
THE TRUTH ABOUT GREECE

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GREEK RESISTANCE

Perhaps less is known about Greek resistance against the Axis powers than about any other liberation movement in Occupied Europe. This is not because the Greek people have been the least active. On the contrary, few resistance movements have been so efficiently organised and have achieved such notable successes. Nor is the poverty of our information due to lack of communications with the Allies. It is well known that ceaseless watch cannot be kept over the long, indented coastline of Greece and over the islands of the Archipelago, so as to prevent close touch between Greece and the Allies. In Free Greece there are aerodromes where Allied planes can come and go, and now there is an Anglo-American Military Mission in Greece equipped with radio-transmitters, which must keep almost daily contact across the Aegean and the Adriatic.

The German and Quisling press and radio make frequent reference to resistance in Greece and concentrate their attacks chiefly on National Front of Liberation (E.A.M.) and the Greek People's Army of Liberation (E.L.A.S.) Their reports alone give an idea of the scale of the movement and make it clear that fighting has never ceased in Greece. Although the Allied Press has given much publicity to the German reprisals, the burning of towns, the sacking of whole districts and the shooting of hostages, it has told little about the actions which provoked such retaliation. Since there is no doubt that the true facts are available, it is obvious that there are influences at work among the Allies to control their circulation, or at least that the Royal Greek Government in Cairo is doing its best to suppress information about the successes that the Greek people are having against their oppressors. In spite of this, however, news is coming through to the general public, though slowly and belatedly, of the true position in Greece to-day.

Few people outside those in high places had heard, at the beginning of 1943, of the National Liberation Front (Ethniko Apeleftherotiko Metopo) but now its name is already becoming familiar and it will soon be as futile to try to ignore this broad popular movement as it was to ignore the existence of the National Liberation Army in Yugoslavia.

Beginnings.

The National Liberation Front was set up in Greece scarcely a month after the German invasion of April, 1941. Its constituent members were the Agrarian Party, the Socialist Party, the Union of Popular Democracy, and the Communist Party. It was soon joined by the Liberal Youth, various women's organisations, the Civil Servants' Union, the Railwaymen's Union, and the General Unionist Confederation of Labour, the strongest Trade Union federation in Greece. These parties and Organisations had formerly organised and led the resistance to Metaxas' dictatorship, during which they had suffered greatly but gained valuable experience. In the new struggle for national liberation they were able to influence large masses of the people who had hitherto remained passive, and win their ardent support. Their opponents, however, remained unchanged.

It was out of the Metaxist-Royalist clique that the Germans patched up the Quisling government of Greece. Among its members were five officers whom Metaxas had raised to the highest positions in the Army. General Tsolakoglou, the Premier, a "palace man," declared, after a visit to Germany in 1939, "that Germany would soon strike and that he was certain she was going to win." The Germans also employed a number of shady business men and black marketeers to whom they distributed various jobs, after purging the Civil Service and the Boards of various private companies.

This was too much for all honest men. There had been a number of conservative minded persons, especially among the old Venizelists, who had accepted Metaxas and had even, in some cases, supported him. Such persons were anxious to dissociate themselves from the Quislings whose regime had not the slightest semblance of legality, though they did not go so far as to join the National Liberation Front.

The E.A.M. drew up a plan of action calling on all political parties, organisations, groups and individuals to sink previous differences and rally against the invaders. Their principle aims were :—

1. The Liberation of Greece from the Fascist invaders and her National restoration as a country really free and independent of foreign rule or influence.

2. After liberation, the formation of a provisional Government of truly anti-fascist elements. This Government to be pledged to reinstate the peoples democratic liberties, to ensure work and food for all, to secure the independence and integrity of Greece, to help in every possible way the anti-fascist struggle of the Allied Nations, to give political amnesty to all anti-fascist fighters and to organise free elections.

The Struggle in the Towns.

The resistance movement was started in the towns remarkably soon, considering the heavy blows under which the progressive organisations had suffered from Metaxas. A much large proportion of the Greek population, compared with the other Balkan countries, lives in towns and it was these townspeople who were most immediately and profoundly affected by the invasion.

Resistance in the towns was both active and passive. This is how a pamphlet of the National Liberation Front describes passive resistance :—

"Refuse any form of collaboration with the enemy. Avoid talking to him and giving him any information.

"Do not allow your wives, sisters, mothers, daughters or any of your relatives to come into contact with him.

"Never sell or buy from the enemy. Hide your harvest from him. Whatever the price offered, do not sell. . . .

"Do not work for him, or if you must, go slow, work badly, leave it unfinished."

Active resistance was at first sporadic and unorganised. Unconnected bands and individuals would cut telephone wires, wreck cars, tear up railway tracks, steal any equipment, fire stores and assassinate isolated soldiers and patrols of the enemy. However, after the organisation of E.A.M. all this was gradually connected and co-ordinated.

The National Liberation Front is organised in the following way :—

In each town and village three to five persons formed a group of the E.A.M., a number of groups made up a sector, and a number of sectors a district. All the districts in each "nome" (local administrative unit in Greece) were under the leadership of a Committee having its headquarters in the capital of the nome itself, these nomic committees being subordinate to the central Committee of the E.A.M. The whole organisation was run and elected on wholly democratic lines in spite of the limitations imposed by conditions of illegality.

The influence of the E.A.M. however, has spread far beyond the actual bounds of its own organisation into ever widening circles of the population, until it has become the trusted organ of the popular will. It has achieved this position by its unremitting activity, correct understanding of the situation and really popular leadership in the struggle against the invaders. Never before has there been such national unity in Greece as exists to-day.

The illegal press has played a most important part in rallying the courage of the people, co-ordinating the activities of the various organisational groupings of E.A.M. and explaining the various phases of the war. It exposes the scandalous activities of the Quislings and the methods the Germans are using to despoil the country. The Germans have done all in their power to suppress the underground press ; they restricted the sale of paper ; they registered typewriters. At present there are over 100 papers duplicated, hectographed or printed, as well as broadsheets. By the Spring of 1943 every town in Thessaly had its own daily paper, or papers published twice or thrice weekly ; while Larissa and Volos have three or four each, both daily and weekly.

Struggle for Existence.

At first the National Liberation Front had to devote all its energies to attempting to mitigate the famine. Greece must, in any case, have suffered severely, once she had been cut off from her imports, but out of her already inadequate home production the Axis proceeded not only to feed the three armies of occupation but to send exports to their own countries. By the spring of 1942 the price of necessaries had risen one hundred—two hundred—even a thousand-fold above that of April 1940. The people were forced to sell all they possessed, furniture, houses, land, to stave off starvation. Catastrophe was prevented by relief from abroad and also by the organised struggle led by E.A.M. E.A.M. arranged for protest meetings, strikes and demonstrations in every town, district and suburb and forced the invaders to put a brake on the devastation of the country.

E.A.M.'s most notable successes in the struggle for existence were the strikes of April and September, 1942, which compelled the occupation authorities to increase wages and salaries, to pay them partly in kind, to set up soup-kitchens for the working people and their families and to declare that in future no foodstuffs would be exported from Greece. Two general strikes after months of famine and in the face of the severest measures of repression were a unique achievement in Occupied Europe.

