, that the Greek government should demonstrate to American public opinion that the rulers of Greece constituted no reactionary oligarchy, bent on exploiting American aid to suppress their political opponents; that democratic institutions were fully functioning in Greece; and that the entire Greek people, except the communists, were united. Should the American people be so convinced, they would be prepared to submit to the new economic sacrifices that aid to Greece would entail.

41. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 288-289.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 294-295. Since the second week of July, the Greek government had started drawing the attention of the British, American, Soviet, and French governments to border incidents, *ibid.*, pp. 230-231. Some of these incidents were later to be investigated by the UN Security Council Commission set up by a Security Council resolution on December 19, 1946.

To broaden the government, to avoid excesses, and speedily to reorganize the Army: these were the best ways for persuading the American people.<sup>44</sup>

When Premier Tsaldaris, after presenting his country's case before the UN Security Council in early December 1946, was invited to Washington for a four-day visit, as the American government's guest, President Truman received him in the White House on December 21.<sup>45</sup> A few days before this meeting, the President had explored the possibilities of the Export-Import Bank for providing economic aid to the Greek government which was in dire financial straits. The Bank, however, informed him that although it would consider a Greek application for a loan, it could make no loan under its statutes, unless it had a reasonable assurance of repayment, and doubted whether Greece could meet this condition, because of the unsettled situation there. For furnishing aid to the Greek armed forces, on the other hand, the President was aware that legislative authority was required.<sup>46</sup>

During his meeting with the Greek Premier, President Truman, with Secretary of State Byrnes attending, expressed deep sympathy and respect for Greece as well as his strong desire to contribute to its economic recovery, within the framework of his own constitutional rights. Both he and Byrnes expressed deep satisfaction with the UN Security Council's decision of December 19 to send a commission to the Balkans to investigate the frontier incidents occurring on Greece's northern border as well as the causes of these incidents and disturbances. Both President and Secretary of State emphasized the importance of this development—made possible by the reversal of Soviet policy in the Security Council—for the pacification of the Balkans.

---

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 400-401. In spite of a Crown Council it was not possible to set up at the time a coalition government. Tsaldaris used the Greek recourse to the Security Council as a pretext for coming to the United States in order to ask for aid. At a time when the domestic situation had greatly worsened because of the guerrilla activities, and the Premier's presence in Athens was considered as necessary by others, because of Field Marshall Montgomery's imminent arrival there to study the situation, Tsaldaris persuaded King George II that it was nevertheless preferable that he make the trip to the United States, for the above-mentioned purpose. He promised that on his return he would submit his resignation, to facilitate the creation of a new, coalition government. Bevin, too, urged this trip, which the U.S. government, on the other hand, did not view with too much favor, possibly because of the failure of Tsaldaris to set up a coalition government, partly, too, because of communist propaganda which labeled the Premier as "monarcho-fascist." Jefferson Caffery, U.S. Ambassador in Paris, was thus gratified to learn from Tsaldaris himself that he would publicly justify his presence in the United States, on the ground of the need of presenting in person Greece's case before the UN Security Council (Tsaldaris to author).

45. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 444.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 446.

On his side, Tsaldaris gave assurances that his government would live up to any obligations and guarantees that might be considered necessary as a basis for a thorough economic settlement, and stressed the need for the restoration of a sense of security in the country.<sup>47</sup>

