

is not neutral to his subject: he readily confesses his own "excess of passion" and "progressive sense of outrage" which drove him to write this book. But without hiding his sympathies and aversions he examines the mountain of documentary evidence he has unearthed (mostly in American diplomatic and intelligence archives) with a cool and sceptical mind, weaving together endless details in a lively and absorbing style.

Keeley makes no attempt to solve the case: the available evidence does not support definite conclusions. Instead, he suggests that of all the possible culprits, the communists had the least to gain from Polk's death. He finds the British "connection" to the crime difficult to sustain and reaches the speculative conclusion that "some agency of the Right would have fewer logistical and political difficulties in staging an 'assassination' and, in the heated war climate of those days, could well have persuaded itself that it was performing a reasonable — if not downright patriotic — act by preventing Polk, and thereby discouraging others on his inclination, from interviewing the enemy".

However, Keeley's attention is focused less on the crime itself than on its subsequent handling by the Greek investigatory and judicial authorities, on the role of American diplomatic and press officials in influencing the pace and direction of the investigation, on the trial, and on the political and psychological climate in Greece and the United States which affected every aspect of the case. His main thesis is that the unspoken but clearly understood purpose of the investigation and trial was to serve pressing Greek and American security objectives; justice and Staktopoulos' rights were sacrificed so that narrowly perceived "national interests" might be promoted. Whatever Staktopoulos' involvement in the affair (which we may never know), his interrogation, trial and conviction represented a travesty of justice reminiscent of Arthur Koestler's account in *Darkness at Noon*. Although Keeley is too careful to say it openly, the record he produces suggests that the "justice" handed down in that Salonica court in April 1949 and so eagerly endorsed by American government officials and the press, represented a different kind of "crime", in the long run more dangerous than the murder of a journalist. It is one thing, and almost commonplace in our times, for individual fanatics to kill in support of their cause; it is far more ominous when entire regimes, while professing their devotion to the fundamental principles of democracy, rules of justice and human rights, convict a man because it is politically expedient. In short, the real message in Keeley's remarkable book will remain relevant and crucial long after the tragic death of George Polk has faded from memory. And while other books on the same subject are bound to appear, Keeley's masterful and fair treatment of this complex case is certain to stand well the test of time.

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Peter J. Stavrakis, *Moscow and Greek Communism, 1944-1949*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989, pp. 231.

Peter Stavrakis has written the first full-length comprehensive study of Soviet policy towards the Greek Communist Party during the Greek Civil War. The book's significance is to be found in the enormous information it provides about Soviet attitude towards the Greek Communists, in the incorporation of newly revealed evidence about the activities of the Greek Communist leaders before and during the Civil War, and in its systematic treat-

ment of a subject that, if it did not determine the foundations of America's policy of containment, certainly provided the excuse for its implementation.

The first part of the analysis deals with the wartime period and the events that transpired before, during, and immediately after the liberation of Greece and which led to the so-called "second round" of the Civil War. The book's basic argument here is that the Soviets opportunistically utilized Britain's concern over the future political orientation of Greece, and by sacrificing the political aspirations of the Greek Communists, gained a free hand in Romania. A typical spheres-of-interest approach. In this context, the author maintains that the Soviet Union's attitude vis-a-vis the Greek Communists had a counterproductive character: without Soviet intervention of restraint, the Greek Communists could have easily gained political power.

Part two describes immediate Soviet postwar policy. With the War nearing its end, the Soviets, according to the analysis, changed their policy from a hands-off approach to a "cautious and gradual political infiltration" with the objective of "creating internally unstable states" and "detaching the Western presence", and opening up the way for "more aggressive policies". Stavrakis concludes that the Soviet approach was unsuccessful due to the fast pace of the Greek domestic situation whose instability was unsuitable for gradualism. Instead of gradualism, the Soviets were faced with the prospect of being drawn in a full-fledged armed conflict.