During the course of the strikes the life of Athens-Piraeus was completely paralysed : no Civil Servant went to his desk ; no judge sat on his Bench ; no worker worked in his factory ; no vehicle left its garage. Hundreds of people were, in consequence, deprived of post or pension, many lost their lives, but the lives of countless men, women and children were saved from death by starvation and the Greek people returned from each battle with their enemies more self confident and invigorated by the consciousness of their power.

Political Struggle in the Towns

The struggle was political as well as economic. On 25th March, Greek Independence Day, and 28th October, anniversary of Italy's attack on Greece, great crowds led by the students and war-disabled veterans of the Albanian campaign, marched through the streets of Athens to crown the statues of the heroes of the War of Independence, singing patriotic songs.

The most spectacular of the achievements of E.A.M., among all the underground movements of Occupied Europe, was the general strike and demonstration of March, 1943, which compelled the occupation authorities to cancel the order for the mobilisation of labour in Greece. The strike was organised and called on as soon as it was learned that the order had been sent for publication in the Government Gazette. 250,000 men, and women, united, determined and angry, surged through the streets of Athens-Piraeus. They marched to the Ministry of Labour and to the Labour Exchanges, and set them on fire, burning the call-up lists. Units of carabinieri, with mortars and machine-guns, or riding in armoured cars, were called on to disperse the crowds. There was bitter street fighting and the demonstrators threw up barricades. Greek blood flowed in the streets of Athens, but the occupation authorities had to give way and no Greek youth was forced to labour in German war factories.

The great demonstration in June, 1943, after the shooting in reprisal of 106 innocent hostages, and the general strike and demonstration of July 22nd, in protest against the extension of Bulgarian rule in Northern Greece, show the high level to which Greek resistance has risen. On the latter occasion columns of Athenians, in spite of warnings that extremely severe precautionary measures would be taken, gathered at pre-arranged points and united into a vast crowd, 300,000 strong.

In 1941 E.A.M. was only able to organise small groups with limited forces and fight for limited objectives, but in the course of 1942 and 1943, its forces swelled to armies of disciplined and battle-seasoned men. It achieved unity among the mass of the people and developed a splendid organisation. The invaders did not spare the Greeks. On July 22nd, 1943, alone there were 300 dead and more than 100 wounded lying in the streets of Athens. Greater ruthlessness on the part of the enemy has only provoked greater resistance.

The Guerillas.

Resistance has not only been confined to the towns. The Greek guerilla movement is also brilliantly organised and has great achievements to its credit.

In the beginning the Greek guerillas had to contend with considerable organisational problems. The Greek army, which had been fighting for six months, was finally trapped, cut to pieces and disarmed. Only small bands of men, in groups of 10-20, in a few cases in larger numbers, were able to retain their light equipment and take to the mountains. They concentrated mainly in the Rhodope, but also in Western Macedonia, on Mount Olympus, the mountains of Roumeli, the Taygetos in the Peloponnese and, of course, in the mountains of Crete. From these centres they harassed the enemy's communications and attacked isolated bodies of the enemy's soldiery in order to capture precious equipment.

It was in December, 1941, when E.A.M., realising the importance for the Allied cause of a strong and united guerilla movement in Greece, set about its organisation. It welded a number of the scattered guerilla groups into E.L.A.S., the National Army of Liberation. In the spring of 1942 recruits were flocking to it. On the one hand the peasants, suffering under the heavy impositions laid on them in order to supply the Axis forces in Africa, were ready to wage a determined struggle against the invaders; and on the other, the great strikes and demonstrations of April (and later September) in the towns had led to the dismissal or arrest of large numbers of Civil Servants and workers. Thousands thus deprived of livelihood or in fear of death, fled to the mountains. The townsmen were usually politically progressive and brought new life to the guerilla movement, particularly in South-Western Greece, where they tended to concentrate.

E.L.A.S. armed the peasants in the areas where it operated, gave them a voice on the elected committees only obtained foodstuffs from them with their free consent and by payment and protected them against the arbitrary exactions of the invaders. The Germans, by way of reprisals, burnt whole villages suspected of assisting the guerillas, made mass arrests of civilians, and shot many hundreds of hostages. But such actions only helped to swell the ranks of those on the mountains. Guerilla recruits were enrolled so fast that there was great difficulty in providing them with arms, and a large reserve was built up to be supplied with arms as soon as circumstances permitted.

The guerillas made constant attacks on the enemy's lines of communication, derailing trains and capturing the war material they carried, while foodstuffs taken from the enemy were distributed to the starving population. Bridges and tunnels were demolished, rails torn up, roads blocked, patrols cut off. 9-10 of the mines producing for the Germans were rendered useless. Many of the mountainous areas were cleared of Axis troops. At first, for fear of guerillas they withdrew the small garrisons they had in the villages. Gradually they were forced to concentrate entirely in the larger towns, until, by the end of 1942, the whole of Continental Greece (Roumeli) outside the urban areas was liberated.

At first the invaders sent carabinieri and Greek gendarmes to deal with the guerillas but the gendarmes frequently deserted en masse to the guerillas and soon regular units of the Axis armies had to be despatched. Until the autumn of 1942 the guerillas were pinning down large enemy forces in Greece, entirely unaided by any help from the outside world.

In the spring of 1943 E.L.A.S. was entirely reorganised and the command given to Colonel Sarafis (now promoted to General) a Liberal officer. In command under him are Generals Floulis, Tzuzios, Caramitzos and Na ssis and Colonels Petroulakis, Bakirtsis, Papathanasiou, Demaratos, and in Crete, Mantakas, to mention only a few. Some of these officers are attached to Sarafis' Staff, while others command important units in the field. The spiritual leader of E.L.A.S. is the Bishop of Kozani who toured the country making fiery speeches urging the Greeks to remain disciplined and united.

By the reorganisation, the guerilla groups of E.L.A.S. were welded, so far as was possible into platoons, battalions and divisions, on the model of the pre-war Greek army. Headquarters are, in many cases in the same areas as before the war. Thus the Second Division, which before the war was quartered in Athens, fights in Attica-Boeotia under Colonel Papastamatiadis. The famous 42nd Evzone Regiment based before the war on Lamia, operates now in the Ghiona-Parnassus region. The 7th Division, formerly based on Chalkis, now controls almost the whole of Euboea. It is estimated that E.L.A.S. has 40-50,000 men and reserves, 2 or 3 times that number who cannot be equipped for lack of arms.

E.L.A.S. has an efficient quartermaster service which collects stores and distributes the foodstuffs and war materials sent from the towns or by the Allies or captured from the Germans. These supplies are stored on the mountains in dumps and caves. The men wear German, Italian, British and Greek uniforms, sometimes a little bit of everything. On their forage caps is embroidered "Liberty or Death."

E.L.A.S. is equipped with four surgeries and a few hospitals which have sufficient personnel but are lacking in medical supplies.

There is also a school for officers where experienced officers train the new cadres. The school takes 300 students, with a University or at least secondary standard of education and turns them out after 4 months' training with the rank of 2nd lieutenant.

"Free Greece."

