

American Diplomats and Officials on Macedonia and the Macedonian Question during the 1940s

CHARALAMPOS MINASIDIS,
School of History & Archaeology,
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Hellas
Email: ch.minasidis@hotmail.com

Abstract

The article analyses United States diplomats' and officials' perception on Macedonia and the Macedonian Question during the 1940s. Based on the collection of Foreign Relations of the United States, the microfilms of the State Department, part of the Historical Archive of the Institute for Balkan Studies, and other primary and secondary sources it examines the evolution of their writings, their influences, their proposals and Washington's decisions. It also examines the pursuit of United States diplomats and officials to maintain the Greek territorial integrity and the importance attributed in Macedonia region. Moreover, it discusses the escalation of the Cold War, the intervention of the United States and the United Nations in Greece and interpretations attributing to communist activities and the Macedonian Question by the Americans. Furthermore, the article discusses the upgrade of the Macedonian Question from a solely Greek security issue to a Yugoslav one too after the breach between Belgrade and Moscow. Finally, it deals with the degradation of the Macedonian Question by Washington and the need for cooperation between Yugoslavia and Greece and argues United States policy makers effectiveness throughout the revival of the Macedonian Question.

1. Introduction

Until the Second World War, Southeast Europe was a relatively unknown and unimportant region, for the United States. Immigrants originated from there were relatively few, while the reputation that followed the area was that of the “powder keg” of Europe.¹ Washington had no long-term interests in the region, which belonged to the British sphere of influence.² However, the absence of a specific policy for Southeast Europe did not mean that Washington had no interest in the area. The latter's concern was gradually increasing as fascism continued to spread throughout Europe. Unsurprisingly, Washington was worried that fas-

¹ For a European and North American view on the Balkans see Todorova, M. (1997), *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, Oxford; Hammond, A. (2007), *The Debated Lands. British and American Representations of the Balkans*, University of Wales Press, Cardiff.

² Frazier, R. (1991), *Anglo-American Relations with Greece. The Coming of the Cold War*, Macmillan, London, p. 3.

cism would also spread in the Balkans, because of the many “unsettled” issues of the region.

One of them was the Macedonian Question. Since 1936, the reports of the American Ambassador to Greece, Lincoln MacVeagh (1933-41 and 1943-47), had identified revisionism as a threat for the peace and security in the Balkans.³ MacVeagh was worried for a Yugoslav-Bulgarian approach against Greece over the protection of the Slavic minorities in Greek Macedonia and Thrace.⁴ As Washington was occupied with the Second World War, American officials foresaw new implications in the Balkans, when Bogdan Dimitrov Filov, a pro-German, who they considered a Bulgarian-Macedonian, was appointed as Prime Minister of Bulgaria in February 1940 by the Bulgarian Tsar Boris.⁵ Meanwhile, worrying reports were arriving from Belgrade too. Weeks after the declaration of the Greco-Italian War (1940-41) Rome launched a propaganda campaign against the Yugoslav regime in Yugoslav Macedonia. According to the American Ambassador in Belgrade, Arthur Bliss Lane, the “fledgling Macedonian movement” was supported by the intellectuals and the leftists of the region, whose purpose of founding a “Yugoslav Balkan federation on republican basis”, the communists who prefer “to keep the pot of trouble boiling” and the “Serbophobes” and peasants who were against Belgrade’s regime and mostly identified themselves as Bulgarians.⁶

The outcome of the Axis’ Balkan Campaign in April 1941 was the occupation of Greece and Yugoslavia and the revival of the Macedonian Question, leading Rome and Sofia to argue over their overlapping territorial claims. Finally, the Albanian-speaking territories of Yugoslav Macedonia and Greek Western Macedonia came under Italian military occupation, the Slav-speaking territories of Yugoslav Macedonia, Greek Eastern Macedonia and Western Thrace came under Bulgarian military occupation and Greek Central Macedonia and the area across the Greco-Turkish border came under German military occupation.

Washington was following closely the developments in Greek Macedonia,⁷ informing Sofia about its frustration for choosing the path of war instead of peaceful negotiations. By November 1941, the American officials were observing the Bulgarian administrative policy in the occupied territories, the suppression of the “revolt” at Doxato in Greek Eastern Macedonia and the project for settlement of Bulgarian citizens. It was clear that Sofia was “proceeding with the systematic subjugation” of the Greek territories.⁸ Commenting on the “Bulgarian outrages” that followed Doxato revolt, George Wadsworth, Chargé d’Affaires ad

³ MacVeagh to Department of State, 10.3.1936 in Iatrides, J. O. (ed.) (1980), *Ambassador MacVeagh Reports, Greece, 1933-1947*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, p. 75.

⁴ MacVeagh to Roosevelt, 17.2.1937 and 22.11.1938 in Iatrides, *op.cit.*, pp. 109-110, 139. His concerns were not unfounded, as both governments signed a treaty of friendship on January 24, 1937 (Crampton, R. J. (2007), *Bulgaria*, Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York, pp. 249, 251-252).

⁵ Department of State (DS), Internal Affairs of Bulgaria (IAB) 1940-1944, m. 17, 874.114 NARCOTICS/176, A[lling] to Fuller, 15.2.1940; Crampton, *op.cit.*, pp. 253-254.

⁶ DS, Internal Affairs of Yugoslavia (IAY) 1940-1944, m. 16, 860H.00/1219, Belgrade (Bliss Lane) to Hull, 1035, 10.10.1940.

⁷ Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) (1958), Diplomatic Papers, 1941, v. II, *Europe*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 740.0011, Sofia (Earle) to Hull, 201, 19.4.1941, p. 720.

⁸ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 16, 874.00/844 1/2, Division of European Affairs to Atherton, 8.11.1941.

interim in Rome, claimed that “[i]t seems clear that there is being carried out in this district a policy of Bulgarization similar and probable even more brutal than the policy of Germanization currently applied by the Nazi authorities of occupation in Slovenia”.⁹

2. The American consulate in Istanbul as Washington’s peripheral reporting centre

After the United States’ entry into the Second World War in 1941 and the withdrawal of her diplomatic missions in occupied Europe, the upgrade of the remaining ones, in the neutral states, seemed necessary. Burton Yost Berry, who was familiar with the area of Southeast Europe and Southwest Asia,¹⁰ became the new Consul General in Istanbul. His task was to organise a peripheral reporting centre on the occupied Eastern and Southeast Europe. The consulate was collecting and analysing a large amount of data, and each country was followed by at least one member of staff. Dr. Floyd H. Black, former president of the American College of Sofia, was responsible for Bulgaria.¹¹ He was the only one with previous knowledge on the Macedonian Question and contributed greatly with his analysis, while he influenced Berry’s reports too.

According to Dr. Black the Bulgarian-Macedonians were playing a crucial role,¹² “not allow[ing] the rest of Bulgarians to forget Macedonia”.¹³ By promoting an irredentist nationalism they cultivated the idea, and strongly influenced Bulgarian public opinion that Macedonia was Bulgarian.¹⁴ It was clear for Dr. Black that “this time Bulgaria has gone to Macedonia to stay”. But in case the War ends he argued that Macedonian Question should not return to its pre-war status, otherwise the peace and stability of the area would be jeopardized once again. He claimed that, if guarantees were to be granted to minorities for a good standard of living, freedom of religion, freedom to use their language and practice their traditions, they would be indifferent to the state they belonged. However, he considered that no Balkan government alone would grant such rights, and that international control should be charged in Macedonia. With respect to Dr. Black, “[p]rosperity is the only medicine which will cure the disease”, thus proposed a “reasonable welfare for all classes of the population in Macedonia”. That is why, according to him, communications should be developed in the area, as a way to promote trade, rather than war.¹⁵ At the same time, Berry was also convinced that the restoration of the Greek and Yugoslav sovereignty would lead to a new wave of persecution against the Bulgarians.¹⁶ Keeping in mind the welfare of the Balkans and the prewar political and economic obstacles he proposed the exercise of interna-

⁹ DS, Internal Affairs of Greece (IAG) 1940-1944, m. 1, 868.00/1136, Rome (Wadsworth) to Hull, 2508, 17.11.1941. On the Germanization of Slovenia see Florian Ruhs, “Foreign Workers in the Second World War. The Ordeal of Slovenians in Germany”, *aventinus nova* 32, 29.05.2011, <http://www.aventinus-online.de/no_cache/persistent/artikel/8599/#rlmp_officelib_footnote_top_10> (4.10.2013).

¹⁰ Berry, B. Y. (1989), *Near Eastern Excursions*, n.p., n.p., pp. 5, 11, 14, 44, 71, 77.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15; Melbourne, R. M. (1997), *Conflict and Crises. A Foreign Service Story*, University Press of America, Lanham/New York/Oxford, pp. 80-81, 87.

¹² DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 17, 874.01/661, Istanbul (Honaker) to Hull, 162, 4.11.1942.

¹³ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 19, 874.9111/196, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 789 (R-723), 22.6.1943.

¹⁴ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 16, 874.00/635, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 19 (R-15), 21.1.1943.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 874.00/635, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 19 (P-15), 21.1.1943.

