

J. T. MALAKASSES Ph. D.

THE COMPARATIVE STRENGTH OF THE GREEK AND TURKISH NAVIES AND THEIR RELATIVE IMPORTANCE IN THE AEGEAN

Both the Greek and the Turkish navies and, especially the former, following the tremendous losses suffered during the second world war the one, and the natural attrition the other, emerged at the aftermath of that conflict as satellite type forces. The Greek navy, like the rest of the Greek armed forces, felt the impact of the fundamentally changed political conditions in Greece and the subsequent loss of the independent status of the country.

Greece, and her armed forces since August of 1947, had to a great extent, surrender their independent status. The foreign policy of the country was compelled, because of the internal crisis, as far as the Greek right was concerned, and international policies as far as the United States, to become almost completely identified with the aims and interests of Washington. The United States in becoming involved in the Greek affairs was aiming at denying «control of Greece by the Soviet Union which would have given the Soviet Union air bases from which could threaten British lines of communication through the Mediterranean and which could be developed as a springboard for an attack on Turkey»¹.

As it was indicated in a State Department policy statement on Greece the American aims were summarized as follows: «The cardinal objective of U. S. policy in Greece is the maintainance of Greek independence»². Meaning, of course, by that that the true dimentions of the Greek civil war raging in the country since 1945 and aiming at unseating a corrupt oligarchy of the right and of imposing a series of much needed social

1. National Archives of the United States, Mieitary Branch, Army Staff P & O Greece, «Russian Short Terms Intentions in Greece», p. 2. This paper was written by the British Chiefs of Staff for the benefit of their counterparts, the American Joint Chiefs of Staff on February 4, 1948, and was classified as top secret.

2. *Ibid*, Memorandum for General Wedemeyer of October 22, 1948.

and economic reforms in Greece, were obliterated, maligned and distorted. More than that the Greek crisis, sustained and fomented by the British, was to serve as a vehicle for the cold war waged by the United States against the Soviet Union.

In a different study, this time by the National Security Council, the highest advisory body on national policies to the President, was considered that the defence of the existing regime in Greece was of the utmost significance for the United States:

The security of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East would be jeopardized if the Soviet Union should succeed in its efforts to obtain control of any of the following countries: Italy, *Greece*...¹.

The prevailing dogma therefore in, as far as the shaping of U.S.'s policies on Greece was concerned, was essentially directed toward the support of the military operations of the government of Athens, to break the will of the revolutionaries and establish its authority. The military and financial commitments of Washington were absolutely if not strictly limited to that endeavor. The State Department was quite eager to make it crystal clear to the Greek government that the reconstruction of the Greek armed forces undertaken under the so-called Truman dogma was oriented to combat only the internal revolutionaries and to save the internal order. The Greek armed forces were to be built for that explicit purpose and to be maintained until that goal had been achieved. Following that they had to be restricted to a level permitting them to safeguard the security of the regime.

Foreign policies objectives of the government of Athens even if directed as they were, against the Balkan states were not to be encouraged or supported by the United States. The army to be organized had to meet only guerilla type of warfare and one with limited resources indeed: «For instance, the State Department declared we do not believe that Greece should press its claims against Albania for Northern Epirus....»².

1. *Ibid*, Memorandum for General Wedemeyer of October 14, 1948.

2. *Ibid*, Special ad hoc Committee, State (Department) -War-Navy Coordinating Committee, Study on U. S. Assistance to Greece, April 7, 1947. «The Greek armed forces should be strengthened and equipped to carry out an intensive campaign to stamp out guerrilla activity during the next few months according to a plan already worked out by the Greek general staff and the British military mission. When this campaign is successfully concluded the Army and the gendarmerie should be gradually reduced to the size necessary for the maintenance of the internal order...».

The American control of the military forces of Greece was inaugurated officially on June 19, 1947, when major-general William G. Livesay arrived in Athens at the head of a group of officers and enlisted men to assume command of the newly formed United States Army Group. A total of 269 officers and 363 privates of all the three services constituted the American military mission. Of those 48 officers were attached to the two existing Greek army corps and the rest to the seven army divisions¹. Their function was the planning and the direction of the operations against the rebels. In other fields according to bill passed by the U. S. Senate, authorising the so-called assistance to Greece, the United States were responsible for the full maintenance of the Greek armed forces: «This total consists of \$ 150.000.000.00 for arms, ammunition, rations, clothing and other supplies and equipment for the Greek armed forces for 15 months ending June 30, 1948»².

