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GREAT BRITAIN AND THE RESTORATION
OF KING GEORGE II

George II had one of the most erratic reigns of any Greek monarch in the nation's modern history. He spent more time in exile than on his throne and he had the dubious distinction of sharing responsibility for the authoritarian regime of General John Metaxas. George inherited from his father a legacy of intense Royalist-Republican power struggle and he fell victim to political conflicts because he sided with the most reactionary forces in the country.

In 1922 he succeeded his father, Constantine I, as the latter was forced to abdicate his throne. In December 1923 after ruling for about a year the Republican Officers League forced the young King to leave the country. Greece had just suffered a major defeat in Asia Minor in the war against Turkey and the monarchists were principally responsible for the debacle. It was hardly an unexpected development therefore given the rivalry between Royalists and Republicans that George was exiled and Greece became a Republic after a plebiscite on April 13, 1924¹.

From 1924 until he was restored to his throne in 1935 George lived in London where he established cordial relations with political and business circles. In the early 1930's the idea of restoration became increasingly appealing to the ex-King's host government. Great Britain which enjoyed a preeminent influence in Greece ever since the War of Independence became concerned about the restoration of George II primarily for foreign policy reasons. After Eleftherios Venizelos, leader of the Liberal Party ever since 1910, was elected Prime Minister in 1928 he chose a course of *rapprochement* towards Italy. On September 23, 1928 he signed the Friendship Treaty with the Fascist government thus arousing suspicions in the Foreign Office about Greece's new direction in international politics. England was apprehensive about Mussolini's expansionist schemes in the Eastern Mediterranean therefore it was disgruntled with the Greek Liberal Government which

1. For more on the King's brief reign and the plebiscite see J.P.C. Carey and A. G. Carey *The Web of Modern Greek Politics*. New York: 1968, 95-8. Also see Constantine Tsoukalas *The Greek Tragedy*. Baltimore: 1969, 41-2.

avored greater Italian involvement in Balkan affairs². The foreign policy of Venizelos was clearly designed to underscore British and French influence in the Balkan region³.

Both France and England welcomed the electoral victory of the Populist Party which defeated the Venizelists in the March 1933 elections. The Populists who were affiliated with the Monarchist bloc factions entertained a pro-Western foreign policy and generally favored greater not less Franco-British involvement in the Balkans. After the Monarchists took power the ex-King's hopes of returning to his throne were raised once again. The first indication that George II contemplated returning to Greece came in the form of a letter addressed to General Metaxas⁴. The Government newspapers published the letter in January 1934 as a gesture of their sympathy with the dynasty. The letter stated: «I have no personal ambition; I simply believe that the historic mission of my Royal House has not ended and that, with a precipitous people like the Greeks, a strong royal power is an indispensable factor to a smooth political life»⁵. Metaxas was the leader of the Freeopinionist Party, the most extreme royalist faction, which favored the abolition of the Republic and the end of democratic institutions.

Many republicans drew the conclusion that George II expressed a willingness to reclaim his throne not by constitutional methods (a plebiscite) but rather by appealing to extremists like Metaxas who had a history of counter-revolutionary activity⁶. After the ex-King's letter was published the right-wing Populists⁷ rallied behind the Minister of the Interior, John Rallis and General Metaxas and pressured the President of the Council to adopt strong anti-republican measures⁸. Tsaldaris who acted as the balance between extremists and mo-

2. D. K. Nikoles *Istorike Poreia Tou Ellinikou Ethnous*, 1863-1941 (Historical Course of the Greek Nation). Athens: 1978, 553. Also see P. Gregoriades *Ellinike Demokratia*, 1924-1935 (Greek Republic, 1924-1935). Athens: 1972, 346-54.

3. Nikos Psyroukis *O Fasismos Kai E Tetarte Avgoustou* (Fascism and the Fourth of August). Athens: 1977, 63.

4. F. O. 371/18393, No. 48, Waterlow to Simon, Athens, January 31, 1934.

5. Cited in SDNA 868.00/736, No. 155, MacVeagh, Athens, February 9, 1934.

6. Psyroukis, *op. cit.* 63.

7. The Populist Party was divided on the restoration issue with the extremists supporting the return of George II and the moderates opposing it.

8. SDNA 868.00/736, No. 155, *op. cit.*

derates in the Royalist camp refused to resort to extra-Constitutional means against the Opposition preferring to weaken the latter by parliamentary manouvres. Metaxas who aspired to head the government interpreted the Premier's policies as weak and ineffective. After January 1934 the Freeopinionist chief became more outspoken about the bankruptcy of the Parliamentary regime and advocated the establishment of a dictatorship⁹.

On January 1934 the conservative newspaper *Kathemerine* published an article entitled «Dictatorship or Parliamentarism?». That was Metaxas' first major public statement about his leanings towards Fascism. According to the General the origin of parliamentary democracy was in nineteenth century Europe. It was a political system which the middle class embraced once it replaced the feudal class in society. The bourgeoisie mobilized economically in the nineteenth century and organized politically devising a system which reflected their interests. The only demand that the new class made on the state was that the latter should provide internal security by maintaining a police force and security from external threat by having a military force.

As long as the free enterprise system progressed, Metaxas continued, under the bourgeois state, parliamentarism augmented and secured bourgeois interests. The system therefore was desirable because it was useful to the middle class. Capitalism, however, found it necessary to abandon *laissez faire* and the bourgeoisie demanded government intervention to protect its economic interests. In the twentieth century the middle class lost the socio-political status which at once enjoyed. The masses had their own leaders to organize them therefore they became politically stronger. Their political mobilization contributed to the decline of bourgeois supremacy. Parliamentary democracy no longer worked for the middle class but for the masses and if that political system remained unchanged, Metaxas concluded, it would lead society to communism. The alternative to the antiquated parliamentary regime was dictatorship. Greece had to choose between communism which would spring forth from parliamentary democracy or a dictatorship modelled after that of Fascism¹⁰.

Although it is true that a number of politicians, republican and

9. John Metaxas *To Prosopiko tou Emerologio* (His Personal Diary). Athens: 1951-64, IV, 592-93

10. *Ibid*, IV, 594-95.

monarchist, flirted with fascist doctrines¹¹, only Metaxas was serious about the installation of a totalitarian regime. It must be emphasized at this point that Monarcho-Fascism was preceded by the monarchical restoration and it was the crown which was used as the stepping-stone to institute a distatorship on August 4, 1936.

