

The Greek-Americans and US Foreign Policy since 1950

Alexander Kitroeff[°]
Stephanos Constantinides^{°*}

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article fait un survol historique général des efforts helléno-américains d'influencer la politique américaine envers la Grèce et ses voisins pendant la seconde moitié du XX^e siècle. Avant 1974, c'est-à-dire avant la création du "lobby" helléno-américain fondé suite à l'invasion turque de Chypre, avaient eu lieu une série d'efforts moins organisés, mais tout de même déterminants. En 1978, l'embargo sur la vente d'armes à la Turquie prit fin. Par la suite, le "lobby" helléno-américain perdit considérablement de son pouvoir, quoiqu'il ait continué à exercer une certaine influence.

La première section de l'article porte sur des questions d'interprétation alors que le reste consiste à donner un aperçu chronologique de ces efforts avec les caractéristiques particulières de ce "lobby".

ABSTRACT

This article offers a general historical overview of Greek-American efforts to influence US foreign policy toward Greece and its neighbors in the second half of the twentieth century. Prior to 1974, when Turkey's invasion of Cyprus led to the creation of the Greek-American lobby, there had been a series of less organized but determined efforts to influence US policy on the part of the Greek-Americans. After 1978, when the embargo was lifted, the Greek-American lobby retained a part of the influence it had gained, although its ability to shape US policy diminished considerably. Following an introductory sections that deals with issues of interpretation, the rest of this article consists of a chronological account of the Greek-American efforts to influence US policy that stresses the particular characteristics of Greek-American lobbying.

Introduction

The 1950s

Unlike their earlier involvement with homeland nationalism which led many to return to Greece as volunteers in the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, the Greek-Americans expressed their concerns through efforts to influence US foreign policy towards Cyprus as well as Greece and Turkey after World War II.

In the World War I era, President Wilson, whose foreign policy was subject to immigrant pressures, admonished ethnics for harboring

[°] Haverford College (USA)

^{°*} Université du Québec à Montréal

"ancient affections."¹ However by the post-World War II era, and particularly from the late 1960s onwards, the era of ethnic pluralism, the immigrant's balancing act was acceptable. Two parallel developments in American society after 1950, the rise of interest group politics and the legitimization of ethnicity, ushered the phenomenon of ethnic lobbies in Washington D.C.

In the very early hours of April 1, 1955 about twenty bombs exploded in or around British military installations on the island of Cyprus. This marked the beginning of a four-year guerilla and terrorist campaign against British targets launched by EOKA (National Organization of the Cypriot Struggle.) Frustrated with the Greek-Cypriot leadership's failure to gain support for an end to British colonial rule on Cyprus and the island's union with Greece, EOKA, the newly-founded military wing of the Greek-Cypriot movement resorted to armed struggle. EOKA's activities, although focused upon the British, inevitably affected the eighteen percent Turkish Cypriot minority and caused Turkey, with Britain's urging, to become involved in the island's affairs. With the old spectre of Greek-Turkish rivalry casting its shadow across the Eastern Mediterranean, EOKA, on the very night its struggle began, distributed leaflets which ended with the appeal "Greeks, wherever you are, hear our voice: forward, all together, for the liberty of our land of Cyprus!"²

Support for the Greek-Cypriot cause among Greek-Americans, whether they were from Greece proper or Cyprus, came naturally for all those who retained a sense of ethnic identity. That Cyprus was "Greek" was part of the conventional wisdom shared by Greeks the world over, it was part of their heritage and this was conveyed by Greek secular and religious education and sustained by most communal institutions in the diaspora. An article in a Greek-American annual almanac of 1930, reporting on a Swedish archaeological dig on Cyprus that confirmed the Classical Greek presence on the island in Antiquity, mentioned that it was "superfluous" to state the island had always been Greek.³

It is not surprising to note that within the Greek-American community, the drive for Cypriot self-determination and Enosis with Greece was understood in nationalistic terms, the goal of Enosis stressed more than the call for self-determination. The Greek-Cypriot struggle was often described as the "sacred national struggle of our brother Cypriots," while their communications to the Greek-Cypriots expressing Greek-American solidarity with their cause were described as "patriotic telegrams."

While Greek-Americans referred to Cyprus in nationalistic terms when communicating among themselves, they tailored their remarks when conversing with policymakers and the American public. Emphasizing the struggle for self-determination over its ultimate goal, the proposed union with Greece would ensure that the Greek-Cypriot movement gained

sympathy and support from many Americans who were critical of British and French colonialism. There were frequent editorials in favour of the Greek-Cypriot struggle in the American press.