The American embassy, which supervised the work of the military mission, was delegated full authority in special signed agreements with the Greek government, enabling it to exercise a virtual veto on all decisions effecting the composition of the armed forces to be constructed. Their deployment, field leadership and the ration of paramilitary forces was also one of the prerogatives vested with the legal representatives of Washington in Athens. No increases even the most trivial could be initiated by the Greek government without the explicit concurrence of the American military missions and the approval of the head of the American economic mission.

In the Greek navy the regime inherited when the fleet was still under the stewardship of the British was to be continued. Second world war had taken a heavy toll of the small Greek navy. What few units existed in 1945 had been provided on loan by the British admiralty. Its operational costs had been underwritten also by the British but since the summer of 1947 the American military mission took charge of the financial burden of that branch of the Greek armed forces. The naval section of the mission operating under the general principles outlined beforehand as to the nature and missions of the Greek armed forces, accepted its service mission assigned by the British:

1. Preliminary estimates indicate that the Greek Navy should be capable of performing the following tasks:

1. « U. S. Navy Group, Greece. Present: 19 officers, 23 enlisted men. Also there was the Joint U. S. Military Advisory and Planning Group Greece from the U. S. Army, Navy, and Air Group in Greece. Functions: (Top Sector, given personally to Ambassador Grady)». *Ibid.*, United States Army Group» Greece. Report by general Van Fleet to the War Department of December, 1948, p. 3.

2. *Ibid.*

- (1) Coastal patrol and anti-smuggling operations.
- (2) Necessary amphibious lift and support of the Greek Army in joint operations necessary for the maintenance of internal order.
- (3) Mine clearance in Greek waters.
- (4) Protection of Greek shipping in Greek waters¹.

According to the same sources at the commencement of the American presence in Greece in the summer of 1947, the personnel strength of the Greek navy was 13,400 officers and draftees². And that was the «authorized» strength approved by the American mission. By the end of 1947 the authorized strength of the Greek navy had reached the ceiling of 14,300. The Greek navy of the civil war period comprised an assortment of vessels to a total of 119, and of approximately 78,000 tons. The American naval mission was considering it sufficient to carry out its mission to deny the rebels the ability of being supplied by sea. It was made up of eight operating destroyers (British Hunt class), 1,400 ton ships with 4 in. batteries; six submarines (British 630 tons) of which four were in operational status; eight escort ships (corvette and SC types) armed with either 4 in. or 3 in. batteries plus heavy and light machine guns; thirty one patrol ships, fourteen of which were motor launches armed with Bofors and Oerlikon machine guns; ten harbor defence motor launches; seven gunboats six of which were acquired from the United States; twenty two mine sweepers fourteen of which were of the 300 tons type and the remaining eight 250 tons each; nine LST's; twelve LCT's; six small wooden coastal transports; and ten auxiliaries of various categories including supply, repair, oil tankers and tugs. For patrol purposes the Grecian waters were divided into three general areas, namely northern AEGEAN, AEGEAN and western GREECE. Greek naval officers in charge in PIRAEUS, SALONIKA, VOLOS, and PATRAS had naval vessels under their command to insure the patrolling and security of their areas.

During the 1947 and early 1948 periods the function of the Greek navy adhered to the peculiarities of the civil war not contemplating or envisioning any other missions. According to an on the field study by

1. *Ibid*, Special ad hoc Committee, State (Department) - War-Navy Coordinating Committee, Study on U. S. Assistance to Greece, April 7, 1947, p. 3.
 2. *Ibid*, Report by A.M. Harper, major-general, War Department.

the War Department in Washington the role of the Greek navy at the time mentioned was the following:

The operations of the Navy included mine-sweeping, movement of troops and material by sea, bombardment and fire support, patrols to deny guerrillas movement of men and material by sea, and the gathering of information through local authorities in coastal villages. Ships on patrol made routine stops at villages that were under threat of attack and coordinated firing plans for covering prearranged areas when attacks actually took place. With vessels constantly on patrol and the bases of SALONIKA, VOLOS, PIRAEUS and PATRAS on alert to requests for support, any coastal area in Greece could be reached by sea in a few hours. Intensified patrols were employed to support the GNA (Greek National Army), during operations. A minimum of 12 shore bombardment firings per month were executed against guerrilla positions. Nine LST's and 12 LST's of the Navy were busy carrying out sea lift commitments¹.

