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MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

WAR DEPARTMENT GENERAL STAFF

MILITARY ATTACHÉ REPORT Egypt

Country Reported On

Subject CONDITIONS IN GREECE **I. G. No.** 3600

Brief Descriptive Title

Source and Degree of Reliability: Mr. S. Zannas, a prominent, once wealthy Greek who, with his wife has recently escaped from Greece. He is in Cairo ostensibly doing Red Cross work but actually the representative of Gen. St. Gonatas outside of

Summarization of Report When Required Greece to further the cause of the Republic after the war. Mr. Zannas states he is receiving no pay for his work. I have no reason to doubt his reliability.

REC'D G-2 FEB - 6 1942

In Comments on Current Events Enter Item Headings Here

The enclosures picture present deplorable conditions in Greece; indicate that all Greeks are now pro-British; claim no one wants the return of their exiled King whom the people regard as an abdicator; advocate self-determination for Greece after the war; claim people want a Greek republic; indicate misgivings concerning British handling of Greek Navy and Army; indicate zones of occupation and describe economic conditions in various occupied areas; report on present political situation in Greece with brief summary of past political events better to explain existing political situation.

Bonner F. Fellers
Colonel, G.S.C.
Military Attaché

Enclosures:
Map of Greece - 1 copy only
Letter - 9 copies
Report - 9 copies
Political Parties - 9 copies

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From M. A. Cairo, Egypt **Report No.** 2170 **Date** 27 January 1942

This line to appear on all succeeding pages

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WAR DEPARTMENT
OCS Form 17

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I consider it absolutely necessary that we should exchange views concerning the general position in order that we might coordinate our efforts. Unfortunately there has so far been no contact. Those who have undertaken to establish one are, indeed, worthy of praise and their services should be regarded as services to the nation. 6-3

The people throughout the country are inspired with pro-British sentiments. Even those who formerly sympathised with the Germans have, by reason of the general attitude of the occupying forces, altered their opinions. The Italians are hated and despised. The sufferings of the population, in their endeavours to secure a means of livelihood, are terrible. There is a total lack of foodstuffs. And the prices of even the cheapest commodities have attained astronomical figures. The daily bread ration has been reduced from 60 drs to 30 drs. The Tsolakoglou government is considered by the public in general as mean, wicked and treacherous as well as inefficient. The only factor which strengthens the patience and perseverence of the people is their hope of and belief in a British victory from which they may expect their own deliverance. It is a profound disappointment to them that there should be no field of action in which they can contribute to the victory. Any reaction on their part against the occupying forces only leads to most severe penalties and sanctions. Numerous victims are caused without any material result being gained. Should the victory be delayed a great number of people will perish from starvation and there is much fear of disturbances breaking out. The final victory is awaited not only in the hope that it will save the people from starvation but also rid them of the occupying forces and enable them to regain their liberties of which they were deprived by the tyrannical regime of August 4th. Many would go so far as to consider the Greek defeat as having provided them with an opportunity of ridding the country forever of that sinister regime of August 4th. The general public consider the governments of Tsolakoglou and Tsouderos, irrespective of the different aims which they pursue, as being the result and mere continuation of that regime. On regaining their liberty the people are not prepared to accept either of these governments. The King is considered to be (as he was in actual fact) the leader of that tyrannical regime, with whose assistance he encashed vast sums. His return therefore would not be tolerated under any forms. Furthermore any assurance he might give of becoming a constitutional monarch would be no longer believed.

It is indeed fortunate that all political parties now existing in Greece at present participate in the general feeling of the public and that no one has hoisted a pro-royalist standard. All are agreed on the establishment of a new popular republic. There might indeed be some sort of attempt to create a pro-royalist organization on the part of those who are bound by personnel ties and personnel interests to the dynasty or by some incorrigible officers