In the communique the State Department issued after the Greek Premier's visit to Washington it was announced that American officials had assured him that they would investigate the possibility of giving not only immediately-needed aid to Greece but also "long-range economic assistance," and that they had renewed their assurances of support "in accordance with the principles of the United Nations, for the independence and the integrity of Greece."<sup>48</sup> Since August and especially since September 20, after the Soviet veto of the American draft resolution for investigating the border incidents in the Balkans there had been many public signs—naval, economic, political—of America's fast-growing interest in Greece additional to the above communique and the earlier-mentioned backstage *démarche* of October with the Greek government. Thus, the American government had decided to lend a sum of \$ 45 million for the purchase by Greek nationals of 100 Liberty ships.<sup>49</sup> It had granted two army surplus credits additional to the one granted in May 1946, bringing the total of such credits to \$ 45 million.<sup>50</sup> It had also approved a short-term loan of \$ 10,800,000 from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.<sup>51</sup> It had also decided to provide post-UNRRA aid to Greece<sup>52</sup> and to send to that country an economic mission, under Paul Porter, to study the economic situation on the spot and to report on it.<sup>53</sup> Besides, in September <sup>54</sup> and December <sup>55</sup> the American government had sent several naval vessels, including its greatest aircraft carrier, the *Franklin D. Roosevelt*, to Greek waters on good will visits; and it had approved the transfer to Greece of certain Lend Lease military supplies originally furnished to Britain.<sup>56</sup> Finally, in December, when Greece resorted to the UN Security Council calling for an investigation of the situation created by its northern neighbors who were

---

47. *Ibid.*, p. 448.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 451-452.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 261.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 451.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 427.

52. *Ibid.*, pp. 258, 335.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 432.

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 290-292; 302-307.

55. *Ibid.*, pp. 422-425.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 451.

charged with supporting the guerrilla warfare waged in northern Greece, the United States once again had immediately proposed the setting up of a commission to investigate on the spot the situation along Greece's northern borders.<sup>57</sup> These many signs were suggestive enough for the Soviet government to predict, as its propaganda proves,<sup>58</sup> that the United States, prodded by Britain, would soon step into the Greek picture. Hence, the Soviet government's attempts to forestall as much as possible such a development, by reversing on December 19 its negative position on the matter of sending a UN Security Council Commission to the Balkans. Hence, too, its efforts directly or indirectly to draw out as much as possible the proceedings of this commission which started its work in Athens on January 30, 1947, a full fortnight later than the date the Security Council had recommended.<sup>59</sup>

By January 1947, the problems of Greece and Turkey, and especially of the former, in contrast to the situation prevailing almost two years earlier when Truman became President, had become quite salient in the presidential perspective of America's international environment. A cable of January 9 from Ambassador Bedell Smith in Moscow informed President Truman that the Soviet government was expected to start a new round of diplomatic pressure on Turkey in connection with the Turkish Straits.<sup>60</sup> On January 28, his attention was drawn to the grave situation in Greece by Archbishop of North and South America, Athenagoras, and the Chairman of the Greek War Relief Association.<sup>61</sup> In February he was shown two cables, of February 2 and 12, respectively, from MacVeagh, who, in the first of these, referred to reports about the imminent departure of the British troops in Greece, and, in the second, urged immediate aid to Greece.<sup>62</sup> Then, he was brought a cable of February 18 from Mark F. Ethridge, the American representative of the UN Security Council's Balkans Commission. All signs pointed to an impending move by the communists to seize Greece, Ethridge reported.<sup>63</sup>

The absolute need for an urgent presidential decision, before the UN

---

57. *Ibid.*, p. 440.

58. *Ibid.*, pp. 423.

59. For an attempt to re-create the Soviet view of U.S. developments with regard to Greece and the impact of this view on Soviet policy, S. G. Xydis, "The USSR and the Creation of the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents." *Balkan Studies*, 4, 1963, pp. 1-14.

60. *Truman Memoirs*, vol. II, pp. 97-98.

61. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 469.

62. *Truman Memoirs*, vol. II, p. 99.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

Commission could officially report its findings and Paul Porter finish his study of the Greek economic and financial situation, came, as well known, on February 24, when President Truman was shown by Secretary of State George C. Marshall the two notes of February 21, in which the British government, without advising the Greek government in advance, informed the American government that it would no longer bear the burden of giving financial assistance to Greece and Turkey, as of April 1, 1947.