In 1948 with the «guerrilla» strength as great as it was in 1947² and the potential threat to the government in Athens equally ominous the Greek government of Sophoulis and Tsaldaris requested, «appealed» as the War Department in Washington was to characterize it, authorization for an augmentation of the Greek armed forces. For the navy the Greek government did not submit any requests for an increase. Its only concern was that the appropriate agencies of the U. S. government take the necessary measures so that it would continue «the retention of ships given to the Greeks under loan terms by the British Government»³. It should be noted that while the authorized strength of the navy in 1948 was 14.300 the actual one was 15.083. It was due to an authorization granted by the American mission in 1948: «Increase of 800 authorized in the Royal Hellenic Navy»⁴. As general Van Fleet was to observe the

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*, Report by general Van Fleet of December 15, 1948 to the War Department.

3. *Ibid.*, Memorandum for the chief of staff, U. S. Army from general Ray T. Maddocks, Director of Plans and Operations of the general staff of December 14, 1948.

4. *Ibid.*, Memorandum by general Van Fleet to general Maddocks of December 15, 1948.

navy during the 1948's had accomplished two basic functions: a) «...kept the Greek waters relatively free of enemy ships, has cleared large areas of naval mines for the protection of both coastal shipping and international shipping»¹. Essentially then an auxiliary role in the main effort to crush the rebellion and more importantly to keep the Aegean and Ionian sea lanes plied by the U.S. naval forces in Mediterranean free of sea mines.

Ambassador Grady on October 1948 acting in unison and with the concurrence of general Van Fleet did not recommend any beefing up of the Greek navy:

No increase in the size of the Royal Hellenic Navy is recommended. The Navy is capable of carrying out its assigned mission including the support of increased land forces. The increase in the number and size of certain tasks presently performed will naturally cause increases in maintenance costs, steaming and ammunition expenditures².

However, as it has been pointed elsewhere in this study, the Greek government did not press at the time for any reinforcements of the naval forces. In that the government was abiding by the recommendations of the minister of the navy, the former head of the Greek fleet admiral Sakkellariou. The admiral a legendary figure in the annals of the Greek navy and a person who was to connect his name with some of the most vicious witch-hunt of alleged leftists in the ranks of the navy in 1948, had accepted the role assigned to it by the American mission. He only requested that its composition remain intact and no depletions be instituted:

2. In order that the Greek Royal Navy continue the fulfillment of its Mission until the rebellion will be completely liquidated and under the prerequisite that the up to date conditions will continue existing, i. e. the non development of the crucial situation into a general war or in case that the bandits will not use aircraft and submarines, we imperatively require that:

1. *Ibid.*

2. Memorandum to ambassador Grady by general Van Fleet of October 7, 1948.

- α) The ships that were given to Greece under loan terms by the British Government should not be returned¹.

The admiral was also advising that the approved figures of the naval personnel be retained to 14.300. The American cost of maintaining that force up to 1948 had been \$ 13.842.994. These figures included not only the maintaining expences of the fleet but also the procurement of vital components, equipage, and systems and also the overhauling of the British ships on loan.

For the fiscal year 1950 the estimated ammount was \$ 9,842,994 an approximate decrease of four million dollars. This reduction of about 33-1/3% was attributed to the exclusion of all things not considered as absolute necessities and to the fact that no replacements or new procurement of ships or major items was contemplated. The mission of the Greek navy under this budget of approximately ten million dollars was defined by the American mission as follows:

- (1) Sea lift of the Greek Army, equipment and supplies.
- (2) Naval patrols of Greek waters.
- (3) Naval gun-fire support of land forces.
- (4) Naval mine sweeping to clear waters of mines placed by both Allies and enemy during World War II².

The number of vessels employed during the period in question in active operation, patrols, sea transport and small landing type amphibious operations, was not more than fifty of the one hundred and fifteen vessels constituting the bulk of the fleet. In practical terms the Greek navy being unopposed, as aptly admiral Sakellariou was to observe, accomplished a great deal not only ensuring the transportation of the governmental army. «Since July 1984 the LSTs and LCTs have transported for the Army approximately 175.000 men, 20.000 animals, 10.000 vehicles and 85.000 tons of material without casualty³». Mined areas had been cleared at an average rate of a little over 100 square miles per month and as with a degree of pompousness the American mission was

1. Top Secret memorandum by admiral Sakellariou, minister of the Navy to the Greek Foreign Office of September 21, 1948.

2. Memorandum by general Van Fleet to the Chief of the American Mission for Aid to Greece of December 6, 1948.

3. *Ibid.*

to assert had kept the international waters safe. The other task assigned was «the rehabilitation and maintenance of lighthouses»¹.