The area liberated by E.L.A.S. now stretches continuously from the Albanian border down to the Gulf of Corinth and includes the whole of the Pindus, Epirus north of Jannina, Eastern Macedonia, the Olympus and Pierian massifs, Western Thessaly and the mountainous South-Western parts of Central Greece, and there are other liberated areas in the North and North-western Peloponnese, and in Crete.

A journalist on the staff of Eleftheria, one of the underground newspapers describes a visit he made to "Free Greece":—

"Imagine my emotion when I saw the Greek flag with the motto "Liberty or Death" embroidered right across it, waving over a balcony. I saw the villagers free to work, to argue, to sing. . . . I saw the village brightly lit at night and the inhabitants free to move about in the evening as they pleased. It was against this background that I saw our guerillas for the first time. They were tall, sunburnt men with determined features, long beards, and moustaches—except the young lads and there were many of them, whose faces have not even begun to grow a beard. They all wear military uniforms of different kinds and from all sources Slung over

their shoulders they carry bandoliers filled with cartridges and bullets and they carry them with a certain pride. They all wear a forage cap with the badge of their organisation embroidered on it. Their armament is usually completed with a dagger which is either slung by their side or thrust through their belt. . . .

“The behaviour of the guerillas is exemplary and no army can boast of such a moral, honest lot of men. Drunkenness and brawling is unknown among these men and in any case any abuse would be ruthlessly punished by the governing body. No guerilla band has ever taken food or anything else from the villagers without permission.”

Of Free Greece the Bishop of Kozani said :—

“Order security and a spirit of patriotism, respect for the Church and a solidarity rare in Greek history prevails.”

Free Greece is a democratic Greece. The struggle in each area is directed by a council elected by the inhabitants of the district, while elected committees deal with specific questions such as the distribution among the peasants of foodstuffs and other goods captured from the enemy. There are also committees for recruitment, to settle local quarrels to execute Quislings and to carry on a campaign against cattle thieves. From time to time Conferences are called of the elected representatives of the liberated areas before which the committees report. Thus in May, 1943, after the liberation of Grevena, a district Congress was held there under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Kozani. Allied officers from Cairo were present. At another conference, held in Thessaly, Generals Montgomery and Eisenhower and Marshal Timoshenko were elected honorary presidents.

The area and position of Free Greece menaces all the vital German communications. E.L.A.S. can and does constantly harass the North-South Athens-Salonika road and railway along which all German supplies on their way to the bases in Southern Greece must pass. E.L.A.S. also controls the road network in Western Macedonia and the important lateral roads linking Eastern to Western Greece : the Florina-Jannina, the Kalambaka-Metsovo-Jannina and the Athes-Delphi-Nafpacto Agrinion roads ; while it has been able to paralyse traffic on the Volos-Kalambaka railway and the small but important Missolonghi-Agrinion railway. In the Peloponnese guerillas of E.L.A.S. have several times wrecked the Athens-Pyrgos and Athens-Kalamata roads and railways. There are few railways and roads in Greece that do not pass through areas controlled by E.L.A.S. and none of the vital ones.

Fighting.

A book twice the size of this pamphlet could be filled just with the communiqués issued by Colonel Sarafis, on the basis of reports received from each unit of E.L.A.S. in the field. The units issue a routine daily report and very frequently a special communiqué giving a detailed account of engagements with the enemy : purpose, place, duration, the size of the forces engaged on both sides and a casualty list. Although the Greek Government in exile has these communiqués in its hand it has never published a single one.

We take here two of these communiqués at random. The first was issued by the 8th Division (Locris) on 28th September, 1943 :—

“ Three German lorries carrying men and material were going to Milo in Locris, but were attacked by our units and forced to return towards Lamia. The next day a force of 500 Germans borne in 24 lorries was going along the Moschochoriou-Loutra-Thermopylae road. During the night our units reinforced by reserve units, took up a position and waited for the Germans who appeared at 9 a.m. Battle was joined at 10 a.m. and lasted until nightfall, when under cover of darkness the Germans retreated in disorder. The enemy lost 40 dead. We made two prisoners, and took two field mortars, two machine-guns and eight rifles. Two German lorries were destroyed.

The second by the 2nd Division on the 20th September, 1943 :—

“ Two German lorries carrying 30 Germans were traversing the pass of Thermopylae. A combat unit of Volos, stationed at Psilopyrghi for observation fired on the enemy and forced it to turn back. The Germans took up their positions and forced our post to retreat in its turn by repeated attacks. Advanced units of a company stationed at Dracospilia hastened to the scene of battle and obliged the enemy to disperse leaving one dead and one wounded on the field of battle. During the night we advanced towards Anavra to prevent reprisals by the Germans. Our force consisted of, besides the company mentioned above, two squadrons, one machine-gun unit, three light mortars and two field mortars. In the dawn our troops took up a position in the passes. The next day at 8 a.m. a German force of 300 men appeared and advanced on foot in battle order towards the passes. At 9 a.m. the Germans reached our lines and battle was joined. The enemy attacked and at several points approached within 30 yds. of our positions. Our partisans held their ground made use of their machine-guns, rifles and hand-grenades. At this unexpected resistance the enemy broke up in the plain of Lamia, in crossing the marshes. At 12 noon enemy reinforcements came from Lamia in 11 lorries, which made four journeys to bring up men, material and three field cannon. It is estimated that the German force consisted of 750-800 men. At 2 p.m. battle was again joined and continued to 11.30 p.m. During the battle our men showed an extraordinary heroism and a high morale. The Germans were not able to approach our lines nearer than 300 yds. At 11 p.m. they increased their fire to cover their retreat, which was so hasty that it had the appearance of a rout. The enemy tried to carry off his dead and wounded but in vain. The next day several enemy dead were found on the field of battle.

“ Losses : the Germans besides the large number of dead left on the field, ordered 92 coffins in Lamia besides those they made themselves. The wounded who fell into our hands and those who could be moved exceeded 300 according to our information. Our losses were 7 dead (3 as the result of the explosion of one of our mortars) and 7 wounded. We took 2 mortars with 80 shells, 2 cannon with some ammunition, a rocket pistol and a number of rockets and destroyed field communication material. On 22nd September a tank and three armoured cars came up to the passes but our fire forced them to return to Lamia.”

Apart from the small engagements that take place somewhere every day and gradually wear down the enemy, there have been a number of major operations. The enemy made three determined

attempts to wipe out E.L.A.S. and sent considerable forces against it, and at the same time tried to force the peasants to dissociate themselves from the guerillas by a savage campaign of looting and by burning down hundreds of villages on the fringe of guerilla territory. Owing to the complete suppression of news very little is known of the battles in which important forces on both sides were engaged but the main facts are clear.