According to the British note on Greece, previous exchanges of views between the American and British governments had led to an understanding that it was not desirable to let the Soviet Union get control over either that country or over its eastern neighbor. And, during the summer of 1946, Byrnes and Ernest Bevin the British Foreign Secretary, had reached an informal agreement that both their governments would share the burden of aid to Greece, with Britain extending chiefly military aid and the United States chiefly economic aid, though the possibility of American military aid to Greece was not excluded. All in all, Greece would require between \$ 240 and \$ 280 million in 1947 in foreign exchange. As of April 1, 1947, civilian as well as military aid to that country, the British government hoped, would be the responsibility of the United States.<sup>64</sup>

As President Truman had done during the Turkish Straits crisis in August of the previous year, he discussed the formidable new crisis with the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy,<sup>65</sup> and in the reactor of American government an explosive process set in. In the State Department, the President's decision to go ahead was carefully kept secret, on Acheson's instructions, from the Office of Special Political Affairs, the responsibility of which was to enable the Department to fully utilize the United Nations as an instrument in the conduct of foreign affairs. Acheson, it seems, feared lest that office do something to upset the applecart. The head of that office, Alger Hiss, on learning about that move, was, it seems, furious.<sup>66</sup>

On February 26, Acheson brought to the President the results of the

---

64. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

65. *Truman Memoirs*, vol. II. p. 100.

66. Loy W. Henderson to author. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 160, merely notes that the Office of Special Political Affairs did not seem to have been brought into the decision-making. The definition of the functions of this office is from the *Register of the Department of State*, December 1, 1946, (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1947), pp. 28-29. The anger of its chief is understandable since the UN Security Council Commission was still investigating the situation caused by the border incidents along the northern frontiers of Greece.

Department studies, which recognized, as Truman puts it in his memoirs, that "if all Greece was lost, Turkey would become an untenable outpost in a sea of communism. Similarly, if Turkey yielded to Soviet demands, the position of Greece would be extremely endangered."<sup>67</sup>

Next day, the President briefed a number of top Congressional leaders who registered no dissent with the idea of providing aid to Greece and Turkey. Then, on February 28, the Greek government was brought into the planning. The *chargé d'affaires* and Minister Counsellor of the Greek Embassy in Washington, Paul Economou-Gouras was invited to the State Department where, as the Greek diplomat recounts, the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs, Loy W. Henderson, who was handling the whole matter, received him, smiling as though experiencing some sort of glowing inner satisfaction. A discussion began for the "eventual broad participation of the American government in the solution of Greek economic problems, with political consequences as well," as the Greek diplomat cabled shortly after to Athens, recommending an extraordinary meeting of the Cabinet for the next day. This discussion continued in the afternoon on measures designed fully to strengthen and restore the economic position of Greece; to permit that country to meet its needs in relief and military supplies; and to make possible the execution of a long-range program that was expected to last for seven years. On the basis of a text drafted by the Department, a request for aid on the part of the Greek government was prepared, for the Greek government's approval.<sup>68</sup> Premier Tsaldaris, incidentally, who, after his return from the United States, had managed to set up on January 23 a broad coalition government that included most of the Parliamentary Opposition leaders, was not astonished by this development. After his Washington visit, he felt quite confident that the American government sooner or later would decide to furnish aid to Greece.<sup>69</sup>

On March 7, President Truman in a meeting that was devoted mainly to a review of the Greek situation, told his cabinet about his decision. None of the cabinet members disagreed, though the Secretary of Labor had some misgivings lest the anti-British elements in America again charge, as Wallace had done, that the United States was pulling British chestnuts out of the fire. Several members stressed the need for governmental reform in Greece.

---

67. *Truman Memoirs*, vol. II, pp. 100-101; 103.

68. Xydis, *op. cit.*, pp. 478-479.

69. Tsaldaris interview with Mr. Philip Brooks, Truman Library, Independence, Mo. (copy in the author's files). Nor did the Soviet government appear surprised. As mentioned a above, it had predicted this sort of development at least three months earlier.