Despite the enthusiasm which Metaxas and other extremists displayed about the Palace, the prospects for restoration were not favorable in 1934. The majority of the population was not receptive to the idea of crowned democracy and as Sir Sydney Waterlow, British Minister in Athens, noted in March 1934 the Republic was still strong. He wrote:

Firstly I do not think that restoration is at all likely. It might conceivably be attempted if parliamentarism were to break down completely and be succeeded by a dictatorship, but those well qualified to judge say that the Royal Family are not popular, and that if they were to return they would probably not leave the country alive¹².

That was indeed a prophetic statement because one year after the Minister wrote the above despatch parliamentarism did break down completely, a dictatorship was installed and the King restored.

The bankruptcy of parliamentarism resulted from the fierce Royalist-Republican power struggle which was accentuated after the March 1933 elections. In the autumn of 1934 Premier Tsaldaris scored a major victory over his Venizelist (almost synonymous with Republican) opponents. He persuaded a group of Senators to defect from the Republican party-line and vote for Alexander Zaimes, the Royalists' candidate for President of the Republic¹³. Venizelos and his followers retaliated in March 1935 by staging a twelveday military revolt to overthrow the Government¹⁴.

The March Revolt failed and Venizelos' political career ended with the demise of the Republican bloc. The Government purged thousands of republicans from the military, the public schools and the bu-

11. *Ibid*, IV, 596-97.

12. F. O. 371/18393, 140/24/34, Waterlow to O'Malley, Athens, March 3, 1934.

13. F. O. 371/18393, R 5983, No. 390, *Confidential*, Walker to Simon, Athens, October 24, 1934.

14. For complete details on the March Revolt see Gregoriades, *op. cit.* 383-435.

reaucracy replacing them with royalists. The purges were principally carried out because the monarchists wished to remove all obstacles for the dynasty's restoration¹⁵.

After the purges and trials the restoration was only a mere formality. The British Legation in Athens regarded the King's return as necessary and inevitable. Waterlow wrote to the Foreign Office:

In these circumstances (political polarization) it is natural that men's thoughts should turn to monarchy as a possible factor of reconstruction... And what better means to that end than a monarchical system,..... The case for monarchy in Greece may be summed up by the saying that with a people so politically minded as the Greeks, a dynasty is indispensable as a steadying force and as a supreme court of appeal¹⁶.

In the same report the Minister pointed out that he doubted if the Greeks were ready for George II. Nevertheless he submitted reports favorable to the Greek Royal House throughout May 1935.

He outlined the advantages to England if the dynasty was restored. He argued that the British government should play a greater role in Greek internal affairs because Great Britain had a responsibility to protect its interests in the Balkans. He continued:

This is the opportunity of communism, not only in the towns, but in the villages where I gather the feeling in anything for a quite life, with a growing discontent for the propertied classes, who seem able to do nothing but make trouble. The spread of this feeling unchecked means anarchy in the end, and except by the restoration of the dynasty, a survey of the Greek political scene today suggests no means to which it is likely to be checked. May it not, therefore, be to our interest to promote restoration, by giving suitable advice as opportunity offers, and even possibly by helping to remove some of the obstacles that militate against it.¹⁷

15. For details concerning the trials and purges see Nikoles, *op. cit.*, 570-71 and Spyros Linardatos *Pos Eftasame stin Tetarte Avgoustou* (How We Reached the Fourth of August). Athens: 1974, 52-63.

16. F. O. 371/19506, R 2288, No. 119, *Confidential*, Waterlow to Simon, Athens, April 4, 1935.

17. F. O. 371/19507, R 3203, No. 202, *Confidential*, Waterlow to Simon, Athens, May 13, 1935.

There was no «communist threat» to Greece in the 1930s and John Simon, British Foreign Secretary, was cautious about British official efforts to restore the exiled King. He responded to Waterlow that the Greek dynasty's return was certainly desirable but the Government's official policy was one of neutrality in the matter¹⁸.

The restoration became the principal campaign issue before the June 3, 1935 special elections for a National Assembly. Tsaldaris' Populist Party and General George Kondylis' National Radicals did not publically support the dynasty's return. These were the front-runner royalist parties who wanted to capture the republican vote so they avoided the controversial restoration issue¹⁹. There was no doubt, however, that Vice Premier Kondylis, who like Metaxas aspired to become a dictator, wanted the King back in Greece. In a despatch marked *very confidential* Neville Henderson, British ambassador in Belgrade, revealed to Waterlow that the Greek Vice Premier planned to restore George II²⁰.

Tsaldaris remained committed to the Republic and according to Waterlow's assessment just before the elections the prospects for crowned democracy had diminished because of the Premier's lack of enthusiasm for the monarchist cause²¹. After the June election — one of the most «corrupt and unreal in modern times»²² — the monarchist camp was returned to power. The first major decision which the new National Assembly made was to announce that a plebiscite would be held to decide the fate of the regime²³. Tsaldaris' enthusiasm for the Crown had waned after his party scored a major electoral victory. The British Minister in Athens wrote to Sir Samuel Hoare, British Foreign Secretary, that the Government Deputies no longer favored restoration because they enjoyed «unlimited power to monopolize the loaves and

18. F. O. 371/19507, R 3203, No. 187, *Confidential*, Simon to Waterlow, Foreign Office, May 30, 1935.

19. F.O. 371/19507, R 2862, No. 175, *Confidential*, Waterlow to Simon, Athens, April 27, 1935.

20. F. O. 171/19507, 103/2/35, *Very Confidential*, Henderson to Waterlow, Belgrade, May 7, 1935.

21. F. O. 371/19507, R 3909, No. 266, *Confidential*, Waterlow to Simon, Athens, June 17, 1935.

22. *Ibid.*

23. For more details on the restoration issue before the National Assembly see Linardatos, *op. cit.* 77-89.

fishes for themselves». Many republican politicians on the other hand did not object to the ex-King's return because «only under a monarchy can a general amnesty and some mitigation of the purge be expected»²⁴.

In July the Southern Division Chief of the Foreign Office concluded that restoration was necessary and indeed inevitable despite the political developments in Athens. He admitted that the Greeks did not want a change in regimes but he did not regard popular opposition to the Court as an obstacle. «The plebiscite on the question», he wrote, «can be rigged in the same way that any Balkan election is rigged, and probably would be»²⁵. He was correct of course because eight months later the plebiscite was rigged. The man primarily responsible for that affair was General Kondylis.

