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Greece In Need Of Outside Aid

By EDWARD H. SIMS
 Special Correspondent For The
 Charlotte Labor Journal

ATHENS, Greece.—Greece presents U. S. aid missions with a different problem from those of other European allies in that she already possesses a fair military machine, but is unable to maintain and rehabilitate the country at the same time. Civil war in Greece ended only in 1949; thus the problem in Greece is not primarily building fighting forces (which should be modernized) but of rehabilitating the country, so it can stand on its feet economically.

American editors and newsmen recently touring Europe got the inside story on Greece when they met Gen. Theodore Grigoropoulos, Chief of the National Defense

General Staff, Prime Minister Plantirau, American Minister-Counselor Charles Yost, and numerous other American military and diplomatic officials. These conferences convinced many members of the group Greece would require economical aid longer than some NATO countries.

With a population of only, 7,600,000, Greece fields an army today which compares favorably with that of Italy, whose rearmament program is just getting under way.

The exact size of the Greek army is secret but one might speculate that it is large enough to handle an attack by Bulgaria, the logical route of any attack, if Bulgaria is not filled with Soviet divisions for the effort. It is also true that an attack on Greece would probably bring Turkey, and perhaps Yugoslavia, into the conflict. These three countries can maintain 60 divisions, or more, in the field. Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary stand little chance of overwhelming these forces in any quick campaign, if indeed they can defeat them, even with their fairly modern equipment of late from Russia.

Fighting Spirit
 Therefore, a successful campaign in the Balkans by the communists, would require large-scale participation by Russian armies. This would almost surely be World War III, since Greece and Turkey are expected to become members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization within a matter of months. Because the United States wants to keep the Greek army equipped with effective weapons, and because members of the U. S. military aid mission believe that the Greeks, like the Turks, will fight to the last man in defense of their country, there is considerable zeal among Americans in Athens who are charged with aiding Greece both economically and militarily.

Greek Chief of Staff Grigoropoulos told Americans who interviewed him a few days ago there was no cause for doubt whether Greek troops would fight effectively in case of invasion. In a dramatic answer to one questioner he quietly but resolutely assured newsmen Greece would fight to the last if attacked, even if suddenly confronted by overwhelming numbers. Americans stationed in Athens think the Greek army would do just that; they

believe the Chief of Staff is not exaggerating.

The Greek navy, composed of over 60 ships, is an important asset on the free world's side. These ships include a number of capable destroyers, six of which, however, are actually owned by the British, and on loan to Greece. The Greek air force is close to obsolete, but jet fighters from the United States will help correct this situation, though air force modernization will take considerable time.

Job Of ECA
 To get Greece back on its feet economically, so that she can maintain a modern military machine without U. S. aid, is one of the jobs of ECA. Towards this end the American ECA group is striving. Knowing that Greece spends a larger percentage of its budget on national defense than any other European country, while having been in a civil war up until two years ago, ECA officials say frankly Americans cannot expect

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