Shortly after a Cabinet committee set up for the specific purpose decided that the best method for informing the American people of the issues involved would be for the President to appear in person before the joint session of Congress.<sup>70</sup> Thus, on Wednesday, March 12, 1947, at one o'clock in the afternoon, President Truman stepped on to the rostrum in the hall of the House of Representatives and delivered his history-making speech, which was broadcast "live" to several countries in the world.<sup>71</sup> In his speech he requested Congress to provide \$ 400 million for financial and economic aid and for military supplies and equipment for Greece and Turkey.

Next day, bills to "provide for assistance to Greece and Turkey" were introduced in the House and the Senate and, after hearings in the appropriate committees of both houses and the introduction of the Vandenberg-Connally amendment which harmonized this move with the principles and purposes of the UN Charter,<sup>72</sup> both Houses of Congress, on May 15, adopted these bills. On May 22, President Truman signed Public Law 75 which proclaimed that "the national integrity and survival" of Greece and Turkey were "of importance to the security of the United States and of all freedom-loving peoples." The relevant executive agreement with Greece was signed on June 20 in Athens by duly authorized representatives of Greece and the United States.

Thus, not only a new era in American-Greek relations began, but also a turning point was also reached in the postwar foreign policy of the United States. For in his famous address of March 12, 1947, President Truman declared that he believed that "it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." In saying so, he informed the world that the United States intended to honor in a very concrete case a public commitment couched in general terms it had undertaken a year earlier, when his Secretary of State, at the Overseas Press Club of New York, in a speech of February 28 that was formulated in terms of balance of power rather than of collective security through the United Nations, had warned that the United States intended to oppose not only open aggression but also covert indirect aggression in the postwar world. President Truman, in his address of March 12, 1947, repeated verbatim a passage from that speech of 1946, in which Byrnes had stated that, although the *status quo* was not sacred and unchangeable,

---

70. *Truman Memoirs*, vol. II, pp. 104-105.

71. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 494.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 502.

the United States could not overlook "a unilateral gnawing away" of it; had observed that the Charter forbade aggression; and had warned that the United States could not allow "aggression to be accomplished by coercion or pressure or by subterfuge such as political infiltration."<sup>73</sup>

The same principle provides the justification for the present involvement of the United States in Vietnam,<sup>74</sup> even though the international environment today is vastly different from what it was twenty years ago and South Vietnam, for various reasons, is simply not Greece, with certain extremely important consequences for the techniques of statesmanship the supporting superpower has had to resort to in order to implement its interest in that part of the world. As President Truman recognized in 1949, in his eighth report to Congress on aid to Greece and Turkey, the successful containment of the communist threat to Greek independence had to be attributed "in the first instance to the courage of the people and fighting men of Greece. "Without the Greek will to resist," the President added, "it was unlikely that foreign aid, or international diplomacy or fortuitous developments could have caused to halt the drive of communism toward the Mediterranean."<sup>75</sup>

But aid to Greece and Turkey under the Truman Doctrine did not mark an essential turning point merely in the post-World War II foreign policy of the United States. It inaugurated, as has been aptly said,<sup>76</sup> "an authenti-

---

73. *Ibid.*, pp. 168-169. President Kennedy reiterated this policy, for instance, in a statement of October 19, 1963, at the University of Maine, on relations with the USSR. All elements of American policy and allied policy toward the Soviet Union, he said, were "directed at a single, comprehensive goal—namely, convincing the Soviet leaders that it is dangerous for them to engage in direct or indirect aggression, futile for them to attempt to impose their will and their system on other unwilling countries," (*New York Times*, October 20, 1963).

74. In a speech of February 23, 1966, President Johnson, explaining his administration's policy on Vietnam, referred to President Truman's 1947 move with regard to Greece and Turkey, as one among five precedents for his stand in Vietnam. The first of these included a quotation from a State of the Union message by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941. The other two consisted of quotation from the Inaugural Addresses of Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy in 1953 and 1961, respectively. (*New York Times*, February 24, 1966).

75. Department of State, *Eighth Report to Congress on Assistance to Greece and Turkey* (for the period ended June 30, 1949), p. 1.

