As the background to our consideration of the present situation in Greece, let me recall in mind the epic fortitude shown by the Greek State and the Greek people in resistance against the Italians and Germans in 1941. At that crucial time political differences in Greece were put aside and a united front was established against the invaders. Everyone knows that as a result of the successful Greek resistance to Italy carried on to the subsequent resistance to Germany, the German attack on Russia was considerably delayed. Instead of gratitude from the Soviet Union, we find that country engaged in a systematic campaign of vituperation against Greece.

Years of Occupation in Greece

For Greece the consequences of the Axis invasion followed by the German and Bulgarian occupation were tragic. The greatest misfortune was that, when Greece was liberated in 1944, unity was not restored to face the great task of post-war reconstruction. Instead a small section of the Greek people attempted by force to impose its will and its ideology on the majority.

In the result Greece has for seven years been disrupted by invasion, enemy occupation, and internal conflict. The Greek people are fully entitled to some chance of stability and to an opportunity to work out for themselves their own restoration without unwelcome and improper interference from without.

In particular the new Greek Government should be encouraged and supported by the representatives of the United Nations in this General Assembly, rather than condemned, because in its desperate need it has requested and received advice and help from the United Kingdom and the United States. From the side of those who in this Committee have been active in vituperation and abuse of Greece and the Greek Government, we have listened in vain for any sign of recognition of the great and unsullied record in war and in peace of the United Kingdom and the United States, and especially for any acknowledgment of the immense contribution which the United States has made to European relief and reconstruction. Instead the Committee has heard only
attacks against Greece, USA, and UK.

Here are a few typical examples of the defamatory charges levelled by the USSR and other countries:

1. "They" (i.e., Greek leaders) "are exciting a conflict among the Great Powers and first of all between the Soviet Union on the one hand and the United States on the other. They are openly spreading criminal propaganda about the desirability of a war between East and West. They are calling for war against the free states."
   (USSR charge, 27 September)

2. "Greek leaders...are prepared to sacrifice the independence and sovereignty of their country in order to obtain the support of the United States and to prolong the existence of the political regime which has been imposed on Greece."
   (USSR charge, 27 September)

3. "The British forces never came into contact with the fleeing German units but they used their army against the people's army of the Greek people ... not a single British soldier was killed or wounded in the course of the liberation of Greece. Moreover the Germans were the British soldiers were not."
   (Yugoslav charge, 26 September)

4. "The United States and the United Kingdom rejected any proposal which would have had the effect of calming minds and spirits in Greece."
   (Yugoslav charge, 26 September)

5. "Greek Governments were formed in the United States Embassy in Athens."
   (Yugoslav charge, 26 September)

6. "In the case of present day Greece the size of the army seems to require the consent of a foreign nation."
   (Yugoslav charge, 1 October)
7. "The theory that the Greek civil war is due to interference by Greece's northern neighbors is entirely unfounded. It serves only to cover the political and strategic aims of certain powers."

(Polish Charge, 4 October)

8. "The United States chose the Greek Question in order to undermine cooperation in the United Nations."

(U.S. Chargé, 27 September)

9. "The re-establishment of normal relations between Bulgaria and Greece is not in harmony with the United States' plan to establish naval and air bases in Greece in order to make its influence felt in the Near East."

(Bulgarian Charge, 2 October)

The Internal Partition in Greece

For the moment, let the Committee consider what is the actual present position in Greece and the real facts concerning the relations of Greece with the three countries adjoining it on the north. First it is to be noted that while continuing to combat the insurgent forces attempting to usurp power by violence, the Greek Government has recently offered an amnesty of wide scope which is still current. Here is evidence of the genuine desire of the Government in the midst of its difficulties to unite the Greek people in a renewed attempt to restore the country's economic and political well-being by constitutional means. The present political control of Greece arises from the elections held in the early part of last year. The conduct of these elections has been criticised, but the fact is that the elections were held under international supervision in which the countries now leading the criticism refused to share.