In March, 1943, during the victorious Allied advance in North Africa, the Italians tried to dislodge the guerillas from their strongholds in Thessaly and Western Macedonia. Strong columns of Italians were moved from Kozani and Larissa against the towns of Siatista, Servia and Grevena in Western Macedonia, while other columns from Larissa were sent against the Karditsa-Kalambak region in Thessaly. E.L.A.S. acted according to a co-ordinated plan. The defence was not left to the local bands, nor did the High Command wait for the enemy to develop his attack, but, foreseeing the direction of his blows, it took counter-measures. When Grevena and Siatista were attacked the guerilla movement in the whole of Thessaly, Macedonia and Epirus was mobilised, classes of peasants called up and their draught animals requisitioned. The narrow passes of Vermion, Pieria and Olympus leading from Thessaly into Macedonia and from Eastern in Western Macedonia were guarded by armed bands of young peasants volunteers. The guerillas attacked at widely separated points to prevent the enemy columns moving up to battle the area and to cut off reinforcements. Stubborn fighting went on for several days at a time. The battle for Servia, which was completely destroyed, lasted 37 hours ; that for Siatista, which finally had to be abandoned, 48 hours. In the region of Varnous fighting went on for 52 hours. The guerillas were forced to retire but the Italians suffered heavy losses in killed, prisoners and in equipment, and failed in the main objective which was not the capture of territory but the extermination of the guerillas.

E.L.A.S. was considerably strengthened by the Italian capitulation. Many Italian units surrendered their equipment to it and some Italian soldiers joined its ranks.

The second major attempt of the enemy against E.L.A.S. was undertaken by the Germans in the autumn of 1943, but unfortunately at the present time even less is known about this campaign than of the previous one. After August, 1943, when the guerilla delegation went to Cairo and was rejected, there was a complete blackout on all news coming from Greece. However, the following facts are known :—

The Germans had two objects : on the one hand to exterminate E.L.A.S ; and on the other to open up their communications between Eastern and Western Greece in preparation for the probable Allied landing from across the Adriatic. How determined was the German effort can be deduced by the fact, casually announced by Cairo without any explanation, that a German punitive column, 7,000 strong was defeated in Western Macedonia. It was later learned that the Greek forces responsible for this defeat was the E.L.A.S. officer General Floulis. The Germans failed in their first objective, although the guerillas were forced to abandon territory where the Germans, in reprisals, burned down several hundred villages. In their second objective the Germans partly succeeded,

for they did manage to clear for a short space of time the Jannian-Metsovo road. Their success on this occasion was due, as we will see, to the activities of Colonel Zervas in the rear of the E.L.A.S. forces.

Other guerilla groups and their relations with E.L.A.S.

The two other bands of guerillas in Greece respectively are E.D.E.S., led by Colonel Zervas, and E.K.K.A., under Colonel Psaros. The former held an area in South-West Epirus, while the latter operates in Mount Parnassus. The strength of E.D.E.S. has never exceeded 3,000 men, a large proportion of whom are reactionary officers from the gendarmerie. E.K.K.A. has about 1,000 men. In the summer of 1943 the bulk of its forces went over to E.L.A.S. and rest of it has since been on friendly terms with E.L.A.S.

Colonel Zervas came into prominence in 1925-6 when with Colonel Dertilis, he led the "Republican Guard," a collection of thugs whom Dictator Pangalos assembled as his personal body-guard. In the autumn of 1926 Zervas and Dertilis overthrew Pangalos in the interests of General Kondylis, but a few days later attempted to overthrow Kondylis and take his place. Since that time there has been no intrigue no shady business in which Zervas has not been concerned. After the occupation Zervas was on very good terms with the Axis and Quisling authorities and remained in constant touch with Pangalos, who has boasted about his friendship with Geloso the Italian C. in C., and with Dertilis, who is now at the head of the "Security Battalions" specially enrolled by the Quisling Government for exterminating the guerillas.

When it was realised that the Allies were not yet prepared to land in the Balkans the Quislings felt themselves able to take bolder measures against the resistance movement. They recruited Security Battalions from the dregs of the Athenian population, which were trained and equipped and to some extent officered by Germans, and their officers included not only Dertilis, Zervas' old comrade, but many royalists such as Poulos, Demitziis and Vretakos. On the plea of securing "law and order," which really meant suppressing E.A.M. and E.L.A.S. members of E.D.E.S. co-operated with the Security Battalions on several occasions. One of the most notorious cases was when E.D.E.S. summoned a meeting of the peasants of Philiata and then called in the Security Battalions and pointed out to them all the peasants who were members of E.A.M. As a result 60 peasants were shot.

The whole people rallied behind E.L.A.S. and in this way E.D.E.S.'s attempt to start a civil war was nipped in the bud and not even a drop of blood was shed. The E.D.E.S. groups in Thessaly, Chalcidice and Euboea were arrested and disarmed, and Zervas himself driven out of Valtos, the stronghold he had held for more than a year.

The King.

Metaxas, sometime Dictator of Greece, had as his principal supporter, King George of the Hellenes, who was brought back from exile in 1935 by a faked plebiscite. He made, at that time, categorical promises to uphold and respect the constitution but, at the first opportunity he handed over control of the government to

General Metaxas and gave him his unconditional support throughout the four blackest years in the history of modern Greece.

During these four years the Greek Parliament was dissolved the Press was gagged, the Trade Unions broken, youth regimented and thousands, men, women and even children, politicians, professors, students, workers, Civil Servants, officers and teachers, arrested, tortured in ways which defy description, and if still alive sent to concentration camps or to the most barren of the islets of the Aegean. But the friends of the regime waxed fat on the public funds.

When some of the older political leaders protested to the King, he scoffed and jeered at them and handed over their memoranda to Metaxas, who promptly had them arrested and exiled. Nor did his popularity increase when he was accused of a number of doubtful financial transactions, such as the selling of Tatoi, the Greek Windsor. Metaxas had it bought back with public funds.

When Greece was attacked by Italy, Metaxas did not recall to the army the ablest and most experienced Liberal officers, who had been dismissed, while some of the most fanatically royalist officers were placed in key positions and later proved to be Quislings. When Metaxas died the King declared that the country would continue to be ruled in the spirit of the Metaxas regime. Twice did the King stand in the way of national unity then. For both after Metaxas' death and after Korizis' suicide he refused the only condition which the political leaders set when they were asked to form a National Government, the removal of the Greek Himmler, Maniadakis.

Later, when the King was in exile it was his supporters in the Greek Middle East army who provoked that army to mutiny. It was the King who resisted the suspension of the reactionary legislation passed by Metaxas. It was the King who did everything he could to convince the British authorities that it was necessary to stop sending supplies to E.A.M. The King has by his policy fought consistently against Greek unity and his adherents in Greece itself have been the most savage of the persecutors of the resistance movement.

With the exception of a few of the most reactionary royalists and politicians all the people of Greece wholeheartedly agree that the King of the Hellenes should not return to Greek soil before a really democratic plebiscite on the matter has been held and he has been invited by the general will of the people. Several memoranda to this effect have been sent to the Greek Government in Cairo signed by all the old party leaders, as well as the E.A.M. and other organisations. On the fundamental question of creating a free, independent and democratic Greece all the Greek people are united.

The Greek people have always had the most friendly feelings towards Great Britain, but nothing could poison this relationship more than an attempt by a British Government to impose on Greece a man generally hated as her ruler.

The Government-in-exile.

After the deaths in 1936 of Venizelos and Tsaldaris the leaders of the two main political parties, the Liberals and Populists (Royalists) began to break up into small factions and were finally suppressed during the dictatorship. The old party politicians circulated lengthy memoranda amongst themselves and took part in abortive and in-

effectual intrigues. The real struggle against the Metaxas regime was organised and led by those progressive forces which are now also leading the struggle against the invaders with the support of the rank and file of the older parties.

