

The historical survey written by the theologian Apostol Mihailov begins with the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate by the firman of the Sultan in 1870 (in stead of the Patriarchal Tome), omitting however the period up to the arbitrary declaration of the Bulgarian church as a patriarchate, thus causing a break with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. But this is put right with a footnote by the author Varnavas "for completion of the historical facts," who also inserts the relevent bibliography. In any case, the survey by Mihailov includes all the legislative fluctuations undergone by the church of Bulgaria at the hands of the government of the Bulgarian schism. There follows the charter of the Patriarchate now in force. This was drawn up by the Holy Synod of December 31, 1950, and consists of 242 articles. The charter is divided into three sections, the first dealing with the organization of the church, that is, on the election of the Patriarch and the bishops, on the Holy Synod and other administrative agencies, the second covers the duties of the church authorities, and the third treats with ecclesiastical courts together with a section on the finances of the church.

Such in brief is this welcome edition. The fact emerges that the Greek clergy has in its ranks writers of outstanding merit and qualifications who can undertake such erudite and scholarly works dealing with ecclesiastical jurisprudence. This fact should by no means go unnoticed.

University of Thessaloniki

CONST. A. VAVOUSKOS

John O. Iatrides, *Revolt in Athens: The Greek Communist "Second Round," 1944-1945*. Princeton University Press, 1972.

The history of Greece in the last generation will owe a permanent debt to two American scholars, both of Greek descent: Professor D.G. Kousoulas, whose *Revolution and Defeat* was published in 1965, and Professor John O. Iatrides, whose *Revolt in Athens* has recently appeared. Both are works of genuine scholarship, based on original research and serious study. To set them side by side is necessarily to detect some contrasts between them.

Kousoulas covered the whole history of the Greek Communist Party (KKE) from its foundation in 1918 to the early 1960's. Iatrides has concentrated on the "second round" of the KKE's struggle with the

established state, in other words the "revolt in Athens" in December 1944, though he has also examined in some depth the periods immediately preceding and following that event.

The book begins with a brief, competent sketch of what may be called "pre-history," increasing in detail with the years of occupation and resistance (1941-44). The last twelve months of the occupation (October 1943 to October 1944) are fully treated in all their complexity, in order to establish what is meant by the "first round" to which the revolt in Athens was the successor. I welcome the fact that Iatrides applies the term "first round" to the civil war in the mountains between ELAS (the Communist-controlled National Popular Liberation Army) and Zervas' EDES (the National Republican Greek League), rather than to the mutiny in the Greek forces of the Middle East in April 1944, since it is reasonably clear that the Communists' official leadership neither planned nor intended the latter event at all. It is a curious fact, to the best of my knowledge, that the KKE never defined exactly what it meant in retrospect by the "first round," but most non-Communist Greek writers have applied the term to the mutiny, which took place after the fighting between ELAS and Zervas had ended. This is a misconception, and Iatrides rightly avoids it.

He makes, however, two minor mistakes with regard to the "first round." He states (p. 42) that in October 1943 ELAS attacked not only Zervas' forces but also those of EKKA (the 5/42 Regiment, commanded by Psarros). This is incorrect: Psarros had in fact been attacked twice before in 1943, and was finally attacked and murdered in April 1944, but during the "first round" he was unexpectedly neutral. It seems clear that ELAS hoped to absorb his force peacefully after destroying Zervas; but having failed to destroy Zervas and liquidated the "first round," irresponsible leaders of ELAS took a private revenge on Psarros. I incline to the view that this disastrous crime was not intended by Siantos, the Secretary General of the KKE, and that the document in which he is supposed to have ordered the attack on Psarros was a forgery — one of many which make the historian's task in these years one of some difficulty.