After the National Assembly recessed for the summer the Vice Premier went to Italy in response to an official invitation from the Fascist Government²⁶. His visit, which took place just before Italy attacked Ethiopia, was designed to convince Mussolini not to interfere in the contemplated restoration of George II. The Italian dictator had no such intention but since he was sympathetic to the Venizelists the Greek monarchists suspected that he might become involved. Kondylis was an honorary member of the Italian League of War Volunteers and while in Rome he delivered the following speech before the League:

It seems though, that Rome's mission in the world is not over, because even today when after the Great War the devastating wind blew from Russia, overthrowing throne, regimes and civilizations, we see only one man standing against this storm, and this man was Italian, il Duce. By creating fascism and placing it as barrier against the wave of destruction and utopian ideas, he saved the world from return to barbarism. We admire with sympathy this achievement and the civilizing struggle that Italy has accomplished. You have created a new regime which Germany has already imitated and today there are Fascist circles in every nation which sooner or later will be triumphant. Long live Italy! Long live il Duce!²⁷

24. F. O. 371/19508, R 4306, No. 309, *Confidential*, Waterlow to Hoare, Athens, July 8, 1935.

25. F. O. 371/19508, R 4397, No. 37, Waterlow, Athens, July 11, 1935.

26. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 94.

27. Cited in Nikoles, *op. cit.* 576.

The Liberal press in Greece criticized Kondylis' visit to Rome and his pro-Fascist address before the League. The Populist newspapers also criticized the Vice Premier and charged that his trip to Rome was linked to the preparations for the restoration²⁸.

On July 16, the day before Kondylis arrived in Athens, the Mayor of the capital, Kostas Kotzias, went to London as the official representative of the Secret Royalist Organization to confer with George II and British officials. After ten days of meetings in London the royalist major returned to Greece and reported to the press that «... the British and French circles place as a principal condition the *legitimacy* of the restoration»²⁹. That however was not actually the case. In a confidential despatch to the Foreign Office the British Legation in Athens reported that during Kotzias' deliberations with George II the latter said that «if he did not go back in the autumn, as he expects to do, he will have to become dictator»³⁰. The question of legitimacy was for the public while covertly illegitimate methods were used to end the Republic. This was with the knowledge of the Foreign Office.

On August 1 Tsaldaris left for his annual vacation in Bavaria. During his absence Kondylis was Acting-Premier. Republican politicians feared that the General would collaborate with the armed forces to install a dictatorship³¹. George II and the die-hard monarchists were pleased that a «man of action» like Kondylis was the head of the government even if for a brief period³².

The Acting-Premier's strategy for restoring George was to create a socio-political crisis during Tsaldaris' absence so that a State of emergency would become necessary and martial law inevitable. Once the Populist Prime Minister was out of the country, Kondylis adopted harsh measures against the anti-royalists. In Macedonia the Governor-General issued an order which banned meetings that supported the Republic. In Epirus three republicans were expelled from the country because they publically expressed their political views. The Minister

28. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 95. Also see SDNA 868.00/885, No. 756, C.A. Aldridge, Athens, July 18, 1935.

29. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 100-01

30. F. O. 371/19508, R 4859, *Confidential*, Walker to O'Malley, Athens, July 30, 1935.

31. SDNA 868.00/886, No. 108, Aldridge, Athens, August 5, 1935. Also see F.O. 371/19508, R 4859, *op. cit.*

32. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 102.

of Justice ordered the police throughout the nation to prohibit the formation of any Republican organizations³³.

Freedom of the press, speech and assembly were banished for republicans only under Kondylis' temporary leadership. The Opposition press was attacked by the Government and by independent royalist organizations³⁴. Thirty armed terrorists of an extreme right-wing organization broke into the offices of *Patris*, a leading Opposition newspaper, and destroyed the machinery and furniture. They injured several of the personnel and left without the slightest interference from the police³⁵. The Government prosecuted *Patris*' editor and sentenced him to two years in prison. Several republican newspapers including the Communist were ordered to stop circulation under emergency measures³⁶.

According to the intelligence reports of the United States Legation in Athens the man behind the anti-republican terrorism was air force General Reppas³⁷. Reppas took orders from the Minister of War, General Kondylis. The Government's persecutions of anti-royalists coincided with working class unrest during August. At the beginning of the month workers at Iraklion, Crete, went on strike demanding higher wages and improved living conditions³⁸. The Prefect (Nomarch) agreed to mediate on behalf of employees and employers but when the strikers marched toward the Prefect's office to attend the scheduled meeting they were met with gunfire. The local authorities ordered troops to fire at the unarmed workers killing seven people and wounding many more³⁹.

The Cretans, enraged with the government's display of brutality, took up arms and prepared for a showdown with the troops. The Acting-Premier adopted emergency measures to suppress the Cretans. The navy sent two destroyers and the air force sent two bombers to the island. The strikers quickly succumbed to the combined strength

33. F. O. 371/19508, R 4973, No. 361, Walker to Hoare, Athens, August 6, 1935.

34. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 104.

35. SDNA 868.00/894, No. 780, Aldridge, Athens, August 14, 1935. Also see F.O. 371/19508, R 5043, No. 377, Walker to Hoare, Athens, August 13, 1935.

36. *Ibid.*

37. SDNA 868.00/894, No. 780, *op. cit.*

38. F.O. 371/19508, R 4962, No. 48, Walker, Athens, August 6, 1935.

39. SDNA 868.00/894, No. 780, *op. cit.*

of the armed forces. As the ordeal ended hundreds of workers were arrested and imprisoned⁴⁰.

When the news of the Cretan strike reached Athens the Greek Communist Party organized workers, students, intellectuals, and other anti-monarchists under the leadership of the United Democratic Committee. This organization was composed of communists and other republican forces whose purpose was to prevent the restoration. Themistocles Sophoulis, the Liberal chief who inherited Venizelos' position, did not support the organization because he maintained that Tsaldaris assured him the Republic was not in danger⁴¹.

The popular response to the United Democratic Committee's anti-Government call was phenomenal. Labor unions throughout major cities sympathized with the Cretan struggle and on August 5 the Greek General Confederation of Labor asked all workers to support their Cretan counterparts⁴². Thousands went on strike while the police and the armed forces were called on the scene to deal with the unrest. On August 11 twenty-three people were killed in labor demonstrations and others wounded. In some cases employers agreed to satisfy labor's wage demands but the concessions were too few and the grievances overwhelming. A general strike was planned but Sophoulis warned the unions that unless they averted the strike the nation would be victimized by a social revolution. He stressed that a national strike constituted a revolutionary threat and he hinted that only leftist forces could possibly benefit from such activity⁴³.