¹⁶ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 18, 874.9111/78, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 456 (R-430), 26.4.1943.

tional control and the opening of the northern Greek harbours to the Bulgarian and Balkan trade.¹⁷ This action was necessary for Sofia in order to abandon its claims.¹⁸

The solution proposed by both Dr. Black and Mr. Berry was the one advanced by the United States, namely the free trade and “open door” policy. Athens should not resume its Inter-war policy, thus isolating itself economically, and therefore politically from the rest of the peninsula or part of it. The predominance of capitalism and liberalism through trade and the improvement of economic relations would lead to a political consensus, peace and welfare. The depoliticisation of the Balkans seemed necessary.¹⁹ Furthermore, most of the principles above were stressing the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Atlantic Charter, United States President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points and, lastly, the United States government’s suggested peace terms during the First World War.²⁰ It is also possible that Berry was influenced by the economic policy of the New Deal and conveyed this new ethos in his reports. On the other hand, Dr. Black was a Wilsonian.²¹

However, the postwar development of Macedonia had to await the final defeat of the Axis. The future attitude of Sofia, in the course of the War, preoccupied Berry since the spring of 1943, when he tried to explain her ultimate policy and flexibility in finding and maintaining alliances. As Bulgaria allied with Germany in order to annex the rest of Macedonia, she could ally with any of the Allies to retain it.²² Many Bulgarians believed that their country had advantages to offer to Moscow, because of its proximity to the Turkish Straits. Moreover, rumours about a postwar establishment of a communist federation between Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia made Bulgaria consider that she was in a more powerful

¹⁷ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 19, 874.9111/296, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 1054 (R-963), 31.7.1943; *ibid.*, 874.9111/165, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 699 (R-639), 4.6.1943.

¹⁸ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 16, 874.00/6-1544, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 5108 (R-2872), 15.6.1944.

¹⁹ On the Interwar United States’ consensus culture see Wall, W. L. (2008), *Inventing the “American Way”: The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement*, Oxford University Press, New York.

²⁰ The Library of Congress, Web Guides, Primary Documents in American History, Documents from the Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention, 1774-1789, <<http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/bdsbib:@field%28NUMBER+@od1%28bdsdcc+c0801%29%29>> (7.10.2013); *ibid.*, Declaration of Independence, <<http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/DeclarInd.html>> (7.10.2012); “Joint Statement by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, August 14, 1941” in *The Avalon Project. Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy*, <<http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/at10.asp>> (15.10.2013); “8 January, 1918: President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points” in *ibid.*, <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp> (13.1.2014); FRUS (1942), 1919. *The Paris Peace Conference*, v. I, Government Printing Office, Washington, Inquiry Document No. 887, “The Present Situation: The War Aims and Peace Terms it Suggests”, p. 51.

²¹ According to Roy M. Melbourne, Vice Consul in Istanbul, Dr. Black was “a gentleman of the Wilsonian generation” (Melbourne, *op.cit.* (f. 11), p. 81). Besides, Dr. Black’s key proposal, prosperity, had a key role in both the Fourteen Points and Wilson’s government suggested peace terms (Fourteen Points, *op.cit.*; FRUS, 1919, Inquiry Document No. 887, “The Present Situation: The War Aims and Peace Terms it Suggests”, p. 51).

²² DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 18, 874.9111/127, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 622 (R-571), 24.5.1943.

position in comparison with the rest. Being the only Balkan country with a conventional army she would act as the main defender of Balkan communism.²³

Soon, as a result of the first major Allied victories, the majority of Bulgarians were considering the withdrawal from the occupied territories as a mean to protect the Bulgarian Kingdom.²⁴ Besides, Berry was clear regarding Sofia's practices. It was her politicians that had to be blamed, because their lack of moderation destroyed a just claim.²⁵ According to the American General Consul it was true that territories "inhabited by a predominantly Bulgarian population" were left outside the Bulgarian Kingdom. For this reason the Treaty of San Stefano (1878) that offered to Bulgaria almost whole of Macedonia had become Sofia's "fundamental charter" on legitimising her territorial claims. However, commenting on the Bulgarian arguments about the Treaty Berry mentioned that although they were accurate in general, Bulgaria's later practices made her tarnish her name worldwide.²⁶ Berry accepted that although Yugoslav Macedonia was a mixed area, her vast majority was Bulgarian.²⁷ As for Greece, he estimated that approximately 100.000 Bulgarians were living in Central and Western Macedonia. A Bulgarian defeat would threaten their lives. That is why he proposed that "the only solution is absolute control by a foreign power or exchange of populations". For the American diplomat the protection of innocent lives in a region that "the idea of justice [...] does not exists" was "rather a question of humanity".²⁸

However, Berry hoped that the postwar Balkan leaders would leave the past behind and work in the future together, for a fair solution to the Macedonian Question. Although he characterized Macedonia as "a land of tragedy with little prospect of being anything else for a long time to come",²⁹ hope and despair for its future was encountered frequently in his reports. However, despair was repeated more often. For him Macedonia was an area where justice was always unbalanced and Great Powers' interests prevailed.³⁰ Thus he was critical of the Bulgarians, who used arguments of ethnical and historical rights to defend their policy. As he claimed, they could not understand that only power settles such questions.³¹ His pragmatism was stronger than his idealism.

Meanwhile, on April 3, 1944 the Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Skryabin "Molotov" announced that Moscow would respect Romanian frontiers as marked before the attack to the Soviet Union and would not proceed to any social changes in Romania. Due to this statement the Bulgarians, according to Berry, knew that their borders were guaranteed without excluding an outlet in the Aegean Sea.³² Besides they remembered the Soviet pro-

²³ Black to Berry, 28.10.1943 in DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 16, 874.00/775 1/2, Istanbul (Berry) to Cavendish, 30.10.1943.

²⁴ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 16, 874.00/971, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull 2058 (R-1913), 22.12.1943.

²⁵ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 20, 874.9111/670, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 1908 (R-1773), 2.12.1943.

²⁶ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 21, 874.9111/764 1/2, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 2685 (R-2498), 20.3.1944.

²⁷ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 20, 874.9111/470, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 1578 (R-1464), 18.10.1943.

²⁸ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 19, 874.9111/335, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 1106 (R-1013), 9.8.1943.

²⁹ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 21, 874.9111/738, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 2565 (R-2384), 4.3.1944.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 874.9111/768, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 2697 (R-2508), 23.3.1944.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 874.9111/791, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 2883 (R-2680), 22.4.1944.

³² *Ibid.*, 874.9111/782, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 2777 (R-2582), 3.4.1944.

posal of November 25, 1940, for the annexation of Northern Dobruja, Greek Thrace and, even, Turkish Thrace by Bulgaria without any Soviet intervention to her internal affairs. However, Sofia preferred to ally with the Axis than the Soviet Union.³³ On their part, American officials were worried that the Kremlin would prefer a great Bulgaria, while the annexation of Bessarabia by the Soviet Union and of Northern Dobruja by Bulgaria would form a “practical highway” that would lead to the Aegean, bypassing the Straits.³⁴ By denying to Bulgaria the annexation of Northeast Greece, the Soviet “practical highway” could be transformed to an Anglo-American practical embankment.³⁵

Nevertheless, the Macedonian Question was not limited only to a Bulgarian outlet in the Aegean, but also extended to the sovereignty in the territory of Macedonia. For Berry lasting peace in the Balkans presupposed a reasonable settlement of the Macedonian Question. He believed that the imminent defeat would make Sofia accept a compromise, and the need for reconstruction of Yugoslavia would push Belgrade on this decision too. According to Berry, the ideal solution was the autonomy of Yugoslav Macedonia, whilst her independence was “undesirable from every point of view”.³⁶ An independent Macedonian state would still be the apple of discord between Sofia and Belgrade. Autonomy seemed the perfect middle ground. Furthermore, was expected such a proposal by a citizen of a federal state, who knew that one of the main problems was the state centralization that was followed by all Balkan states. But the proposal lacked the fate of the remaining parts of Macedonia. This makes sense since the American Consul General did not recognise a separate Macedonian ethnicity. Therefore, he could not accept any claims for autonomy or union of the whole Macedonia.

Besides, Berry believed that Sofia’s inability to protect the pro-Bulgarian Macedonians, because of the looming defeat, would perhaps lead to the strengthening of the separatist movement and the formation of a government in Skopje in an attempt to maintain permanently a status of autonomy.³⁷ Already, the dissatisfaction over the policy of Bulgarization and the centralization in Yugoslav Macedonia led more people to join the autonomist/separatist movement which asked for an autonomous Macedonia in a federal Yugoslavia.³⁸ Finally, on the 2nd of August 1944, the First Anti-Fascist Assembly for the National Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM) was held which proclaimed the founding of the People’s

³³ See Pundeff, M. V. (1969, reprint Seattle/London 1994), “Bulgarian Nationalism” in P. F. Sugar, I. J. Lederer (eds.), *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, University of Washington Press, pp. 152-154; Crampton, *op.cit.* (f. 4), p. 255.

³⁴ FRUS (1965), Diplomatic Papers, 1944, v. III, *The British Commonwealth and Europe*, Governmental Printing Office, Washington, 740.0011 Stettinius Mission/3-1944, “Memorandum by the Division of Southern European Affairs”, Washington, March 1944, p. 304.