After the German break-through at the Olympus line and the suicide of Premier Koryzsis, the old political leaders were invited by the King to form a Coalition Government. As we have already seen this plan fell through because the King refused to dismiss Maniatakis, and the King turned instead to Tsouderos, a banker who had supported Venizelos when he was in power and opposed him when he fell. He had been appointed Governor of the Bank of Greece by Metaxas who, dismissed him when he was discovered to be corresponding with the opposition in order to be on the safe side.

Tsouderos formed his Government. Six of his Ministers had held portfolios or other important posts under Metaxas and the rest were lawyers and business men, unknown outside their own restricted circles. In exile the Metaxist ministers made statements and wrote articles declaring their faith in Metaxist principles. So great was the dismay and the outcry among the Greek communities abroad (especially those in America) and from the Greek seamen, that the most compromised Ministers were dropped though they still draw handsome pensions.

At first, the Greek Government was indifferent to the resistance movement in Greece. Only for propaganda purposes did they speak about it—in grandiloquent terms. The Minister of Propaganda talked of Greek resistance in general without producing any concrete evidence, though it is only fair to say he was unable to interpret the evidence he did have.

However, when the resistance movement grew so enormously in town and country during the summer of 1942, the Greek Government became alarmed. It maintained a conspiracy of silence on the name of E.A.M., while at the same time it established contact with various groups of reactionary officers in Greece, who were themselves in contact with the Quislings. A good deal of publicity was at one time given to the great Cretan guerilla, Colonel Mandakas, until it was discovered that he too, was an adherent of E.A.M. When it became impossible to ignore the fact that E.L.A.S. was fighting large scale battles, Cairo propaganda credited it to “the guerillas” or “the resistance movement” in general, mentioning E.L.A.S. merely as one of many organistaions.

The exiled Government sought to organise the Greek army in the Middle East so that it might serve as a post-war police force to maintain “law and order” in Greece.

The Greek Government also sought to strengthen its political position. When M. Kannelopoulos, leader of the National Unity Party, escaped from Greece early in 1942 he joined the Government as Vice-Premier, and was accorded a great welcome as a representative politician, though at the only election in which he ever took part he was unable to secure a seat for himself let alone for his party. He used a left-wing phraseology, though in private reassuring his colleagues. He was later forced to resign after arousing the bitter distrust of the Greek army.

In the autumn of 1942 and particularly in the spring of 1943 a great number of Greeks escaped from Nazi persecution to the Middle East. They joined the Greek army and entirely altered its composition. These exiles understood only too well what was Fascism and they demanded a more representative and democratic Government and were not prepared to have the army in which they served led by notorious pro-Fascists. In consequence M. Tsouderos felt obliged to make the following statement in January, 1943 :—

“ The Greek Government declares that being attached to the principle of popular sovereignty, it considers it its duty immediately on returning to Athens after the liberation of Greece to resign, so that a Government may be formed representing all the political and social currents, all the national forces irrespective of whether they are organised as political parties or as organisations contributing to the national liberation struggle during the occupation.”

In March, after the dismissal of three officers well-known for their democratic opinions, there was a mutiny in the Greek army. The men put all the reactionary officers under arrest, and the Greek Government fearing lest the whole situation should gain too much publicity dismissed the most notorious of the Metaxists, replacing them with right-wing Liberals, but they did not replace the three democrats over whom the trouble originally arose.

To strengthen itself politically after this episode the Greek Government appointed to four of its key positions the right-wing Venizelists, M. Sophoulis, M. Karapanayotis, who has a following among Venizelist officers, and it was thought would be able to restore discipline in the army, M. Roussos, an Alexandrian banker, and M. Sophocles Venizelos, the son of the great Venizelos, but not the inheritor of his greatness.

In July, 1943, another mutiny broke out which spread also to the Greek navy in Alexandria. British units were called in to disarm the 2nd Brigade, which was dissolved, and many of the “ ring-leaders ” sent to a concentration camp in Egypt.

The continuing unrest in the army, the tremendous growth of the resistance movement, forced the King to make a verbal compromise. On 4th July, the King made a declaration that :—

1. Within six months after the military situation permitting elections for a Constituent Assembly would be held.
2. A Coalition Government would be formed to carry on the administration after the liberation of Greece.

The first part of this declaration seems merely vague, but in reality attempts to secure that elections shall be held only after the King's return (a point which both E.A.M. and the representatives of the old parties have strongly resisted) and only then when circumstances permitted.

A month later the E.A.M. delegation arrived in Cairo, to explain the point of view of the resistance movement on the question of the monarchy to G.H.Q. Cairo and to open discussions with the Government-in-exile in order to co-ordinate the struggle inside and outside Greece, and establish real national unity. The initiative for sending the delegation had come from the British Military Mission inside Greece, and neither the Greek Government nor the British Foreign Officer had been consulted.

The E.A.M. delegation put forward the following demands :—

1. That the King should not return to Greece before a plebiscite had been held on the matter.

2. “ In view of the decisive battle for our country’s liberation and to the end that the national war within the country and outside its borders be fully co-ordinated and integrated, and the people of Greece pass into their normal free political way of life, the representatives of the fighting Greek people consider it essential that all the national forces irrespective of political creed, come to an immediate understanding on the question of forming a provisional government of National Unity, which will assume the direction of the entire war effort, mobilise all the armed forces inside and outside Greece, co-ordinate their action, and prepare the ground for the free expression of the will of the Greek people on the question of the Constitution. To this end, we suggest that you call a conference of the representatives of the parties and people’s organisations here, that we may meet together with the members of your Government on the above urgent question. . . .”

The King on a plea of ill-health, went off to Syria. The King sent two cables, one to President Roosevelt and the other to Mr. Churchill. President Roosevelt’s reply was evasive and merely said that the Greek question would be solved in accordance with the Atlantic Charter, but Mr. Churchill supported the King’s declaration on 4th July.

“ No final and authoritative answer was given to our two demands on the national question and which require an immediate and courageous solution.”

After issuing a statement to the Greeks abroad on their mission, the guerilla delegates went back to their posts in Greece.

Further extracts from this document follow :—

“ First of all the E.A.M. delegation is happy to have had the opportunity of giving the outside world some information however elementary, on the Greek people’s resistance in the towns and in the mountains. Strangely, and the fact is devoid of reasonable explanation, the people’s present struggle one of the finest and grimmest pages in Greek history, is practically unknown, where it has not been libelled. We are deeply affected by the interest shown by the outside world, and the thirst of the Greeks abroad for authentic information of the continuation of the national epic of Pindus, written in Athens and the Piraeus, as it is on Olympus and the Parnassus in the blood of the people of Greece. . . .”

“ Distorted information, casual or deliberate, circulated throughout this time, has given the fighting Greeks a false picture of the situation abroad. It has been made to appear as if a wide gulf separated the fighters in Greece from those of the armed forces in the Middle East. We rejoice to observe that Greek officers and men, like Greek civilians and guerillas are inspired by the self-same iron determination to crush the forces of the Axis and the self same belief in the sovereignty of the people.”