A second minor error in Iatrides' account concerns the dispute between Papandreou and Siantos about the terms on which the KKE and its partners would enter the Government of National Unity. Iatrides states (pp. 69-70) that when the KKE presented its "final terms" early in July 1944, one of them was that the blame for the "first round" should

be placed entirely on Zervas. This would have been too grotesque a demand even for Siantos to make. In fact he demanded only that the blame for the latest incident between ELAS and Zervas, which had taken place towards the end of June, should be placed on the latter. In that matter he was probably more nearly right than wrong.

On one other point in the prelude to the "second round" Iatrides is mistaken, though he could not have known it. Discussing the initiative taken by the Prime Minister, Tsouderos, to remedy the deteriorating Greek situation in December 1943, he states (p. 47) that it "became necessary to ascertain the reactions of those in Athens (but not those of Mountain Greece)" to his proposals. In fact, however, his proposals were communicated to ELAS GHQ in the mountains through my own wireless link. The text of the communication does not survive, but I recall one curious particular about it. It was transmitted in Greek, using the Latin alphabet. The type of cipher used (known as "double transposition") could not distinguish between capital letters and lower case, nor could it indicate accents or other diacritical marks, nor even spaces between words. In consequence, when Tsouderos stated that he was prepared to consider a far-reaching reconstruction of his Government ENKAIRO, it was impossible to tell whether he meant "in Cairo" or "in time." The point was of some importance to the KKE, which was anxious that at least a section of the Government should be installed in the mountains. It took some days to ascertain that Tsouderos meant only "in Cairo." If he had been prepared to establish some Ministers in the mountains (as he had been urged to do by non-Communist leaders of the Resistance as early as August 1943), it is possible that the formation of PEEA (the Political Committee of National Liberation) under Communist control in April 1944 might have been averted.

With these few qualifications, Iatrides has presented an impeccable account of the background to the great drama which followed the liberation of Greece. In particular, he has for the first time made full use of the American materials which were not available to earlier writers. He shows that the American authorities were much better informed about the affairs of Greece than had been generally supposed. So far as the Greek authorities in the Middle East were concerned, the credit is rightly given in the main to Lincoln MacVeagh, the pre-war Minister in Athens, who resumed his post as Ambassador to the Greek (and incidentally also to the Yugoslav) authorities in exile towards the end of 1943. His despatches were invariably judicious, and equally sympathetic

to the Greeks and the British. Unfortunately the State Department largely ignored his advice that the US Government should play a more active role. Still more unfortunately, whenever President Roosevelt did intervene, it was on the basis of personal caprices, which happened to coincide with those of Churchill and field-Marshal Smuts. The failure to pay more attention to MacVeagh was indeed tragic, for he understood what was going on among the Greeks better than any British diplomatist. It would also have been a belated act of justice to give some credit, so far as information from within Greece was concerned, to Major Gerald K. Wines, the senior American officer in occupied Greece.

The use of American materials distinctly improves the balance of Iatrides' account in comparison with that of Kousoulas. On the other hand, Iatrides has been much less thorough than Kousoulas in using Greek Communist sources. He says at one point that "the motives and plans of the Communist leadership throughout this critical period will not be adequately revealed until and unless the decision-makers of EAM and KKE who are still alive today decide to write their version of history instead of crude propaganda tracts." This is perhaps unduly harsh. Quite a lot can be learned from Communist sources even as they stand. Ideological bias is fairly easy to discount, and most of the forgeries (by both sides) are not too difficult to detect. There are undoubted fragments of fact in the outpourings of Zakhariadis and Bartzotas in 1950 and afterwards, as Kousoulas has shown. I would say the same for the recollections of Orestis, which Kousoulas also used, and for those of Tzimas and Markos Vaphiadis as recorded by Dominique Eudes in *Les Kapétanios* (Paris 1970), though of course verbatim accounts of long-past conversations cannot be taken seriously. The biography of Aris Veloukhiotis by Panos Lagdas (Athens 1964) is also informative; and not less so is a manuscript of the recollections of Dimitrios Vlandas, which came into my hands last year through the good offices of Mr. Panaghiotis Lambrias. There are also illuminating passages in the works of a number of ex-Communists such as Papakonstantinou, Stavridis and Dimitriou-Nikiphoros, as well as foreign Communists like Tempo (Svetozar Vukmanović). Admittedly it is hard work extricating the wheat from the chaff, but the task is worth while.