Senators and Congressmen were only too happy to lend their support to the Greek-Cypriot cause. The AHEPA-sponsored Justice for Cyprus Committee boasted the names of a great number of legislators and other nationally and locally elected officials. Three days after the guerilla war against the British began on Cyprus, the *Atlantis* newspaper published an AHEPA announcement which claimed "a majority in the American Congress has already declared itself in favor of the right of the Cypriot people to self-determination. This was achieved through the education and appraisal of American Congressmen of the situation in Cyprus by members of AHEPA in the course of dinners, public and private meetings."⁴

Effective as the Greek-American leadership was in relating the Greek-Cypriot struggle to public feeling against colonialism and in enlisting the support of Congressmen, no results could be seen on the policy level. The mid-1950s were not a time in which Congress was likely to take the initiative in foreign policy formulation because it was generally considered to be the responsibility of President Eisenhower and his Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. The policy they followed was officially one of neutrality; in practice the United States's policies were designed to blunt the enosis movement and to discourage the Greek-Cypriot attempts to get their case heard at the United Nations. It was Dulles' preoccupation with containment and security in the Eastern Mediterranean which is assumed to have been behind his thinking on Cyprus. In any event, the key to any shift in US policy towards Cyprus lay in either pressuring or persuading Eisenhower or Dulles. The Greek-American leadership was apparently unwilling to put any direct pressure on either the President or his Secretary of State in relation to US policy on Cyprus.

The reasons that prompted the Greek-American leadership to avoid engaging directly with Eisenhower or Dulles over Cyprus are difficult to establish since no direct information exists in the available sources. They can be inferred, however, from the conventional wisdom governing public attitudes over foreign policy in the 1950s, a period which political scientist Gabriel Almond has described as one of "consensus" over foreign policy. It was very unusual to have groups, especially ethnic groups, expressing alternative views about what the United States should be doing internationally.

In light of all this, overt criticism of senior officials in the administration or the President himself were out of the question. Although strong language describing the Administration's attitude of non-involvement in

Cyprus was common in the press and in publications such as *Life Magazine* reporting on the events on the island, the Hellenic community's press refrained from open criticism of either Eisenhower or Foster Dulles. On the contrary, the Greek-American leadership sought to ingratiate itself with the President. As the crisis on Cyprus unfolded, the AHEPA leadership continued its annual ceremonial and "photo opportunity" visits to President Eisenhower.

There was one exception to the rule governing the Greek-American community's attitude towards Eisenhower and Dulles. That exception proves there were strong underlying feelings over their handling of the Cyprus situation. The proof lies in a memorandum submitted to the National Democratic Convention held in Chicago in 1956, by the Hellenic-American Democratic Club of Chicago soon after the British authorities arrested the leader of the Greek-Cypriots, Archbishop Makarios. Evidently, the particular context in which the memorandum was submitted ensured that its authors though apt to be accused of party partisanship, could not be easily deemed disloyal Americans. The memorandum mentioned, among other things, that "The Republican Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, has blundered, mismanaged, and bungled the entire Cyprus question and has almost succeeded in alienating the people of Greece, who have been our traditional allies."⁵

By the late 1950s, intense diplomatic pressure was exerted on Greece and even more so on the Greek-Cypriots with a view of terminating the EOKA struggle and arriving at a solution of the Cyprus crisis. The Greek-American community, having tested its strength against the US foreign policy establishment, would not have to wait long for another opportunity to flex again.

The Cyprus Crisis in the 1960s

The Republic of Cyprus was formed in 1960 as a compromise between the Greek-Cypriot wish for union with Greece and the unwillingness of Britain and Turkey to see Cyprus incorporated into Greece. The heated diplomatic negotiations held in London and Zurich in 1959 and which led to this compromise solution produced a document entitled the "Basic Structure" on which Cyprus' future constitutional arrangements would be based. Those arrangements were designed to ensure harmony between the majority Greek and minority Turkish population. Yet as analysis of the "Basic Structure" compiled by the US Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research in 1959 concluded "in a number of respects the solution agreed upon sets up new and largely untried procedures...there are dangers inherent not only in the comparative rigidity of the new state but also in the detailed codification of community rights which will tend to perpetuate rather than eliminate the communal

cleavages.”⁶ Ethnic strife erupted between the two communities in December 1963. Tension built up steadily and the threat of a Turkish invasion of Cyprus and a Greek-Turkish war loomed over the Eastern Mediterranean until the United States and the United Nations intervened to restore a fragile peace in the late summer of 1964.