76. W. W. Rostow, *The United States in the World Arena* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1960), p. 130. Similar views, to mention a few, are held by Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 3; J. W. Spanier, *American Foreign Policy since World War II* (New York: Praeger, 1960), p. 33; J. Davids, *America and the World of Our Time* (New York: Random House 1960), p. 408; A. De Conde, *A History of American Foreign Policy*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), p. 670.

cally revolutionary phase in the nation's experience." The press recognized this at the time. Thus, the *Christian Science Monitor* termed the move as the most momentous decision in American history, and the *New York Times* observed that for American foreign policy it ended the epoch of isolation and occasional interventions.<sup>77</sup>

The differences between this doctrine and the one that was announced almost a century and a quarter earlier —the Monroe Doctrine— serve to highlight this point.

First, President Truman, even though he dislikes the term "Truman Doctrine," wanted his speech to include a declaration of general policy. He wanted it to be "America's answer to the surge of expansion of communist tyranny."<sup>78</sup> President Monroe, on the other hand, in his State of the Union speech of December 2, 1823 probably never intended to proclaim a doctrine at all.<sup>79</sup>

Second, the Truman Doctrine, unlike the Monroe Doctrine, did not include Britain among its targets, Soviet propaganda to Britain notwithstanding.<sup>80</sup> Clement Attlee's and Ernest Bevin's Britain triggered the Truman Doctrine in a far different way than had George Canning's Britain at the time of the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>81</sup> Bevin, as he told Tsaldaris in Paris on October 12, 1946, was trying to draw the United States out of its postwar trends toward a renewed isolationism<sup>82</sup> that was tempered only by American participation in the potentially veto-bound United Nations. With the Truman Doctrine, he "called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old" as Canning boasted he had done at the time of the Monroe Doctrine.

Third, when the Truman Doctrine was announced, the international position of the United States was far different that it was when the Monroe Doctrine was first proclaimed. In 1823, the United States was but a weak young state just emerging from colonial bondage and wanting to be left alone.

---

77. Cited by Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

78. *Truman Memoirs*, vol. II, p. 105.

79. D. Perkins, *Hands Off: A History of the Monroe Doctrine* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1952), p. 367. Monroe's statement, another writer has written, was a stopgap measure in the face of the British offer of a joint statement of policy, A. E. Kirich, *Ideas, Ideals, and American Diplomacy* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966), p. 21.

80. E. H. Tatum, Jr., *The United States and Europe, 1815-1823* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938), emphasizes the anti-British of the Monroe Doctrine, in contrast to Perkins.

81. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 491.

82. In conversation with the author, Tsaldaris greatly emphasized Bevin's role in catalyzing the Truman Doctrine. See also Xydis, *op. cit.*, pp. 475-476; 550.

Until about the turn of the century, the effectiveness of the Monroe Doctrine was due mainly to the willingness of the former metropolis not to challenge this doctrine with its overwhelming naval power. In 1947, on the other hand, the United States, both absolutely and relatively to other states in the world, was actually or potentially the most powerful state on our globe. It had a navy second to none as well as an unsurpassed though not fully tested strategic air force. It enjoyed an atomic monopoly. Moreover, for the first time in its history, it had joined a universal, multipurpose, collective security organization, the United Nations. When in February 1947 the former metropolis gave up its international position as one of the Big Three (temporarily, it was thought at the time) the world system of states clearly assumed the bipolar character which, until quite recently, has been its outstanding feature.<sup>83</sup>

Fourth, the Truman Doctrine, unlike the Monroe Doctrine, was not based on the maxim that the United States should keep itself aloof from what John Quincy Adams called "the political systems and contentions of Europe."<sup>84</sup> In consequence of the above-mentioned enormous change in America's position in world affairs, the Truman Doctrine, together with America's participation in the United Nations, dealt a mortal blow to the "two-hemisphere" concept of American peacetime foreign policy.<sup>85</sup> Since the establishment of the United States, this isolationist concept has been a predominant feature of America's peacetime policy. It underlay Washington's Farewell Address as well as the Monroe Doctrine and, Cordell Hull notwithstanding, it had been reintroduced in the UN Charter in the guise of regionalism.