The most important point on which it sheds light is the question whether there was or was not a Communist conspiracy to seize power in 1944, and whether or not (if there was a conspiracy) it was promoted from Moscow. Hard though it may be for many Greeks to accept the

fact, it can no longer seriously be disputed that the answer to the second question is negative. Stalin simply abandoned interest in Greece during the course of 1944, and as Iatrides rightly concludes "the Greek Communists were truly their own agents and not Moscow's" (p. 279). The answer to the first question is somewhat harder, unless one regards the mere existence of a Communist Party as a conspiracy in itself. Broadly speaking, Kousoulas argued that there was a conspiracy, Iatrides argues that there was no conspiracy but merely a succession of blunders and misjudgments on both sides. My own view is that both are partly right. It is rather like the question, did Hitler plan aggressive war in 1939? No one can seriously doubt that he planned aggressive war, but A.J.P. Taylor cogently argued in *The Origins of the Second World War* (London 1961) that he did not intend that particular war to break out in that particular way on 1 September 1939. Similarly, I believe that the KKE certainly intended to seize power in Greece — to have intended otherwise would have been to abdicate the objects of Communism — but that it had in mind a process more like that which the Czech Communists achieved in February 1948. The form which the "second round" eventually took was forced on them by the follies of their own "hawks," the stupidity of their own "doves" (particularly Siantos), and the mistakes of the British and Greek authorities.

With regard to the last factor, Iatrides is by no means unjust to Churchill and King George II, but he is perhaps a little unjust to Papandreou. He does not, of course, give any credence to the argument that Papandreou deliberately provoked the confrontation in Athens in December 1944, but he is inclined to overstate Papandreou's errors of judgment, especially in the last ten days before the rising. The most notable example concerns the controversy over his proposals for the demobilisation of the guerrilla forces (ELAS and EDES), and the demands of the KKE that the Greek forces from Middle East (the Mountain Brigade and the Sacred Squadron) should also be demobilised at the same time.

According to Iatrides (p. 169):

On November 22 Prime Minister Papandreou attempted to break the developing impasse by declaring that "all volunteer units" would soon be demobilized. Although the distinct impression was created that he had meant this formula to apply to the Brigade as well, he did not make it sufficiently clear that such was his intention.

This statement is based on a passage from W.H. McNeill's *The Greek Dilemma* (New York and London 1946) which I have always regarded with scepticism. If Papandreou ever used such an expression as "all volunteer units," it would be strange indeed to imagine it as including the Mountain Brigade, which was the only regular unit available to the Greek Government in Athens, unless he explicitly said so. It is true that the Communists had been trying for some time to extract such a declaration from him, and that they meant it to apply to the Brigade as well as ELAS; but Papandreou was not bound by their semantics unless he chose to be. What is more doubtful, in any case, is whether he ever made such a declaration at all.

Certainly he never did so publicly, for no newspaper in Athens reported it either on 23 November or any subsequent day. A story that he privately made a commitment in effect to disband the Brigade, by initialling an agreement to send its men on 'indefinite leave', was published a year later by Professor Svolos in *Makhi* on 5 December 1945. If the story were true, Svolos as a Minister would have been in a position to know — but in no better position than the Communist Ministers, none of whom ever referred to it. The columns of *Rizospastis* during the last week of November 1944 were full of paragraphs which could not possibly have been phrased in the way they were if the KKE had knowledge of any such commitment by Papandreou, which they were bound to know even if he had only made it confidentially to his Cabinet. On 30 November *Rizospastis* carried an editorial which *ex silentio* virtually disposes of the story altogether. It was written by Karagiorgis, and it is quoted in translation by Iatrides.