The presence of impartial international observers made it possible for the majority of the Greek people to express their will. This is an achievement which the peoples of some other countries may well copy. Instead of looking for defects in the conduct of these elections, or in the conduct of the various Governments which have held office since that date, our objective should be to do everything possible to ensure that stable conditions are created in Greece in which, at the proper time, elections can be held without fear of pressure or intimidation by any group or party, especially by any extremist minority seeking to establish itself.
As a Government by Force,

Retreat Behind Attack on Greece.

Unfortunately, the statements made to this Committee by the representatives of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania have served to confuse rather than to clarify the issue in this case. Primarily they have consisted of reckless and irresponsible denunciations against those who have been in control in Athens in the past two years. A study of the tone and character of the statements delivered before the Security Council, the Security Council's Commission of Investigation and before this Committee of the Assembly, shows very clearly that the three countries concerned have acted, and are acting, in the closest day-by-day collaboration with each other, and with the Soviet Union, the Ukraine and Belorussia. Here is evidence of a policy of combination against Greece, Great Britain and the United States which presents us with perhaps the gravest and most intractable aspect of the question before us.

However, in the counter-charges put forward by these countries much was implied that they presumably wish to cover up their carefully organized and well-timed verbal offensives, the impartial observer can easily discern motive and purpose for the actions charged against them in the United States resolution, that is, the purpose of aiding and abetting the forcible destruction of a regime which, not being Communist-controlled, is detested by Communist-controlled Governments who can hardly conceal their desire to overthrow it.

Let me interpolate this. The Greek Government may not be as fully representative as all democratically-minded people would like. If we had to examine and determine this issue, we should also have to consider the representative and democratic nature of some countries neighboring Greece, such as Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania, to mention only three. If these countries are democracies they are very differently constituted from our idea of what democracy signifies - that is the people's complete freedom of choice and the right of free appeal to a free electorate in both the appointment and the dismissal of governments.

The main question which have arisen in the committee are first, whether Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania have given, in breach of international law, aid and support to Grecia who are opposing the Greek Government by force, and secondly, if so, what this Assembly should do in the circumstances.
The Security Council's Committee of Investigation

In a result of the Greek allegations made in December of last year, a Commission of Investigation was sent to Greece by the Security Council. The Commission was in no sense a one-sided body. Its membership was the same as that of the Security Council, that is to say, it was composed of countries widely separated geographically and differing in their policies and even in their political and economic systems.

In the course of its work the Commission heard 258 witnesses of whom 76 were presented by the Greek Government and 182 by the other three Governments. With the exception of the Soviet Union and Poland, the members of the Commission were unanimous in their recommendations to the Security Council, while eight out of the eleven were agreed on the conclusion that on the basis of the facts ascertained by the Commission, Yugoslavia and, to a lesser extent, Albania and Bulgaria, had supported the guerrilla warfare in Greece.

The Commissioners saw and heard the witnesses. It was for them and then alone to determine the credibility of the witnesses. The Commission was the fact-finding tribunal especially appointed for that purpose. No one can challenge the honesty and integrity of the Commission's membership.

Credibility of Witnesses

Attention has been directed to the fact that some of the witnesses were in the custody of the Greek authorities, and it is claimed that their testimony was therefore worthless. Again certain inconsistencies in the evidence were pointed out before the Commission and have again been referred to here. These are matters to which attention has rightly been drawn, and which the Commission had the duty to take into account and did, in fact, take into account. Nonetheless, it is the opinion of the Australian Delegation that these aspects can easily be exaggerated and that emphasis should rightly be given to the mass of evidence as a whole, which substantiate the conclusions drawn by the Commission of Investigation.

The question of inconsistencies, long familiar with proceedings in courts of law is aware of the fact that occasional inconsistencies are often proof, not of unreliability but of honest mistakes. On the other hand, we know that statements may be so consistent and pattern-perfect, but they can have been given only...
in accordance with preconceived arrangements, and are therefore worthless.