For 1949 the American mission assuming that the governmental forces would have gained the upper hand and consequently a reduction would be in order, it proposed a somewhat drastic decrease of the Greek navy. Subscribing, of course, to the existing dogma that the very existence of the fleet was to combat the rebellion, aside from the purely auxiliary tasks, like mine sweeping and maintenance of the lighthouses. The director of the naval section of the American military mission admiral W. E. Moore was of the opinion that commencing November 1 and to be completed by December 31, 1949, the Greek navy should adjust in accordance with the the following table:²

VESSEL	ACTIVE	RESERVE	REDUCTION
Cruiser		1	0
Destroyers	5	5	2
Submarines	3	3	3
Escort Ships	3	1	1
Corvettes	3	1	1
PGMS	6	1	1
Minesweeping type	No reduction		
Landing craft type	No reduction		
ML's	10	4	4
HDML's	6	4	4
FT's	4	2	2
Auxiliaries	9	2	2
Armed Caiques	20	0	10

The principal benefits from this first phase elimination of these ships from the active list would be in terms of dollars a savings of \$ 727,272 and the personell would also be cut by approximately 1.300 leaving a total Greek navy personnel strength of 13.000³. Also the proposal by

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*, Memorandum of the chief of the naval section of the JUSMAPG to general Van Fleet of June 17, 1949.

3. *Ibid.*

admiral Moore envisioned a further reduction within the same time table. It was the American opinion that depending on the rate of demobilization of the army 3 more LST's could be mothballed or returned to the British.

The projection for the year 1950 forecasted a further curtailment of the Greek navy, something, which according to the Americans, would approach a peace time Greek fleet. These new measures would have taken effect beginning April 1 and completed June 30, 1950.

VESSEL	ACTIVE	RESERVE	REDUCTION
Cruiser	-	1	0
Destroyers	2	8	5
Submarines	3	3	3
Escort Ships	2	2	1
Corvettes	2	2	1
PGMs	4	3	3
Minesweep type	No Reduction	-	-
LSTs	3	0	6
LSTs	4	2	8
MLs	8	6	6
HDML's	4	6	6
FTs	2	4	4
Auxiliaries	6	4	4
Armed Caiques	2	0	18 ¹

Under this plan the overall manpower employed by the Greek navy would come down to around 10.300² with a corresponding savings to the Americans of \$ 2.237.763. An important reservation, as far as the fate, and the future, of the Greek navy was concerned, was included about the ships in reserve which comprised the bulk of the fleet. More or less it was recommended that the ships remain there so long as the threat

1. *Ibid.*

2. This was to be implemented as follows: «Release 2.000 militar' personnel commencing immediately to reach a strength of 10.000 by 30 June 1950. The program of release to be progressed at the rate of 400 per month, to be broken down to approximately 40 officers, 60 petty officers and 300 men. The progressive reduction should result in a savings of aproximately 677 million drachmae». Memorandum to the Chief of AMAG from general Van Fleet of January 31, 1950. *Ibid.*

of resurgence of the guerrilla movement remained. But while for the Americans the role of the Greek navy was essentially one of assisting in the crushing of the rebellion, thus justifying the expences they vested in maintaining it, they recognized, that for that branch of the armed forces no future binding plans could be made without consulting the British. In recognizing the paramount British stake in the Greek navy they were willing to let London have a decisive role in determining the mission of the Greek navy precisely beyond the period in question:

In this connection, it is pointed out that no discussion on this subject has been had with the British Naval Mission whose view (reflecting the view of the British Chiefs of Staff) is that the Royal Navy's interest in Greece is permanent and paramount, and quite independent of the present querrilla operations. That the British will have a voice in the determination of the composition of the Greek Navy goes without saying. In fact, in view of the extent of the British partipation in the Greek Navy, any estimate which is made without the knowledge of their intentions is apt to be at considerable variance with ultimate developments, regardless of the fact that the Greek Navy is currently maintained by the United States Military Aid Program¹.

