

# Study Guide

## - Greek Civil War

When and where; Who is fighting; Who is backing each side

Greek Civil War was fought in **Greece during 1946 to 1949** between **Greek Government army** which was backed by the **United Kingdom** and **America** and the **Democratic army of Greece** led by the Greek Communist Party and was backed by **Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria.**

What does each side want?

Greek Government army: They wanted to take back the control of the country, just like how they did before the WWII

Democratic army of Greece: Their goal initially was to resist against the Fascism, but then they wanted to liberate the country from Monarchy.

Key events of the Conflict:  
(Outbreak part)



In the Second World War, the Greek government and the king were in exile. In the country, the Greek Communist Party and some left-wing parties establish the "National Liberation Front" and "National People's Liberation Army" during September to December in 1941 to carry out the resistance movement against fascist forces.

In the autumn of 1944, the members of the Liberation Front had reached more than 160 million people and more than 70,000 people in the People's Liberation Army. They liberate most of the land, and establish local temporary democratic regime.

The British government wanted to safeguard its interests in Greece, so it tried to restore the Greek pre-war system. In 1944, when the Germans withdrew from Greece, as a result of the treaties signed by the United States, the Soviet Union, the British, at the Yalta meeting. The British army landed in Greece on behalf of the Germany and escorted the Greek government in exile to return to Athens. In November, the Greek government and the **British general Scobie** ordered the dissolution of the National People's Liberation Army. On December 3, the National Liberation Front organized huge amount of demonstrations and strikes in Athens, but which was eventually suppressed brutally by the police and the British army. Start on December 5, the National People's Liberation Army and the British army fought each other for 33 days.

On January 5, 1945, the National People's Liberation Army (PLA) was forced to

withdraw from Athens. On February 12, the two sides signed the "Vargiza Agreement", and the National People's Liberation Army surrendered weapons, and announced the dissolution.

On September 28, 1945 King George II returned to Athens.  
(War Part)



Στρατηγόσος ΔΙΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ ΒΑΦΙΑΔΙΣ (1901 - 1946)  
Photograph courtesy of 1916

The Communist Party of Greece, which received assistance from Yugoslavia in February 1946, decided to reorganize an armed struggle and was led by Markos Vafiades. The same year on October 28, the Communist Party formed the Greek democratic army. The Athens government once again asked the British government for help. At this time, the United Kingdom was about to face economic collapse.

On March 1947, the United States replaced the British to join the Greek internal affairs. They provided the Greek government 300 million US dollars of aid and 74,000 tons of military equipment, including aircraft, artillery and solidified gasoline bombs etc.

(The end of the war including who won and what changed)

In 1949, the fatal blow to the Greek republic "democratic army" came from a political rather than a military. In June, the relationship between the Soviet Union and its satellite countries and Yugoslavia deteriorated, and Yugoslavia began to be the main and only supporter of the Greek Communist Party in 1944. In this way, the Greek had to make a choice whether to continue to obey Stalin, or to maintain the relationship with its ally Yugoslavia. As a result, internal divisions inevitably occur, and most of the Greek leaders chose Stalin.

In January 1949, Markos Vafiades was dismissed of all political and military duties due to the recognition of "Titoism" and was replaced by Zachariadis. As a result, Yugoslavia deported all the "Democratic Army" in its region and closed the border. Although Democratic Army could still be active in Albania, but the conditions there are too bad. The break with Yugoslavia also forced the Greek Communist Party to eliminate the "Titanic" in the interior, which resulted in the decreasing of morale of the "Democratic Army", and deprived the support from the citizens. At the same time, the government forces finally found an excellent military commander - General Alexander Papagos.

In August 1949, Papagos launched a code-named "torch action" campaign against the "democratic army" in northern Greece. "Democratic army" had been unable to cope with this sudden position war, till September, most of the "democratic army" soldiers have surrendered or fled to Albania. In September, Assigned by the Soviet Union, the Albanian government told the Greek Communist Party that they could no longer use the Albanian territory to carry out military operations. On 16 October, Zachariadis announced the "temporary ceasefire to

preserve the whole of Greece without being completely destroyed", which actually meant that Democratic army lost totally and the government army won. This marks the Greek civil war is actually over.

Greek Civil War caused serious political and economic split, which did not get improved until the beginning of the 1970s. The result of the civil war led Greece to go on a different path of development with other Soviet-controlled satellite states. Greece had become the only country in South-Eastern Europe to accept the Marshall Plan and was not controlled by the Soviet Union. It had also become an important ally of the United States in the Cold War in the Balkans against the Soviet Union.

Citation:

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