I repeat that there is substantial evidence, fully set out by the Commission in its report, on which the Commission’s conclusions have been properly based.

Not all the evidence placed before the Commission is equally credible or equally substantial; but there is undoubtedly strong factual basis for the conclusions reached — as I have said, this Committee cannot substitute itself for the Commission as a judge of the credibility of witnesses.

This evidence received by the original Commission has now been reinforced by additional facts reported by the subsidiary group, which was often able to make an investigation on the spot very shortly after an incident had taken place. I quote here by way of example, three incidents recently investigated by the subsidiary group, which tend to confirm the Commission’s findings.

**Complicity of Bulgaria**

The first concerns the complicity of Bulgaria. It was the Agriam-Asip Wasikopas incident of April 1941, which was the subject of an on-the-spot investigation in June 1941. Four former guerrillas testified that they had taken part in the Agriam incident, and that they are the hand cross the frontier. Three of these witnesses testified that they had crossed into Bulgaria with 185 guerrillas, that the entire group was taken under Bulgarian escort to the refugee camp at Makrishti; that some 600-500 guerrillas were sneaked there, where political indoctrination and hospitalisation were provided. Those testified that they were members of three groups of 150 men who were returned to the frontier, after being re-armed, for re-entry into Greece for further action.

**Complicity of Yugoslavia**

The second incident was that of March 31 to April 1, 1941, at Grane-Palatin-Triantsa. It concerns the complicity of Yugoslavia. The 37th Greek Brigade, during mopping-up operations, drove some 200-500 guerrillas across the Yugoslav frontier. Seven Greek soldiers, in several depostions, testified that they had taken part in the action and had driven the guerrillas across the frontier. Three former guerrillas declared that they had fled into Yugoslavia during the fight, that they had been escorted about four or five kilometers into Yugoslav territory by Yugoslav soldiers, where they stopped at a temporary camp for about four or five days, that some twenty Yugoslav soldiers had guarded the camp, that they were fed and housed, and that their
wounded were cared for by a Yugoslav military doctor. About 100 guerrillas, they said were sent to Serbia "for a rest". Two Yugoslav army doctors, one of whom was recognized by a guerrilla, testified that they had been members of the camp guard, and that they had personally guarded the arms and ammunition of the guerrillas and had helped to care for the sick and wounded. It should be noted that the rest of the guerrillas returned to Greece for further action.

**Complexity of Albania**

A third incident was that of Kastorias on July 11th - 12th 1947. This concerns the complexity of Albania. The subsidiary group began investigating this incident on July 11th, and 23 witnesses being examined. Two witnesses declared that guerrilla bands which had gone into Yugoslavia in June, about 500 in number, had crossed into Greek Macedonia and Albania about July 1st, after being sheltered, fed and armed. Six witnesses declared that their bands entered Albania about July 9th - 10th, were escorted by Albanian soldiers, and that they entered Greece from Albania in the Kresopan area, not heavy Greek artillery fire, and withdrew into Albania on July 12th, only to return again for further action. Seven guerrillas testified that their bands crossed into Greece from Albania between Vali Keminist and Kastoria on July 11th - 12th. It was estimated that about 1,000 men were involved in this violation of the Greek frontier.

I need make no further reference to the very large mass of evidence available since the initial Commission left Greece in March, to justify the point that the findings of the Commission are fully borne out by the subsequent investigations of the subsidiary group.