The editorial challenged Papandreou to say, first, whether or not the Government's policy statements (*programmatikès dilóseis*) had promised that "all volunteer bodies will be dissolved and that the national army of the future will be based on regular conscription (*stratologia*)"; secondly, how many days had passed since he "signed the agreement to send the Mountain Brigade on indefinite leave"; and thirdly, how many days had passed since "it was officially declared that the Gendarmerie was being dissolved and disarmed." Karagiorgis, who always used the Greek language (even in his extreme variant of demotic) with the utmost care, would never have chosen such devious expressions if he could have accused Papandreou of making an explicit commitment less than ten days earlier.

Whether the Government's *programmatikès dilóseis* are taken to be

the Lebanon Charter of 20 May or Papandreou's speech on arrival in Athens on 18 October, neither contains any phrase about "all volunteer bodies," though the latter does contain a reference to "regular conscription." Both contain clear implications that the guerrilla forces would be demobilised, but none with regard to the Brigade. As for the other two questions, it is clear that Karagiorgis would not have spoken of a commitment to "indefinite leave" for the Brigade if he were in a position to quote a commitment to demobilise it; nor would he have spoken of a commitment to "dissolve and disarm" the Gendarmerie alone if he could have quoted a similar commitment relating to the Brigade and the Sacred Squadron as well.

The belief that Papandreou made such a commitment nevertheless has great durability. It was mentioned (though with no specific date attached to it) by Kaphandaris at the all-party conference in Athens just after Christmas 1944, and in the memoirs of the British journalist, Richard Capell, and of General Saraphis. Iatrides gives all the relevant references except the last. Capell said that Papandreou's intention was "disapproved" by General Scobie, implying that this was why it was dropped. Saraphis went further: "the British absolutely forbade the disbanding of the Mountain Brigade and the Sacred Squadron, which Papandreou had agreed should be demobilised at the same time as ELAS"; and he quoted the article by Professor Svolos in *Makhi*: on 5 December as evidence that Churchill personally took the decision to overrule Papandreou.<sup>1</sup> Many circumstances make the story hard to believe. There is no trace of it in the memoirs of Papandreou, Churchill, Macmillan, Eden or Leeper, nor in Sir Llewellyn Woodward's *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, volume III (London, 1971).

Finally, an examination of the British official documents in the Public Record Office in London, which Mr. Richard Clogg has kindly undertaken for me, has revealed no trace of such a commitment by Papandreou, whether open or secret, though the documents make it clear that the British authorities feared that he might make a concession over the Brigade and urged him not to.

If Papandreou had given such a commitment, and then been forced to withdraw it, there would indeed have been good reason to lay the blame for subsequent events on his weakness and vacillation. There were at least two other episodes at the end of November and the beginning of

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1. Saraphis, *O ELAS* (Athens, 1946, new edition 1958) pp. 578-501.

December 1944 of which the same may be said. In both cases Iatrides correctly indicates that there is a reasonable doubt, but he seems to be inclined not to give Papandreou the benefit of that doubt. Personally I would have done so.

The first case concerns the formula, proposed by EAM on 27 November and withdrawn on 28 November, by which two brigades of equal numerical strength would have been formed, one composed of the Mountain Brigade, the Sacred Squadron, and a unit of EDES, the other composed exclusively of ELAS, all other forces being demobilised. Papandreou accepted the proposal and announced that he would invite his Cabinet to approve it. In a public reference to its details, he used slightly different words which were, on the one hand, perfectly reconcilable with the original formulation, but could on the other hand be misconstrued as inconsistent with it. This was the excuse used by EAM, but was clearly not the true reason, for withdrawing the compromise and putting forward new demands of a totally uncompromising character. Iatrides says that Papandreou may have intended to implement the compromise "faithfully and fully," but implies a doubt about it. He supports the doubt by a reference to the diary of MacVeagh, who had clearly misunderstood Papandreou's words. In view of the very clear account of the matter given by Papandreou in *I Apelevthérosis tis Elládos* (Athens 1948), it is difficult to see any reason to question his good faith. To put it at its lowest, he must have known, if he intended to cheat, that he had not the slightest chance of getting away with it.

