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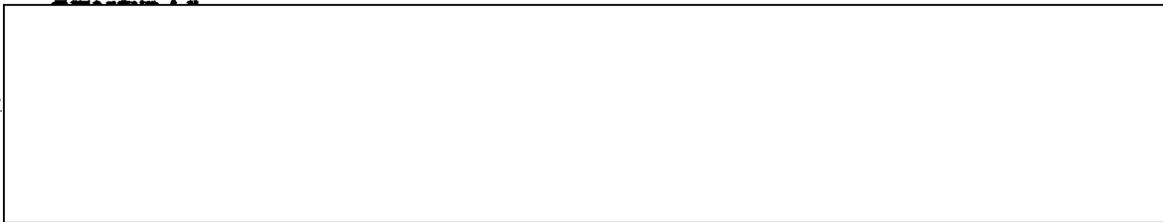
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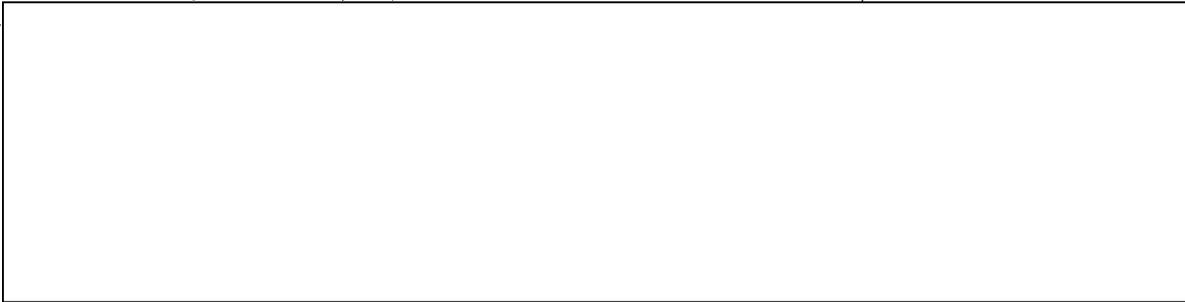
TRENDS IN BRIEF 1 - iii



EASTERN EUROPE



The Greek Crisis 5



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The Greek Crisis

The fate of Greece may be decided within the next few months, if not weeks. Militarily, a demoralized, under-equipped army is losing ground to guerrilla forces backed by the Soviets and their satellites. Politically, a compromise government of Rightists, through inefficiency and political narrowness, is losing what little popular confidence it once possessed. Economically, a country unreconstructed from the devastations of war, is losing its fight against starvation, inflation, and internal and external debt.

Since the liberation, two factors have saved Greece from relentless attempts by the USSR, through its satellites and local Communist elements, to dominate the country: (1) The presence of British troops; and (2) loans, including UNRRA aid, from the US and the UK. Now, in the face of an all-out Soviet effort to capitalize on the current crisis, British troops (except for a small token force) are being withdrawn, and the US and the UK are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain money to bolster Greece's economy. Because of the UK's own financial straits, economic aid from that source may cease completely.

Alone, Greece cannot save itself. Militarily, the country needs aid in the form of equipment and training. Politically, Greece's diehard politicians need to be convinced of the necessity of a housecleaning, and the prostrate Center, which traditionally includes the majority of the population, requires bolstering. Economically, it needs gifts or loans of commodities, food, foreign exchange, and gold to check inflation. Of these needs, the economic are the most vital.

If Greece withstands Soviet pressure during the next few months, and can contain the guerrillas, the Center, which is ineffectual at the moment, may become sufficiently aroused by the increasing atrocities

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of the Leftists and the continued bungling of the Rightists to reorganize itself and to take control of the Government, excluding both the Right and the Left. Such a move might be led by the moderate Sophoulis or the old republican Plastiras.

Without immediate economic aid, however, there would appear to be imminent danger that the Soviet-dominated Left will seize control of the country, which would result in the loss of Greece as a democracy of the Western type.

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