

TRUMAN DOCTRINE AND GREECE TWO COMMENTS *

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Professor Edson has focused his attention on the deteriorating situation in Greece right after the end of the World War II, Professor Xydis on the Truman doctrine as a new departure in American foreign policy, while Professor Howard has dealt with developments in the United Nations, where he himself played a role as a member of the American delegation. I should like, by way of comment, to concentrate on the impact of the Truman doctrine on developments in the Sino-Soviet Bloc.

I wish to argue, in the first place, that the split in the Cominform of 28 June 1948 was probably a consequence, an unintended consequence if you like, of the implementation of the Truman doctrine. Had it not been for American intervention in Greece in the spring of 1947, it appears to me likely that a Communist government would have emerged in Athens, with N. Zachariades as its effective head. The great personal sacrifices required of the Greek population, and the extent of the American aid needed to make possible the defeat of the Communist guerrillas and their Cominform supporters, is proof of how great the danger was.

There are a number of reasons why I incline to the view that, had the Bloc Communists won in Greece they would not have fallen out, at least not in June, 1948. A principal cause of disagreement between Moscow and Belgrade—not the only one but certainly a very important one—was Belgrade's scheme for Balkan Federation. Comintern policy in the 1920's had made such Federation virtually a canon of the faith, so that even in the inner circles of the Cominform Moscow hesitated to express its opposition. It was not until January, 1948, after the Americans were firmly committed in Greece and when Dimitrov gave his famous interview in Bucharest, that the Kremlin made known its views to an apparently astounded Yugoslav leadership.

To put my argument in another way, had the Greek enterprise proved a success, Tito's prestige would have been so great that it would probably have been difficult for Stalin to forbid federation, the consummation of which was a principal objective of the guerrilla operations in Greece. In the event of victory in Greece, at least there appears to have been agreement between the

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Greek, Yugoslav and Bulgarian Communist parties on this point, Greece was to cede Greek Macedonia, which was then to be conjoined with Bulgarian and Yugoslav Macedonia in a Macedonian state which, in turn, would become the eighth constituent republic of a preponderantly Slavic federation extending from Trieste and Zagreb in the north to Thessaloniki and Burgas in the south. In the event of Communist victory in Greece, the persistent differences between Yugoslavs and Bulgars as to the form of federation would have probably dissolved in the euphoria of triumph and Stalin could not so easily have played the two neighbors off against each other as, in fact, he succeeded in doing.

Nothing succeeds like success. It is said that in 1945 Stalin advised Mao Tse-tung to form a government together with Chiang Kai-shek. Mao refused the advice and, without receiving important Soviet help, emerged as the victor in the Chinese civil war which ensued. In 1949, Stalin could only congratulate his Chinese colleagues. I would argue that, in the event of a Communist take-over in Greece, Stalin could only have congratulated Tito. That in the long run the new federation might have quarrelled with Moscow, and broken away, or, as a consequence of clandestine Soviet intervention, broken up, is another matter. The basic argument remains : it is probable that without the Truman Doctrine Greece would have been overrun *and* the Cominform split would not have occurred, at least not in June, 1948.

There is a broader sense in which the Truman doctrine had a major effect on the affairs and policies of the Soviet Bloc. The Bloc leadership, it now seems increasingly clear, was divided into two groupings, in common parlance the "hards" and the "softs." The division between the two involved maneuvering for position in the event of Stalin's death, divergent estimates of the situation which confronted the Communist movement, and the degree of tension obtaining between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. The extremists argued that capitalism was on the verge of a new collapse, comparable to that of 1929, and that it was time for bold forward movement. Specifically, the extremists wished to revive the Comintern, to proceed at once to the installation of proletarian dictatorships in Eastern Europe, and to launch guerrilla wars in Greece and in various countries of the Far East. The moderates, on the other hand, felt that capitalism had reached a new plateau of stability through reform and would probably escape a serious economic crisis for some time. They opposed the revival of the Comintern, desiring to conciliate public opinion in the West where possible, thought in terms of governing Eastern Europe through people's democracies and coalition governments, opposed heavy reparations deliveries from former enemy states, and thought guerrilla

operations unnecessarily risky. Zhdanov and Tito were the leaders of the radicals, whereas the moderates included men like Malenkov and Varga.

Now the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Soviet camp was a disaster for the extremists. Zhdanov died a broken man in August, 1948, his followers were rooted out in the great Lenigrand purge in 1949, and his Czech surrogate Slansky was sent to the gallows in December, 1952. Malenkov became Stalin's heir and, for a brief moment in 1953, succeeded him. In his struggle for power with Khrushchev, Malenkov put increasing emphasis on consumers' goods in the Soviet Union, and supported the revisionist Nagy against the extremist Rakosi in Hungary. In short, the enunciation and the implementation of the Truman doctrine in Greece proved the extremists wrong and the moderates right, and contributed to the shift of Soviet policy from revolutionary extremism to one of international *détente*. The evolution which the radical Yugoslav regime underwent after its expulsion was an unexpected bonus, but this evolution also contributed to the change in Bloc policy by providing the Bloc with revisionist policy alternatives in both domestic and foreign affairs.