³⁵ On the double nature of countries and territories that could be used as embankments-highways see Spykman, N. J. (1942), *America’s Strategy in World Politics. The United States and the Balance of Power*, Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York.

³⁶ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 16, 874.00/6-1544, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 5108 (R-2872), 15.6.1944.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 874.00/6-3044, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 3182 (R-2937), 30.6.1944.

³⁸ DS, IAB 1940-1944, m. 21, 874. 9111/750, Istanbul (Berry) to Hull, 2662 (R-2476), 17.3.1944.

Republic of Macedonia (NRM). However, within ASNOM disagreements occurred between communists and non-communists.³⁹

3. Protecting Greek territorial integrity

The Soviet advance into the Balkans meant the termination of Istanbul as a reporting centre, while the Fatherland Front, a Bulgarian antifascist coalition, established a new government on 9th of September 1944, after the Soviet invasion in Bulgaria.⁴⁰ Although, under German pressure the Bulgarian occupation forces withdrew from Yugoslavia,⁴¹ they did not evacuate Greece, handing only the civilian administration to the leftist Greek National Liberation Movement (EAM). The new Bulgarian government saw fit to justify this action to the British and Americans who until that time demanded a full evacuation. To dispel any allied concern Sofia invoked the necessity of the presence of its troops as the only conventional anti-German military power in the region, since German forces still stationed in the Aegean Islands and Salonika.⁴² However, the British were not persuaded and were fearful of a possible descent of the Red Army in the Aegean, in conjunction with the strong presence of EAM in Northern Greece.

This is why British Prime Minister Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill visited Moscow between 9 and 19 October and proceeded to the so-called “percentages agreement” with the Soviet Premier Iosif Vissarionovich Jugashvili “Stalin”. The British acknowledged the Soviet dominance in Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary and the Soviets the British dominance in Greece, while both would have equal influence in Yugoslavia.⁴³ United States President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, accepted the Anglo-Soviet understanding as a mean to avoid a clash between his two main allies.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, in Yugoslav Macedonia the National Liberation Brigade, or the so-called, Macedonian Brigade, was founded. According to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) it was going to be composed of 10,000 men, equipped by the Bulgarian Army and commanded by Tito. Moreover, OSS informed Washington about the alliance between Slav-Macedonian federalists and communists, namely ASNOM, and their decision to found an autonomous Macedonia.⁴⁵ Until that time Yugoslav partisans did not have any significant presence in the

³⁹ Sfetas, Sp. (2003), *Η Διαμόρφωση της Σλαβομακεδονικής Ταυτότητας. Μια Επώδυνη Διαδικασία*, Vanyas, Thessaloniki, pp. 177-179; Rossos, A. (2008), *Macedonia and the Macedonians. A History*, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, pp. 196-197.

⁴⁰ Crampton, *op.cit.* (f. 4), pp. 279-280.

⁴¹ Mitcham, S. W. Jr. (2001), *The German Defeat in the East, 1944-45*, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA, p. 201.

⁴² FRUS, 1944, v. III, 740.0011 E.W./10-344, Ankara (Steinhardt) to Hull, 1894, 3.10.1944, pp. 442-443. On November 1, 1944, when the German evacuation from Greece was completed, 45,000 Axis' soldiers were still stationed in the Aegean islands and Crete (Mitcham, *op.cit.*, p. 206).

⁴³ Churchill, W. (1953, reprint New York 2002) *The Second World War*, v. VI, *Triumph and Tragedy*, Rosetta-Books, Company, pp. 273-274.

⁴⁴ Smith, R. J. (1973), *The United States and the Anglo-Soviet Balkan Agreement of October, 1944: A Study in Wartime Diplomacy*, PhD thesis, Political Science, International Law and Relations, Clark University, p. 240.

⁴⁵ DS, IAY 1940-1944, m. 22, 860H.01/9-2544, Caserta (Kirk) to Hull, FMH-217, 25.9.1944.

region.⁴⁶ In reality the Brigade was under the command of a Slav-Macedonian from Greece, Elias Dimakis “Gotse”, who was among those men that sought refuge in Yugoslavia after a clash with the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) and the Greek People’s Liberation Army (ELAS).⁴⁷

These developments led to the adoption of an official policy by the United States. Evidence of this need was a report by the State Department, concerning the policy towards Greece, dated 23 October 1944. Although, the authors accepted as valid the Greek territorial claims, they suggested that an early reconciliation was needed as well as the “removal of commercial, financial, social and cultural barriers” in order to build good relations among the Balkan states. A possible economic and political isolation of Greece, Turkey and perhaps Albania, from their Slavic neighbours, was considered as a threat to world peace. Regarding the Macedonian Question they proposed as official stance as follow:

*To oppose any revival of the Macedonian issue as relates to Greece, as already seems threatened by the formation in Russian-occupied Bulgaria of a Macedonian Army. The Greek section of Macedonia is largely inhabited by Greeks, partly as a result of population exchanges after the First World War. The Greek people are unanimously opposed to the creation of a Macedonian State and allegation of a serious Greek participation can be assumed to be false. We should hold the Bulgarian and Soviet Governments responsible; despite any disclaimers or misleading propaganda they may issue, for any menacing or aggressive acts of “Macedonian” forces or a “Macedonian State” against Greece, and should not hesitate to make our views clear to Moscow and to the public if the occasion arises.*⁴⁸

American officials acknowledged, contrary to the official Greek position, that Greek Macedonia was not only inhabited by Greeks, but also that the non-Greek minority may pose a problem. Therefore they interpreted the revival of the Macedonian Question as a Bulgarian-Macedonian initiative and regarded Sofia would control a Macedonian state. It was believed that Sofia wanted to keep the occupied territories at all costs. It was also understood that the principle of self-determination for the “Macedonians” jeopardized the Greek territorial integrity and could lead to Soviet descent in the Aegean, an outcome that the Americans wanted to avoid.⁴⁹ Moreover, it seems that for the American officials, Bulgarians and

⁴⁶ Markham to Carroll, 1, 10.6.1944 in DS, IAY 1940-1944, m. 18, 860H.00/7-744, Ambassador to the Yugoslav Government in Exile (Patterson) to Hull, 50, 15.6.1944.

⁴⁷ Michailidis, I. D. (2003), *Τα Πρόσωπα του Ιανού. Οι Ελληνογιουγκοσλαβικές Σχέσεις τις Παραμονές του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου Πολέμου (1944-1946)*, Pataki, Athens, pp. 63, 165, 233-235.

⁴⁸ FRUS (1969), Diplomatic Papers, 1945, v. VIII, *The Near East and Africa*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 711.00/11-144, “United States Policy With Regard to Greece”, Washington, 23.10.1944, pp. 301-302.

⁴⁹ According to the Atlantic Charter (1941) which was prepared by Washington and London and was signed by the rest of the Allies, there would be “no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned” and Allies would “respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them” (Joint Statement, *op.cit.* (f. 20)). Although it was a political statement and not a legal document that could have binding force (Roucounas, E. (2010), *Δημόσιο Διεθνές Δίκαιο*, Nomiki Vivliothiki, Athens, pp. 149-150), this characteristic did not become understood by the Yugoslav government or the Bulgarian-Macedonian and the Slav-Macedonian diaspora organizations in North America (see, for example, DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 7, 868.00/11-1046, Popoff to Byrnes, 10.11.1946; Mitcheff,

Soviets were acting in a double manner. Although, they withdrew the conventional Bulgarian military forces from Northeast Greece,⁵⁰ they were arming Bulgarian-Macedonian irregulars to invade Northern Greece. On the other hand, Yugoslav territorial claims to Greece were an additional threat.⁵¹ The above, as well as the indications on the establishment of a Balkan Federation and a possible agreement between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, in order to solve the Macedonian Question, were causing concern among American officials.⁵²

Nevertheless, Balkan states' aspirations were not the only problem. War and Occupation had radicalized politically and ethnically the population of geographical Macedonia and had a particular impact on Slav-Macedonians. Both, the Communist Party of Macedonia (KPM), which the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (KPI) controlled, and ASNOM were acting as hegemonic blocs. KPM and ASNOM's purpose was to establish a Macedonian state,⁵³ but each aimed at making its discourse hegemonic, so to produce and reproduce its model on Slav-Macedonian national identity as something natural rather than artificial.⁵⁴ Athens, London and Washington were seeking the promoter of Slav-Macedonian movement in Sofia, Belgrade and Moscow. Certainly these centres favoured, more or less, this movement, guided and tried to control it. But, its success showed that there was already fertile ground.

Developments were calling Washington itself to conclude to a policy framework. The increasing propaganda on the Macedonian autonomy and the detachment of Greek Macedonia recommended very clear threats to Greek territorial integrity and undermined the American objective for a peaceful post-war world. The new Secretary of State, Edward Reilly Stettinius, adopted the report of 23rd October 1944 and informed the American diplomatic missions that "...[t]his Government considers talk of Macedonian 'nation,' Macedonian 'Fatherland,' or Macedonian 'national consciousness' to be unjustified demagoguery representing no ethnic nor political reality, and sees in its present revival a possible cloak for aggressive intentions against Greece".⁵⁵

Thereby Washington formalized its willingness to maintain the status quo in the Balkans. While not implying any direct involvement, it was the first major step to end the hitherto lack of official stand on many of the developments that took place in the region. By this decision, and in response to the Macedonian Question, the United States' policy regarding Greece was formalized. Specifically, Washington decided that it was in its interest to maintain Greek territorial integrity. American policy makers understood how the transformation of the term "Macedonian" from a simple geographical designation to a national

Vangeloff to Huber, 18.7.1945 and Grew to Huber in DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 3, 868.00/7-2045, Huber to Byrnes, 20.7.1945).