In the midst of social unrest George Pesmatzoglou, a staunch royalist, went on a European tour to confer with Tsaldaris, George II and Venizelos about the restoration issue⁴⁴. The Premier favored postponement of the plebiscite but after he realized that the extremists in the monarchist camp would return the King by extraparliamentary means, he agreed not to delay the proposed plans for the November plebiscite⁴⁵. Venizelos who was the victim of monarchist persecution

40. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 104-05

41. *Ibid.*, 105-06.

42. Kommounistiko Komma tis Elladas, *Episema Keimena*, 1934-1940 (Greek Communist Party, *Official Documents*, 1934-1940). Athens: 1974, IV, 517-19.

43. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 106.

44. *Ibid.*, 111. Also see Georgios Vouros *Panagis Tsaldaris*. Athens: 1955, 507.

45. Georgios Pesmatzoglou *Gyro Apo Tin Palinorthosin Tou* 1935 (On the Restoration of 1935). Athens: 1950, 45-6, 62-4.

many times during his long political career promised Pesmatzoglou that he would not obstruct the dynasty's return.⁴⁶ The ex-Liberal chief hoped that George II would grant amnesty to Venizelists who were purged after the March Revolt. The King confided in Pesmatzoglou that the plebiscite should take place as scheduled without any delays⁴⁷.

On September 5 Foreign Minister Dimitris Maximos and Pesmatzoglou decided to announce the Government's unqualified support for the dynasty. Tsaldaris concurred and he planned to step aside for the formation of a provisional government headed by Kondylis which would have prepared for the plebiscite⁴⁸.

On the same day that Maximos and Pesmatzoglou conferred with the Premier, the die-hard royalist military officers in collaboration with the Minister of war planned a *coup d'état*. The British Legation in Athens was informed about the military plot on September 6⁴⁹. The chief strategists behind the scheme were generals Reppas and Demestichas, Commander of the Athens regiment, who sided with Kondylis on the restoration issue against the President of the Council who appeared to have been stalling. The generals and the Acting-Premier intended to arrest Tsaldaris once he returned to Greece and then they would form «a directorate pending the restoration of the ex-King»⁵⁰. Apparently Kondylis and his cohorts were belatedly notified that Tsaldaris was willing to fully embrace the restoration issue. As a result of that development the Minister of War postponed the plot to overthrow the government. On September 7 the Government newspapers acknowledged the abortive coup which was scheduled to take place on September 9, the day Tsaldaris arrived in Athens⁵¹.

When rumors of the Kondylis scheme reached Pericles Rallis Minister of the Interior and General Panayotakos, both loyal Tsaldarists, they acted swiftly to save the Prime Minister. Panayotakos stationed troops in Corinth where Tsaldaris was due to arrive. He replaced a number of military officers who were devoted to the Minister of War with

46. *Ibid*, 59-62. Also see Linardatos, *op. cit.* 115-16 and Psyroukis, *op. cit.* 66.

47. Pesmatzoglou, *op. cit.* 55-8.

48. *Ibid*, 63-5.

49. F.O. 371/19508, R 5450, No. 219, Walker, Athens, September 6, 1935.

50. F.O. 371/19508, R 5552, No. 398, *Confidential*, Walker to Hoare, Athens, September 11, 1935.

51. F.O. 371/19508, R 5450, No. 119, *op. cit.*

Tsaldarists. All these measures were taken with Rallis' approval while Kondylis was ignorant of the counter-coup preparations⁵².

Kondylis arrived in Athens from Spetzes on September 9 and was informed that Rallis and Panayotakos had secretly prepared a counter-coup. Overwhelmed by the consternation of the plot against him the Vice Premier demanded the immediate dismissal of General Panayotakos as Commander of the First Army Corps otherwise he threatened to resign. Tsaldaris grudgingly consented to Kondylis' ultimatum hoping to avoid a possible military confrontation among royalists⁵³.

Rallis was also forced out of office giving a decisive administrative victory to the extreme monarchists in government. On September 10 the Prime Minister publically announced that he supported the restoration and he asked the people to vote for the dynasty. After that date the Populist chief lost control of his Cabinet to Kondylis who had mobilized the ultra-royalists behind him. Alan Walker, Waterlow's temporary replacement at the Legation, informed the Foreign Office on September 11 that the die-hard royalists were in total control of the government. «The events outlined above», he wrote, «have resulted in an undoubted victory for the extreme royalists who, though a minority in the country, now have the whip hand over their less organized opponents⁵⁴».

The republicans were indeed rather loosely organized and were not resisting the systematic monarchist measures to restore the ex-King by forcible methods. On September 17 the republican parties formally announced for the first time that they considered the plebiscite illegal but they intended to participate in the process⁵⁵. That announcement coincided with the disintegration of the Populist party. Fifteen Tsaldarist deputies resigned to protest Kondylis' attempted coup and his blatant manipulation of the Cabinet. Many military officers who were loyal Tsaldarists and who had supported Panayotakos resented the Vice Premier's domination of the government and his control of the armed forces⁵⁶. The Minister of War, however, was firmly in power and a few renegade officers did not pose a threat to his

52. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 116-17.

53. *Ibid.*, 118-21. Also see Pesmatzoglou, *op. cit.* 69-71.

54. F.O. 371/19508, R 5552, No. 398, *op. cit.*

55. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 124.

56. F.O. 371/10508, R 5586, No. 54, Walker, Athens, September 17, 1935.

carefully constructed power-base. It would have taken much more than editorial criticism, Cabinet resignations and political and military defections to stop the irreversible trend of dictatorship and Monarcho-Fascism.

Within a few days of Rallis' resignation Kondylis consolidated power in the Cabinet to the extent that he ruled Greece without any active opposition from the moderates. Walker remarked on September 17 that «General Kondylis is a virtual dictator, and is consolidating his position by transferring to provincial garrisons such senior officers as carried out orders of General Panayotakos on the Prime Minister's return to Athens⁵⁷». Kondylis managed to expand and solidify his power primarily because of the Opposition's weakness and failure to rally behind Tsaldaris and the moderate royalist forces⁵⁸.

On September 18 the Council announced that a decree was drafted which outlined the manner by which the plebiscite was to be carried out. There were fourteen articles in the Ministerial Decree and they were designed to provide the legal foundation for the plebiscite. According to the second article all registered voters were required to participate. Everyone in the military had to vote whether he had registered or not. Anyone who abstained without «justification» was subject to penalty⁵⁹.