During the 1960s, the United States, unlike its spectator status in the 1950s, was to play a key role in the affairs of Cyprus. Following the outbreak of ethnic conflict in December 1963, Britain, one of the three “guarantor powers” of Cypriot sovereignty along with Greece and Turkey, formally requested that the United States take the initiative in resolving the crisis. Since both Greece and Turkey were NATO members and also dependent on US aid, this gave the United States additional leverage with which it could influence the course of events. Indeed, in June 1964 a Turkish invasion of Cyprus was halted only after President Lyndon Johnson contacted the Turkish premier and threatened American intervention. Though successful in creating short term solutions to the crisis, Johnson was unsuccessful in imposing a scheme for a long term resolution of the problems on Cyprus after meeting separately with the Greek and Turkish prime ministers in June. By August he was ready with a new initiative, the so-called Acheson Plan which was eventually dropped.

This time a less coercive domestic climate and the President’s explicit initiatives over Cyprus emboldened the Greek-Americans in their efforts to pressurize the Administration. In March 1964 Marketos published a long front page editorial in the *Ethnikos Kyrix* stating that the crisis on Cyprus had forced Greek-Americans to go against the President for the first time in their history but went on to elaborate that there was no contradiction between supporting the Greek-Cypriot cause and being a democracy-loving American citizen.⁷

But Hellenic community leadership continued to proceed cautiously, and the press was careful to ensure that any criticism of the president would be tempered with explicit affirmation of the community’s belief in American principles. An editorial in the other Greek language daily, the *Atlantis*, on the occasion of the Fourth of July, lamented the fact that the United States had not moved against Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot minority whose disruptive actions were violating the principles of freedom and democracy, those integral values of American Independence.

For want of anything better, the issue was again presented by the Greek-Americans as one of “self-determination” despite the fact that it involved Greco-Turkish ethnic conflict and the threat of Turkey invading the island.⁸ Yet this was not done consistently; rather, there emanated various interpretations of what was going on in Cyprus, e.g., Greco-Turkish ethnic strife was explained as anti-democratic moves by the

Turkish Cypriots; after jets bombed civilian targets on Cyprus humanitarian arguments about the protection of the Greek-Cypriots were also enlisted. Finally, as a preview of the major tactic to be successfully employed in 1974, the bombings were also condemned by the Greek-American press because US-supplied missiles were used. Yet there was little reaction from either the public or policymakers.

If the wider issues raised by ethnic conflict in Cyprus were blurred in the community's interaction with Congress and the general public, they sharply focused around nationalist concerns in its internal debates. A good example of this is the way the readers of the *Ethnikos Kyrix* responded to Marketos editorial in March 1964 which explained why the Greek-Americans were disagreeing with the President's foreign policy. A reader wrote "we are all proud to have a Greek newspaper representing the Greek-American community with courage, burning patriotism and historical clarity during this period of national crisis."⁹ Another reader described the newspaper's stance as one of "Greek-like pride." This difference of opinion with the President, for those and many other readers, was not a normal consequence of living in a democracy, but rather an instance of asserting Greek national principles.

In keeping with this view of the Cyprus issue, the community's mobilization over Cyprus in the community reflected the old nationalist perspective that Cyprus should be united with Greece. In contrast to the "American Committee for Cyprus Self-Determination" formed by the Greek-American leadership which included experienced activists over Cyprus such as Rossides and John Plumides of the AHEPA and which called for Cyprus' "full independence with the right of self determination for the people of Cyprus"¹⁰ demonstrators in Atlantic City and Chicago demanded Cyprus' union with Greece. The Greek-language press, meanwhile emphasized the Turkish atrocities only when reporting on the ethnic strife on the island, while the community protested what it saw as biased reporting of the events in Cyprus by the national press in the United States.

Understanding full well how counterproductive the Greek-American nationalist perspective could be in rebutting the alleged misrepresentation of Cyprus by the print media and promoting the Greek-Cypriot case, the community's leadership took practical measures to change it. The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese produced a "Campaign Kit for defending the Reputation of Americans of Greek Descent," the implication being that negative reports on, for instance, Greek-Cypriot actions against Turkish Cypriots would reflect negatively on the Greek-Americans. A parallel was drawn between how Japanese Americans had been maligned during World War II and what conceivably could happen to the Greek-Americans. The "campaign kit" consisted of a set of instructions on how to lobby effectively: "Postcards: Each Greek Orthodox Church will

receive large quantities of postcards showing a wounded little boy. The photograph has been specially chosen - it is the only one that was not gruesome. The caption does not rant at the Turks... Letters to the Editor:...If the letter writer refers to an article printed by the newspaper, i.e. an attack on Greece, he should not let his arguments be determined by those used in the attack he is answering; the readers would not remember the exact contents of the attack and there is no reason to remind them. Moreover, the attack could probably be based on facts that are not necessarily the most favourable for the presentation of the Greek case."¹¹

The situation on Cyprus was eventually pacified in late 1964. While the community's pressure on the US government may not have produced concrete results their lobbying had gained them useful experience for the future.