⁵⁰ The Bulgarian evacuation was completed in November 1944 (FRUS, 1944, v. III, 740.00119 Control (Bulgaria)/11-2844, Caserta (Kirk) to Hull, 1523, 28.11.1944, p. 493).

⁵¹ Markham to Carroll, 1, 10.6.1944 in DS, IAY 1940-1944, m. 18, 860H.00/7-744, Ambassador to the Yugoslav Government in Exile (Patterson) to Hull, 50, 15.6.1944.

⁵² DS, IAG 1940-1944, m. 6, 868.014/10-1144, Caserta (Kirk) to Advisory Council for Italy, 712, 11.10.1944.

⁵³ On hegemony and hegemonic blocs see Forgacs, D. (ed.) (2000), *The Gramsci Reader. Selected Writings 1916-1935*, New York University Press, New York, pp. 189-221.

⁵⁴ On hegemony and discourse see Laclau, E., Mouffe, Ch. (1981, reprint London/New York 2001), *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, Verso.

⁵⁵ FRUS, 1945, v. VIII, 868.014/12-2644, Stettinius to Sofia, et al., 26.12.1944, pp. 302-303.

identification posed a risk to Greek territorial integrity. Essentially, a portion of geographical Macedonia's population, had founded a Macedonian state in a corner of Macedonia, which was acting as a national centre and claimed on its behalf the exclusive use of the term "Macedonian" and "Macedonia" and the sovereignty over the entire geographical area under a single state entity. Besides, Washington was worried that a Macedonian state would be supported by Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union and would act as a Soviet motorway to the Aegean. Therefore, it was necessary to defend Greek interests and it was essential the non-recognition of the existence of a Macedonian ethnicity and homeland. Nevertheless, the denial of the problem constituted its existence. Washington acknowledged that pro-Bulgarians were living in Greece and that they could be attracted by the new state entity. However, the statement made clear that the Macedonian Question interested Washington only if its revival was creating a threat to the Greek security. American officials recognized that since they were not in position to intervene in the internal affairs of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, they would not be able to prevent any action directly related to Greece.

Washington chose to agree on any plans for regional consultations that could prove conducive to the welfare of the Balkans, but to oppose to the creation of coalitions that would entrench the region for once more and could jeopardize world peace and security. Such a union was not to be accepted before the conclusion of peace between the United Nations and Bulgaria.⁵⁶ United States could favour a "Balkan entente that would include Greece, instead of a Slav bloc to the North of Greece" and would oppose any attempt for a Greater Macedonia. Although Washington acknowledged that it could not object "an autonomous Macedonia as part of a federated Yugoslavia" it understood that "such a move would only foster exaggerated Macedonian consciousness, to the ultimate danger of Greek territorial integrity".⁵⁷

However, developments in the Balkans created a very complex set of new data and reports were unable to provide a clear picture. Dimitrov argued to the American representative in Sofia, Maynard B. Barnes that peace would be established only if a Balkan federation or confederation, which would include Greece, was going to be founded.⁵⁸ While, other reports were claiming that Sofia had no clear policy on Greece. On the other hand, Tito himself stated that Yugoslavia had no aggressive intentions in Greek Macedonia and any claims would be submitted to the ongoing Peace Conference.⁵⁹ However, a month later Yugoslav General, Svetozar Vukmanović "Tempo", spoke in favour of Macedonia's reunification.⁶⁰ Although, the mass of soldiers in Skopje demonstrated against their transfer to the North, asking to occupy Salonika instead, the Yugoslav leadership chose not to clash with the Brit-

⁵⁶ FRUS (1967), Diplomatic Papers, 1945, v. V, *Europe*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 760h.00/1-245, Department of State to the British Embassy (Washington), 2.1.1945, pp. 1306-1308.

⁵⁷ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 3, 868.00/2-2445, Baxter, "Data on Greece for Secretary's Notebook", 24.2.1945.

⁵⁸ DS, IAB 1945-1949, m. 5, 874.01/1-245, Sofia (Barnes) to Stettinius, 3, 2.1.1945.

⁵⁹ A.I.S. Land Force and Military Liaison (Greece), *Weekly Report No. 11, 24 December - 30 December 1944* in DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 1, 868.00/1-1045, Office to Stettinius, 998, 10.1.1945.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 868.00/2-245, Caserta (Kirk) to Stettinius, 394, 2.2.1945.

ish.⁶¹ As argued by American observers, the Slav-Macedonian autonomists “acting without, and contrary to, the authority of Marshall Tito” and therefore the autonomists and not Yugoslav communists possessed threat to Northern Greece.⁶² This was the reason why, by the end of the War in Europe, Belgrade tried to increase its control all over Yugoslavia. In May 1945 two Serbian Corps of the Yugoslav Army were transported to the Greco-Yugoslav borders, which until that time were lightly guarded.⁶³ Although Athens was worried by such a move, American officials reassured that the two Corps were insufficient for any military attack,⁶⁴ but could be used from a “politico-psychological [...] point of view”. As Captain William H. McNeill, Assistant Military Attaché in Athens, mentioned, in case Belgrade wanted to invade Greece, the propaganda over autonomous Macedonia had to be increased, but Bulgarians and not Yugoslavians controlled the propaganda organization.⁶⁵ McNeill had failed to distinguish between the Slav-Macedonian autonomists/separatists and Sofia, claiming that the latter controlled the former. As for Greece both OSS and MacVeagh were claiming that ELAS was too nationalistic and opposed an independent Macedonia or an incorporation of Greek Macedonia to Yugoslavia.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, in February 1945 OSS argued that KKE was unaware of Yugoslav Slav-Macedonian propaganda’s success.⁶⁷ MacVeagh was also worried by the ever-growing influence of Tito in Greek Western Macedonia and the possibility of encouraging EAM to anti-government actions. Lastly, he agreed with Athens that the troubles in Macedonia were the outcome of external and not internal factors.⁶⁸

4. In search of political identifications

If Greece was the embracement in the spread of communism to the South and the KKE the fifth phalanx according to Athens, London and Washington, Greek Macedonia was the backdoor. Not only was exposed defensively, but beyond its borders it had a new state, the NRM that claimed the role of a Macedonian national centre and complete control over geographical Macedonia. That is why Slav-Macedonian minority in Greek Macedonia possessed qualitative and quantitative characteristics that no other ethnic minority in Greece had. It lived in border regions and had a different self-identification from the rest of the Greek

⁶¹ A.I.S. Land Force and Military Liaison (Greece), *Weekly Report No. 15, 21 January – 27 January 1945* in DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 1, 868.00/2-645, Offie to Stettinius, 1033, 6.2.1945; A.I.S. Land Force and Military Liaison (Greece), *Weekly Report No. 17, 4 February – 10 February 1945* in DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 3, 868.00/2-1945, Offie to Stettinius, 1053, 19.2.1945.

⁶² A.I.S. Land Force and Military Liaison (Greece), *Weekly Report No. 18, 11 February – 17 February 1945* in DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 3, 868.00/2-2745, Offie to Stettinius, 1070, 27.2.1945. For more on Macedonian anti-communist, anti-Yugoslav autonomist/separatist opposition see Rossos, *op.cit.* (f. 39), pp. 205, 220-226.

⁶³ A.G.I.S., *Weekly Report No. 45, 19 August - 25 August 1945* in DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 4, 868.00/9-345, Offie to Byrnes, 1134, 30.4.1945.

⁶⁴ FRUS, 1945, v. VIII, 760H.68/6-2245, Caserta (Kirk) to Stettinius, 2713, 22.6.1945, pp. 318-319.

⁶⁵ FRUS (1960), Diplomatic Papers, *The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference), 1945*, v. I, Government Printing Office, Washington, 124.686/6-2345, Athens (MacVeagh) to Stettinius, 1213, 23.6.1945, p. 666.

⁶⁶ OSS XL817, 24.6.1944 in Stavrakis, P. J. (1989), *Moscow and Greek Communism 1944-1949*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca/London, p. 130; DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 1, 868.00/1-1045, Athens (MacVeagh) to Stettinius, A-5, 10.1.1945.

⁶⁷ OSS L53686, 8.2.1945 in Stavrakis, *op.cit.*, p. 129.

⁶⁸ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 3, 868.00/3-845, Athens (MacVeagh) to Stettinius, 667, 8.3.1945.

population. Either pro-Bulgarian or pro-Macedonian, its members were recognizing as their national centre Sofia or Skopje respectively. Moreover, it was the largest minority in Greek Macedonia and in Greece overall. Unquestionably, Slav-Macedonian movement could constitute a threat for Greek territorial integrity. However, Greek Macedonia was vastly inhabited by Greeks, mainly refugees from Turkey and Caucasus, who to a great extent had turned to the Left in the Interwar period and especially during the Occupation. Although, Slav-Macedonian movement could constitute threat for Greek territorial integrity, the Greek communist movement could lead to the communisation of Greece. Both could prove a threat for United States interests in the region.