The document ends thus :—

“ Again, we are aware that the people of Greece have been taught a hard lesson during the years 1936-1943. They have known the rule of aggression, they have seen what humiliation and devastation lie hidden beneath fair words and they have witnessed the results of

the wave of Fascism which swept over Europe, with its harvest of four years' bloodshed. All must understand this: that a people have fought as they fought in Albania, and have liberated by their own efforts half their country's soil, can never again, either by coercion or persuasion, yield to an enslaver. Loyally, insistently they want their political freedom, not to revive ageworn institutions but to create a new way of life. There are, of course, those who long for the rule of the tyrant, the chancellery system of the "mailed fist"—the only government which would sanction their illegal interests. They have a hundred justifications for their case. They claim that they are all for national unity, meaning by this that the people should fight whilst they rule without authority, even though they are the very men who have tyrannised over the people and who represent that very Fascism against which the war is being fought. Another pretext for this "unity" is that of the national claims, which can only be won by the prowess of the people's arms. They go so far as to conceive the anti-national idea of invoking foreign intervention in Greek internal affairs. All this in the hope, as criminal as it is stupid, of suppressing, misleading, or degrading the spirit of the Greek people. They will soon realise that it will pay them to keep silence; to desist from operating as the enemies of the people. . . . However, the existence of these few deplorable and lamentable adventurers does not alter the situation."

The Government-in-exile now felt stronger. It thought it could now come out into the open and convince the Greeks themselves, as well as the rest of the world, that the fighting Greeks in Greece, were lawless anarchists, who on the liberation of Greece would need thorough policing. It tried to represent itself as the embodiment of all that the Greek people desired in a Government. In the corrupt and reactionary atmosphere of Cairo it lost its sense of reality to such an extent, and became so convinced of its own arguments, that it even dared to put out all this stuff on its Cairo and London broadcasts to the Greeks in Greece itself.

On 28th and 31st December, 1943, M. Tsouderos stated in a broadcast to Greece:—

1. That as a result of internecine warfare all fighting against the Germans had ceased.

2. That the conflict had now reached such proportions that it would lead not only to the complete annihilation of the guerillas but also enable the enemy to uproot whole towns and persecute thousands of "defenceless fellow-countrymen, women and children fated to die of starvation."

From his snug corner in Cairo, M. Tsouderos ended by bidding the guerillas "unite or return to your peaceful occupations."

It was at this time that the Germans were also conducting a furious propaganda campaign against E.A.M. The anti-Comintern Bureau in Berlin suddenly discovered a document signed by "a Bulgarian and a Greek" on the Sovietisation of the Balkans. The Germans also issued a pamphlet mainly intended for the Government-in-exile, describing how the Athenian mob had looted shops and houses of wealthy citizens, how disorders in the streets had only been quelled by the intervention of German troops and how the guerillas were ransacking the countryside and assassinating honest and peaceful citizens. "It is either we or anarchy," said the Germans. All

these stories were industriously circulated by the Greek Government as coming from unimpeachable sources.

On 4th December, Cairo radio singled out one of the most popular of the guerilla leaders of E.L.A.S., Aris Velouchiotis, for attack :—

“ A few anti-patriotic and ambitious individuals seem to monopolise the national struggle. The most notorious is Capetan Aris Velouchiotis, commissar of guerilla bands, who was imprisoned for immoral activities. His main purpose is to undermine the national struggle. He is mainly responsible for the clashes between E.L.A.S. and E.D.E.S. . . . The inhabitants of Palaiocastro in Roumeli remember with horror the sentence passed on three cattle thieves and the tortures they suffered at the hands of Velouchiotis. The inhabitants of Gardiki have not forgotten 27th January, when the same man executed so-called traitors without any proof of their guilt.”

This is the language of Goebbels himself.

After August the Greek Government also succeeded in securing the full support of the British authorities. A censorship was imposed on all news of guerilla activities in Greece—save such scraps as tended to show that “ Greek was fighting Greek,” while the King of the Hellenes obtained the complete substitution of the members of the British Military Mission as the previous personnel was not sufficiently pro-King.

Thus simultaneously was E.A.M., E.L.A.S. attacked from all sides : by the Germans, by the Security Battalions of the Quisling Government, by Zervas lavishly supplied with arms by the Allies who denied them to E.L.A.S., and by the propaganda of the Greek Government in exile and of the Allies.

But the Greeks are not easily cast down. How shortsighted to think of thwarting the will of such men as those who have routed greatly superior enemy forces not only in Albania but under the incredibly difficult circumstances of defeat, occupation and famine during three long years. Men who have the unstinted support of a united people behind them, and also of the Greek forces in the Middle East and all the Greek communities in the Americas, in London and in Egypt who have all organised committees in support of E.A.M.

The facts are clear. These men are fighting our battles. They need the arms we can make—arms, more arms and still more arms for all fighting the Germans is the slogan of every true anti-Fascist.

In the Balkans the old world of poverty, illiteracy, disease, dictatorship, military coups, and the police rule is being broken. The people of Britain will rejoice that this is so and will wish to ally themselves with the forces of the future, and not with the representatives of reaction.

COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL LIBERATION IN “ FREE GREECE.”

A Committee of National Liberation has lately been formed in “ Free Greece.”

On 12th March, 1944, the Greek Political Committee of National Liberation, of which General Bakirdzis is President, has addressed to the Governments of Great Britain, America and the Soviet Union, the following Message :—

“ We, the undersigned, have the honour to inform you that in obedience to the wish of the Greek people that a political organ be formed inside the country for the direction of the national struggle and the administration of our liberated areas, a Political Committee of National Liberation was formed in the liberated part of Greece on March 10th.

“ The Committee, bearing in mind the absence of national unity which is harmful to the national and Allied struggle and favours the sinister plans of the enemy, is making every effort to bring about this unity.

“ By the realisation of national unity the yield of our struggle will grow, the country will be helped in the transitional period towards a normal political life, and the danger of internal strife be avoided.

“ The country thus enters the road leading to the attainment of its efforts—the formation of a Government of national unity.

“ The Committee considers the struggles of the Greek people an integral part of the war effort for common victory over Fascism, realisation of the ideal of liberty for the people in accordance with the principles of the Atlantic Charter, and the declarations of the Governments of the United Nations.

“ On this point the Committee is certain that it expresses the deep feelings of the Greek people who remain faithful to the real aims of the war—the realisation of complete independence for the nations and the progress of civilisation—and it asks your Governments to continue the material and moral aid which you have not ceased to render us.”

(Signed)

GENERAL E. BAKIRDZIS (President and Foreign Secretary of the Committee and Organiser of the Liberation Army).

D. SANTOS (former Deputy of the Communist Party).

COLONEL E. MANTAKAS (leader of the Crete Guerillas).

ILEAS TSIRIMOKOS (former Deputy of the Liberal Party).