The gradual withdrawal of the British sea power from Mediterranean rended those calculations meaningless. The Greek navy like the rest of the army as it was emerging from the ordeal of the civil war was becoming the exclusive preserve of the American defence plans. The first year after the end of the civil war the strength of the naval forces was as follows in accordance with the master plan of the American mission:²

	Various Branches	Technicians	Lighthouse Personnel		Total
			Technicians:	Guards	
Officers	1.046	55	7	--	1.108
Naval Cadets	73	--	--	--	73
Petty Officers	1.845	409	10	233	2.497

1. *Ibid.* p. 8.

2. *Ibid.*, Joint U. S. Military Advisory and Planning Group, Monthly Naval Report, February 3, 1950.

Ratings	7.599	684	19	43	8.345
	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	10.563	1.148	36	276	12.023

Alongside with the personnel discharging and the inactivation of the ships the American mission in its almost unquestionable authority over the Greek armed forces recommended that the ships on loan be returned:

It is pointed out that the optimum in...savings will be possible only if inactivated ships which are placed in a «care-taker» status in Greece, and which are foreign owned, are actually returned to the loaning government promptly.... Hence, immediate arrangements should be made by the Greeks to return to Great Britain those ships now on loan which will be reduced to a «care-taker» status as a result of the demobilization¹.

Such an act would have as it did further depleted the crippled Greek navy whose major work would have to be concentrated on mining operations and a decorative role. But of far greatest importance was the fact that the Greek fleet with the decrease of the British holding, the last vestige of which was the presence of British owned ships, was to be rebuilt by American owned vessels. Notwithstanding the withdrawal on a rapidly increasing pace (see attached table)² the Greek.

Reduction of American naval mission in Greece:

Navy Mission	Present Strength (Sept. 1949)			
	31 Jan 50	30 Jun 50	31 Dec 50	
Officers	20	14	6	6
Enlisted Men	24	20	10	10
Civilians	0	0	0	0
	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	44	34	16	16

1. Memorandum by general Van Fleet to the Chief of AMAG of January 31, 1950.

2. *Ibid.*

navy was to be oriented, as far as training, composition and dependence for spare parts, supplies and know how on the American prototype. Like the rest of the armed forces it was literally ceasing to perform a function traditionally assigned to the armed forces of a sovereign nation. Instead, it was adjusting to the assigned task by Washington. The Chief of Staff of the American Army on the recommendation of general Van Fleet submitted the following memorandum to the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

Support should be given to a Greek military establishment which would be capable of maintaining internal security in order to prevent a Communist domination of Greece and of affording the Greek nation, through certain limited accessories, a modicum of prestige and confidence and which, in the event of global war, would be capable of causing some delay to Soviet and/or satellite state advance, and of assisting, within its capabilities, in the over-all war effort¹.

The new army was to perform functions of an auxiliary nature to the overall American interests versus the Soviet Union that of befitting a client state status which Greece emerging from the civil war was assuming:

Approve (Joint Chiefs of Staff), the organization of the Greek Army as recommended by General Van Fleet as the army necessary to accomplish the United States objectives regarding Greece and which for planning purposes the Joint Chiefs of Staff believe the United States shall be willing to help support...²

On January 12, 1950, the Joint Chiefs of Staff informed general Van Fleet that they approved the new organization of the Greek armed forces the land army not to exceed the 80,000 men «as the army... which the Joint Chiefs of Staff believe will accomplish the United States objectives regarding Greece»³. The Navy Department in Washington was si-

1. *Ibid.* Memorandum by the chief of staff of the American army to the Joint Chiefs of Staff entitled: Organization of the Greek Army to Consist of a Strength of 80,000.

2. Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to general Van Fleet of January 1950. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

milarly instructing the American naval group in Greece to proceed with the organization of a Greek naval force «under the 7.000 to 10.000 strength for 31 December 1950»¹. The new arrangements were to have a profound effect for the future evolution of the Greek navy. The new fleet was to be cut almost at half from its 1948 strength. Unlike the previous one was to be based on light crafts, a swift from the British Hunt destroyers. More and more its ranks were to be filled by American made vessels and equipment. The Chief of Staff of the United States Army directed the following organization of the Greek navy as of 31 December 1950.

A Royal Hellenic Navy as of 31 December 1950 with a strength of 8.500 with an order of battle (strength) of 59 ships as follows:

1 Destroyer	4 Landing Ship Tank	1 Repair Ship
4 Destroyer Escort	4 Landing Craft Tank	2 Ocean Tugs
4 Submarines (2 U.S.)	4 Mine Sweepers	4 Oilers (small)
6 Motor Gunboats	14 Motor Mine Sweepers	10 Submarine Chasers
1 Lighthouse Tender ² .		

