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People of Greece Will Achieve Victory

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In August of the last year, around Vitsi and Grammos, the main forces of the Greek democratic army were forced to retreat, and under pressure of the numerically superior monarcho-fascist troops, relinquished the armed struggle.

Following this, the Greek exploiters and the foreign invaders noisily proclaimed that, henceforth, a new period of calm, peace and restoration would set in for Greece.

The past year has utterly refuted these allegations of reaction. The situation in Greece has deteriorated in every respect. Industrial output stagnates around 50-60 per cent of pre-war. The number of unemployed exceeds 200,000. The agrarian crisis dooms agriculture to increasing degradation. Foreign trade is declining. Enormous quantities of tobacco, raisins and others agricultural produce, which form the bulk of export, cannot be marketed due to American competition. The deficit in the balance of foreign payments is growing steadily. Despite constant injections of American aid, finances are always threatened by bankruptcy. Inflation is strangling economic life in the country. In the last for months, food prices have risen 50-100 per cent. Stagnation in trade and unbearable taxes, which were increased on American orders and which in recent months soared to record dimensions, worsen further the already hard position of the working people.

Monarcho-fascism has also failed to achieve any improvement in political life. The puppet governments, manipulated by the American imperialists, change just as frequently as before. Discord in the monarcho-fascism camp is becoming more intense. The rampant embezzlements and plundering, the scandals within the government, embezzlements of public property, contraband and corruption, which involve not only all monarcho-fascist parties but also highly-placed American officials, poison the atmosphere in the country and testify to the decay and rottenness in which the ruling classes are immersed.

The only sphere where life and animation prevail is militarization of the country in accordance with the requirements of the American war plans. There is ample, concrete and

irrefutable evidence showing that the American imperialist aggressors have picked on the Balkans as a sector for war adventures, timed for the near future. They are using monarcho-fascist Greece, like Titoite Yugoslavia, as a base for their military adventures. Greek rulers are servilely fulfilling all the demands of the Americans in preparing for war. All the means of the State budget are now devoted chiefly to war preparations. The numerical strength of the army is being increased from 300,000 to 500,000. Dozens of new airfields are under construction and the American and British naval and air forces based on Greece are always carrying out manoeuvres.

The war and militarist hysteria is now taking a more concrete shape. The "Greece-Yugoslavia-Turkey-Italy" square is being knocked together as the Mediterranean-Balkans continuation of the North Atlantic aggressive pact. This square is being glued together from two triangles. One "Athens-Belgrade-Ankara" is directed against Bulgaria, and the other – "Athens-Belgrade-Rome" against Albania. American and British politicians, diplomats, and generals are developing feverish activity for the purpose of accelerating this imperialist, aggressive link-up. Monarcho-fascist Greece is the most docile and the main weapon for preparing war in the Balkans. This is spoken of openly and brazenly by the mercenary reactionary press: "Americans supply the dollars, we – the blood".

Thus, a direct and deadly menace threatens our country and our people. The people see the abyss into which they are being plunged by the American imperialists and the Greek monarcho-fascists. Guided by the Communists, they are struggling against hunger and war, for the life and peace.

A broad strike movement of the factory workers, civil servants and office workers, a powerful movement against repressions and terror, for a general amnesty, is developing and gaining momentum in the country.

The peace movement is spreading in Greece. It is underground but breaking down the obstacles and gaining legality because of its strength. Scores of the best representatives of the intelligentsia, languishing in prisons and concentration camps, signed the Stockholm Appeal. The Appeal was also signed by thousands of honest Greeks, including soldiers and officers, ministers of the church, merchants and industrialists. The movement for peace is revealing itself with particular force now that the menace of American war adventures in the Balkans is becoming imminent and telling. Our people protest against the American aggression in Korea and against the dispatch of Greek troops there. When the 529th and 583rd battalions of the third monarcho-fascist brigade were detailed for Korea, the mothers and soldiers cried: "Give our sons back to us!" On the arrival of the battalions in Lamia (the point of departure for Korea), the soldiers organised anti-war manifestations; many of them were arrested and subjected to torture. Some of the men deserted. Thousands of leaflets calling for resistance against the despatch of Greek troops to Korea were distributing among the population.

The main feature of the present mass struggle is that, besides the workers, it involves wide sections of the peasantry and handicraftsmen, that a movement is developing for peace, against imperialists war, a movement which is rallying not only masses of the people but soldiers too.

Monarcho-fascism, despite last year's victory at Vitsi and Grammos, failed to crush the people's democratic movement. The People's democratic forces have carried out an organised retreat and in the main, are intact. Partisan units continue to defend the rights of the

people in the many regions of the country. No lull or decline has taken place in the mass economic and political battles of the broad sections of the people. The people's democratic movement, relying on the moral support of the entire camp of democracy, peace and socialism, is reorganising and regrouping its ranks.