In the third part, the Soviets are depicted as being hard at work trying to control the tempo of events in the Balkans. As a result, they were forced to become involved in the Greek Civil War to "protect their interests against independent factions, especially those associated with Tito". In this context, Stalin sought to use the Greek Civil War as a weapon against Tito's independence, and later on in 1948 and 1949 to increase his negotiating power vis-a-vis the United States.

Part four constitutes an attempt to dispell allegations that domestic political conflicts in the Soviet Union were extended to the Greek Communist Party. Part five, is in essence a general conclusion.

Stavrakis' analysis reinforces the findings of other analysts that have traditionally allotted blame to the Soviet Union for the outbreak of the Greek Civil War. At the same time, it attempts to deviate from traditional interpretations, but without joining the ranks of the revisionists. By labelling the Soviet Union's Greek policy as a prudent and gradual expansionistic one (rather than outright expansionist), Stavrakis attempts to justify America's policy of containment and then criticize it as an overreaction. If Soviet sensitivities in regard to Albania, he concludes, were taken into consideration, the United States "might have accomplished more in a short time than it did with four decades of containment" (p. 215). In his effort to please the traditionalists without displeasing the revisionists, Stavrakis often finds himself in the compromising position of having to contradict himself. This manifests itself in two interrelated levels: his methodological approach, and his source selection and focus.

On the methodological level, the analysis is hard pressed to differentiate the value of what it considers to be the three most influential exogenous factors in Soviet foreign policy formulation: strategic, regional, and local. While the first part of the analysis focuses on the importance of the strategic considerations, subsequent chapters focus on the importance of regional and local factors to the detriment of the strategic ones. "A policy", notes Stavrakis, "that reflects an overriding concern for strategic factors...may have to be put aside in response to the threat that uncontrolled regional or local forces may pose" (p. 3). The reader

finds it difficult to accept the notion that Soviet strategic considerations in Eastern Europe received secondary priority in Soviet policy following the conclusion of the Second World War. Stavrakis provides no explanation as to why the Soviets abandoned their spheres-of-influence approach in regard to Greece or why they adopted an expansionist policy with the objective of expelling Western influence there.

Moreover, in part two and three the analysis focuses nearly exclusively on the apparent conflicts that were in existence between the three factors. It would seem that there are as many elements in each of the factors that were mutually compatible as there are elements that were in mutual conflict. For example, instability in Greece could jeopardize Soviet strategic gains in the Balkans as much as it could assist in consolidating them. In conclusion, Stavrakis gives no sufficient explanation as to why the Soviets stopped subordinating their Greek policy and interests to their overall strategic considerations in Eastern Europe and opted for an expansionist policy in Greece. He assumes that Soviet priorities changed and thus, so did Soviet policy. Instead of continuity in foreign policy, he emphasizes mutability.

The biggest problem in trying to evaluate Soviet intentions is, obviously, the lack of primary sources. Stavrakis' claim that new and sufficient evidence allow for an objective analysis of Soviet policy in Greece (p. 2), is undermined by the statement that "my extensive use of Greek Communist, British, and American sources means my analysis is based largely on perceptions of Soviet conduct rather than on the conduct itself" (p. x). Indeed, in order to demonstrate Soviet prudent expansionism, Stavrakis first relies on the conclusion reached by Stephen Xydis (p. 49), a traditionalist author whom he earlier on criticized for having argued from a point of view "rather [than] for it" (p. 2). Secondly, Stavrakis relied on the activities of the Greek Communists who indeed appear to have applied infiltrating tactics. The problem with this approach is that the Communist in general, given the opportunity, always apply such tactics; they were typical of their operating methods. Stavrakis is unable to produce convincing evidence of any coordinating efforts made between the Greek Communists and the Soviet leadership. Arguments to the effect that there had to be some kind of Soviet directives are tenuous at best. The Greek Communists, according to the analysis, planned infiltrating policies as early as January 1945, long before Zachariadis was allegedly briefed by the Soviet military command in Germany (p. 66), and much earlier than mid-1945 when gradualism and infiltration are assumed to have become part of Soviet policy. The fact that a Greek politician of the Left, Sophianopoulos, favored a policy that was pro-Soviet in nature, is not necessarily an indication that he was an instrument of Soviet policy.