K. GAVRIELIDES (representing the Argarian Party).

THE TRAGEDY IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

On Greek Independence Day, 25th March, the Greek Community in Egypt, officers and men of the Greek Army, Navy and Merchant Navy and refugees demonstrated in Alexandria, Cairo and Port Said, for the formation of a Government of National Unity on which the Political Committee in Greece should be adequately represented. On 31st March, a delegation of high officers, representing all the Greek Armed Forces in the Middle East, placed this demand before M. Tsouderos, asking him either to accept or resign. The delegation was arrested but soon released from their confinement at the Provost Marshal's H.Q. by their comrades and their guards. More demonstrations took place in Alexandria and Cairo and M. Tsouderos, who had not even the support of his own Service Ministers was forced to resign.

The King tried to form a Services Government but soon realised that the crisis was too serious to be solved by such measures. On 5th April, M. Tsouderos was provisionally restored to power. He

immediately asked the British authorities to make wholesale arrests among those who sympathised with E.A.M. in the Greek services and among the refugees. This roused the temper of the Armed Forces and on 6th April the 1st Brigade and the Navy declared that they would not carry out further orders until their comrades were released and they had a guarantee that a Government of National Unity would be formed. The Navy was supported by the tacit acquiescence of its C-in-C. Admiral Alexandris. The 1st Brigade, the main formation of the Greek Army in the Middle East, remained in its camp and the sailors in their ships.

The King arrived at Cairo from London on 11th of April firmly resolved to undermine a Government of National Unity and to disband the Armed Forces in the Middle East, on which he could no more "rely" because of their democratic feelings, but as he was opposed by the entire personnel of the Armed Forces he was forced to seek help against them from outside. It was only after three weeks that a boarding party led by the retired Vice-Admiral Voulgaris, for the King could not find a high naval officer on active service to execute his orders, managed one moonless night to take three of the ships by surprise and then forced the others to surrender. Even so there was a great number of victims. The 1st Brigade too was finally starved out, obliged to submit and be sent into concentration camps. From this moment the Greek Armed Forces in the Middle East ceased to exist.

At the same time, here in England, at the Greek Naval base, on 20th April, 1944, 98% of the Greek sailors, 96% of the petty officers and 60% of the Greek officers, signed a memorandum by which they were expressing the view that for the better prosecution of the war a Government of National Unity should be formed, based on the Political Committee set up in "Free Greece." These men have never refused to carry out orders. Yet, on 29th April, they were ordered by the British Naval Authorities to leave their ship within two hours.

In the Middle East officers of all ranks, even to that of general and admiral, many of whose bodies are scarred with war wounds; soldiers—those brave men of the Albanian mountains and of El Alamein; sailors of the Navy and Merchant Navy, heroes of all the seas, were shot at, killed and dragged in thousands, to prisons and concentration camps. Just now, practically the entire Greek armed forces of the Middle East are in concentration camps.

These harsh and inhuman measures were taken against them solely because these men believed in the ideals of democracy and freedom.

A blind policy of this sort in the Greek question is heading Greece for a new unimaginable disaster. Is not all that this little heroic nation has so far undergone, enough? Are not the sufferings, the agony, the famine, the 400,000 graves, the hundreds of villages razed to the ground, the scores of wrecked cities, enough? Must the whole nation be "led" to a terrible internecine war for the individual benefit of a handful of men?

Do the people of Greece deserve such a fate, who for seven long months, in 1940 to 1941, stood alone in Europe, the free world's only

hope? The praises, the hymns and promises—are they so soon forgotten? Yet the blood that the Greek people shed, and do still shed, is not yet dry! . . .

Let any one who wishes to know the pain and grief Greek patriots feel, take their place for a moment. He would then realise that just now the spectre of disaster is rearing itself on all sides of the people of Greece.

We appeal to the free world to remember a little of all it owes to the Greek people.

The Greek question, with the tragic turn it has taken, has now become the touchstone which shall show the intentions of the United Nations towards Europe's captive peoples. Not only the policy, but the honour too, of the free world is involved in the Greek question.

END.

SUPPLEMENT

LEBANON CONFERENCE

From the 17th to the 20th May a Conference was held at Lebanon between various politicians and the delegates of the fighting people of Greece. Some of these delegates did in fact represent the true wishes of the people, but many others represented no one but themselves.

Some of the politicians who have no support in Greece went so far as to attack the National Liberation Front who have for three years led the heroic struggle of the Greek people against the invaders, and to excuse the so-called Security Battalions who, armed by Germans and organised by German officers and Greek traitors fought against the guerillas.

In spite of this provocative attitude the delegates of the Political Committee of National Liberation, the E.A.M. and the Communist Party, having in mind that it is absolutely necessary in this critical moment of the war to establish unity, took up a conciliatory, moderate and patriotic attitude. They stressed that the liberation of suffering Greece from the hated enemy and the speedy victory of the Allies was the supreme task. Their sane attitude, so well sustained throughout the Conference led to its success.

All delegates signed the following National Charter :

1. The reorganisation and establishment of discipline in the Greek armed forces in the Middle East under the National flag.
2. The unification and discipline of all guerilla bands in Free Greece under the orders of a single Government, and the setting in motion, when the moment arrives, of all fighting forces of the Nation against the invader.
3. The cessation of the reign of terror in the Greek countryside and the firm establishment of personal security and political liberty of the people when and where the invader has been driven out.
4. Sending sufficient supplies of food and medicines to Greece.
5. The securing, once the country is liberated, in common with the Allied forces, of the order and liberty of the Greek people, in such a way that, uninfluenced by material or moral pressure, they may, with sovereign rights, decide on the constitution and social regime and on the government they want.
6. Severe sanctions against traitors and those who have exploited the misfortunes of the Greek people.
7. Care in advance that the material needs of the Greek people shall be immediately satisfied after their liberation, and
8. The full satisfaction of Greek national claims.

Some Points from the Speeches at the Lebanon Conference.

Professor A. SVOLOS, President of the Political Committee. He warmly supported the idea of National Unity, with a single national army and a single united government. He had given the example of uniting with rivals of

various opinions and had formed the new Committee of National Liberation in the mountains to further the idea of the formation of a single united national government which is now sought, and under which the whole nation would range itself in the struggle for liberation and democracy. He attributed the internal friction and anomalies to the lack of national union on a popular basis. He stressed the significance of the resistance of the people against the invaders, as a further glory for Greece after the epics of Albania and Macedonia.

He paid tribute to the victims of German occupation and to the activity of the forces of the Middle East. National unity must have as its aim the struggle against the invaders. To be genuine and lasting it must be based on mutual trust and understanding, political equality, love for and faith in the people, absolute recognition of popular sovereignty, and the adoption of the ideology of the Allied struggle.

Mr. M. PORPHYROGENIS, Secretary General of E.A.M. stressed that E.A.M. correctly interpreted Greek desires and had continually made efforts to achieve Greek unity. These attempts came up against the short-sighted. Distrust of, and prejudice against E.A.M. was shown by refusal to participate in the national struggle, and then by hostility. This serious mistake on the part of the political world must be recognised if we wish to prepare the ground for unity to-day. He then refuted all the arguments put forward by those who tried to justify their absence from the national struggle. He praised the heroic activity of E.A.M. and E.L.A.S. which have written some of the most glorious pages in Greek history. He attacked the opposition to the growing national and popular movement of E.A.M., opposition skilfully exploited by the invader. The invader took advantage of this to organise the Security Battalions and to create civil war with the collaboration of certain traitors.