The Greek-American Lobby, 1974-1978

The role of the Greek-American lobby in connection with the Turkish arms embargo, imposed by Congress between 1975 and 1978 has been the subject of numerous studies. Works on US foreign policy formulation have described the Greek-American lobby as an example of the way ethnic groups can put pressure on Congress and influence foreign policy. Critics of ethnic lobbying have singled out the Jewish-American and the Greek-American lobbies as examples of what they see as detrimental influences in foreign policy. Other works, which focus on Congress' foreign policy formulation potential, and which regard ethnic lobbies as of secondary importance, have nonetheless noted that out the Greek-American lobby between 1974-78 as an example of how Congress' initiative can be aided by an ethnic lobby.

The Greek-American lobby has been the subject of numerous monographs. The views of the lobby offered in this corpus of work have ranged from claiming its role was crucial in imposing the Turkish arms embargo to, in contrast, disputing its potential to be of any effective influence on Congress. A middle position is offered by Paul Y. Watanabe in his book *Ethnic Groups, Congress, and American Foreign Policy* where he argues that the lobby was crucial in aiding Congress in the initiative it took to impose the embargo. Here, it is argued that this "middle position" is correct but it involved two distinct phases. In the early phase of the imposition of the embargo, from mid-1974 to early 1975 the Greek-Americans — there was no "lobby" as such — were active in backing Congress. From mid-1975 onwards, began a second phase in which Congress' assertiveness in the foreign policy sphere began to wane. Two parallel developments ensued; firstly the Greek-Americans did become organized into a "lobby." Secondly, there emerged a mythology of an all-powerful "Greek lobby" in the press, especially by commentators hostile to the Turkish arms embargo who were anxious to attribute its imposition not on Congress but on ethnic lobbying.

The Imposition of the Embargo

The fragile peace established on Cyprus in 1964 lasted more or less intact to 1974. In July 1974, the colonels' dictatorship which had ruled Greece since 1967 engineered a coup which overthrew President Makarios who escaped abroad, and installed in power an extreme right-wing Greek-Cypriot regime. This provoked a two-stage Turkish military invasion of Cyprus which resulted in a third of the island being occupied by Turkish forces with thousands of Greek-Cypriots either being killed, captured or being made into refugees. The regime collapsed immediately and democracy was restored in Cyprus and in Greece. Nevertheless, the Turkish occupation remained a grim reality.

Television images and front-page stories in the American press replete with photographs of the Greek-Cypriot victims of the Turkish invasion electrified the Greek-American community. The events on Cyprus went to the core of Greek sensitivity about the century-long suffering of Greeks at the hands of the Turks. The community was immediately stung into action. In its essence, its mobilization was similar to previous actions during the earlier crises on Cyprus: support for the Greek cause on Cyprus. The invasion, however, raised a multiplicity of issues, political, humanitarian, legal and so on, and the form and content of this mobilization, compared to earlier ones, were much more diverse. As a result, reactions to the events among Greek-Americans were varied and in many cases spontaneous, and often went beyond the particular initiatives sponsored by AHEPA and by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.

They included demonstrations outside the United Nations building in New York, a demonstration held in early August opposite the White House and a deluge of "mailgrams" sent to the President, the State Department, senators and congressmen. The issues raised in this varied mobilization were themselves diverse, addressing the Turkish invasion as a violation of the sovereignty of an independent state or as a violation of human rights, questioning the United States and Britain's responsibilities for allowing the invasion to take place and for not appearing prepared to take measures for its reversal.

Under those circumstances, traditional community leadership was superseded by the following three events or individuals: the initiative on Cyprus taken in Washington D.C. by congressmen and senators including those of Greek origin; a professional lobbying organization, AHI-PAC, established by Eugene Rossides a Washington-based Greek who had served in the Nixon Administration and, lastly, several grassroots organizations. The grassroots organizations, bodies such as the New York-based Panhellenic Emergency Committee, the Minnesota Friends of Cyprus and the Save Cyprus Committee of Southern

California sought to coordinate and sustain the spontaneous activities undertaken by many Greek-Americans. What eventually emerged was a loose network of organizations: its "head" were the members of Congress and the Rossides group which reached out to the entire community via the Archdiocese - the Archbishop created his own equivalent of AHI-PAC, the Chicago based UHAC - the AHEPA and the various grassroots organizations.