The ballot papers were marked by two different colors; blue for the King and red for the Republic. Article XI stipulated that a simple majority of fifty per cent was required to reinstate the monarchy. The simple majority rule was a departure from the Government's original position which required seventy per cent of the vote in the King's favor for his return. Needless to say that the Decree was drafted by the extreme royalists.

After the Cabinet announced the Ministerial Decree Tsaldaris held a Party meeting and threatened that if anyone opposed the Decree he would be expelled from the party. Alan Walker wrote that the Government in Athens expected the King to return as the head of the Royalist bloc and hence the opponent of the Republicans⁶⁰. The monarchists

57. F. O. 371/19508, R 5640, No. 402, *Confidential*, Walker to Hoare, Athens, September 24, 1935.

58. SDNA 868.00/910, No. 844, MacVeagh, Athens, September 24, 1935.

59. For complete details concerning the Ministerial Decree see F.O. 371/19508, R 5640, No. 402, *op. cit.* and SDNA 868.00/910, No. 844, *op. cit.*

60. *Ibid.*

naturally craved to secure the Crown's grace but they realized that George would be forced to make concessions to the Opposition.

Just a few weeks before the plebiscite the republicans launched some last minute attacks on the Ministerial Decree and the Crown. The Opposition press charged that the royalists intended to engage in multiple voting practices because the Decree allowed for it. Some newspapers charged that the servicemen and the gendarmes who should have been kept out of politics were forced to vote in the plebiscite in the King's favor. Furthermore, the press charged that the color difference on the ballots lucidly illustrated the fraudulent character of the entire process. The fact that authorities prevented the Opposition from openly campaigning for the Republic and against crowned democracy was another indication that the plebiscite would be conducted unethically and illegally. Finally, the Government supervising committees at the polling places were composed of «the same persons with which M. Tsaldaris carried out the elections of 9th June after illegally dismissing those who had been legally appointed by his own Government the preceeding January»⁶¹. According to the Opposition and to the British and American intelligence reports the election process was expected to be very corrupt.

On September 29, less than a week before the plebiscite, a massive demonstration was staged in Thessaloniki where the Liberal leader Sophoulis and a Communist politician, Giannes Partsalides spoke out against the Government's illegal practices. The local authorities ordered the troops present at the demonstration and during Sophoulis' speech soldiers opened fire on the amorphous crowd wounding thirty people⁶². The British Legation informed the Foreign Office that «there is much dissatisfaction in the country and that opposition to the return of the King is rapidly spreading even to those parts of Greece which are traditionally royalist in the Peloponnese»⁶³. In Athens the Republican resistance against the restoration was so intense during the last week of September that the State resorted to terrorist activities to suppress it⁶⁴.

61. F.O. 371/19508, R 57508, No. 413, *Confidential*, Walker to Hoare, Athens, September 24, 1935.

62. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 125-26.

63. F.O. 371/19508, R 5781, No. 413, *op. cit.*

64. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 126. Also see F.O. 371/19508, R 5949, No. 422, October 4, 1935.

On October 2 republican party chiefs Sophoulis, George Papan-dreou, Alexander Papanastasiou, George Kaphandaris and Alexander Mylonas addressed a letter to George II in which they expressed the views of their constituents.

The popular will, in all corners of the country, shows itself to be strongly in favor of the republican form of government. The saddest thing of all is that the restoration of your throne will inevitably increase and perpetuate the spiritual division and, in the final analysis, the complete destruction of the nation. It would be a very sad sign indeed if your attention were not called, and if you felt no uneasiness as to the manner in which the plebiscite is being prepared in undisguised contempt of the rights and liberties of the people. There is no kind of fraud for which ordaining the plebiscite does not provide and pave the way. This is why we feel obliged to inform you that the great majority of the Greek people not only will never recognize as legal a throne which is based on violence and fraud, but will continue to fight to the end for the republic,.....⁶⁵

The above letter was the strongest against the restoration since the issue resurfaced but as Lincoln MacVeagh pointed out the republicans were not so much against the Crown as they were against the royalist parties.

On October 2 a special Chamber session was held in which one hundred and eighty-seven of the two-hundred and eighty-seven deputies participated. The Chamber agreed to support the Prime Minister's decisions on state affairs. The vote of confidence was an astonishing victory for the Populist leader over his arch rival Kondylis. It was further proof that many Royalists opposed the extremist policies of Kondylo-Metaxists. The Minister of War was not dismayed, however, because he lost his colleagues' support. According to the intelligence reports of the United States Legation in Athens Kondylis secretly conspired to carry out a coup «to sweep Mr. Tsaldaris into the discord and invite the King back by decree, he himself then assuming

65. Cited in SDNA 868.00/914, 862, MacVeagh, Athens, October 14, 1935. Also see Linardatos, *op. cit.* 126-27.

the post of Regent, and if the King will not return that of a dictator»⁶⁶. MacVeagh's sources could not have been more accurate. On October 8 the adventurous General walked into the Premier's office and presented him with an ultimatum to adopt a more determined role in support of the dynasty.

Tsaldaris knew that Kondylis had conspired with the chiefs of the armed forces otherwise he would not have delivered the ultimatum. The Prime Minister telephoned Alexander Papagos, Head of the First Army Corps, rear-Admiral Oikonomou, Head of Naval Staff and General Reppas, Head of the Air Force, to assure them that he consented to Kondylis' terms. The following day the Minister of War met with the three military leaders and convinced them that Tsaldaris would betray them. At that meeting they all agreed to overthrow the government⁶⁷.

On October 10 Reppas, Papagos and Oikonomou ambushed the Premier and presented him with an ultimatum to recall the ex-King immediately. Tsaldaris refused to be coerced by «soldiers» so he was ousted. The three officers pronounced themselves a triumvirate and at noon of that day announced that the *coup d'état* had succeeded⁶⁸.

According to MacVeagh's sources the Minister of War planned the entire plot before he met with Tsaldaris on October 8. The die-hard royalist forces were scheming to restore George II and then hold a plebiscite. The reason behind these developments according to the American Minister was that many monarchist politicians had extended loans to the Royal House and they did not wish to gamble with the dynasty's fate by relying on Constitutional methods. Moreover, the British financial institution Habros' bank, with substantial investments in the Greek economy and finances, had extended loans to the ex-King. The Habros found it profitable therefore to finance the Crown's restoration⁶⁹.

On October 10 the National Assembly was to meet to decide if the ex-monarch should return before the plebiscite. The Minister of War feared that the National Assembly would not favor him preferring Tsaldaris' more moderate approach to the restoration. The day

66. SDNA 868.00/914, No. 862, *op. cit.*

67. Linardatos, *op. cit.*, 128.

98. *Ibid.*, 129.