Events show that our retreat last year was not a rear-guard action, but a vanguard battle of a broad people's movement which was in a stage of rapid revolutionary development. Therefore, the main danger for our movement just now is defeatism and an opportunist under-estimation of the enormous possibilities for further struggle.

In these conditions of the profound political crisis in the country and the spreading broad movement of the people – the Third Conference of the Communist Party of Greece was held last October.

The conference had the job of summing up the lessons of the entire ten-year struggle of the Greek people and of charting the course ahead for the Communist Party.

The conference analysed, in the spirit of healthy criticism and self-criticism, the work of the Communist Party and disclosed and examined the mistakes of the Party over past ten years.

Despite the fact that our people had resolutely fought against the German occupation, they nevertheless failed to achieve victory because, as now stated by the Third Conference, the leadership of our party followed, in the main, an incorrect line which subordinated the struggle to the aims of British imperialism and which led to capitulation and surrender of arms after the well-known Varkiza agreement (February 1945). The conference stated that such an incorrect policy of the Communist Party of Greece during the Hitler occupation, right up to the Varkiza agreement was the outcome of deliberate treachery by G. Siantos, then Secretary of the Central Committee and military leader of ELAS (Greek People's Liberation Army)

However, despite treachery by Siantos and the Varkiza capitulation, the people of Greece, led by their Communist Party, which, after the Twelfth Plenum of the Central Committee (June 1945), began to rectify the treacherous and revisionist line of Siantos, never became reconciled to the December 1944 defeat or the Varkiza capitulation. In March 1946, the people again took to arms in order to secure – although under more difficult and complicated conditions – what they failed to secure with their armed struggle against the first, Hitler occupation and against the British in December 1944.

The main difficulty in this struggle lay in the presence of British occupation troops in our country. In this connection, the Communist Party directed its efforts to exposing to world public opinion the British imperialist policy in Greece and to avoiding, at any rate at the beginning, an immediate clash with British troops. In the main, we succeeded in isolating and exposing the British in Greece.

For nearly three and a half years our people, relying on the sympathy of world democratic public opinion, waged an armed struggle against the forces of the monarcho-fascists. In 1948, when the all-out campaign of the monarcho-fascists against the Greek Democratic Army had suffered failure, the American imperialists, jointly with the British, resorted to an open

military offensive against the Greek democratic forces. At the same time, the going over of the Tito gang openly to the imperialist camp, changed the balance of forces in favour of monarcho-fascism. The Democratic Army of Greece was faced with exceptional difficulties, since it failed to solve in time both the task of replenishing its ranks (in view of the forced removal by the monarcho-fascists of the rural population to fortified towns) and of ensuring supplies for its units in Southern Greece. Thus, Tito's treachery enabled monarcho-fascism to secure a military victory at Grammos – Vitsi.

The main forces of the Democratic Army of Greece ceased armed struggle after 1949. The Communist Party is regrouping its forces now, concentrating chief attention on the struggle of the masses for bread, democracy and peace.

The Third Conference of the Communist Party discussed in detail the tasks facing the Party in this struggle. It unanimously exposed all anti-Party attempts to deflect the Party away from this path. After the conference, the Party became stronger, more united and more tempered for the battles ahead.

One of the first steps of the new American Ambassador to Greece, Peurifoy, was to visit the Greek-Albanian frontier where he reviewed units of the monarcho-fascist army. This action is reminiscent of the visit made by John Foster Dulles to the 38th Parallel in Korea shortly before Syngman Rhee attacked the Korean People's Republic.

In view of the naked preparations of the Greek Government for war, a big responsibility rests with the Communist Party of Greece. The conference focussed particular attention on the question of vigilance. The tasks of building the Party, the creation of a powerful underground organisation capable of acting as organiser and leader of the future battles of the working people of Greece, and the task of strengthening the ranks of this organization – these were the centre of attention of the Third Conference.

Our main political task, at present, is the struggle for peace, against the war preparations of the monarcho-fascist Government, to organise and mobilise all the people in the defence of peace.

Particular attention must be devoted to work in the monarcho-fascist army where we exercise considerable influence and have great possibilities. Our conference developed and approved this line. Large-scale battles are being waged by the people in Greece and even bigger ones are maturing. The occupationists and the monarcho-fascists are creating an army, 500,000 strong, for an attack, above all, against the Bulgarian and Albanian People's Republics. The Conference outlined in regard to this the course for the communists, for all working people of Greece. If the American aggressors and their servants – the Greek monarcho-fascists – dare attack these people's Democratic Republics, we shall strike at the enemies from within and bring about confusion in the monarcho-fascist army where 95 per cent of the soldiers, sailors, airmen and honest officers are the sons of the people.

By crushing defeatist opportunism and purging its ranks of all capitulatory elements and enemy agents, the Communist Party of Greece, loyal to Marxism-Leninism, will carry high the banner of struggle against the American and British plunderers and will lead our people to a final victory, no matter what difficulties and obstacles remain to be overcome.