Fifth, the Truman Doctrine, in contrast to the Monroe Doctrine, called

---

83. Acheson emphasized this point in briefing Congressional leaders. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 484.

84. D. Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine 1823-1826* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927), p. 101.

85. A. P. Whitaker, *The Western Hemisphere Idea. Its Rise and Decline* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1954), pp. 173-174, emphasizes that the Truman Doctrine abundantly illustrated the new two-world concept that took shape in the 1940's, supplanting the one-world idea. The two worlds were no longer the two hemispheres "but the communist slave world and the noncommunist free world" with the dividing line not up and down the Atlantic but along the Iron Curtain. The anti-European bias of the Western Hemisphere idea, he adds, gave way to the concept of Western Europe as the natural and indispensable ally of America in the community of free world nations. The Truman Doctrine, he emphasizes, was no globalization of the Monroe Doctrine, whose very essence was its exclusive West-hemisphere character.

for very concrete techniques of implementation —“primarily . . . economic and financial aid,” as President Truman stated. It was accompanied by a Presidential call upon Congress, and through Congress, upon the American taxpayer, to appropriate a specific amount of money for assistance to Greece and Turkey.

Sixth, and finally, with regard to Greece specifically, the Truman Doctrine constituted an affirmative reply on the part of the Chief Executive of the United States, sole organ of the United States in foreign affairs and commander-in-chief, to the Greek government's repeated requests for aid since mid-1944 in a situation that concerned “the survival and integrity of the Greek nation.”<sup>86</sup> The Monroe Doctrine, on the other hand, served to confirm the negative response the United States had given a few months earlier to the request of the provisional Greek government for American recognition, alliance, and assistance, when the Greeks were fighting for their independence. Secretary of State John Quincy Adams had replied on August 18, 1823, that “the United States are forbidden by the duties of their situation from taking part in the war, to which their relation is that of neutrality.”<sup>87</sup> And, in November of that same year, commenting on the draft of the presidential message that was to proclaim the Monroe Doctrine and which originally contained “a broad acknowledgment of the Greeks as an independent nation, and a recommendation for sending a minister to them,” Adams observed that the entire tone of the message “would take the nations by surprise and greatly alarm them . . . This message would be a summons to arms . . . against all Europe and for objects exclusively European.” His views prevailed when he explained that the attitude he wished the United States to take was “that of earnest remonstrance against the interference of the European powers by force with South America, but to disclaim all interference on our part with Europe: to make an American cause; and adhere inflexibly to it.”<sup>88</sup>

---

86. *American State Papers*, Class I, *Foreign Relations* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1858), V, 256.

87. *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, ed. Charles Francis Adams (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1875), vol. V, pp. 194-195; 197-198.

88. Testifying recently before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, George F. Kennan observed one should think about Russia as simply another great world power “a power different in many respects, but perhaps no longer in essential ones from what Russia would have been had there been no Communist revolution in that country fifty years ago,” *The New York Times*, January 31, 1967. In this connection it is worthwhile noting that containment of the USSR was not an altogether novel concept in the United States though not as government policy. Brooks Adams in 1900 had advocated a similar approach

This last difference alone between the Truman and the Monroe Doctrine is a striking measure of the steady and tremendous growth of the United States from the status of a newly independent colony to that of a world power — a superpower. For aid to this small country in the eastern Mediterranean as well as to its eastern neighbor in 1947, meant setting aside the principle Adams had invoked when he had objected to American aid to the Greeks fighting for their independence in 1823. This decision, which blazed the way open for the Marshall Plan and NATO, was thus no mere episode in American-Greek relations but a token that the United States was now firmly determined to take part in world affairs not only through formal membership in world organization but through deeds, as a power with global capabilities and responsibilities in the global society of nations.