Seeking answers and explanations for the evolution of the Macedonian Question and the shaping of the United States policy, Leonard J. Cromie, Third Secretary at the Embassy in Athens, turned in to the new discipline of political behaviour. That is why Cromie conducted a fieldwork in Greek Macedonia and Thrace between 12 and 24 June 1945.⁶⁹ His report tried to explain the political behaviour of Greek Macedonia's inhabitants, having been influenced by studies such as André Siegfried's,⁷⁰ Herbert Tingsten's⁷¹ and Paul Felix Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet's.⁷² For Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet, political homogenization takes place in social groups. According to them, social environment in which he lives and develops shared values and ideas affects the person. Most likely, Cromie followed their model, since their methodology was based on individual interviews and Media influence. He mentioned clearly that he conducted numerous interviews with representatives across the political and social spectrum. Moreover, he studied newspapers' influence and gathered data from information services. Moreover, Cromie and his main adviser Governor General of Central Macedonia, Charalampos Fragkistas, were influenced, likely, by Siegfried's and Tingsten's electoral geography as they claimed that "the kaleidoscopic character of political sentiment in Northern Greece may be ascribed to the mixed origins of the population". Both supported that Greek-Macedonians and refugees from Eastern Thrace and the rural areas of Asia Minor were rightists. On the other hand, Slav-Macedonians and refugees from Transcaucasia and the urban areas of Asia Minor were leftists. The American Secretary maintained that the urban population of Macedonia had been radicalized.

But why the United States should be interested in the Macedonian Question? Cromie argued that "[t]he spotlight of world attention is once again swinging back to Macedonia and Western Thrace, the granary of Greece and outpost of British influence in the Balkans". He recognized that ideological and ethnic conflicts were taking place in Macedonia and different territorial claims were prevailing. Greece wanted greater strategic depth for her northern regions, while "Slavs and Bulgarians" aspired for an outlet to the Aegean. According to him, Macedonia was a "border-key" between Russian and British influence. For Cromie, the

⁶⁹ Cromie, L. J., "Northern Greece. A Regional Survey of Present Conditions" in DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 3, 868.00/7-1745, Athens (MacVeagh) to Byrnes, 1331, 17.7.1945.

⁷⁰ Siegfried, A. (1913), *Tableau Politique de la France de l'Ouest sous la Troisième République*, Armand Colin, Paris.

⁷¹ Tingsten, H. (1937), *Political Behavior. Studies in Election Statistics*, P.S. King, London.

⁷² Lazarsfeld P. F., Berelson, B. and Gaudet, H. (1944), *The People's Choice. How the Voter Makes up his Mind in a Presidential Campaign*, Columbia University Press, New York.

Greek demands, that emerged because of rivalries in Greek internal politics and were causing the military readiness and perhaps possible military action in neighbouring states, as well as the old pursuit of Moscow to descend to the Aegean via a "Free Macedonia' movement", could currently cause geopolitical upheavals with the loss of Northern Greece and the redefinition of the balance of power in the Mediterranean and the Straits. Although, he believed that EAM was realistic enough not to promise anything else to Slav-Macedonians, except from the free use of their language, but he considered that a Soviet intervention in favour of minorities in Greece, especially the Slav-Macedonians was possible. For Cromie the solution would be a moderate minority policy aimed at future integration of Slavs in the Greek national trunk.⁷³

Although Cromie's report was the first on Northern Greece's political behaviour, soon Raleigh A. Gibson, Consul General at Salonika, became responsible for monitoring and analysing the public opinion in Northern Greece. His reports focused mostly on political behaviour and morale and Slav-Macedonian demographic presence. However, he was also reporting on Northern Greeks dissatisfaction over Greek authorities or their opinion on United States.⁷⁴

5. Border regions and the Greek Issue

Meanwhile, the new Secretary of State, James Francis Byrnes, was informed that "it is improbable that large-scale incursions into Greece by Bulgarian, Albanian or Yugoslav forces will occur, but possibly there may be small-scale incursions. It is unlikely they would be backed by gov[er]n[ment]s concerned but in order to test our reactions and as part of general war of nerves may have their unofficial backing".⁷⁵ However, Belgrade was accusing Athens for a series of frontier violations and for the influx of 20,000 refugees from Greece, because of a persecution by Greek ultra-right gangs and the authorities.⁷⁶ Also, it was asking Washington to put an end to such actions and proceed to the implementation of the Atlantic Charter for the Slav-Macedonians.⁷⁷ On the contrary, McNeill reported an escalation of the Yugoslav aggression, mainly through Greek irregulars, while the Yugoslav frontier guards attacked their Greek and British counterparts and behaved with disrespect during their

⁷³ Cromie, *op.cit.* (f. 69).

⁷⁴ See "Report on Situation in Central and Western Macedonia With Regard to Slavo-Macedonian Minority and Left-Wing Armed Bands, and Policy of Greek Government Towards Them", Widney to American Embassy Athens, 6.11.1946 in DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 7, 868.00/11-746, Salonika (Widney) to Byrnes, 757, 7.11.1946; DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 11, 868.00/8-447, Salonika (Gibson) to Marshall, 125, 4.8.1947; DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 23, 868.00/7-1948, Salonika (Gibson) to Marshall, 141, 19.7.1948; DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 28, 868.00/4-549, Salonika (Gibson) to Acheson, 41, 5.4.1949; DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 29, 868.00/7-1449, Salonika (Gibson) to Acheson, 93, 14.7.1949; *ibid.*, 868.00/7-1949, Salonika (Gibson) to Acheson, 96, 19.7.1949; DS, *ibid.*, 868.00/9-3049, Salonika (Gibson) to Acheson, 105, 30.9.1949; DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 30, 868.00/10-349, Salonika (Gibson) to Acheson, 107, 3.10.1949; *ibid.*, 868.00/10-1849, Salonika (Flood) to Acheson, 114, 18.10.1949.

⁷⁵ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 34, 868.014/7-1345, Caserta (Kirk) to Byrnes, 2940, 13.7.1945.

⁷⁶ FRUS, 1945, v. VIII, 740.0011 EW/7-2045, Belgade (Shantz) to Byrnes, 295, 20.7.1945, pp. 323-324; FRUS (1960), Diplomatic Papers, *The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference)*, 1945, v. II, Government Printing Office, Washington, 760h.68/7-2445, Grew to Byrnes, 117, 24.7.1945, pp. 1065-1067.

⁷⁷ FRUS, 1945, v. VIII, 760H.68/7-2345, Athens (MacVeagh) to Byrnes, 742, 23.7.1945, pp. 328-329.

common meetings. These incidents made the American Captain reconsider his claims on Bulgarian primacy and supported that Belgrade troubles in West Greek Macedonia served Yugoslav territorial claims.⁷⁸ Moreover, he denounced Yugoslav accusations claiming that no persecutions were taken place against Slav-Macedonians⁷⁹ and advised against Greek territorial claims arguing that would add more Slavic populations to Greece and worsen her defensive capabilities.⁸⁰ On its part Sofia blamed Greece for aggression,⁸¹ asked for an autonomous Macedonia⁸² and annexation of Greek Thrace as a way to improve her relations with Greece.⁸³ According to American diplomats in Bulgaria, the Macedonian Question still influenced Bulgarian foreign policy, since many Bulgarian communists had Macedonian origin⁸⁴ and that was a reason why the Fatherland Front was not willing to discuss publicly the concession of Bulgarian Macedonia to NRM.⁸⁵ The Paris Peace Conference that was held between 29 July and 15 October 1946 was an opportunity to put on the table all the open issues. Bulgaria demanded the annexation of Western Thrace, Greece asked for the Dodecanese, Northern Epirus and boundary changes with Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia claimed the annexation of Greek Macedonia.⁸⁶ However, only Greece's annexation of Dodecanese was accepted.

During 1946, the leftist reaction to the rightist persecutions led to the Greek Civil War, which complicated the internal situation in Greece. After Kennan's telegram on Soviet policy,⁸⁷ Washington was suspecting Moscow for any Eurasian crisis.⁸⁸ The American diplomats in the Balkans were seeing the local communists as Moscow's puppets⁸⁹ and failed to distinguish between Soviet policy and local nationalism and irredentism, save the British Ambassador in Belgrade, Charles Brinsley Pemberton Peake, whose report on independent from Moscow Yugoslav policy was transmitted to Washington via the United States embassy in Belgrade.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, both Soviet and Ukrainian United Nations delegations tried

⁷⁸ McNeill, W. H., *Greco-Yugoslav Border Incidents*, No. R 132-45 in FRUS, *Berlin*, v. II, 760H.68/7-2445, Athens (MacVeagh) to State Department, 1346, 24.7.1945, pp. 1068-1071.

⁷⁹ FRUS, 1945, v. VIII, 760H.68/8-2845, Athens (MacVeagh) to State Department, 933, 28.8.1945, pp. 340-341. In contradiction, McNeill acknowledged in his book the persecution against the Slavic population of Greek Western Macedonia (McNeill, W. H. (1947), *The Greek Dilemma. War and Aftermath*, J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia/New York, p. 266).

