

Gruca - 2¹/₅ Recent History

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Greece today is a small country, a pawn of great Power politics. Distressed by poverty and ~~v~~distracted by corruption and internal strife that ~~xargxs~~ that has culminated in civil war.

I will divide the review of ~~of~~ Greece into two ^{parts} categories - the ~~xxxxxxx~~ background of the Left and the Background of the Right.

Ever since Greece became independent of the Turks in 1830 they have been ruled by a monarch. and for some eighty years they maintained a precarious hold on their independence. Great Britain long ago recognizing the strategic importance of Greece in the Mediterranean ~~xxxxx~~ managed to control Greece through the effective but not so obvious device of Economic Imperialism. Britain stabilized the Greek economy with various loans with interest ^{rates} so great that it managed to saddle the Greek ~~xxxxxxx~~ budget with debt. ^{It controlled much of the railways, communications and} It required a sizable proportion of Greek income to pay off ^{the interest} on these debts. ^{One of the conditions for} restoring the Greek monarchy to power after World War I was there pledge that they would continue to respect and pay towards their loan of the late nineteenth century.

Under a new fiery personality Eleftherios Venizelos a Turkish Subject ~~xxxxxxx~~ ^{NOTED FOR} brought to light for his ^{INSPIRED} leadership against the Turks on his native island, Crete Greece began a program of expansion. He was installed as prime Minister in 1910 and lost no time in joining in league with Bulgaria and Serbia for the purpose of attacking the Turks and partitioning the European provinces of the Ottoman empire. ^{He} added to his laurels by defeating the Turks and thereby gained more territory for Greece. His popularity brought him into open conflict with The Monarch King Constantine.

At the outbreak of World War I. Constantine—who was related to the Kaiser did not wish to join the Allies and preferred instead to remain~~ing~~ neutral. Venizelos however saw in joining the with the allies an opportunity of gaining Constantinople for Greece from the Turks.

This rivalry culminated ^{with} ~~into~~ Venizelos deciding on insurrection especially when his party in an election in 1916 gained a majority ~~xxxxxxx~~ and King Constantine refused to appoint Venizelos Prime Minister. He withdrew from Athens and established a Government in Salonika in open defiance of the King. He was supported By the French and British anxious to have Greece in on their side ^{for the} ~~and~~ ^{purpose of} to open^a front on Bulgaria. The allies forced the Government at Athens to come to terms with Venizelos and declare him Prime Minister in 1917. It was an open victory for the revolutionaries and Constantine was forced to relinquish his throne to to his second son Alexander.

~~Thexstxmgglaxhaxtwe*axxayaxkistexxandxxVenizeliststxdiadaxdewwxkaxx
fxxxxxxx Txxxxxhaxaxsxxx~~ These events marks the beginning of of two rival and hostile parties. New men representing a new class rose to power in in Venizelos wake and shouldered aside the semi-aristocratic families who had previously exercised a near monopoly of political leadership. Thus we see a formation of a Liberal party consisting of agrarian and overcrowding peasants eager to join Venizelos in his quest for more lands for Greece and on the other hand the Peoples or Popular party consisting of the old families and established wealthy and aristocratic Greeks which rallied around the figure of King Constantine. This rivalry ~~xxxxxxd~~ ~~itself~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ centered it's power into two different sections. The North became strongly Pro-Venizelist and the South Pro Monarchy. After 1932

the struggle took on a constitutional form: royalist versus republican.

After the defeat of Greece in Asia Minor by the turks under Mustapha Kemal and the subsequent loss of ~~the~~ part of Asia Minor ~~disgust~~ popular revulsion against the monarchy that brought about this defeat realized itself and three Venizelist officers, Nicholas Plastiras, Stylaianos Gonatos and another Admiral Hadjikyriakos seized control of the Government and invited the then reigning monarch King George the 11 to leave the country. In March 1924 George was formally dethroned and Greece officially became a Republic. By this act the Liberal and associated parties became indelibly stamped as republican; while their major rival for political power the Popular Party by virtue of its origin and composition favored monarchy. Thus the constitutional issue was created which has distracted Greek politics ever since.

The Republicans enjoyed ~~an extremely majoritary xxxxxxxx years xxxxxxxx~~ ~~several xxxxxxxx republican administrations~~. strong but somewhat ^{erratic} unstable power until 1935. During this post war period the principal line of division in Greek politics remained /royalist and republican. The two main groups were in turn extensively subdivided into a large number of splinter parties. These splinter parties generally formed around some prominent politician. The small parties thrown off the by the liberals were in general left of center like the Progressive party under George Kafandaris the Democratic Socialist Party of George Papandreou.

Among the conservatives similar developments took place. After 1924 the main stem of the popular party officially accepted Republicanism but privately clung to the hope of seeing the