The Monroe and Truman Doctrines, on the other hand, resembled each other in four important respects. This suggests not only a similarity of style in American policy but the existence of certain permanent realities of intercontinental relations, of relations namely between powers predominant in the Americas and in Eurasia.<sup>89</sup>

First, in form, both doctrines were unilateral proclamations of American foreign policy, except that the Monroe Doctrine was proclaimed in a State of the Union message whereas the Truman Doctrine was enunciated before the two Houses of Congress in joint session. This had the advantage of reserving the freedom of the United States to decide in each specific case that might arise, whether or not it should seek to implement the general principles that were declared in these Doctrines.

Second, in substance, both doctrines included “hands off” warnings of a territorial character. The Monroe Doctrine’s warning against any further colonization of the Americas had, as its counterpart in the Truman Doctrine, the warning against further Soviet “satellitization” which was contained in that doctrine’s key passage concerning the determination of the United States to support “free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” Thus, both doctrines tacitly and unilaterally established a “sphere of influence” division of the world. And neither stated any American intention to decolonize or desatellitize — to “liberate,” in terms put forward for a short while during the Eisenhower administration, — perhaps mainly for reasons of internal policy. Thus, by not

---

to Tsarist Russia, W. A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1959), pp. 237-238.

89. Xydis, *op. cit.*, p. 75-76.

proclaiming a crusade for liberation, the Truman Doctrine was no mirror image of the Soviet doctrine I have termed elsewhere as "proletarian irrendentism,"<sup>90</sup> the doctrine of trying to free the oppressed working class of the whole world from the supposed exploitation of the bourgeois, capitalist class.

Third, both doctrines had a strongly ideological character. They were directed against the expansion of disliked systems of government beyond the boundaries in which these systems existed. The Truman Doctrine was directed, in the name of American democratic ideals, against totalitarianism somewhat to Kennan's misgivings. As President Truman put it in his famous address of March 12, 1947: "At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life." The Monroe Doctrine was directed in the name of American republican ideals against monarchic forms of government in Europe which the Russian tsarist autocracy symbolized par excellence. As Metternich contemptuously noted, the United States, under President Monroe's "indecent declarations," had distinctly and clearly announced their intention "to set not only power against power but . . . altar against altar."<sup>90</sup>

Fourth, and finally, both doctrines were directed either in part or in whole against more or less the same target state: Imperial Russia, in the case of the Monroe Doctrine; its successor, the Soviet Union, in the case of the Truman Doctrine.

This last resemblance between the Truman and the Monroe Doctrine clearly reveals that regardless of polycentrism in the Soviet bloc or the "diffusion" of power in the Western alliance which have occurred since 1947, regardless, too, of any possible future convergence of the American and Soviet systems of government and ways of life, with a possible resultant blunting of the ideological aspects of the conflict, the United States, in its foreign policy, is likely to continue favoring in the foreseeable future the maintenance of the multi-state system on the Eurasian and African continents. Hence, its relations with any power seeking predominance on the "world island" are likely to remain competitive, if not antagonistic, unless a spheres-of-influence agreement were to be reached with it. Greece, together with Turkey, lies at the political, military and economic crossroads of those continents and thus continues to be of special strategic significance to the United States. Moreover, closely associated as it is with western Europe, Greece, is also the eastermost outpost of that most important single grouping of nations

---

90. D. Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1823-1826*, p. 167.

with which the United States is intimately and inevitably associated. As an influential high official in the Johnson administration stated recently, "everyone, including the Soviet, understands clearly that for any hostile power to attempt to dominate or control Western Europe's 350 million people, immense material resources, and strategic position would be to strike directly at the vital interests of the United States."<sup>91</sup>

Hunter College

STEPHEN G. XYDIS

---

91. Statement of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara before a Joint Session of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Subcommittee on Department of Defense Appropriations on the Fiscal Year 1968-72 Defense Program and 1968 Defense Budget, January 23, 1967, p. 24.