69. SDNA 868.00/915, No. 874, MacVeagh, Athens, October 9, 1935.

before the military coup took place the *Messenger d'Athènes* reported that George II was willing to abide by the Assembly's decision whether favorable or unfavorable. The article stated that:

Consequently there would be no objection on the King's part if the National Assembly, reversing its previous position, should vote for the abolition of the Republic and the restoration of the monarchy before the holding of a plebiscite, which would then have the quality of a ratification by the people.

Before the above article was published the ex-King stated categorically that he would only return to his throne if the people willed it.

On the same day that Kondylis presented Tsaldaris with the ultimatum, George II reversed his position about returning to Greece upon popular consent. The Vice Premier therefore arranged for the dictatorship with the aid of the extremists in order to force the monarchy upon the reluctant Greek people and to prevent the National Assembly from freely exercising its duty.

The Triumvirate, or the Revolutionary Committee, as the officers labelled themselves, abolished the Republic immediately after seizing power. No-one in the Government resisted the takeover as though they all expected it and were willing to tolerate it⁷¹. The Revolutionary Committee appointed Kondylis President of the Council and then it dissolved itself. General Kondylis was finally dictator, a long awaited dream. He announced to the public that he was Regent until November 3, the date of the plebiscite⁷².

As expected the new Cabinet was composed entirely of die-hard monarchists⁷³. In the afternoon of October 10 the National Assembly met as scheduled under heavy military guard. A few hours before the Assembly convened the Regent-Premier signed a proclamation of martial law. At the session Tsaldaris condemned the conspirators who engineered the coup. He ascertained that they did not represent the

70. Cited in Ibid.

71. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 130-31.

72. F.O. 371/19508, R 6097, No. 239, Waterlow to Hoare, Athens, October 10, 1935.

73. F.O. 371/19508, R 6160, No. 434, *Confidential*, Waterlow to Hoare, Athens, October 11, 1935.

peoples' interests but those of foreign Powers, obviously meaning Great Britain⁷⁴.

After he finished speaking the ex-Prime Minister walked out of the meeting followed by one-hundred and sixty-five Populist deputies⁷⁵. Only eighty-two deputies remained to listen to Kondylis' justifications for the military overthrow of the government. He explained to the rump Assembly that the former President of the Council intended to cancel the plebiscite thus making military intervention unavoidable⁷⁶. The deputies sympathized with the Regent-Premier so there were no questions asked. They passed a motion to abolish the Republic and revive the royalist constitution of 1911. General Metaxas and all the extremists at the session gave their vote of confidence and pledged to support the new government's policies until the King's triumphant return⁷⁷.

Great Britain's official position concerning the new Government was not one of jubilation. The Foreign Office did not trust General Kondylis because he flirted with Mussolini's Fascist regime and because he had dictatorial ambitions which compromised the Crown's power. On October 11 Waterlow warned the Foreign Secretary that Kondylis wanted to «postpone the plebiscite indefinitely and govern as dictator without the King»⁷⁸. The British representative recommended that in view of that consideration the Foreign Office should not be hasty in recognizing the Dictatorship.

Waterlow was sceptical about the strength of the new regime. He was concerned that Kondylis was extremely unpopular in the country and even though he enjoyed the loyalty of the armed forces, the popular opposition was too widespread to be taken lightly. Because of the opposition to the Dictatorship the opposition to the Crown had also increased⁷⁹. Sir Sydney continued:

74. Linardatos, *op. cit.* 130-31.

75. *Ibid.*, 131, Waterlow informed Hoare that one-hundred and seventeen deputies remained in the Chamber while one-hundred and twenty Populist deputies followed Tsaldaris. These figures have been disputed by recent research in Greece. For Waterlow's account see F.O. 371/19508, R 6105, No. 241, Waterlow to Hoare, Athens, October 11, 1935.

76. Linardatos, *op. cit.*, 131.

77. F.O. 371/19508, R 6160, No. 434, *op. cit.*

78. F.O. 371/19508, R 6107, No. 243, Waterlow, Athens, October 11, 1935.

79. F.O. 371/19508, R 6108, No. 244, Waterlow, Athens, October 11, 1935.

In conclusion I feel that the consequences of this militarist stroke must be regarded with some apprehension. The strong suspicion that it has the approval of the ex-King, and that in that sense is a put up job, makes it the more difficult to believe that His Majesty's return can be for the good of the country or that the basis of his restoration can be either popular or lasting..... The Republicans, certainly more than half the country now, and excluded from any share in public life, will be violently hostile and may go the length of boycotting the plebiscite if it is held⁸⁰.

The British government recognized the Kondylis' dictatorship despite Waterlow's recommendations not to do so. Sir Sydney informed the Foreign Office on October 10 that «There is general agreement that plebiscite is bound to be a farce. Reign of terror is a fact. I understand that German Government regard restoration prospect with satisfaction for this reason»⁸¹.

Six days after the military dictatorship was established George II conferred with Sir Samuel Hoare to express his willingness to return to Greece. He asked the Foreign Secretary what England's official position would be concerning the plebiscite. Hoare replied: «...in the face of so many disquieting features we would not take the responsibility of encouraging it or discouraging it»⁸². He added that it was the King's choice of whether to return or not but Great Britain intended to recognize the dynasty once restored.

The Greek ex-monarch asked for British advisers once he regained his Crown and Hoare assured him that his request would be fulfilled. In a despatch to Waterlow the Foreign Secretary wrote: «As the restoration is now inevitable we had much better do everything that we legitimately can to help to make the monarchy as secure as possible⁸³.» Officially therefore England retained a role of a friendly supporter to the Crown.

The Foreign Office did not share Waterlow's stiff opposition to Kondylis' dictatorship and to the restoration. A memorandum dated October 22 pointed out that Sir Sydney was so enthusiastic about the

80. F.O. 371/19508, R 6160, No. 434, *op. cit.*

81. F.O. 371/19508, R 6174, No. 68, Waterlow, Athens, October 10, 1935.

82. F.O. 371/19508, R 6249, Hoare Foreign Office, October 16, 1935.

83. *Ibid.*

monarchy after the March Revolt that he «recommended that H.M. Government should officially support the restoration of King George⁸⁴». The author of the memorandum, Southern Division Chief O'Malley, argued that the Minister in Athens apparently changed his mind about the dynasty after the October coup. He should have understood, however, O'Malley maintained, that it was part of the Greek political nature to disregard Constitutional procedure and orderly compromise. He concluded:

Roughly speaking, it may be said that hardly any change of Government, and certainly no change of regime, has ever been carried through in modern Greece except by more or less illegal forcible means. It may be said, therefore, that the restoration of the monarchy by means of a *coup d'état* is quite inaccordance with Greek custom and therefore almost inevitable⁸⁵.