In the decade of the 1950's this composition of the Greek fleet was, on the average, to remain unchanged. However, major overhauling of the fleet was in the making. Early in the decade the United States transferred to Greece on loan four frigates of the Cannon class long discarded in the American navy. Named AETOS, IERAX, LEON, PANTHIR respectively they were of 1240 tons with 3-3in. guns and of 1943 vintage. Those ships bearing the names of the destroyer flotilla of the Balkan wars along with two destroyers of the Gleaves class, DOXA and NIKI also given by the United States, and long now disposed³, formed the backbone the Greek fleet of the 1950's.

At the end of the decade and within the space of a relatively short time Greece was to acquire 6 destroyers from the United States. With the exception of the two of the Gleaves class those new ships were the first units which could be classed as constituting the nucleus of a new Greek fleet one built around destroyers and resembling the Greek fleets as had evolved after the mid-nineteen twenties. The six destroyers, ASPIS, LONCHI, VELOS, SFENDONI, NAVARINON and THYELLA of the

1. *Ibid.*

2. Memorandum by general L. Bolte Director of Plans and Operations of the General Staff of February 16, 1950. *Ibid.*

3. Disposed since 1972.

Fletcher¹ class were ships of 2,100 tons standard with 4-5 in. guns in the three of them and 5-5 in. guns in the other two. Those relatively large vessels with a complement of 250 rates and officers introduced new expenses for the Greek navy which now were to be partially met by the NATO subsidies and the limited American economic assistance which on a regular basis was provided to subsidize the Greek armed forces. Those destroyers with a cluster of submarines that never exceeded the six and an assortment of light craft and landing vessels were the Greek fleet. The Greek fleet of the ninetensixties with the exception of five obsolete corvettes² of British origin, was in its entirety American made. The Greek navy, for all intents and purposes, depended on the United States for spare parts, technology and major maintenance of its ships which because of their old age, the Fletcher class destroyers were commissioned in 1943, required an above the average upkeep and a constant modernization to keep up with the demands of electronic warfare.

The big lift forward was to be achieved in the early seventies in twin fold manner. Washington was to provide in a piecemeal fashion between the years 1971-73 four large destroyers of the Gearing Fram I class and one of the Allen M. Sumner class. Those ships of 2,425 tons standard the first and 2,200 the other were equiped on arrival in Greece with improved gunnery. Comparatively more recently build than the previous ones were the last world war two destroyers still at the time serving in the American navy having been replaced by the Coontz, Micher, and Forrest Sherman class of the fifties and sixties. The SACHTOURIS, KANARIS, KONTOURIOTIS, THEMISTOCLES along with MIAOULIS were the counterparts of the five American destroyers of the same class which were given at precisely the same time to Turkey. As a matter of fact Turkey was to receive in 1971 and 1972 two more destroyers respectively. To that should be added two newly build frigates the BERK and PEYK launched at the Golcul naval yard in Turkey.

The American reinforcement of the navies of Greece and Turkey in the early seventies weighted unevenly in favor of Turkey. Not only in the number of ships provided but most importantly in the fact that Washington was providing American technology for major warship building

1. Those were survivors of 175 destroyers which stricken from the U. S. Navy were transfered to other navies mainly those of Latin American states, Greece and Turkey.

2. Former ocean minesweepers of the British navy the ARMATOLOS, POLEMISTIS MAHITIS, PYRPOLITIS and NAVMACHOS were used mainly as transport and lighthouse tenders.

in Turkey. Indeed, the two frigates which constituted, as far as warship building in Eastern Mediterranean is concerned, a major breakthrough, were constructed on the design of the American Claud Jones class boats¹. Turkey with the assistance of American specialized naval science was embarking on an ambitious program of ship building in the area, one unmatched by the countries in the Eastern Mediterranean littoral. This native shipbuilding enterprise while flattering to the national prestige of Angora it had ominous repercussions on the neighboring country of Greece. The two states long at loggerheads over the issue of Cyprus were on a collision course over the so-called problem of the Aegean.