⁸⁰ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 34, 868.014/9-45, Athens (MacVeagh) to Byrnes, 1487, 4.9.1945.

⁸¹ DS, IAB 1945-1949, m. 2, 874.00/6-1346, Sofia (Barnes) to Byrnes, 441, 13.6.1946.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 874.00/4-2646, Sofia (Harris) to Byrnes, 344, 26.4.1946.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 874.00/6-1346, Sofia (Barnes) to Byrnes, 441, 13.6.1946.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 874.00/6-1146, Sofia (Barnes) to Byrnes, 435, 11.6.1946. On Bulgarian Left's nationalism see Sygkelos, Y. (2011), *Nationalism from the Left. The Bulgarian Communist Party during the Second World War and the Early Post-War Years*, Brill, Leiden/Boston.

⁸⁵ DS, IAB 1945-1949, m. 2, 874.00/9-346, Sofia (Rewinkel) to Byrnes, 689, 30.9.1946.

⁸⁶ FRUS (1970), 1946, v. III, *Paris Peace Conference: Proceedings*, Government Printing Office, Washington, pp. 113, 203, 381.

⁸⁷ FRUS (1969), 1946, v. VI, *Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 861.00/2-2246, Moscow (Kennan) to Byrnes, 511, 22.2.1946, pp. 696-709.

⁸⁸ See, for example, Ferrell R. H. (ed.) (1980, reprint Columbia/London 2002), *The Autobiography of Harry S. Truman*, University of Missouri Press, p. 100

⁸⁹ De Santis, H. (1979), "Conflicting Images of the USSR: American Career Diplomats and the Balkans, 1944-1946", *Political Science Quarterly*, 94, 3: 475-489.

⁹⁰ DS, IAY 1945-1949, m. 3, 860H.00/12-1446, Belgrade (Hickok) to Byrnes, 1235, 14.12.1946.

unsuccessfully to internationalise the Greek Issue in January and September 1946, claiming respectively that British military presence in Greece and Greek policy in general destabilized the region.⁹¹ Yet according to MacVeagh, Athens, except from the Greek extreme Right, avoided any conflict with its northern neighbours. On the contrary, MacVeagh claimed that the latter followed an aggressive policy towards Greece. For him, frontier violations' purpose was to create a strong Greek reaction. In this way, the communist bloc could argue that Greece was indeed a menace to peace and stability.⁹² Greek Issue was crucial for American officials, who started to worry that Greece could be brought under communist control. Because of that, United Nations had to be ready to intervene, either by sending military forces⁹³ or organising an investigation, as the Greek border zone was in critical condition and Belgrade and Sofia were still seeking to annex Northern Greece.⁹⁴ Finally, on December 3, 1946, Greece internationalised the Greek Issue to the UN General Assembly, accusing her northern neighbours of supporting the communist-led Democratic Army of Greece (DAG) and claiming that the latter was an act, which endangered the maintenance of international peace and security.⁹⁵ As a result, the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents was founded on 19th of December 1946.⁹⁶

Meanwhile, Britain's economic weakness to assist the Greek government in its struggle against DAG led the United States to assume this burden. Washington had essentially inherited the British system of security and was convinced that Moscow was behind DAG, but Kremlin unwilling to collide with its former allies did not favour the Greek guerrillas.⁹⁷ American policy makers argued that in case United States did not intervene in Greece, not only she would become communist, but also communism would spread to Eastern Mediterranean and Europe.⁹⁸ Eventually, Washington took over this responsibility. United States' anti-communism had to ally itself with Greek and global anti-communism. The Truman Doctrine, which was announced in 12th March 1947 by the United States' President, Harry S Truman,⁹⁹ was the epitome of Washington's new global policy,¹⁰⁰ from which "a new kind of war" emerged.¹⁰¹

⁹¹ Nachmani, A. (1990), *International Intervention in the Greek Civil War. The United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans, 1947-1952*, Praeger, New York/Westport/London, p. 33.

⁹² FRUS, 1946, v. VII, 868.00/9-3046, Athens (MacVeagh) to Byrnes, 1307, 30.9.1946, pp. 226-227.

⁹³ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 7, 868.00/10-2146, *Memorandum Regarding Greece*, 21.10.1946.

⁹⁴ FRUS (1969), 1946, v. VII, *The Near East and Africa*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 501.BC/12-946, *Incidents on the Northern Greek Frontiers: A Summary Statement* (Howard), Washington, 9.12.1946, pp. 276-277.

⁹⁵ Aghnides to Secretary-General, 3.12.1946 in FRUS, 1946, v. VII, 501.BB/12-446, United States Acting Representative at the United Nations (Johnson) to Byrnes, 921, 4.12.1946, pp. 272-273.

⁹⁶ Nachmani, *op.cit.* (f. 91), p. 33.

⁹⁷ Zubok VI., Pleshakov, C. (1996) *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War. From Stalin to Khrushchev*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge/Massachusetts/London, p. 45.

⁹⁸ FRUS (1971), 1947, v. V, *The Near East and Africa*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 868.00/2-2147, Acheson, "Crisis and Imminent Possibility of Collapse in Greece", 21.2.1947, pp. 29-31.

⁹⁹ Address of the President of the United States delivered before a Joint Session of the Senate and the House of Representatives, Recommending Assistance to Greece and Turkey, 80, 1, No. 171, 12.3.1947 in Harry S. Truman. Library & Museum, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/doctrine/large/documents/pdfs/5-9.pdf#zoom=100> (25.10.2013).

The decision itself was bypassing the UN, and Washington that did not want any control on its activities in Greece rejected any proposals for cooperation between the United Nations with the American Mission for Aid to Greece (AMAG). Moreover, Washington no longer trusted the findings of the Commission of Investigation, although it had proposed its creation in the first place. Marshall considered the findings inconclusive and feared that the Commission would stand mostly on internal conditions of the Greek Issue. For this reason, he asked the representative of the United States to the Commission, Mark Foster Ethridge, to make some changes in the final text so as to serve better the American positions.¹⁰² The conclusion of the Commission was announced on June 27, 1947. The majority of the committee members accused Yugoslavia, and to a lesser extent, Albania and Bulgaria for supporting the DSE and proposed a permanent observer mission at the Greek frontiers in order to investigate, help and resolve any border incidents.¹⁰³ As expected, Americans used Commission's report as a diplomatic tool, in an effort to defend Greece against her three northern neighbours.¹⁰⁴

In a State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee meeting, on 20th of March 1947, officials of the three ministries reiterated their faith in the strategic importance of Greece and the need to preserve her as embankment against communism, believing that developments in this country can affect the safety of the United States and the interests of all capitalist democracies. For them, the insurgent groups that crossed the borders aimed at isolation of Macedonia from Greece.¹⁰⁵ However, although State Department acknowledged that “[t]he crux of the Macedonian problem is its relation to the maintenance of the territorial integrity of Greece”, it still denied to follow British proposals for an early action against the foundation of a Macedonian Republic after the union between NRM and Bulgarian Macedonia. Washington understood that such an action could lead to “a diplomatic defeat”, an outcome it wanted to avoid at any rate.¹⁰⁶ American policy on the Macedonian Question had reached the point of having clear goals and boundaries.

Alongside its intervention in Greece, Washington processed a more permanent, but supportive role of the United Nations. After repeated Soviet vetoes at Security Council, the General Assembly, on 21st of October 1947, established the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB) aiming at conciliation between Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and

¹⁰⁰ Ambrose, St. E. (1971, reprint New York 1993), *Rise to Globalism. American Foreign Policy since 1938*, Penguin Books, pp. 78-83; LaFeber, W. (1993), *America, Russia and the Cold War 1945-1992*, McGraw-Hill, Inc., New York, p. 49.

¹⁰¹ Jones, H. (1989) *“A New Kind of War”. America’s Global Strategy and The Truman Doctrine in Greece*, Oxford University Press, New York/Oxford.

¹⁰² FRUS, 1947, v. V, 501.BC Greece/5-2047, Marshall to Ethridge, 403, 16.5.1947, pp. 862-863. See also Jones, *op.cit.*, pp. 68-70.

¹⁰³ Nachmani, *op.cit.* (f. 91), pp. 33-35.

¹⁰⁴ See FRUS, 1947, v. V, 501.BC Greece/5-1247, Genoa (Ethridge) to Marshall, 299, 12.5.1947, pp. 850-860 and 501.BC Greece/6-2647, Marshall to Austin, 280, 26.6.1947, pp. 866-868.

¹⁰⁵ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 8, 868.00/3-2047, Moseley, Schulgen and Lawrence, *State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee. SWNC Subcommittee on Foreign Policy Information. Public Information Program on United States Aid to Greece*, 20.3.1947.

¹⁰⁶ FRUS, 1947, v. V, 868.00/7-2147, Reber to Henderson, 28.7.1947, pp. 263-264.

