

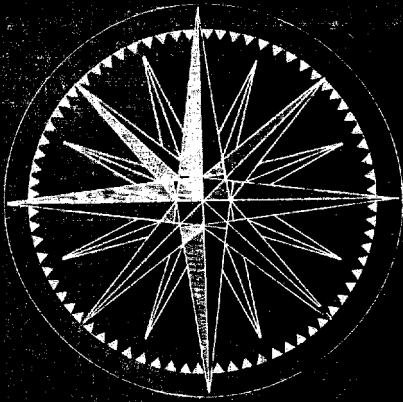
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SPECIAL REPORT

OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

THE MONARCHY AND STABILITY IN GREECE

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

MORI/CDF Pages 1 thru 6

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THE MONARCHY AND STABILITY IN GREECE

The status of the Greek monarchy, a major stabilizing element in Greece since World War II, is once again in question.

Continuation of the present trend could widen splits among the country's democratic forces and thereby strengthen the extreme left. As a countermove, the military might attempt to impose an authoritarian regime.

Family History

The present dynasty began with Prince William of the Danish House of Glucksburg, who arrived in Athens in March 1863 following the overthrow of his Bavarian predecessor, King Otto. The new King reigned as George I for half a century, and was a genuinely popular monarch.

George's son Constantine, father of the present ruler, came into conflict both with the Allies during World War I and the ambitions of Liberal Party leader Eleftherios N. Venizelos. Constantine and his two oldest sons were intermittently kings or kings-in-exile from 1917 until 1924, when the country became a republic. George II, eldest brother of the present monarch, was recalled in 1935, fled the country before the advancing German armies in 1941, and was

again recalled following a UN-observed plebiscite in 1946. His acquiescence in the Metaxes dictatorship from 1936-41 and his absence from the country during the Axis occupation nevertheless damaged the standing of the monarchy.

The death of George II in the spring of 1947 brought Paul and the German-born Frederika to the throne at a time when Greece was in the midst of civil war, with Communist rebels occupying much of the country. In the two years that followed, the royal couple did much to revive respect for the monarchy. Their frequent trips to the front and their willingness to undergo both physical hardship and danger endeared them--particularly the hardy and vivacious Frederika--to the Greek people. By 1950 the old controversy between republicans and royalists appeared dead, with only the far left rejecting the King as

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the symbolic head of the nation.

Constitutional Position

The Greek constitution provides for a sovereign with nominal authority. He is declared to be both "inviolable and unaccountable" for the actions of the government. In times of national crisis or political impasse, however, he may step in to form a non-political or "caretaker" government to conduct elections.

In the generally volatile political climate in Greece, however, few public actions by the royal family can be completely devoid of political impact. Furthermore, the personalities of the present rulers tend to inhibit their relegation to a completely non-political role comparable to that of northern European monarchies. In practice, Paul and Frederika have demonstrated throughout their 16-year reign that they are willing to exercise all power at their disposal--constitutionally authorized or not--to secure governments and governmental actions friendly to their interests.

King, Queen, and Crown Prince

Several of Paul's actions in recent years have aroused

animosity. Although the 61-year-old King has been described as enjoying an abundance of common sense, [redacted]

[redacted] He alienated Premier Karamanlis and unnecessarily involved himself in political polemics by selecting a caretaker government chosen almost exclusively from among palace favorites.

The King's demand in 1962 for a 50-percent increase in funds allocated to the royal family was particularly ill-timed, being coincident with an increase in taxes and official consternation over a cut in US economic aid. Karamanlis regards the palace's demands as "insatiable."

Additional difficulties arise from actions by [redacted] Frederika. The 45-year-old Queen frequently makes known her distaste for certain politicians, has been known to



Paul and Frederika (front row center) photographed during the festivities at the wedding of Spain's Juan Carlos and Greek Princess Sofia in 1961. (Constantine is second from the left in the third row.) UNCLASSIFIED

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intervene in domestic politics, and has attempted to influence foreign affairs--as at the time of the Cyprus settlement. Enthusiastic receptions by villagers in rural Greece appear to have convinced her that the entire nation is still solidly behind the monarchy, and her attitude on the prerogatives of the crown has hardened.

The large dowry she demanded from the treasury for her daughter Princess Sofia and the lavishness of Sofia's wedding to Spanish Prince Juan Carlos in 1961 stirred deep criticism. Frederika's role in the building of expensive new palaces and refurbishing of old ones for the royal family's use has also come under heavy fire.

The Queen's Fund, established during the civil war to support various welfare projects, is a chronic irritant. The fund is financed by a ten-percent tax on motion picture admissions, but its use is completely free of parliamentary scrutiny.

Most well-educated Greeks also ridicule the Queen's pretensions to a knowledge of nuclear physics, a subject of occasional palace news releases.

The 22-year-old Prince Constantine, too, has irritated both government and opposition leaders. Although he has en-

joyed surges of acclaim, as he did in winning a gold-medal victory in a 1960 Olympic sailing event and when he became engaged to Danish Princess Anne Marie last January, he occasionally has plunged into domestic politics [redacted]

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Current Problems

In part, the royal family's troubles are due to changing conditions in Greece. The outstanding services of the King and Queen during the civil war have become obscured by time. Moreover, the Greek people's increased contacts with Western Europeans and Americans during the past decade have contributed to greater awareness of material benefits and social and economic changes in the rest of the Western world.

This awareness in turn has tended to breed dissatisfaction, especially among the youth, with Greece's slow pace of change and stultified educational system. The royal family's tendency to identify its interests with the status quo rather than with innovation and progress has fostered the belief--expressed with increasing frequency in non-Communist circles--that the monarchy is a needless luxury and a political anachronism.

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The growing controversy over the crown stems also from the deepening sense of frustration felt by the largest of the nationalist opposition parties, the Center Union, now some ten years out of the government. Leaders of this slightly left-of-center party have been at odds with the monarchy ever since the King astutely selected Karamanlis as premier in 1955 and thereby prevented the dissolution of the rightist political array formed by his predecessor, Marshal Papagos. Many of the senior Center Union leaders are aware of King Paul's personal distaste for them and resent his occasional refusals to see them for transparently disguised reasons.

These leaders have launched a vigorous campaign to secure new elections by denouncing the 1961 national elections as fraudulent. Usually critical of the monarchy's tendency to influence politics in behalf of the status quo, they now demand that the King prove his impartiality by intervening to force a new vote.

Outlook

The royal family's relations with the government are not

much better than with the opposition. Karamanlis and the right of center remain basically pro-monarchy, however, and his fall from power could pave the way for a less friendly government. The royal family therefore seems inclined to play along with Karamanlis for the present.

Meanwhile, the Communist-dominated party--the United Democratic Left (EDA) hopes to exploit the anti-monarchical trend of public opinion. EDA may eventually find in this issue one which can unite it with the non-Communist left in a popular front.

Should political stability deteriorate, especially on issues concerning the monarchy, the King might support an authoritarian military government. Memories of the 1936 political crisis, when King George II backed the establishment of the Metaxes dictatorship, support the widely held belief that the present King might act in like manner. He is already reported to be contemplating such a course. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

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