It is important to note that UHAC was established only one year later in the summer of 1975. Until that time, there were very few public references to the existence of a Greek-American lobby. The conventional wisdom during the imposition of the embargo from mid-1974 to early 1975 was that Congress was primarily responsible for promoting the idea of an embargo.

Indeed a small group of Congressmen reacted to the news of the coup and the ensuing invasion on Cyprus well before they were contacted by their Greek-American constituents. This group of congressmen, all of them Democrats, included John Brademas of Indiana, Benjamin Rosenthal of New York and Paul Sarbanes of Maryland. Initially critical of the Administration's failure to control the Greek junta, the congressmen quickly addressed the post-invasion situation and became critical of the Administration's attitude toward Turkey. They met with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in August to protest the passivity of the American policy. Finally, after Turkey completed the second stage of its invasion on August 14, the number of protesting Congressmen rose, and as the focus shifted further towards Turkey's policies and the Administration's inactivity, calls for arms cutoffs were first made.

AHEPA's biannual convention had opened in Boston on August 16th 1974, a day after the second stage of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus was completed. The convention became a forum in and around which a number of different responses to the events on Cyprus were aired. Thirty members of the MIT-Harvard Hellenic Students Association began a two-day hunger strike protesting the "criminal policy of the US government on the Cyprus issue. One demonstrator in downtown Boston was reported to be carrying a sign which read "President Ford: Rid Cyprus of Dirty Turks," while a photograph showed another sign appealing to the president to "stop the Turks from Bombing and Killing."¹²

One of the speakers at that demonstration, Massachusetts Democratic gubernatorial candidate Michael Dukakis was calmer, urging an end to "indecisive American policy" in response to the events on Cyprus. Mindful of the broad range of issues relating to the Cyprus crisis, and not wanting to be outflanked from within the community, AHEPA adopted a suitably broad resolution which called for the enforcement of a cease fire

on Cyprus proposed by the United Nations, for Turkey's withdrawal of its army from Cyprus, for the United States to reassert its "moral leadership" in support of self-determination and freedom for Cyprus, and for "the world's peace-loving nations to join in providing massive relief for the Greek-Cypriot refugees."¹³

The broader range of demands notwithstanding, AHEPA's attitude towards influencing US policy makers and public opinion in connection with events on Cyprus remained much as it had been during previous crises on the island. AHEPA, while not ignoring Congress, remained focused on gently pressuring the Administration. AHEPA's leadership was being circumspect as usual, having witnessed the failure of similar mobilizations in the past to make a dent in foreign policy. Yet by the close of the convention, it was evident that on this occasion there was greater momentum in the community's mobilization and there was real concern in Congress over the United States' policies towards Cyprus. How could the two be linked?

Knowing by experience that AHEPA was reluctant and ill-equipped to lobby effectively, Eugene Rossides had formed his professional lobbying organization, AHI-PAC, which was to function as the link between the Congressmen concerned with the Cyprus issue and AHEPA, the Archdiocese and other Greek-American Organizations. In Rossides' consultations with Congressmen Brademas, Rosenthal and Sarbanes, it became obvious to all that the most effective tactic for involving the greatest number of legislators would be to emphasize the illegal nature of Turkey's use of US-supplied arms in the invasion.

Brademas and his colleagues began focusing on this particular issue and their efforts were rewarded soon. At a press conference on August 19, Secretary of State Kissinger was asked whether the terms of the Foreign Assistance Act did not require a cut off in assistance to Turkey since, according to the law, military aid could only be used only for internal security or legitimate self-defence. He responded by saying that he was waiting for the results of a study being conducted by State Department lawyers but until such information was available the Administration would adhere to its position that an arms embargo was contrary to US interests in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Two weeks later, information that the report was not being made public because Kissinger was trying to alter its damaging conclusions for the administration's policies was "leaked" to one of the Administration's critics, Senator Thomas Eagleton. The Senator from Missouri, addressing the Senate in early September charges that President Gerald Ford was being ill-advised or misinformed of the legal implications of his inaction over the Cyprus crisis. And in an obvious reference to the Watergate crisis which had toppled President Richard Nixon less than month earlier, Eagleton added "we have learned that the policies created in ignorance or in spite of the law are doomed to failure."¹⁴