**Non-Cooperation of Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria with**

In considering the significance and value of the evidence I have summarized, it is also pertinent to examine the attitude of the Yugoslav, Bulgarian and Albanian Governments to the subsidiary group acting for the Commission on the direction of the Security Council. The facts are that although Greece cooperated fully with the subsidiary group, the other three Governments disregarded the authority vested in the group, by the Security Council, and by one means or another obstructed and delayed the work of the group whenever, in the opinion of the group, investigations were necessary across the Greek frontier. Questions addressed by the group to the
three Governments at various times for assistance and facilities in carrying out
investigations across the Greek frontier received official replies from each in
almost identical terms, conveying a refusal to permit the subsidiary group to make
any investigations on Albanian, Yugoslav or Bulgarian territory on the ground that
the official investigations of the respective Governments had demonstrated that
no incidents of the kind with which the group was concerned itself had taken place.

The Subsidary Group itself will characterize the situation in a report to
the Committee of Investigation on 25 July when it said (H/1812; 5/5/46/79):

"Albanian, Bulgarian and Yugoslav Governments in one way or another .......... have disregarded Sub-Group's opinion authority vested in it by Security Council
and Commission to perform its functions in Northern Greece and other parts of
Greece, Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria on Sub-Group might decide necessary.
Consequently, Sub-Group has been unable to implement fully terms of reference
adopted by Commission on instructions of Security Council although Sub-Group
endeavoured throughout its work to promote and assure full cooperation by inter-
ested Governments."

I must add further that ten members of the subsidiary group did not appear
desirous to hear available evidence. Then the group was in Greece but close to
the Albanian frontier, examining on the spot an incident of early July, it was
proposed on one occasion to assemble some local, i.e. Greek, witnesses. The Soviet
and Polish members of the group, however, both opposed this procedure on the ground
that the witnesses were not formally presented by the Greek Government. The proposal
was criticized by them as "an attempt to accomplish something behind the back of
the Greek liaison representative and an attempt at the sovereignty of his Govern-
ment, showing lack of respect for that sovereignty". This sudden adherence to and
respect for the dignity of the Greek Government, which has been subjected before
the Security Council and this Assembly to vituperation and attacks of the most
violent and irresponsible character, is surprising but interesting to record.

Greek Situation Endorses Peace

In all these circumstances, what conclusions should this Committee draw? I sub-
mit that no reasonable person who has listened to the statements made by the represen-
tatives for Greece, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Albania, to say nothing of statements made
on their behalf by other Governments, can fail to come to the conclusion that there exists on the northern borders of Greece a situation which endangers peace, and which now falls within the jurisdiction of the Assembly because the Security Council has been prevented from acting by the veto of the USSR.

The allegation that the Greek Government is to blame for all the trouble and that it is planning with foreign instigation some assault upon its neighbours seems utterly false. It is inconceivable that this Committee can endorse any such conclusion.

**Design Plan Directed Against Greece**

On the contrary, it would be more appropriate for the Committee to direct its attention to the aspect of the question to which I referred at the beginning of my remarks, that is to say, the evidence that the three Governments of Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria, together with the other Governments which have supported them throughout, are acting in pursuance of a common plan directed against Greece and through Greece against the conduct and policies of the United States and the United Kingdom. In the same way as the Committee has observed a close similarity in the wording and intention of the two letters received last week from the Bulgarian and Albanian representatives in reply to the Committee's invitation so it will not have escaped notice that there is a remarkable similarity, if not identity, in the statements we have heard both from these representatives and those of Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, Poland, the Ukraine and Bulgaria.

By some queer process of distortion, it is alleged in these statements that the Greek Government, in order to maintain itself in power, has brought forward false charges against its northern neighbours in the hope thereby of evoking aid and sympathy from abroad. For their part, the United States and United Kingdom Governments have been accused, under the guise of providing assistance to Greece, of interfering in Greek affairs so as to make Greece an instrument of their own aggressive policy.