Yugoslavia and observing the Greek frontiers.¹⁰⁷ Besides, one of UNSCOB's primary concerns was the exploitation of the Macedonian Question by the Bulgarian and the Yugoslav communists as a way to annex the Greek Macedonia.¹⁰⁸ UNSCOB became part of the great propaganda war that was taking place between the two opposite camps. It did not only observe, but published its findings too. According to the American officials, this was "sufficient to deter the Communists from extending additional aid" to the DSE.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, the Greek National Army (EES), after any serious frontier incident, asked for a "swift and massive retaliation", as UNSCOB methods lingered. However, the latter had resulted to the prevention of any escalation of the crisis. By this way peace and stability was protected, thus UNSCOB was fulfilling its task.¹¹⁰

Besides, Washington preferred collective security, than sending its own troops in Greece. However, London's decision to withdraw its forces from Greece¹¹¹ met Washington's severe reaction,¹¹² as EES was designed to counter guerrillas and not conventional forces.¹¹³ Dwight Palmer Griswold, chief of AMAG, warned that the British evacuation could mean the failure of AMAG and the split of Greece.¹¹⁴ Although London reassured that no withdrawal would take place,¹¹⁵ General Stephen J. Chamberlin proposed the preparation in various contingency plans.¹¹⁶ American policy could not afford a failure in Greece. Communisation of Greece, Italy, Turkey and Iran or any loss of their territorial integrity should be avoided. The National Security Council (NSC) worried that Soviet Union could threaten the security of Eastern Mediterranean and Southwest Asia, and hence the American security. Moreover, it assumed that for the realization of this policy the complete political, economic and military power of the United States and the maintenance of the strong military and economic position of Britain in the region were necessary.¹¹⁷

6. Upgrading and downgrading the Macedonian Question

The escalation of the American-Soviet relations led to the establishment of two opposing blocs in 1947. Moscow since late 1947, through its Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), tried to answer back to American initiatives of Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan by expanding its control to the Eastern European communist countries and curbing the in-

¹⁰⁷ Nachmani, *op.cit.* (f. 91), p. 36

¹⁰⁸ Rossow, R., "The Macedonian Question from 1878 to the Second World War" in DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 24, 868.00/8-448, Sofia (Heath) to Marshall, 4.8.1948.

¹⁰⁹ NA, SD, USNA, 501.BB Balkan/2-2448, "Next steps of UNSCOB", Washington, D.C., 24 February 1948 in Nachmani, *op.cit.* (f. 91), p. 37.

¹¹⁰ Nachmani, *op.cit.* (f. 91), p. 63.

¹¹¹ FRUS, 1947, v. V, 841.2368/7-3047, British Chargé Washington (Balfour) to Marshall, G58/-/47, 30.7.1947, p. 268.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 841.24568/8-147, Marshall to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, 3304, 1.8.1947, pp. 274-275.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 868.00/8-147, Athens (MacVeagh) to Marshall, 1261, 1.8.1947, pp. 270-271.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 868.00/8-547, Athens (Griswold) to Marshall, 1291, 5.8.1947, pp. 279-280.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 841.2368/8-2047, Bevin to Marshall, London, n.d., pp. 301-302.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 867.00/10-2747, Jernegan to Henderson, 27.10.1947, pp. 381-382.

¹¹⁷ FRUS (1974), 1948, v. IV, *Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union*, Government Printing Office, Washington, Executive Secretariat Files, Lot 63-D351, [Souers] to [NSC], NSC 5, Washington, 6.1.1948, p. 2.

dependent Yugoslavia. Yugoslavians were expanding their communist model to the rest of East European CPs and their intervention to the Greek Civil War could lead to an American invasion to the Balkan border of world communism.¹¹⁸ The regional role Belgrade wanted to acquire antagonized Soviet influence in the Balkans. Yugoslav initiatives exposed the Soviets, since the capitalist world stereotypically believed that Kremlin was the great puppeteer and CP the puppets.¹¹⁹ Moscow could not continue to tolerate the Yugoslav hegemonism. Despite Belgrade's efforts not to escalate the confrontation with Moscow, Cominform, on June 28, 1948 expelled the KPJ from its ranks.¹²⁰

The first rupture within the Communist bloc was a fact and surprised the capitalist governments. American diplomats and officials started discussions on how to exploit the split and assist Yugoslavia.¹²¹ For the first time Washington was facing the dilemma of supporting a communist state, independent from Moscow. Therefore, the decision about the type of relation should be formed with Belgrade had to be carefully configured because a precedent could be set and also other East European states could be affected, while there was always the risk of a rapprochement between Belgrade and Moscow.¹²² On the other hand, the Yugoslavs began to worry about a possible Cominform invasion.¹²³ Tito's regime survival served the American interests.

Naturally, the split upgraded the Macedonian Question, which "once again become a key to the general Balkan situation".¹²⁴ Bulgaria was released from her agreements with Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, Sofia worried about Yugoslav aspirations in Bulgarian Macedonia, Skopje's influence on Bulgarian-Macedonians¹²⁵ and accused Skopje of denying the right of existence of the "Bulgarian national minority".¹²⁶ According to the new minister in Sofia, Donald H. Heath, the attitude of the communist regimes on the Macedonian Question was revealing, since it proved that the nationalist passions were not silenced. The Macedonian Question had reverted to its former condition by the awakening of Bulgarian and Yugoslav chauvinism.¹²⁷ American diplomats' mission was to follow and analyse not only the developments on the Macedonian Question, but its history as well.

¹¹⁸ Zubok, Pleshakov, *op.cit.* (f. 97), pp. 128-133, 135; Mastny, V. (1996), *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity. The Stalin Years*, Oxford University Press, New York/Oxford, pp. 34-35; Roberts, G. (1999), "Ideology, Calculation, and Improvisation: Spheres of Influence and Soviet Foreign Policy 1939-1945", *Review of International Studies*, 25: 672-673.

¹¹⁹ Banac, I. (1988), *With Stalin Against Tito. Cominformist Splits in Yugoslav Communism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca/London, pp. 259-260, 267.

¹²⁰ Mastny, *op.cit.*, pp. 30-46, 53; Zubok, Pleshakov, *op.cit.* (f. 97), pp. 125-136.

¹²¹ See FRUS (1974), 1948, v. IV, *Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 860H.00/6-2948, Belgrade (Reams) to Marshall, 789, 29.6.1948, p. 1076; *ibid.*, 860H.00/6-3048, Belgrade (Reams) to Marshall, 799, 30.6.1948, pp. 1077-1078; *ibid.*, 840.50 Recovery/7-848, Marshall to Harriman, Washington, 2532, 8.7.1948, p. 1092.

¹²² *Ibid.*, Policy Planning Staff, "The Attitude of This Government Toward Events in Yugoslavia", PPS 356, 30.6.1948, pp. 1079-1081.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 800.00 Summarles/7-648, Marshall to Athens, et al., 6.7.1948, pp. 1084-1085.

¹²⁴ Rossow, *op.cit.* (f. 108).

¹²⁵ DS, IAY 1945-1949, m. 5, Sofia (Heath) to Marshall, 818, 5.7.1948.

¹²⁶ DS, IAB 1945-1949, m. 4, 874.00B/7-1548, Sofia (Heath) to Marshall, 874, 15.7.1948.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 874.00B/7-1648, Sofia (Heath) to Marshall, 882, 16.7.1948.

In regards to Washington, DSE could be used by Moscow to encircle Yugoslavia from the South.¹²⁸ Cavendish W. Cannon, Ambassador in Belgrade, claimed that Greek and Slav-Macedonian agents would conduct Cominform's anti-Yugoslav campaign in Yugoslav Macedonia.¹²⁹ KKE was in a difficult position too. EES' successes had limited the territories controlled by DSE, mainly in Western Macedonia. This fact, coupled with the evacuation operation of the villages around, reduced the recruitment tanks to Greek communist refugees who fled to the Balkan communist countries and Slav-Macedonians who lived in areas under DSE control. Thus, Slav-Macedonians recruitment was a necessity and the Soviet-Yugoslav rift threatened to enlarge Slav-Macedonians desertion from DSE. For this reason KKE decided, on 30-31 January 1949, that "the Macedonian people will find their full national restoration the way they want it".¹³⁰ It was obvious for Cannon that KKE chose to follow an anti-Yugoslav stand and that could work in favour of a Greco-Yugoslav rapprochement,¹³¹ as "Yugoslavia has supplanted Greece as immediate Communist objective".¹³² Rumours on a Macedonian state foundation in Greek soil by the Slav-Macedonian organization attached to DSE, National Liberation Front (NOF),¹³³ divided the American policy makers. Some expected, as it happened,¹³⁴ a rift inside the KKE that could be exploited¹³⁵ and some believed that Washington should act against any such declaration.¹³⁶ Finally, on March 17, 1949, Truman denounced the idea of Macedonian autonomy,¹³⁷ while American diplomats and officials continued to discuss Belgrade's, Sofia's and KKE's role.¹³⁸

Since the inter-communist rupture and Washington's effort to "recruit" Belgrade, the Macedonian Question received new dimensions and started to be associated not only with Greek security, but Yugoslavian too. Americans realised that, like in the case of Greece, Macedonia was the backdoor of Yugoslavia as well. Its geographical position, between Cominform members, and its population volatile political and ethnic identities, created suitable conditions to thrive the propagandas by the Albanian, Bulgarian and Greek CPs and also by Cominform. United States had to ensure Yugoslav security and keep the USSR away from the Aegean. The strategy of containment of communism included now Yugoslavia too, even if she remained a communist state. Essentially, the axis of American policy, as

¹²⁸ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 28, 868.00/3-249, Directors for European Affairs and Near Eastern and African Affairs to Webb, Acheson, 2.3.1949.