The other case concerns the fatal demonstration in Constitution Square on Sunday 3 December. After the resignation of the EAM Ministers during the night of 1-2 December, the Central Committee of EAM announced its intention to hold a demonstration on the Sunday morning at 11.00 a.m. Papandreou and the rump of his Cabinet agreed at first to allow the demonstration but later, for reasons which Iatrides clearly explains, decided to forbid it. It was certainly an error of judgment to vacillate in this way. But the question whether EAM could have called off the demonstration in time once the ban was decided is not one which admits of the slightest doubt. They could, but deliberately decided to do the exact opposite.

The evidence is clear from a comparison of the Athens newspapers of the day. Every morning paper on 3 December, except *Rizospastis*, carried the news that the demonstration had been forbidden. In *Eleftheria*, for example, it appeared on the front page under the headline:



"Assembly of Today's Demonstration Forbidden." By contrast, the headlines of *Rizospastis* read: "Everyone Today at 11 to EAM Demonstration in Constitution Square! Down with the Government of Civil War! Forward to Government of REAL National Unity!" The defiance could not have been plainer. Any suggestion that the KKE had no time to correct its headlines can be answered by comparison with the issue of the previous day, which had contrived to include a stop-press announcement of the resignation of the EAM Ministers during the previous night, despite the lateness of the hour.

If the evidence acquits Papandreou of anything worse than one momentary error of judgment, ruthlessly exploited by his opponents, it does not, on the other hand, as Iatrides rightly argues, in the last analysis convict the KKE of a planned conspiracy. There is some evidence that some militants were preparing for the worst at an early date (as early as September, according to Bartzotas); but there is even more evidence that others (particularly Siantos) were hoping to avoid a clash with the British until beyond the eleventh hour. Kousoulas argued, on the basis of Orestis' recollection, that the KKE decided on an armed rising during the night of 27-28 November, having received an encouraging message from Tito. To this story Eudes added, on the basis of Tzimas' recollection that Petros Roussos was sent to Belgrade to seek Tito's advice, and that in Tzimas' presence Tito promised Yugoslav support. Certainly the KKE bitterly blamed Tito in retrospect for failing to support the rising; but equally certainly Tzimas knew at the time that Tito was in no position to provide support. Iatrides regards these stories with scepticism, which I share. He quotes significant evidence that there was dangerous tension between the Yugoslavs and ELAS in Macedonia at the time. He also makes effective use of captured and intercepted messages to show that Siantos was still hoping to avoid a clash with the British some days after the fatal demonstration in Constitution Square. But it passes comprehension that Siantos thought the KKE could take over power without a clash with the British.

From personal knowledge of every major participant on both sides in the "second round," I share Iatrides' conviction that neither side had initially any aggressive intentions against the other. This is the inescapable conclusion from Iatrides' able marshalling of the evidence. It does not follow that if the clash had not come in December 1944, it would never have come at all. Unless the KKE had succeeded in taking over power by some other means (like the Prague *coup* of 1948), the

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"third round" was also probably inevitable. Iatrides concludes his account with a less detailed summary of the gradual deterioration which led from the Varkiza Agreement to the "third round" in 1946. With this too it would be hard to find fault on grounds of either prejudice or inaccuracy.

This is as near to a definitive statement of the matter as can be achieved in the present state of historical knowledge; and it is doubtful if the present scope of knowledge will be greatly extended even when, if ever, Yugoslav and Soviet archives become accessible. If Iatrides leaves many questions unanswered, it is because they are at present unanswerable; but at least he poses them. If it is sometimes permissible to differ from his conclusions, that is because he makes all the evidence freely available. It is altogether a distinguished contribution to contemporary history.

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C. M. WOODHOUSE