**British aid to Greece agrees with outbreak**

There could scarcely be a greater perversion of the truth. It would be calumny if a clear case of victimisation of one country by
a group if other countries were allowed to be obscured by a cloud of reckless accusations against other Governments who have conducted themselves in this matter with propriety and with full observance of recognized international principles and conduct. It was at the explicit invitation of the Greek Government of the day that British forces remained in Greece after the liberation and that British military and economic assistance was rendered to the Greek authorities in their attempt at reconstituting the shattered life of the country. When the United Kingdom felt no longer able to continue this assistance alone, the task of supporting the Greek economy and of helping the Greek Government where it was needed was carried on by the United States.

The generous American aid to Greece since March of this year has been given at the free will of the Greek people who, in those critical months, could not have known where else to turn for help. The United Nations Charter does not prohibit such aid, even in relation to military action against armed aggression, Article 51 of the Charter expressly contemplates joint defensive action unless the Security Council itself has voted against the aggressor. At San Francisco great care was taken to preserve this inalienable right of collective self-defense and the recent Inter-American agreement of Rio de Janeiro illustrates this fundamental principle.

The motives of both the United States and the United Kingdom in aiding Greece have been openly and frankly stated and are beyond suspicion. Both these countries, as well as Australia and New Zealand whose forces bore so large a share of the campaign of resistance against the almost overwhelming power of Germany in Greece in 1941, value highly the gallant resource and self-reliance of the Greek people. The help now being given to Greece is to help to enable one of the countries of Europe worst crippled by the war to set itself once more on its feet by its own efforts and in so doing to contribute also to Europe an recovery. The means for legal and constitutional settlement of Greece’s internal difficulties are not lacking; but it is for this Assembly to express its opinion that no collective inter-
foremore and no attempt at domination from outside, in whatever form it may be disguised, is to be tolerated. The Assembly should also express its opinion that the Greek people’s own efforts towards their rehabilitation as a democracy playing a responsible part in the family of nations should not be impeded, either by overt acts of military hostility from its neighbors or by the systematic dissemination of untrue slanders against those nations who, in the crises of war and the extreme difficulties of peace, have proved that “A friend in need is a friend indeed.”

It is for the Assembly to pass its judgment on these grave matters. Why? Because the will of the great majority of the Security Council has been frustrated by the exercise of the USSR veto. The case is one of supreme importance. What principles should now guide the Assembly? Let me suggest the answer.

**Australian Practice in the Security Council**

Australia, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the past two years, has endeavored to act as representative of the general body of the Assembly and as trustee for the noble objectives of our Organisation. We have never acted as part of an instrument of any bloc or group. While we have never hesitated to take up a position in opposition to that of the Soviet Union ready at the same time everyone knows that our approach has always been fearlessly independent. The Australian people have admiration for the great war effort made by the Soviet people. However, we expect, but seldom find, the Soviet Union ready in its turn to give some recognition to the efforts of other nations whose proportionate war effort was in every way equal to their own and even longer sustained.

What we have tried to do on every issue in the Security Council, including the Greek case, has been to apply the principles of justice and equity on which the Charter is based. In this regard, Australia was the first country to advocate the practice that, before disputes or situations are dealt with in the Council, there should be a general rule to be a preliminary and objective investigation to ascertain the facts. This policy was not accepted at first but in the end it has won almost universal recognition.
Course the Assembly should Follow

I submit that the Assembly should adopt a similar practice, and that its method of approach should not be different from that adopted by the Security Council majority in its consideration of the report of its own special fact-finding commission. The Assembly now has the relevant reports before it and the evidence upon which the reports are based. If, as I believe, the Assembly when dealing with the practices and principles I have outlined, the conclusion must be to accept the relevant findings.

If we accept the findings, we should not hesitate to vindicate the committee by saying so. Then the facts of a case are established by an impartial commission of investigation and subsequently accepted by us, these facts should be the basis for all our actions and recommendations. Only if that is done, can the principle of just decision prevail. If a breach of international duty has taken place (and the commission has so found) we should not hesitate to say so and to say so openly. Only by proceeding on that principle can the Assembly carry out the great powers and functions committed to it by the Charter.