Turkey's insatiable nationalism galvanized by the constant internal economic and political turmoil which there had endemic, found an outlet in territorial claims on areas long assigned to Greece by international treaties. Turkish nationalism disputing the *status quo* in the Aegean with not so veiled claims on Greece's national borders, areas guaranteed by international treaties of which Turkey as the legal successor to the Ottoman empire was bounded, give impetus to a naval race for superiority in the Aegean. Not contented with the naval armaments provided by the United States for a modicum of defence in case of a global conflict, as it was the case also with Greece (see the pertinent assertions of the Pentagon referred earlier in this study), Angora commenced a rapid augmentation of her naval forces with the explicit aim to intimidate Athens into a compromise favoring Turkish expansionism.

The boosting of the Turkish naval strength was conscientiously aided, and in fact made possible by an impressive and massive American offering of naval vessels not justifiable under the traditional aid program of strengthening friendly countries versus the Soviet Union. Within the space of two years (1970-72) the United States provided the Turkish navy with 9 submarines while Greece at the same time was receiving only 2 to be added to the other 2 that she had already possessed. The two years interval² in the actual hoisting of the Turkish flag on those craft was due more to the scarcity of trained Turkish crews than on anything else. At about the same time Turkey was introducing into the naval race, which up to this time was a unilateral naval build up of the Turkish forces, an

1. Those were the first major warships to be build in Turkey. Their armament radar and electronics were U. S. made.

2. Those submarines were of the *Guppy III*, *Guppy IA* and *Guppy II A* class and were the following: CANAKKALE, IKINCI INONU, DUMLUPINAR, BIRINCI INONU, BURAK REIS, ÇERBE, MURAT REIS, ORUC REIS, PREVEZE, ULUC ALI REIS.

unknown to the area type of naval vessel, one especially designated for a possible confrontation with a navy like the Greek. It was the fast attack craft-missile /torpedo boat of the so-called Kartal class. Those craft of the German Jaguar type were to be equipped with American, McDonnell Douglas SSM Harpoon naval missiles. At the same time a busy native shipbuilding program was in progress with the emphasis on a peculiarly large number of large patrol craft, a total of 29 of 170-150 tons each and above all of amphibious forces. In between the years 1965-1973 44 landing ships and landing craft, LCTs and LCUs were launched in Turkish shipyards¹.

This frantic naval rearmament which clearly provided the Turkish navy with a marked superiority in the Aegean was aiming at providing the Turkish strategists with a mobile naval force capable of a quick strike and of landing troops at one of the many Greek islands. The Cyprus crisis while making the issue more acute, due to the existence of the military dictatorship in Greece, did not arise the Greek mieitarists to the dire needs of the time. To counter the threat of the impressive submarine flotillas, an order for four submarines was placed with the German Howaldtswerke in Kiel. Those four craft were commissioned in the Greek navy in 1972 and formed the first Greek flotilla of modern submarines of the so-called Glavkos class².

With the fall of the Junta and the Cyprus debacle of 1974, the Turkish menace continue to constitute a threat to the national security of Greece forcing the later country to devote a great part of her budget to counter Turkish expansionism. To an essentially American supplied armament which Turkey made no bones that she intended to applied against a member of the same alliance, Greece, Athens attempted to counter it in the naval area, with a crash program of naval rearmament outside the traditional American supplied market. In 1976 four more submarines of the Clavkos class were ordered bringing the number of those ships to eight. As an immediate measure to bring to parity the strength of the Greek navy, in September of 1974, Greece ordered from France the building of four fast attack craft-missile boats. Of the La Combattane III class they were of 386 tons standard with 4mm. 38 (single elle) Exocet surface to surface missiles. These craft were to complement a group of four of the same type (*La Combattante II*

1. To that should be added four large American LSTs, of 5800 tons the two and 4080 the other two which were provided to Turkey between the years 1972-1974.

2. GLAVKOS, NEREUS, TRITON, PROTEUS. Of 1100 tons surfaced and 1210 dived they had 8-21in. torpedo tubes with reloads.

class) which had been acquired in 1972, of 234 tons standard and equipped with 4 Exocet (single cells) missiles.

The Turkish response to those defensive measures was swift. In 1973 the Turkish navy ordered in the German firm of Lurssen 4 craft of the Lurssen class. The first was to be constructed in Germany and the other four in the Taskizak shipyard in Turkey. The last one was a new feat for the the Turkish shipbuilding industry made possible, of course, with the assistance of the German firm. Those boats of the same tonnage with the Greek ones, those ordered in 1974, were far superior in armament, missiles. While the first four Greek craft, ANTIPOIARCHOS LASKOS PLOTARCHIS BLESSAS, IPOPOIARCHOS TROUPAKIS and IPOPOIARCHOS MIKONIOS had four Exocet (single cell) SSM the Turkish DOGAN, MARTI, TAYFUN, VOLKAN had 8 Harpoon (2 quad launchers). The Exocet MM38 are two stage solid fuel rocket with a radius of 26 nautical miles, on the other hand the American made Harpoon has an active radius of 50 nautical miles. The Kartal class Turkish missileboats were armed with Norwegian made Penguin II SSM which are of a radius of 20 nautical miles.