The reality however was that a British Bank financed the restoration and the Foreign Office recognized the terrorist dictatorship of General Kondylis — despite Waterlow's best judgement — because approximately half of the Greek foreign debt was owed to British financial institutions and because George II was to be the «British connection» in Greece.

England, Germany, France and Italy recognized the Greek dictatorship almost immediately⁸⁶. The United States followed the course of its European allies only after a slight hesitation⁸⁷. The State Department argued that in March 1924 when the Fourth Constituent Assembly abolished the Glucksburg dynasty, the United States recognized the Republic and continued normal relations with Greece. There was no reason therefore for the government in Washington to break diplomatic relations with Greece because Kondylis abolished the Republic⁸⁸.

General Kondylis was secure in his new role because he enjoyed the loyalty of the armed forces and the recognition of the Great Powers. The political leadership however and the people resisted the

84. F.O. 371/19509, R 6297, No. 73, Waterlow, Athens, October 14, 1935.

85. *Ibid.*

86. SDNA 868.00/911, No. 156, MacVeagh to Hull, Athens, October 14, 1935.

87. SDNA 868.00/911, No. 68, Hull to MacVeagh, State Department, October 15, 1935.

88. SDNA 868.00/911, (not numbered), State Department, October 11, 1935.

new government. The Cretans who were mostly Republicans refused to accept the legitimacy of the new government and the change in the regime⁸⁹. Northern Greece (New Greece) which was primarily Republican was at a state of social unrest because of the military coup and the reign of terror. The Republican bloc formed a committee to prevent the rigged plebiscite but martial law prohibited free activity and organizing by political parties or other groups opposed to the dictatorship⁹⁰. Martial law could not prevent the republican newspaper *Kypriakos Typos* from expressing its indignation against the reign of terror instituted by the new government. On October 12 the following article entitled «The Curse» was published.

The republican government of the country has been overthrown, the liberties of the people have been curtailed and abolished and a wave of the most terrible terrorism has been let free.... It has been shown that the supreme rulers were nothing else than agents in the service of the exiled royal family... And what next? Is the King of the Greeks expected to return! But who are these Greeks? Are they those who betrayed their leaders? Of the Greeks whose opinion has not been consulted? Of those Greeks who a few years ago had sent the King, now brought back with the aid of the bayonets of his agents, far away from the country?....⁹¹

The day after the above article was published another appeared in the same newspaper. It stated that the royalists prepared for the restoration long before the October coup⁹².

The new administration included die-hard royalists some of who openly supported Fascism⁹³. Kondylis who was on record for his enthusiasm for the «Italian accomplishment» announced six days after he seized power that Greece would maintain cordial relations with Italy and Germany⁹⁴. In view of his foreign policy and his ideological leanings, Waterlow questioned the wisdom of reestab-

89. F.O. 371/19508, R 6170, No. 69, Waterlow, Athens, October 12, 1935.

90. F.O. 371/19509, R 6289, No. 445, *op. cit.*

91. Cited in F.O. 371/19509, No. 415, Athens, October 31, 1935.

92. Cited in *Ibid.*

93. F.O. 371/19508, R 6170, No. 69, *op. cit.*

94. F.O. 371/19508, R 6170, No. 69, *op. cit.*

lishing the Crown under a government with fascist tendencies. He pointed out that the reactionary clique in power led by General Kondylis intended to hold the King prisoner to the dictatorship once he was restored⁹⁵.

The government in London was somewhat concerned about Kondylis' strong sympathies for the Fascist government of Rome. On October 21 the Foreign Office recommended that «The King would do well not to entrust himself to General Kondylis»⁹⁶. The British tolerated the Greek dictatorship for it served the useful function of returning the Royal House but after George was restored he alienated Kondylis as the British had advised.

The Regent-Premier was not only distrusted by the Foreign Office and opposed by the Republicans in Greece, he was also the target of monarchist plots to overthrow him. There was widespread dissension among military officers who refused to serve the extremist government. Overall the new administration was plagued with fragmented and opposing royalist forces who felt that the Premier was not the best representative of the monarchist camp despite his attempts to portray that role⁹⁷.

To consolidate power Kondylis forced Zaimes out of office and prepared to launch even more austere anti-republican measures. Although the monarchists presented a major threat to his government he wanted to display his power by crushing the Opposition hoping that the effects would dissuade moderate royalists from dissension⁹⁸.

One week before the plebiscite the administration resorted to repressive measures against the anti-royalist forces in order to secure majority vote for the Crown. The British Legation in Athens reported to the Foreign Office some of Kondylis' tactics which were designed to ensure a Royalist victory.

Measures of intimidation and suppression include the refusal of all applications from Republicans to hold public me-

95. *Ibid.*

96. F.O. 371/19509, R 6301, No. 258, Waterlow, Athens, October 18, 1935.

97. *Ibid* and F.O. 371/19509, R 6250, No. 252, Waterlow, Athens, October 17, 1935.

98. F.O. 371/19509, R 6299, No. 75, Waterlow, Athens, October 16, 1935, and F.O. 371/19509, R 6466, No. 468, Waterlow, Athens, October 26, 1935 and SDNA 868.00/913, No. 165, *op. cit.*

etings, indoor or outdoor; abolition of the free expression of opinion in the press; the arrest and bludgeoning, before trial by court martial, of all persons shouting for the republic, while Royalists cheer for the King with impunity and fire off pistols in the streets; concentration camps for persons *suspected* of communism or «communizing»; and the deportation on police initiative, of anyone provoking breach of peace (i.e. Republicans)... In the arts of propaganda, display, lies and mass suggestion, by which modern dictatorships mould the mob, General Kondylis is showing himself an apt pupil of other leaders of people⁹⁹.

Kondylis was a ruthless authoritarian but he was no Mussolini or Hitler. Nevertheless it was his dictatorship which laid the foundations for the Monarcho-Fascist regime of General Metaxas. In a celebration ceremony commemorating King Constantine and the Greek military victory of 1912 at Thessaloniki, the Regent-Premier delivered a speech fused with fascist slogans¹⁰⁰. It was Metaxas however who developed a fascist ideology and implemented his dream of the «New State» and the «Third Greek Civilization».

