A SUMMARY ACCOUNT
by Henry N. Howard

I. General

Since 1945-47, the United States has been concerned with the problem of threats to the political independence and territorial integrity of Greece. Through the United Nations it has sought to preserve the integrity of Greece against the actions of its northern neighbors and to find some solution of the problems therein involved. Through its aid missions, American AID to Greece and the Economic Cooperation Administration, it has sought to help Greece to regain the capacity to cope with the Communist attempt to overthrow the constitutional system in Greece, and to assist that country along the road toward social and economic reconstruction.

II. The Greek Problem in the Security Council, 1946-47

CONSIDERATION OF THE GREEK PROBLEM IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

The Security Council first considered the problem of Greece as a result of a letter of the representatives of the U.S.S.R. on January 22, 1946 under article 38 of the Charter which charged that the presence of British troops in Greece was a threat to international peace and security. Since no disposition was made on the part of the Security Council, however, to agree with the Soviet thesis, the charge was not sustained. This Greek question came before the Security Council for a second time in August 1947 as a result of a cable from the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs on August 28, 1946, under article 38 of the Charter which charges the policy of the Greek Government had produced a situation in the Balkans endangering international peace and security. The question was discussed between August 28 and September 30, 1946, but once more the Security Council declined to accept the Soviet thesis.

Since December 1946, the United Nations has been especially concerned with the problem of threats to the political independence and territorial integrity of Greece. The problem of Greece was brought to the attention of the Security Council for the third time when, on December 3, 1948, the representatives of Greece, under articles 34 and 35 (1) of the Charter, requested that the Security Council give early consideration to a situation which, it was charged, was leading to friction between Greece, on the one hand, and Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia on the other. The Greek Government declared that the guerrilla movement in Greece was receiving support from Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia, that groups of men were trained for guerrilla activities in Greece, and that foreign assistance had been given to the guerrillas.

THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION OF INVESTIGATION

On December 19 the Security Council unanimously approved a resolution establishing a Commission of Investigation (on which the 11 members of that body were represented to which Eastern representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia were attached. This Commission was to make an on-the-spot investigation in order to ascertain the facts as to the disturbed situation along the northern frontier of Greece.


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signed its report in Geneva on May 25, 1947. Among other things, it found that Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia had, in fact, been assisting the Greek guerrilla movement, as charged, and it proposed that the Security Council recommend that the four parties concerned do their best to establish normal and good neighboring relations, abstain from any action likely to maintain or increase the tension in the frontier region, and refrain from any support of elements in neighboring countries aiming at the overthrow of the lawful governments of those countries. Secondly, the Commission proposed that the four parties enter into new frontier conventions along the lines of the Greek-Bulgarian convention of 1931. It was also suggested that a body be established to investigate frontier violations or complaints, use its good offices, make studies and investigations, and report to the Security Council. Finally, it was suggested that the proposed commission study the question of international refugee and the practicability of the voluntary transfer of minorities.

The representatives of the U.S.S.R. and Poland, who held the Government of Greece solely responsible for the troubled situation along the northern frontier, subordinated neither to the conclusions of the Commission nor to its recommendations.

III. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE PROBLEM OF GREECE, 1947-48

The United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans, composed of the active representation of Australia, Brazil, China, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, began its work in Greece in November 1947, and has continued to sit in that country, either in Athens (December 1947-July 1948) or in Athens (July 1948-49).

In its first report to the General Assembly* signed at Geneva on June 30, 1948, the Special Committee stated:

"For text see ibid., pp. 3121-3122, and resolution 149 (13)."

*See U.N. Doc. A/574: Report of the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans, p. 36. The Special Committee had previously submitted two interim reports to the Secretary-General, on Feb. 24, 1947 (U.N. doc. A/310) and Jan. 10, 1948 (U.N. doc. A/322). For convenience these reports, together with that of June 20, 1948, may be found in Documents and Replies Papers, September 1948, pp. 623-637, and 639-652. It may also be noted that a supplementary report of the Special Committee on the Balkans was signed on Sept. 30, 1948 (U.N. doc. A/929). The supplementary report and the third interim report which have further details and confirmed the conclusions reached on June 30, 1948, may be found respectively in Documents and Replies Papers, September 1948, pp. 410-413, and January 1949, pp. 685-689.
The General Assembly again considered the Greek question at its third session in Paris in the autumn of 1948. After a long discussion, by a vote of 47 to 6, with 8 abstentions, on November 27, 1948, the General Assembly adopted a resolution concerning the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans with clarified terms of reference concerning its work of observation and conciliation. The General Assembly took note of the conclusions of the Special Committee as to the assistance of Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia to the Greek guerrillas and that a continuation of this situation constituted a threat to the independence and integrity of Greece and to peace in the Balkans and that the conduct of these countries had been "inconsistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations." A second resolution, unanimously approved, also recommended resumption of diplomatic relations between Greece and her northern neighbors, the drafting or renewal of frontier conventions, and the settlement of the refugee problem. Finally, the General Assembly unanimously approved a resolution concerning the repatriation of some 20 thousand Greek children who had been removed primarily to the territory of the northern neighbors of Greece.

It should also be noted that the First Committee (Political and Security) of the General Assembly, on November 16, 1948, established a "Conciliation Committee" under the chairmanship of Dr. H. V. Evetts, President of the General Assembly, to explore methods and procedures with the representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia, looking toward a settlement of their difficulties. By the close of the session in December, draft agreements had been prepared and Dr. Evetts had reported some progress, especially as to the possible establishment of mixed frontier commissions and the drafting of frontier conventions, although the Albanian Government refused to sign any agreement unless Greece gave a formal renunciation to her long-standing claim to northern Epirus, and the Bulgarian and Yugoslav Governments refused to sign unless the Albanian Government signed. Subsequently, during the second part of the third session at New York, the Greek Government, on May 11, 1949, substantially accepted Dr. Evetts' proposals, but no reply was received from the other governments concerned.

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on November 27, 1948. Nevertheless, thousands of Greek children, contrary to the spirit of that resolution, have been transferred from one Soviet satellite state to another. Moreover “in violation of fundamental humanitarian principles, some of these children, both boys and girls of adolescent age, have been sent back to Greece to fight in the ranks of the guerrillas.”

The report outlines the consultative efforts of the Special Committee, noting that its consultative role was suspended for 6 months during 1948 to avoid duplicating the efforts of the Consultative Committee, of which Dr. H. V. Evatt was chairman. The Special Committee, however, immediately resumed this role after the termination of Dr. Evatt’s activities. Although the Soviet Union and Poland refused to cooperate in the work of the Special Committees and Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia refused to cooperate or even to recognize it, documents of the Committee were sent regularly by these governments, and the Committee remained available to assist Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia in the solution of their difficulties.

The report concludes that “the continuance of the present situation constitutes a threat to the political independence and territorial integrity of Greece and to peace in the Balkans,” reaffirming conclusions which the Special Committee had reached in 1943. The report contains no recommendations which are to be the subject of a supplementary report before the General Assembly takes up the Greek problem in the autumn of 1949.

TEXT OF REPORT OF U. N. SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE BALKANS

United Nations Official Records:

General Assembly

Supplement No. 9 (A/195)

Chapter I. Creation, Function and Organization of the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans

A. THE GREK QUESTION BEFORE THE THIRD REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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