The same exactly armament was fitted on the six new Greek missile craft ordered in the Skaramanga shipyards under licence from the Construction M. de Normandie. The French missile technology was replaced in favor of the Norwegian one with missiles which can be fitted in frigates and fast attack craft.

The equilibrium achieved with the hurried purchase of the German made submarines of the type 209 in favor of Greece was a short lived event. In 1972 the Turkish navy ordered 3 of the same in Germany with the option of having two more constructed in Turkey. Submarine building was a novelty for Turkey and it was evidently pursued like other forms of warship construction in order to create a native industry which could be depended upon to arm its forces for the contemplated expansionistic ventures in the Aegean. Turkey's determination to achieve at all costs, irrespective of the wretched state of its economy, superiority over the Greek presence in the Aegean was demonstrated by new order of 7 more of those submarines bringing, when materializinges to a record number of 12 the type 209 submarines which can deployed in the Aegean. And if the unconfirmed reports that Angora has ordered four more of the missile armed Kartal class from Lurssen, Germany, are correct then the number rides to 12 versus the 16 possessed by Greece.

Turkish nationalism of the sixties and seventies along with the time honored American foreign policy of placing a far greater than it seems justifiable, to the Greeks reliance on the Turkish armed forces have helped transform an obsolete navy like the Turkish into, at paper at least, a force to be reckoned in a localized conflict. It did accelerate and in fact introduced a local shipbuilding program, one based in the case of Angora in its offensive expansionism and in the case of Greece on the defensive needs to meet the Turkish aggression. It placed a heavy burden on the economies of both states but in the process made possible an independence and a diversification in the sources of armament for both navies.

The much coveted by the Turkish navy superiority in the Aegean, with the exception of the flotillas of landing craft, which due to the geographical exigencies of the area are of paramount importance, was not achieved. Notwithstanding, the shelving of an ambitious program by the Greek naval staff to install on the 5 Gearing Fram II and I destroyers Albatros 8-cell BPDM launcher system along with Exocet launchers and a sophisticated electronic system, which would have established the unquestionable Greek supremacy over the Turkish fleet, it can be assumed that even with the present accelerated pace of shipbuilding program Turkey has not any firm advantage over Greece the Aegean.

The Greek navy has been transformed from an insignificant conglomeration of discarded boats of World War Two vintage that was down to the sixties to a constantly updated organization because of the pressure applied on it by the Turkish expansionism. Its major handicap, of course, is still its dependence on a variety foreign sources for sophisticated weapon systems on the new shipbuilding program and the fact that its destroy force is made up exclusively of obsolete discarded American craft, all of which by now have been bought. The the acquisition of 2 Dutch (Holland) made frigates of the Kortenaer class, the ELLI and LEMNOS modern and efficient ships, of the guided missile type, will certainly usher the Greek navy into the group of independent, efficient naval forces a far cry from the client type force it had been established by the American missions.

APPENDIX

TABLE OF THE COMPARATIVE STRENGTH OF THE GREEK AND THE TURKISH
NAVIES IN NUMBER OF CRAFT AND MANPOWER

	Patrol Sub- marines	Destroyers	Frigates	0	FAC* Missile	FAC Torpedo	Patrol Craft	Mine- Layers	Coastal mine Mine Swe- pers, Mine- Hunters
GREECE	0	14	6	0	14	14	12	2	14
TURKEY	15	13	2		13	1	54	7	21

	Inshore Mine Swee- pers	Mine Swee- ping boats	Assault Ships	Landing Ships	Landing Craft	Depot Repair	Survey Ships	Supply Small	Tankers Ships	Miosse- llane- ons
GREECE			1	16	67	1	6		8	31
TURKEY	4	9		5	68	4	4	2	6	35

*FAC= Fast Attack Craft.

Approximate strength of the Greek Navy: 19500 (2.500 officers and 17.000 ratings).

Approximate strength of the Turkish Navy: 46.000 officers and draftees.