of whom there are fortunately very few. Such group could not possibly be considered as a political party representing a proportion of the people and should be looked upon as a mere conspiracy. These persons allege (and it is an allegation which may find an echo in the opinions of some simple-minded people) that any reaction against the return of the King after a British victory would have unfavourable repercussions on the interests of the Greek nation. We consider such fears to be altogether unfounded. England has embraced the King because she found him a fully empowered monarch in time of war. There is no reason for her to adopt a similar attitude towards him after the war, and to base her future policy towards Greece on the personality of a single man whose presence would offend the sentiments of an entire people. Of the friendly disposition felt by that people towards her England has had ample proof in the attitude of the Greek people towards her troops, prisoners and escapees. Moreover the King did not assist as he should have done and that is a point on which you should try to enlighten the British. Having decided on a pro-British policy the King employed pro-German men and means to carry out that policy. From the Army, for instance, he excluded capable officers possessed of thoroughly pro-British sentiments. Nor could England, in her own interests, alter her intentions concerning the creation of a greater Greek Mediterranean state on the mere grounds that a pro-British Greek Republic was in power minus King George. Moreover it must not be forgotten that the U.S. and Russia will be on the side of the victors and that the British Labour Party will be the most powerful political factor in England. It is impossible that they should all go back on the statements and declarations concerning the right of self determination of a people.

The opinion prevailing here is that a government composed of all the political parties should be formed as soon as the occupying forces commence to withdraw. It will be incumbent upon this government to proclaim the republic immediately. To all those who would induce England to restore the King by force. We are sure she will reply "We do not meddle in your internal affairs". That, too, was the answer the British invariably gave during their presence in Greece to those who asked them why they tolerated the persecution of proved Greek friends of theirs.

Let us now turn to the Greek Army in Egypt. There is no one in Greece who does not desire the successful formation of that Army by the side of the British Army and does not wish for its victorious participation in the struggle against the common enemy. But we are indeed sorry to hear nothing regarding any action by our Fleet since its departure from Greece. Experience and patriotic officers and men of the Army and Navy, who remain idly here, many of whom had from the first moment expressed the desire to join the fleet sailing for Egypt and whose offer was rejected are anxious to reinforce our new army and our old fleet. We know nothing here of the form and organization of our new army nor of the principles guiding its leaders. As long as that army is outside the frontiers of our country and so long as we are under enemy occupation none of us are in a position to recommend the alteration of the status. But what is that army going to do when circumstances permit its return to Greece? It is reasonable

to assume that the feelings of the Greek Army cannot be different to those of the Greek population. And we are not, in all good conscience, prepared to lower it from the standing of a National Army to that of a mercenary organ in the hands of the King whom we already consider as having abdicated. Tsouderos bombards us continually with promises to the effect that after the war a spirit of absolute freedom will prevail and that the people will be free to choose their own form of Government, subject always, according to Tsouderos, to the Government being under the leadership of the King, so suddenly converted into a liberal.

The people through their political leaders (who must be considered as representing public opinion until such time as elections can be held) have declared themselves unreservedly in favour of a popular democracy. Every one is prepared to prevent the return of the King, who failed to keep the promises he has given when he was restored to the throne. Until such time as the Greek Army of Egypt can return victorious to Greece, where its presence will be absolutely necessary, we will meanwhile maintain order and establish the new republican government. But what we should like to know is what attitude will the Army, on its return, adopt towards the people and the "fait accompli" of the established republic.

You will undoubtedly realize how anxiously we await enlightment on these vital matters about which we know so little. Meanwhile certain individuals here, while giving the impression of acting on behalf of the Tsouderos Government, facilitate the departure of all persons who adopt that Government's views and excluding all others from doing so. We should also like to know whether we can establish contact with you, a matter no doubt which could only be arranged with the assistance of the British who dispose of the means to render such assistance. In view of this, those persons who have, at their own risk, taken the initiative to establish contact between us are rendering a very valuable service which might prove extremely useful in all respects and especially in strengthening your efforts to reinforce our armed forces by suitable elements, whose sole object is to serve our country with devotion.

(signed) S. GONATAS

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STATE OF REVICTUALLING IN GREECE

After the occupation, Greece came under four different zones of influence as follows:

1) The Triangle Didimoteicho which was occupied by the Germans and where the Greek authorities are still kept.

2) The reclaimed part between the Evrou and the Strymon river, which is occupied by the Bulgarians as a sort of annexation and in which every sort of Greek government has been wiped out.

3) The part from the Strymon river to Mount Olympos, not including Epirus, occupied by Germans and to which has been added the governing of the North Aegean islands, without excepting Mytilene and Chios.

4) The rest of Greece which is occupied by Germans and Italians.