Eagleton, to his surprise, discovered a groundswell of support among his colleagues; clearly the Administration's continued inertia over the invasion and the legal implications of the use of arms were a matter of growing concern in the Senate, as were associated issues such as the Greek-Cypriot refugee problem which Senator Edward Kennedy was pursuing. When Eagleton confronted Kissinger, who was addressing the Democratic caucus on Capitol Hill, with the words "Mr. Secretary, you do not understand the rule of law," he in effect enunciated the principle on which the embargo's supporters in both the House of Representatives and the Senate would wage battle: the embargo on Turkey would symbolize the application of the "rule of law," a critically sensitive notion in the aftermath of Watergate. By late September, both Houses had passed the first of a series of legislative measures which would lead to a US embargo on arms sales to Turkey, which, after some delays, went into operation in February 1975. The Greek-American community's lobbying efforts have been widely recognized as a crucial factor which ensured the passage of the relevant embargo legislation especially since the measure was opposed vigorously by the Administration as well as the by leadership of both parties in both Houses. But it is important to note that the initiative, and the overall strategy (the "rule of law" argument) was in the hands of a small group of Congressmen.

Pro-embargo lobbying was effective because it was able to focus its lobbying efforts around the issue of "the rule of law." The embargo related activity on Capitol Hill represented the first breakthrough in terms of international intervention in the Cyprus crisis. By mid-September 1974 it was clear that neither the United States government, the United Nations or any other national or international body was about to take any practical action. Thus, for all concerned Greek-Americans, Congressional initiative over Cyprus along the lines of the rule of law was incentive enough to put aside the variety of particular demands aired at the AHEPA conference and to fall behind the pro-embargo group in Congress. Nevertheless, Ethnic mobilization still operated along a pronounced nationalistic vein. Photographs taken at a massive Greek-American demonstration in Washington on July 20, 1975 opposing the Ford Administration's attempt to persuade Congress to lift the embargo reveal a mixture of Greek and American flags and demonstrators dressed in Greek national costumes. Anti-Turkish messages and images were evident in the reports on Cyprus by the two Greek-American Greek language dailies, the *Ethnikos Kyrix* and the *Proini*, although less so in their editorial comments.

But the Greek-American leadership "translated" the ethnic concerns into the wider concerns that legislators had in the wake of the illegalities of the Watergate crisis, namely the "rule of law." Many of the individuals concerned, for example, Eugene Rossides, *Ethnikos Kyrix's* now elderly editor Babis Marketos, AHEPA officials such as John Plumides and the

Greek Orthodox Archbishop Iakovos had experienced the Greek-American mobilizations over Cyprus in the 1950s and the 1960s and were aware how easily the movement could fail to make an impact. Even after the legislation was eventually passed and adopted as policy in early 1975, the message sent out time and time again to Greek-Americans by organizations such as AHI-PAC was that the embargo would be not a pro-Greek or anti-Turkish measure, but "an important victory for the rule of law."¹⁵

Throughout this first phase, which involved the imposition of the embargo, President Ford had consistently ignored the Greek-American factor and had focused his attention on persuading Congress not to impose the embargo. Precisely at the time when the embargo went into operation in February 1975, Ford and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger launched a campaign to persuade Congress to drop its antagonism towards the Administration over foreign policy. The campaign bore fruit, especially a few month later when Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese heralding the end of the Vietnam war. The Administration secured a narrow victory over the embargo in April when the Senate voted to lift the embargo; the House of Representatives was still in a majority in favor of the embargo.

The next few months saw a struggle by the Administration to erode the pro-embargo sentiment in Congress. Finally, on July 24th the House of Representatives voted to preserve the embargo on July 24th. Turkey retaliated by closing US bases on its soil, prompting the Senate to reaffirm, again by a single vote, its opposition to the embargo by a vote of 47 to 46. Renewed pressure was placed on the House of Representatives with the issues involving US security interests and electronic surveillance capacities in the Eastern Mediterranean. This time around, the pro-embargo group delayed the vote and with the help of Congressman Madden (D-Ind), a close friend of Brademas who was acting speaker, prevented the embargo issue to be placed on the agenda just before the summer recess.

