President's Message to Congress on the Greek Situation

I lay before you today for consideration and decision a grave problem of national security.

The British Government, through its ambassador in Washington, has informed the Government of the United States that as of March 31, this year, it will be obliged to discontinue its program of financial assistance to Greece.

On March 3 the Secretary of State received from the Greek Government, through the Greek Minister in Washington, an urgent appeal for financial, economic, and expert assistance from the United States. The text of this message has been made public. The Greek Government states that assistance is imperative if Greece is to survive. Greece is today without funds to finance the importation even of those consumables goods which are essential for bare subsistence. Under these circumstances, says the Greek Government, the people of Greece cannot make progress in attacking problems of reconstruction, even though substantial reconstruction must be begun if the situation is not to continue to be critical. The Greek Government therefore asks for financial and economic assistance which
seeds, and the like that are indispensable for the sustenance of her
people and that are only obtainable from abroad;

in order to

enable the civil and military establishments of the Greek Government

with
to operate from abroad the means of restoring the tranquility and feeling

of security necessary for economic and political recovery;

and in order to

enable Greece to create the means for self-support in the future.

Finally the Greek Government asks for the assistance of experienced
American administrators, economic and technical personnel to assure the
utilization in an effective and up-to-date manner of the financial and
other assistance given to Greece, and to help restore a healthy condition
in the domestic economy and public administration. This

The Greek Government expresses its determination to restore Greece

as a self-supporting and self-respecting democracy, but states that because

of the circumstances it must have aid from the outside.

I do not believe that the American people would be willing to see
this desperate appeal from the Greek Government for assistance in maintaining
its independence and democracy restored. I therefore ask you today to
grant to the Executive sufficient authority to lend a hand to the Greek
Government, of a kind and on the scale that is required by the circum-
stances.

The primary objective of the foreign policy of the United States
is the creation of conditions in which nations shall be able to work out
their own way of life free of coercion by other nations. This is the
deep meaning of the war with Germany and Japan. Our victory was
won against countries which were seeking to impose their will upon
other nations. Creating conditions for the peaceful development of nations free from coercion the United States has taken a
leading part in establishing the United Nations, which is designed to
make possible freedom and independence for all its members.

Our policy of maintaining a world of free peoples
means that we resist aggressive movements of any kind, whether they be
Fascist, Nazi, or Communist, which seek to impose upon other countries
dictatorial regimes. This policy is a frank recognition that only in
such a world can the United States maintain its freedom and
domestic security.
A frank appraisal of the present world situation, nevertheless, is suggested by the fact that majorities in a number of countries of the world have had totalitarian forms of government imposed upon them against their will. In recent months the Government of the United States has made it clear that it considers that this has happened already in Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria. I think we must also frankly admit that in a number of other countries there is imminent danger of similar developments.

At the present moment in world history there is a conflict between two ways of life. One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the imposition of the will of a minority upon a majority, upon control by a minority of the press and other means of communication, and upon terror and oppression.

It is the policy of the United States to give support to free peoples who are attempting to resist subjugation by armed minorities or outside forces. It is our policy to assist free peoples who are trying to enlarge the area of their freedom, to work out their own destiny. This
This is not a new policy. It was stated in the Atlantic Charter, the principle underlying it was enunciated in the Declaration of the United Nations and embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, and the principle was carried forward in the Yalta Agreement.

In order to accomplish our objectives we must give primary emphasis on economic and financial aid necessary for the creation of a stable economic structure in Greece. Assistance of this kind is entirely in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It would be an unspeakable tragedy if countries which have struggled for so long for their independence against overwhelming odds should lose that victory for which they sacrificed so much. Collapse of free institutions and loss of independence would be a disaster not only for Greece but for the rest of the world. It would be a disaster, discouragement and possibly defeat for neighboring countries engaged in the struggle for freedom and independence. Assistance of this kind would be disastrous...
help coming from another country. The British Government, which has been assisting Greece, has informed us that it can give no further financial or economic aid in this crisis. Great Britain finds itself under the necessity of reducing or liquidating its commitments in several parts of the world, including Greece and Turkey. It would be difficult to overemphasize the importance of these developments to the United States and to American foreign policy.

No government is perfect. One of the chief virtues of democracy, however, is that its defects of government are always visible and under democratic process can be pointed out and rectified. Greece's government is not perfect. It has been operating in an atmosphere of chaos and extremism, and has made mistakes. The extension of aid by this country does not mean that this government endorses everything that the Greek Government has done or will do. We have condemned in the past and
and we do condemn now any extremist measures of the right or the Left. We have in the past advised tolerance and we advise it now.

The Greek Government in its communication to the Government of the United States emphasizes that economic reconstruction must be based upon administrative efficiency. I consider it
pital importance that the Greek request for the assistance of
experienced American administrative, economic and technical
personnel be granted. The most effective utilization of the financial
and other aid the United States might extend to Greece, be
granted. It is of utmost importance that the funds made avail-
able to Greece be meticulously supervised so that every dollar
advanced shall count towards making Greece truly self-supporting.

The future of Turkey as an independent and economically
sound state is clearly no less important than that of Greece.
And the circumstances in which Turkey finds herself today are
considerably different. Turkey has been spared the
disaster that befall Greece. And during the war, the United States
and Great Britain furnished Turkey with very substantial aid. Since
the war, however, Turkey has sought additional financial assistance
from both Great Britain and United States for the purpose
of effecting that modernization of its defensive establishments

that
Finally, I ask that the Congress provide authority which will permit the speediest and most effective use, in terms of needed commodities, supplies, and equipment, of such funds as may be authorized.

If further funds, or further authority, should be needed for purposes indicated in this message, I shall not hesitate to bring the situation before Congress. This is a time when the Executive and legislative branches of the Government must work together expeditiously, and in close coordination, to ward off dangers which are no less certain to affect the peace, security, and prosperity of the nation because they are a step removed in time and space.