As Professor Xydis has suggested, the applicability, and the importance, of the Truman Doctrine, did not end with the Greek affair, nor with the death of Stalin. I would contend that the situation which the Truman Doctrine was designed to meet is repeating itself today in South Vietnam. Here again we are faced with an extremist foreign policy, this time that of an Asian Communism, which seeks to use a minority movement in a non-Communist neighboring country, Vietnam, to bring Communism to power in the name of creating some larger political entity. Once again the United States has thrown its weight into the scales, and once again this stubborn, defensive holding action has begun to produce signs of policy conflict and policy change, this time in the Asian Communist camp. In particular, it seems to me, there is an intimate connection between the American stand in South Vietnam and the Cultural Revolution, so-called, in China.

1958 witnessed the beginning of the Great Leap Forward. This policy was in good part a reflection of the growing schism between Moscow and Peking over the issue of extremism, but its importance in the present context is that it constituted a typical example of left-wing Communism in domestic policy, an effort on the grand scale to substitute discipline and sacrifice for capital resources and technical know-how. As a consequence of the failure of the Great Leap, Mao by his own account lost control of the day-to-day implementation of Chinese domestic policy and this was taken over by the more pragmatic elements in the Chinese leadership.

By 1966, five years after the Great Leap had come to an end, Mao was—I hypothesize—faced with a reversal of his extremist foreign policy, which had eventuated in a series of failures. The Soviet Union, the only Communist power capable of giving China significant help with industrialization, had become a bitter enemy. Chinese influence in the free world parties had been greatly reduced if not destroyed, and the Indonesian Communist party, a staunch ally of Peking, had been physically annihilated. Above all, however, there were declining prospects for Communist victory in Vietnam, the major testing ground of Mao's revolutionary line. In my view the Vietnamese situation was of decisive importance because it stood in ever starker contrast to the Maoist doctrines of "the paper tiger," "the revolutionary war of national liberation," and "the mobilization of the peasant countries against the industrial countries."

The moderate elements in the Chinese leadership prepared to modify Mao's foreign policy. This was perhaps more dangerous to his ultimate aims than the setback of 1961, since the existence of a foreign danger, and the threat of grave international tension, were necessary to the sense of discipline and the willingness to sacrifice on which extremism in the domestic field had to be based. The evidence supporting this hypothesis is the cultural revolution, the organization of the youth of China as an irregular military force and the attempt to use this *force* to cow the party apparatus, purge its leaders, and set up a new mechanism of supreme control based on elements of the Red Guard and the army. The party apparatus was accused by Mao of wishing to follow a revisionist line, and in an effort to prevent a revisionist turn, Mao and his hardline colleagues drove China to the verge of civil war. While the outcome of the struggle is not yet altogether clear, the Red Guard has been disbanded, compromise arrangements with anti-Maoist forces have been set up in many provinces, and that arch-revisionist Liu Shao-chi has still not publicly confessed.

Of course, there are many significant differences between the situation in Greece and Eastern Europe in 1947-48, on the one hand, and that obtaining in Vietnam and Eastern Asia in 1966-67, on the other. The Greeks had a long tradition of heroic resistance in the face of great odds; they possessed a highly developed national consciousness; they had profited from more than a hundred years' experience in self-government; they enjoyed the solid support and sympathy of opinion in the United States. In consequence, the Greeks were able to stop and turn back the Cominform extremists with only help in weapons, supplies, and reconstruction.

Nonetheless, the parallels between the two cases seem to me striking. As

the application of the Truman Doctrine to Greece contributed to a basic shift in Soviet policy, internal as well as external, so the application of that doctrine in Vietnam has begun to produce a basic change in Chinese policy.

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We were interested in Professor Edson's interpretation of the relationship between ELAS and the Soviet Union but would like to raise the question of the exact nature of that relationship. In our estimation the problem needs clarification as does that of factionalism in the "national liberation movement." Only through re-evaluation of these complex factors and re-interpretation of Soviet-Greek relations during World War II and the months antedating the formal formulation of the Truman Doctrine will our understanding of Greek politics be strengthened.

Professor Xydis' paper brings out certain essential differences between American and British attitude toward Greece. Indeed, the Truman Doctrine differs conceptually from the traditional British policy of containment of Russia in Southeast Europe in that it reflects a specific American national interest, different from the British. It would be erroneous to assume that that interest coincided with England's any more than the American policies in Southeast Asia after 1954 corresponded in scope and purpose with those of France which Secretary Dulles allegedly assumed. It is also interesting to note President Truman's insistence on the "democratic" nature of the Greek struggle against communism and of the Greek government per se. For those who wish to compare the Truman with the Johnson Doctrine that insistence by itself shows the long road which we have travelled since 1947 in the doctrine of containment. The Truman Doctrine is only superficially comparable to the Johnson Doctrine to the extent of both seeking the containment of international communism. Still, the Truman Doctrine bears as much comparison with the Johnson Doctrine as with the Monroe Doctrine to which Professor Xydis has so eloquently referred.

Our views regarding the essentially American nature of the Truman Doctrine have fortunately been supported by Professor Howard. America's awareness of the purpose of the Soviet Union and her allies and Truman's decision to prevent a communist take-over of Greece long before 1947 are most significant factors in assessing the character of American policies toward Greece in 1946 and 1947.