Kondylis' oppressive policies were so extreme that even the conservative London *Times* which often reflected official views deplored the Greek government's methods designed to restore George II¹⁰¹. The royalist press in Greece however proudly announced that Great Britain backed the restoration efforts¹⁰². It was widely believed in many circles in Europe and the United States that England was forcing an unpopular dynasty upon the Greek people. Such suspicions were well founded of course because George II never concealed his love for England and his dissatisfaction with the Greeks. In 1938 the King con-

99. F.O. 371/19509, R 6554, No. 466, *Confidential*, Waterlow to Foreign Office, Athens, October 25, 1935.

100. F.O. 371/19509, R 6703, No. 474, *Confidential*, Waterlow to Hoare, Athens, October 29, 1935.

101. For the London *Times* article dated October 26, 1935 see SDNA 868/00 934, No. 915, MacVeagh, Athens, November 9, 1935.

102. F.O. 371/19509, R 6350, Waterlow, Athens, October 16, 1935 and F.O. 371/19509, R 6446, Greek Republican Union to Samuel Hoare, Chicago, October 29, 1935.

fided in the Sweedish Minister in Athens that, «I was sent down here against my will..... this is a damnable profession»¹⁰³.

On the eve of the plebiscite the Government created an artificial atmosphere of enthusiasm for the monarchy. It was clear however even to the die-hard royalists that there was a lack of genuine support for the Crown¹⁰⁴. On November 3 the plebiscite was held, as predicted, under the most fraudulent conditions. There were 400,000 more votes than registered voters. The grand total of votes polled was 1,527, 714; 1,491,992 were for the monarchy and only 32,454 for the Republic with 3,268 invalid ballots. Royalist officials admitted privately that the published figures were meaningless¹⁰⁵. The published figures were exaggerated because they not only represented popular approval for the Glucksburgs but they were also indicative of mass support for the Kondylis dictatorship.

In reality very few voters actually casted a ballot and very few people were so gullible as to believe the government's fraudulent figures. George II however was thankful for the favorable results and sent the following message to his subjects:

Greeks, with God's help and with the Greek peoples will, I am returning to the country. I am not resentful towards anyone. I shut the near past, I consider only the future, supported only by the feeling of my beloved people and the genuine help of all¹⁰⁶.

Obviously the King wished to return as the representative of all parties not as the head of the Royalist factions. Nevertheless he did become a prisoner of the extreme right wing parties after he was restored because he chose to do so.

It is worth noting at this point Lincoln MacVeagh's comments concerning the King's address to «his beloved people». He wrote to Secretary of State Hull:

103. SDNA 868.00/1031, No. 2088, MacVeagh, Athens, February 5, 1935.

104. F.O. 371/19509, R 6566, No. 266, Waterlow, Athens, November 1, 1935.

105. For the British Legation's observations on the vote fraud see F.O. 371/19509, R 6717, No. 482, Waterlow to Hoare, Athens, November 6, 1935.

106. Cited in Linardatos, *op. cit.* 193-40. For the King's message see F.O 371/19509, R 7362, No. 518, *Confidential*, Waterlow, Athens, December 2, 1935.

But these are days of high royalist hopes. So far, God has not been invoked as the Author of the Restoration. But his name has at least been mentioned among those invited to attend (the enthronement ceremonies). M. Mavromichalis (Minister of Communications) is reported to have said that the ceremonies attending will be principally religious, «*car les Grecs commencent toujours par Dieu*». The word «always» opens up a long cista into the past. Certainly God Hermes would have delighted in the recent plebiscite¹⁰⁷.

The American and British representatives informed their respective governments that a large number of people stayed away from the polls for fear intimidation. Both Ministers agreed about the fraudulent character of the plebiscite¹⁰⁸.

According to MacVeagh vote fraud was so extensive that even Kondylis was annoyed with his followers for «exaggerating» the figures. Publically however the Premier expressed gratitude and satisfaction for the plebiscite results¹⁰⁹. He declared that: «There are happily no longer any political parties in Greece today. The Greek people, in presenting itself at the polls as a unit, has destroyed them. The new political order began in our land of Greece from the day of the 3rd of November»¹¹⁰.

George II had scored a major victory despite the overwhelming opposition to his throne. The principal beneficiary of his return was not Kondylis or the royalists who labored for his reinstatement, but rather Great Britain which after the restoration improved financial and commercial relations with Greece and exerted more diplomatic influence than before. On November 18 four days before George was scheduled to arrive in Athens, Sir Sydney Waterlow outlined the policy which the Court would follow. He wrote to the Foreign Office:

It is not difficult to see that there are two things imperatively requiring to be done if the necessary conditions (for Constitutional Monarchy) are to be created; the armed forces must be inspired with a sence of personal loyalty to the Crown,

107. SDNA 868.00/934, No. 915, *op. cit.*

108. SDNA, 868.00/920, No. 167, MacVeagh, Athens, November 4, 1935.

109. SDNA 868.00/934, No. 915, *op. cit.*

110. *Ibid.*

since otherwise they will never be taken out of politics; and an election must be held as soon as possible, with the minimum of manipulation and with all parties, Republican or otherwise, freely participating, since otherwise the influence of the Crown will be based from the start on Government that will not represent the people¹¹¹.

It was essential for the dynasty to have the loyalty of the armed forces so that no political party or leader could present a threat to the Court which represented British interests in Greece.

On the same day that Waterlow submitted the above despatch MacVeagh informed the State Department that the Foreign Office had instructed its Minister in Athens to «guide and counsel» the Greek Court. He also ascertained that George II did not trust anyone other than his British associates. Finally, MacVeagh concluded that Sir Sydney agreed to advise the King on internal affairs¹¹². Clearly that constituted foreign interference in the affairs of a sovereign nation.

George II arrived in Athens on November 25 to an unreceptive population. The Republican leaders did not recognize the Court's legitimacy and they refused to compromise with the monarchy. Upon the advice of Waterlow the King ameliorated relations with the Republicans and elections were held in January 1936. There was a political deadlock, however, between Liberals and Populists and it was finally resolved by the royal appointment of General Metaxas as Premier on April 13 and dictator on August 4, 1936. The King's restoration which was to be the «balancing factor» in the political arena the stepping-stone for the authoritarian regime of 1936-1941.

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111. F.O. 371/19509, R 6989, No. 502, *Confidential*, Waterlow, Athens, November 18, 1935.

112. SDNA 868.00/924, No. 172, MacVeagh, Athens, November 18, 1935.