The presence of Soviet officers in Greece and their efforts to collect intelligence information cannot exclusively be taken to mean a Soviet effort towards expansionism. Such activities could as well be explained by defensive considerations. As Stavrakis notes, along with the Turkish issue, the defense of Albania and Bulgaria held the highest priority in Soviet objectives in the Balkans. Also, Zachariadis could not have increased his offensive against the British starting on April 1945 (p. 68), because he was not yet in Greece. Briefly, the point to be made is that it is difficult to determine which KKE actions were part of a broader Soviet policy and which were not. This notion becomes more complicated taking into account Stavrakis' contradictory statements declaring the KKE as being faithful to the Soviet Union and Stalin (p. 12), while at the same time, pursuing an independent path (p. 15), or failing to follow Soviet instructions (p. 126).

On the point of independent factions, the analysis gives the impression that the Yugoslav Communists were constantly challenging Stalin's authority by exhibiting independent tendencies. This argument contradicts the conclusion reached by one prominent scholar

who noted that "...the realities of postwar politics make the thesis that Tito attempted to build a bloc of socialist states apart from and against the Soviet Union completely untenable and fantastic...and the idea of an outright challenge to Soviet supremacy could not enter the minds of the Yugoslav leaders prior to 1948" (Adam Ulam, *Titoism and the Cominform*, p. 80).

Without firsthand information from the Soviet archives and the archives of the Greek Communist Party, any attempt to explain the motives, the intent, and the degree of Soviet involvement in the Greek Civil War is bound to have limitations. Even a serious and well researched effort, such as the one made by Stavrakis, will be hampered by the reality that it must be based on Western sources or biased revelations made by the participants of that conflict. No matter how objective the approach, it cannot evade all analytical contradictions. Bearing this limitation in mind, Stavrakis has written an admirably good book which will set the tone of discussion and initiate further serious analysis and speculation on an important subject that has hardly been given systematic attention.

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Jon V. Kofas, *Intervention and Underdevelopment: Greece During the Cold War*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989. 215 pp., notes, bibliography, index.

According to this unabashed revisionist work by Jon V. Kofas of Marquette University, the United States intervened in Greece in 1947 to block a mythical attempt by the Soviet Union to establish Communism, and then to spread American capitalism into this underdeveloped economy. The Truman administration thereby launched a global crusade with the Truman Doctrine that became so military in orientation that it led directly to America's disaster in Vietnam and has threatened to do the same in Central America. Further, the American aid program stunted Greece's economic growth, relegating its people to the fate of Third World countries in that its sponsor reaped the benefits while the client wallowed in its own economic and political juices and continued its long train of social injustices. Using an impressive array of economic figures and documentation, Kofas substantiates the already wellknown truth that Greece was hurting socially, politically, and economically by longstanding problems before, during, and after World War II. But then he, not convincingly, attempts to tie much of the blame to the United States. In an unmistakable allusion to America's tragic involvement in Vietnam, he argues that Greece might have developed its own "social democratic regime" (p. xi) had not the United States attempted a military solution to what was essentially an economic and political problem. The Americans' failure to work for a "political compromise" assured the reduction of Greece "to a military satellite and an economic dependency of the United States" (p. 3).

As documentation becomes increasingly available in the United States, the revisionist view of the Truman Doctrine and the Cold War has become an increasingly tired issue. To propound this view, the author must virtually dismiss the impact of the civil war in Greece from 1946 to 1949. The result is a distorted story. Had Kofas used the records of the U.S. Army, Department of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and State Department, he would have