Throughout this period public commentators painted a picture of an all-powerful Greek-American lobby. For example, in describing the situation in the House of Representatives The New York Times wrote "individual congressmen have been pressed hard by the so-called Greek-lobby to reaffirm previous House votes and prevent Turkey from receiving further American arms until she makes significant concessions to the Greek-Cypriotes."¹⁶ In the same newspaper, a senior journalist, Cyrus Sulzberger, writing from London where Ford and Kissinger were attending a NATO summit, noted that "The Administration realizes that in all these [foreign policy] matters its position is being weakened by special ethnic groups in Washington" which included "the splendidly organized 'Greek lobby'."¹⁷

When Congress reconvened in September 1975, the pro-embargo forces could postpone the vote any longer. Under great pressure by the Ford Administration the House of Representatives voted to "ease" the embargo by a 223 to 206 vote. The Senate, which had voted against the embargo before the summer recess quickly agreed on this compromise position. The "easing" of the embargo permitted the delivery of about \$185 million worth of equipment contracted for by Turkey before the embargo took effect, commercial cash sales of arms through private suppliers in the United States as well as US government sales and credits up to \$175 million needed for Turkey's responsibilities to NATO.

Nevertheless the image of the all-powerful lobby was preserved intact: the "easing" rather than the total lifting of the embargo, reinforced the Greek-American lobby's notoriety. A long article published in the *Baltimore Sunday Sun* in early September 1975, a few days before the House of Representatives was to begin discussing the proposal that the embargo on Turkey be eased. The article, written by two journalists who later on published a book criticizing ethnic lobbies, painted a stark picture of the "Greek lobby" forcing Congress to vote for the Turkish arms embargo over what were the nation's real interests.¹⁸ By early October, AHI-PAC was obliged to rebut such charges in letters it sent soliciting the membership of prominent Greek-Americans. The letters mentioned that "Secretary of State Kissinger has charged that we are engaged in "ethnic politics" with references to the so-called "Greek" lobby. Americans of Greek descent interested in this issue are not a "Greek" lobby. They are Americans working for decency and respect for basic American principles - the rule of law in domestic and international affairs and opposition to aggression - and for the proper role of congress in foreign affairs."¹⁹ The hostility which coloured the public recognition of the Greek-American lobby's impact caused its role to be exaggerated. The fact remains that the lobby did not initiate any policy in the summer of 1975. It merely worked towards the preservation of a particular policy which congress had elaborated and imposed the previous year. At no point between June and October 1975 did the Greek-American PACs or any other communal organization seek to impose any particular strategy or tactic on the embargo's supporters in Congress. On the contrary, as the AHI-PAC and UHAC documents show, the Greek-American organizations functioned strictly as transmission belts between Capitol Hill and the community across the United States. But the reputation of the Greek-American lobby had by now been established and lasted through the next phase, from mid-1975 onwards.

The Lifting of the Embargo

When Jimmy Carter was running for president in 1976, he declared that he would preserve the embargo until Turkish troops left the island. As a result, the Greek-American leadership threw its support behind him. So much enthusiasm was generated that after his victory in November of 1976 that Greek-Cypriots were dancing in the streets of the Greek sector of Cyprus' divided capital, Nicosia.

But by April 1978, Carter had decided that the embargo should be lifted since Turkey was too much of a valuable ally of the United States. The Greek-American Lobby shifted into full gear again., but the domestic climate had changed. Congress was losing its initiative in foreign policy while the presidency, through Carter, was regaining the ground it had lost to Congress under Nixon and Ford. The "rule of law" argument which had resonated so widely in the immediate aftermath of the Watergate crisis of 1974 was less appealing to the public and policy-makers. The supporters who believed in Turkey's paramount strategic value to US policy had been ably assisted by public relations campaigns financed by the Turkish government.

The struggle over the embargo eventually culminated in debates in the Senate (July 25) and the in House of Representatives (August 1st). The pro-embargo side won handily in the Senate but very narrowly - by only three votes in the House of Representatives (208-205) and the embargo was lifted. The "strategic interests" arguments put forward by the Administration had won the day. In the House of Representatives, 31 of the 43 Congressmen who changed their votes gave as their reasons the factors of national security and the failure of the embargo to bring about negotiations over the situation in Cyprus. Needless to say, the specter of an ethnic lobby dictating foreign policy was raised in connection with the debates in the House of Representatives. Before the issue was taken up in the House, the *Wall Street Journal* editorialized that "the only reason for maintaining the embargo is that more Greek descendants than Turkish descendants vote in electing members of the House."²⁰ On the floor of the House, Paul Findley (R-Ill.), author of a book criticizing the Jewish American lobby's activities, said, quite erroneously, that the issue was being decided on an emotional basis because "Greek-Americans are prominent in every Congressional district in this country."²¹