¹²⁹ FRUS (1976), 1949, v. V, *Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 860H.014/3-849, Belgrade (Cannon) to Acheson, 237, 8.3.1949, pp. 877-878.

¹³⁰ 5th Plenum of KKE's SC, 30-31.1.1947 in *To Kommounistikiko Komma tis Elladas* (1987), *Επίσημα Κείμενα* v. 6 *1945-1949*, Sygchroni Epochi, Athens, p. 337.

¹³¹ FRUS (1977), 1949, v. VI, *The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 868.00/2-1649, Belgrade (Cannon) to Acheson, 161, 16.2.1949, pp. 250-252.

¹³² DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 28, 868.00/3-949, Belgrade (Cannon) to Acheson, 242, 9.3.1949.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 868.00/3-1149, 11.3.49, Howard to Jernegan, Baxter, Cromie, 11.3.1949.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 868.00/3-949, Athens (Grady) to Acheson, 441, 9.3.1949; DS, IAY 1945-1949, m. 8, 860H.00 (W)/3-1149, Belgrade (Cannon) to Acheson, 257, 11.3.1949.

¹³⁵ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 28, 868.00/3-349, Athens (Grady) to Acheson, 392, 3.3.1949.

¹³⁶ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 35, 868.014/3-1049, Jernegan, "Possible Proclamation of a Macedonian State", 10.3.1949.

¹³⁷ See FRUS, 1949, v. VI, p. 261, f. 3.

¹³⁸ See DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 28, 868.00/3-2349, Athens (Rankin) to Acheson, 233, 23.3.1949; *ibid.*, 868.00/3-2549, Sofia (O'Donoghue) to Acheson, 255, 25.3.1949; DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 35, 868.014/3-2949, Belgrade (Cannon) to Acheson, 330, 29.3.1949.

far as the Macedonian Question upgraded and transformed at the same time, functioned as a response to the upgrading and transformed Soviet policy. While during the early post-War period the Macedonian Question was originally connected Sofia and Belgrade and was used against Athens periodically, now it had adopted an anti-Yugoslav role. However, the American willingness to support Tito's regime and the acknowledgment of NRM's vulnerability implied the indirect recognition of the Slav-Macedonian identity. United States policy makers had to follow the developments in NRM and judge whether the constituent republic would remain loyal to the federal government in Belgrade or the Bulgarian propaganda could succeed once again by endangering the Yugoslav structure and independence of Belgrade against Moscow. It is characteristic that the American diplomats dealt with the Slav-Macedonians, instead of the Albanians of the NRM who had more coherent national identity.

Scenarios on whether the Soviets would invade Yugoslavia or would prefer to use guerrillas instead, in order to weaken Belgrade were exchanging between American officials and diplomats.¹³⁹ Nevertheless, Cannon acknowledged that the Yugoslav program succeeded to make the Macedonian self-identification strong in NRM which, according to him, could not be reversed anymore, and thus loyal to the Yugoslav federation. The only weakness, according to him, was that the emphasis on the Macedonian nationality might weaken the loyalty to the Yugoslav state in the future.¹⁴⁰ Meanwhile, KKE's anti-Yugoslav turn caused the termination of the Yugoslav support to the DSE and on 23rd of July 1949 the Yugoslav frontiers close for DSE troops.¹⁴¹ One and a half month later, DSE suffered a decisive defeat by EES.

The end of the Greek Civil War did not lead to discontinuation of the scenarios on a possible Soviet invasion of Yugoslavia¹⁴² or a possible use of the Greek guerrillas in Yugoslav Macedonia.¹⁴³ For Washington, especially after the beginning of the Korean War, the continuance of the Greco-Yugoslav rapprochement was essential.¹⁴⁴ While, the upgrading of the Macedonian question, from a mere issue of Greek security to an issue of Yugoslav security too, had led the United States to adopt a neutral stance, after the termination of the Greek Civil War and the rumours over a possible Cominform invasion to Yugoslavia, Washington sought to downgrade it. The Macedonian Question should be downgraded to an internal issue for both Greece and Yugoslavia who had to improve their bilateral relations.

¹³⁹ See DS, IAY 1945-1949, m. 11, 860H.20/4-149, Mead to Armstrong, GSGID-ID 8-381, 1.4.1949; FRUS, 1949, v. V, 760H.61/4-449, Moscow (Kohler) to Acheson, 829, 4.4.1949, pp. 880-881; DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 28, 868.00/4-1249, Belgrade (Cannon) to Acheson, 142, 12.4.1949.

¹⁴⁰ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 28, 868.00/4-1249, Belgrade (Cannon) to Acheson, 142, 12.4.1949.

¹⁴¹ Kofos, Ev. (1964), *Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia*, Institute for Balkan Studies, Thessaloniki, p. 184.

¹⁴² FRUS, 1949, v. V, PPS Files, Lot 64 D 563, Policy Planning Staff, "Yugoslav-Moscow Controversy as Related to U.S. Foreign Policy Objectives", P.P.S. 60, Washington, 12.9.1949, pp. 947-954.

¹⁴³ DS, IAG 1945-1949, m. 30, 868.00/12-1549, Sofia (Heath) to Acheson, A-462, 15.12.1949.

¹⁴⁴ FRUS (1980), 1950, v. IV, Gleason, S. E., Aandahl, Fr., Churchill, R. P., Sampson, Ch. S. and Slany, W. Z. (eds.), *Central and Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union*, Government Printing Office, Washington, p. 1477, f. 5.

This would have guaranteed the cooperation of both sides. What could Washington succeed was to find a temporary solution before the common enemy. Containing the Soviet Union preceded the final settlement of the Macedonian Question.

7. Conclusion

Ethnic and political radicalization in the Balkans and, especially, Macedonia forced Washington to take a closer view in the region. It did not take long for the American diplomats and officials to realise that the revival of the Macedonian Question threatened United States' interests. The strong presence of Greek communist rebels and Slav-Macedonian autonomists transformed Macedonia to the most vulnerable part of Greece. It was in the American interest to protect the Greek territorial integrity and to keep the country in the British or, afterwards, American sphere of influence. Although, United States diplomats and officials recognised that KKE sought to protect Greek territorial integrity, they also believed that the annexation of Greek Macedonia and Thrace by Greece's northern Slavic neighbours was quite possible. Besides, they were familiar with rumours and statements about founding a Balkan Federation where Greece, without or with her northern territories, would be a constituent state. KKE's predominance had to be prevented, if Truman's administration wanted to contain the spread of communism and Soviet influence. In this way Greece climbed at the evaluative scale of Washington's strategic planning. She would be used as an embankment in what Americans interpreted as an export of Soviet influence. But above all, she must not become a Soviet highway to the rest of Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean and Southwest Asia, at all costs. Therefore, Athens ought to be supported in its struggle against its domestic enemies.

American policy makers admitted that the Macedonian national movement, which was emerging in neighbouring Yugoslavia, could be used as a Trojan Horse for the conquest of Greece and the spread of Moscow's influence. That is why it was decided that the recognition of the Macedonian nationality and the establishment of the People's Republic of Macedonia as a national centre for the whole of Macedonia endangered Greek territorial integrity. At the same time, reports on Macedonia's autonomy and the foundation of a South Slav Federation were considered equally dangerous. Washington proved in many ways its determination to protect Greek territorial integrity and thus its interests, either by supporting Greece financially and succeeded to retain the British military troops in Northern Greece or by manipulating United Nations' collective security.

Yugoslav-Soviet rift led to the restructure of United States' strategic planning in the Balkans. The American policy makers recognized that the Yugoslav communist model could act in competition with the Soviet one and distract other Eastern European countries from Kremlin's control. But to achieve that Yugoslavia ought to be part of the American security system. In return, the Yugoslavs had to end their support for the KKE. In accordance with Washington, this action would not only benefit Americans and their Greek allies, but also Yugoslavs themselves. If the KKE had decided to join Moscow, then the Yugoslavs might be faced with a particularly difficult situation. Like Greek Macedonia, Yugoslav Macedonia was also vulnerable to either conventional or unconventional invasion regimes. Therefore, the

inter-communist rupture upgraded the Macedonian Question to the point that it could be associated, for Washington, not only with Greek security. However, this change implied a large database and continuous analyses and reports on the rapid developments. The Macedonian Question on regard to Greece was easier to comprehend than on regard to the ongoing conflict between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Therefore, United States diplomats were asked to refer to libraries and compile reports on the Bulgarian and Yugoslav perspective concerning the Macedonian Question.

With the adoption of the new axis of American policy, rapprochement was reached between Athens and Belgrade, which led to a partly strategic unification of Macedonia. Washington chose to follow Black and Berry's proposals to de-politicise the Macedonian Question. She also worked on a Greco-Yugoslav consensus and succeeded to convince Yugoslavia and Greece that they had to leave aside their differences, due to their similar interests. Once American interests got secured and served on the Macedonian Question would be considered accomplished. American policy makers had established clear goals and priorities, but also were inspired by practicality and flexibility, which proves that they did not have ideological rigidities and they could integrate a communist state in their strategy of containment of communism, while helping an anti-communist regime to suppress a communist revolution.