In this department the exceptions are: (a) Corfou which the Italians consider as annexed by them and which comes under the direct government by Italy, not connected in any way with the Italians in Greece. (b) The Cyclades which belong to the group governing the Dodecanese, and (c) Epirus which comes under the governor of Albania. This is how the governing of Greece has been fixed.

The question of food supplies varies in the different zones, some are better and some are worse. The situation is as follows:

1) The Zone Didimoteicho, till the month of November, had sufficient food supplies. There was even talk of transporting 6000 tons of wheat to Piraeus collected by the Wheat Collecting Service. In agreement with the German authorities it was agreed on and motor boats were even sent to take it over. But the Germans, as usual, cancelled the permission and kept the wheat. The motor-boats sent for the wheat returned empty with a loss of 3.000.000 Drs for the Bank of Agriculture. Nevertheless the information was that there was a shortage of food in this part.

2) Bulgarian Zone. This district had a sufficiency of food on account of the fertile earth but after the unbelievable plundering and the coarseness of the Bulgarians towards the inhabitants, the conditions changed altogether. The barberousness of the Bulgarians acting personally against the students of Pontion who were residents of Palaia in Greece surpassed every limit. The inhabitants were ordered to quit within a few hours and others were murdered. Some were able to reach Negrita where they were put under arrest by the German authorities. The conditions of the inhabitants were so miserable that even the German ordered and sanctioned the running of the hospital in Nigrita under the Greek Red Cross, whose object was not only to nurse the sick but to care for the human victims coming from the Bulgarian Zone. From the above you can imagine the wretchedness of the situation.

3) German occupying forces from the Strymon till Olympos. Is in a better state concerning food-supplies than any other part of Greece, because it is the most fertile part and because the Bulgarians are supplying food through the 'Black' market at the expense of the inhabitants. In this district right from the beginning of the occupation there was a lack in the following foodstuffs: oil, soap, sugar, coffee and rice.

4) German and Italian occupiers in the remainder of Greece.

a) District of Athens. On account of the increased population during the time of the war, following the bombing of various towns in Thrace and Macedonia, and for many other reasons, the population of Athens-Piraeus increased from 1/3. The immediate consequence of this fact and the lack of communications was the cause of the shortage of foodstuffs. The Government was leaving for Crete and appointed General Platir as their representative who was also in charge of the question of food and supplies and whose bad management was the cause of the later great shortage of supplies. To be correct the course of matters was as follows: The General Platia, acting quite on his own, or on the orders of the departing Government, refused to distribute to the population even the slightest amount of food available in the stores of provisions, notwithstanding the information before the occupation of the great shortage in the retail selling of provisions. Therefore, when the Germans on their arrival found the stores stocked with provisions they took over all. The patience of General Platis reached that point which, when the E.E.S. asked him for supplies for the hospitals where Greek soldiers were being attended to and also British soldiers, he did not give anything until the amount had been paid in full before delivery. The result of this action was that the sum from the E.E.S. should not be available, because during those days the banks were closed and there was no possibility of getting cash. In view of the above, the shortage started immediately after the arrival of the Germans. Apart from the requisitioning and thefts committed by the Germans there were other means which helped to bare the country. Every German soldier received 8 Marks per day at 60 drs. per Mark, i.e., 480 drs. which he spent buying foodstuffs and every sort of merchandise which he sent to Germany, because in any case the Marks printed in Greece were of no use to him except in Greece. This is how the country became bare and on account of the great demand a colossal increase in prices which was not controlled or fixed and rose higher and higher from day to day. About the time when I left Greece, that is to say about the end of October the prices of the different articles were as follows: Coffee 2000 drs. per oke, Sugar 1000 drs., Rice 700 drs, Butter 1600, Flour 1000 drs., Oil 600 drs., Macaroni, Fish and others were not availsble. Different cereals 500 to 600 drs. each, Milk for the sick and for children was not obtainable. The restaurant prices on meat days 160 drs. potatoes 90 drs., oil dish 100 drs. per plate or portion. These were only to be found in certain restaurants supplied by and supplying Germans or Italians like Zonars, Costi's, Katsimba and others. On the contrary in other restuarants like Averoff, Pantheon, Panhellinion and others and which had been entirely requisitioned by the occupying forces

everything was available at moderate prices. The prices of clothing were as follows: for a winter suit, men's of local wool and cotton manufacture, of the worst quality 11.000 to 12.000 drs. was charged. The cheapest locally made costume of cashmere, sewn by a cheap tailor cost 18 - 20.000 drs. The cheapest cotton ladies' stockings cost 300 to 350 drs. per pair and other garments likewise. Burning or stove oil was almost unobtainable. The selling price of firewood was 45 drs. per oke. Sticks 11 drs. per oke. Crude oil 240.000 drs to 300.000 per ton, petrol cost from 7000 to 9000 drs. per tin.