He declared categorically that E.A.M. steadfastly adhered to the principle of respecting the sovereignty of the people and concluded, that if a spirit of greater mutual confidence prevailed agreement would be reached, and they would show themselves worthy of the expectations of the people.

Mr. P. ROUSSOS, representing the Communist Party of Greece, said that his Party had sought unity since 1941 when the enemy occupied the country. He expressed sorrow that, after the three years struggle by the Greek people, the epic of the heroic Greek resistance which is at least comparable to that of the Albanian mountains, has remained relatively little known, while at this very Conference efforts are being made to belittle that struggle. The Greek Communist Party is proud that, in May 1941, it was first to sound the clarion call for the unity of all Greeks against the common enemy, for the prevailing of the people's free will after victory and for the free choice of a political regime through the election of a representative national assembly. Unfortunately most of the political parties did not listen to this call and the failure to accomplish national unity is their great responsibility.

The Communists of Greece base national unity on the following principles : total mobilisation of the nation, without any reservation, at the side of the Allies for the crushing of the invader. A democratic solution of the constitutional question with a free expression of the people's will. The creation of a national army under the orders of the Government. The Communist Party does not approve of any action which weakens the Greek or Allied war effort, such as the recent mutiny, but stresses that political responsibility for it lies on those, particularly the Tsouderos Government, who for three years impeded the union of the Greeks. Even though late, national unity must be totally achieved, and the Communist Party sincerely offers all its services for this realisation.

Major General STEPHEN SARAPHIS, Military leader of E.L.A.S. gave an account of the way in which the army of E.L.A.S. was organised and of its fighting value. In Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, Central Greece and the Peloponnese they had inflicted heavy losses on the enemy by blowing up and derailling trains specially on the Athens-Salonika line. Hundreds of trucks of war material had been destroyed. Between June, 1943 and April, 1944 alone the figures of enemy losses were Italians 3,166, Germans 8,929, and Bulgarians 466. The action of E.L.A.S. had exalted and inspired the spirit of the nation, and averted anarchy, had liberated a great part of the mountain districts in which, by its activity, order and safety had been restored.

Mr. N. ASKOUTSIS former Liberal Minister and member of the Political Committee of National Liberation said that from his knowledge of the attempts which had been made to come to an understanding he did not consider that the responsibility for failure to do so fell upon E.A.M. or the Communist Party. The invader, taking advantage of the dissensions which existed, had tried to divide the Greek people by threats of the danger of Communism in Greece. He maintained that this danger does not exist in Greece because the Communist Party does not seek to prevail by force nor would the Greek sense of reality accept that. He condemned the Security Battalions who have provoked the hatred of all the people.

Mr. A. ANGELLOPOULOS, Professor of Public Finance of Athens University and a member of the Political Committee stated that E.A.M. is not a Communist coalition but an extensive popular movement, the movement of a new world which is seeking a new orientation and new watchwords. The people are asking for leadership and not a policy of negation. We must not forget however, that the political activities of the country stopped ten years ago and in that lapse of time new social currents have been formed which do not believe in the old political world.

Mr. D. STRATIS, representative of the Socialist Party said it would be for history to pass its judgement on the liberation struggle of E.A.M., E.L.A.S. and on its contribution towards the Allied war effort against Nazism. He went on to describe the Allied war effort against Nazism. He went on to describe the contributions of the working class towards the struggle in the form of strikes and sabotage against the Germans and in general of the resistance and heroic sacrifices which the Greek people had made. He attacked the Security Battalions formed by Rallis Government at the orders of the Germans and he asked the Conference to record its condemnation of them.

GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY IS IMPERATIVE.

After the Lebanon Conference was ended all the delegates arrived in Cairo. Mr. Papandreou handed his resignation to the King, and was again asked to form a Government. After three attempts Mr. Papandreou announced on the 8th June that "The Government of National Unity which was formed to-day will not make a new declaration of policy. Its programme is the Lebanon National Charter, to the direct application of which the Government will apply its whole-hearted effort. We regret, however, that the representatives of the Communist Party, of the E.A.M. and the Political Committee are not yet participating in the Government of National Unity."

Mr. Papandreou's description of his Government as one of "National Unity" without the participation of the E.A.M., the Communist Party and the Political Committee is a little strange. Everyone knows that those delegates who have not yet (as we write) a seat in the Government in Cairo represent 80 per cent. of the Greek people.

Our Committee have received the following cable from the General Secretary of the E.A.M., Mr. Porfyrogenis, sent on June 7th :

"Your welcome patriotic message strengthens us in our hard struggle. Our brothers abroad may rest assured that the E.A.M. will continue by the side of our Allies to fight at the head of our heroic people, for liberation and for the respect of the people's rights in spite of the vile calumnies and furious attacks from many sides. We have done everything possible for the achievement of National

Unity and we hope that in spite of all we shall find the same good will in others. In the name of the Greek people we thank you for your efforts in support of our struggle."

At this moment when the fortress of Hitlerite tyranny is being assailed from West, East and South, the paramount need for a Government of National Unity is more than ever imperative. It is hoped that all obstacles placed in the way towards this end must be brushed aside and that the Government of National Unity will become a reality. As stated by "The Times" Cairo Correspondent on 9th June, "Until Ministerial Unity is achieved it is difficult to proceed with the reorganization of the Greek armed forces, partisan as well as regular—a matter of much moment, as military developments in the West may well have repercussions throughout the Balkans."

Witnesses against the slanders.

Mr. Svolos, President of the Political Committee is a Professor of Constitutional Law in Athens University and one of the outstanding figures in our country. He is also well known internationally. On the 1st June he made the following declaration to the correspondent of the A.F.I. Agency :

"There is the world of yesterday and the world of to-morrow. The Greek people await a new era, which in its spirit will be a popular democracy. It is wrong to say that Communism prevails in Greece. The E.A.M., the Political Committee and the Communist Party itself insist on the integrity of private property. I, myself, have assisted in giving the most rigorous judgements against anyone taking away the property of another. After a long tour which I made through the country after my departure from Athens to return to the mountains, I can assure you that complete security reigned everywhere. The people went about their work without fear or anxiety. The only disturbing elements were the members of the Security Battalions who terrorised the people with the help of the invaders."

The slanders against E.A.M., E.L.A.S. were also exposed by the Istambul correspondent of "The Times" who reported on May 7th : "A girl of 21 has just arrived in Turkey after spending 10 weeks in the Greek mountains among a group of E.L.A.S. guerilla organisation. When a student of Athens University she was involved in anti-German agitation and was threatened with arrest. She says : 'I had heard many stories about partisan excesses and I was prejudiced against them because a friend had been killed for political reasons. But after a few days my ideas completely changed. I never met a group of men so well behaved, so chivalrous and disciplined. I saw there a people made up of all classes—students, lawyers, doctors, workmen and peasants, who lived in complete brotherhood having only one thing in mind; to fight the Germans The Germans with the connivance of the quisling government have formed bands that are supposed to protect the people from "communism." These bands are terrorizing the population; they are a rabble of the most disreputable characters, many of whom are common criminals.'"