b) Corfu. The Italians, contrary to the other parts of Greece which they occupy, have the intention of annexing Corfu and therefore economise foodstuffs from Italy and do commerce with the population in exchange for other products or for large sums of money. That is why the question of supplies is practically good on this island.

c) The Peloponese and Greek Mainland. Stores were very few. The great pressure of the Germans and Italians was responsible for the finding of hoarded foodstuffs. The few farmers who had small quantities of foodstuffs refused to sell these and only sometimes exchanged for other products like soap and that with much difficulty. You must note that in no other town except Athens and Piraeus were there any ration cards for bread. In the Corinthian district there was a total lack of bread. In Patras and in Calamas there was rarely any distribution. All the crops of olives and raisins in the Peloponese were requisitioned by the Italians. They make a very strict control on everything coming from the Peloponese in fear of foodstuffs being smuggled through. Soap and like products are also rare on account of the shortage of caustic soda.

Although Greece is one of the most important tobacco growing countries in the world there is even a shortage of tobacco at the present moment. This is because apart from the tobacco seized by the Germans in the start, the tobacco factories are obliged to hand a large part of their output to the Germans and Italians. The remainder only is for sale to the public, but on account of the possibility to buy, as mentioned above, every German soldier buys what has remained for the public use and therefore the shortage becomes greater. Cigarettes sold at the cigarette shops at 25 drs have reached the high price of drs. 60 in the black market.

Statistic. The average amount of deaths in Athens was between 25 - 27 persons per day. In the month of November it reached 450 persons and in December there were 1000 deaths daily.

Cairo, 9th January 1942

(signed) S. Zannas

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REPORT ON THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN GREECE

To have an approximate idea of the situation of all political parties in Greece at this moment, it is necessary to cover the interval of four years of dictatorship and review the last elections in Greece during 1936.

The Chamber of Deputies - 280 elected by 8,000,000 population - in March 1936 under a royalist government presided by Demertzis with the following results:

Democratic Party. 117 Deputies having following politicians: Th. Soffoules, St. Gonatas, G. Kapandaris, G. Poppaudrcon, Al Milonas and J. Sophicascopoulos.

Communist Party. 14 Deputies under G. Glinos.

Royalist Party, known as the Popular Royalist Party. 65 Deputies under M. Tasldaris and now directed by Pierre-Perecles Phafli.

National Party. 44 Deputies under J. Theotoki.

Progressive Party. 10 Deputies under J. Metaxas, the future Dictator.

Such was the make up at that moment of the parties in Greece.

King George II proclaimed on the 4th August the dictatorship of Metaxas which represented only 1/25 of the population and ignored completely the rest of the country. The immediate result of the proclamation of the dictatorship was that all the parties turned against the King and would not believe his word from the time of the constitutional King.

After four years of this regime with the mistakes committed on the entire people and which continued during the Italian and German - Greek war, with the purpose to make an Anglophile "politique" with the pro-German elements even to the point that they did not use the services of capable officers who were deported and who were even forbidden to take part even as common soldiers. It is easy to understand that the King lost at once the few friends he had in the country. The parties being united now for some time, all decided to name Gen. St. Gonatas, chief of the Democratic Party (against Royalist) giving him full powers to establish the future political regime in Greece.

Gen St. Gonatas was Commandant of Division during the War 1914-1918 and General of Army Corps in 1920-1922 in Asia Minor. He was Prime Minister for the period 1922-1924, Minister and Governor General of Macedonia under the Governor of Venizelo 1928-1932, and finally President of the Senate and Vice President of Venizelist Party. Now Chief of Party and delegate of all the political parties except the Quisling Tsolakogcon, to regulate all questions of politic and others.

Cairo, 20th January 1942

(signed) S. Zannas