The very narrowness of the vote in the House of Representatives (208 to 205) has served to sustain the image of power and influence commonly associated with the Greek-American lobby between 1974 and 1978. The embargo had died, but its heroic agony in the House of Representatives coupled with the way opponents exaggerated its actual role only added to the Greek-American lobby's reputation. Only days after Congress voted to lift the embargo and Time magazine reflected on how difficult the decision had been for the Senate because "senators were subjected to

considerable pressure by the pro-Greek lobby"²² despite the Senate having voted to lift the embargo by a fifteen-vote margin in a debate described by one observer as having proceeded "almost listlessly, with a few sharp exchanges" despite senators having spoken with "feeling for repeal or retention."²³

The mythology surrounding the Greek-American lobby was related to the accepted practice of lobbying and interest group politics in Washington D.C. were also important contributing factors. Another crucial factor was public acceptability of "ethnicity" a result of the revival of ethnicity in the United States in the late 1960s. Since both lobbying and ethnicity were considered part of social and political life, Congressmen displayed a sensitivity towards ethnic lobbying. While the Greek-American community did not have the numerical strength to required to determine elections even in congressional districts, even legislators who were undecided or indifferent to Cyprus took notice of representations made by their Greek-American constituents. This was the first step towards coming around to supporting their constituents' demands. In one study, aides to Congressmen are cited as recalling large numbers of phone calls, letters and the emotion with which Greek-American constituents pressured Congressmen and one aide apparently recalled Representative David Clancy, Republican of Ohio, saying "Maybe I would not have lost my seat over this, but who wants the hassle" -although it should be said that some opponents of the embargo expressed themselves negatively about ethnic pressures.²⁴

Yet on the whole, ethnic lobbying was acceptable, especially to the large number of Congressmen who were indifferent to the Cyprus question. One often quoted story, probably apocryphal, has one Congressman remarking that he was voting in favor of the embargo because there were more Greek than Turkish restaurants in his constituency.

Even more importantly, the revival of ethnicity made interest expressed in homeland affairs legitimate - this concern was part of the ethnic heritage that US society sought to preserve. This belief was shared even among opponents of the policies put forward by the Greek-American lobby. For example, Representative George Mahon, Texas Democrat (chairman of the important Appropriations Committee), opposed Rosenthal's proposal to stop aid to Turkey unless "substantial progress" was made over resolving the crisis on Cyprus. Mahon argued that the measure was rash and potentially counterproductive for the Greek side and added that "We have throughout this country numerous communities, where Americans of Greek descent live. These people are entitled, as well as all other Americans to our consideration and to an attitude of helpfulness. To do something which would jeopardize their homeland, more or less, would seem most ill-advised... I am concerned about the welfare and interests of American citizens of Greek descent..."²⁵

The Post 1978 Era

The post 1978 era has been described as one of decline of the Greek-American lobby.²⁶ In fact it became less effective year by year although the myth of a powerful Greek Lobby in Washington is alive not only in Greece but even among numerous Greek communities of the diaspora.

Let us take a look at the evolution of this lobby after 1978. There have been some efforts at better organization, especially after the decline of the enthusiasm generated by the Cyprus invasion.

The Cypriot organizations around the world managed to create the POMAK (World Organization of Cypriots Abroad) and PSEKA (International Coordinating Committee Justice for Cyprus), two umbrella organizations of the Cypriot diaspora in order to demonstrate support for the Cypriot people against the Turkish invasion and occupation of almost 40% of the territory of the island. PSEKA, based in New York, directs its main activities in the USA in an effort to influence American administration and Congress for a more favourable position of the Cyprus question.

Another important evolution was the creation of SAE (Symvoulion Apodimou Ellinismou - Council of Hellenes Abroad) on December 1995 in Thessaloniki, a world wide umbrella organization of which the presidency is based in the USA. The SAE of Americas, including Canada and Latin America, is one of the most important components of the organization.

There have been also efforts from Angelo Tsakopoulos, a wealthy Californian Greek - American supporter of President Clinton to establish his own group, the Western Policy Center, originally based in California and transferred in 1998 to Washington.

These groups have been added to the older existing structures, such as the Greek Orthodox Church's network, the AHEPA (American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association) and the American Hellenic Institute (AHI) with its Public affairs committee (AHI-PAC).

The creation of the SAE has been criticized by influential Greek-Americans who consider it an artificial structure and a compromise between the late Archbishop Iakovos and the Greek government. Andrew Athens, a wealthy Greek-American based in Chicago and a close friend of Iakovos, has been promoted to the post of president of the SAE. Some critics also opposed the role of the Greek government in the establishment of the organization and the conservative orientation of its Greek-American leadership. SAE looked upon itself as a vehicle for coordinating activities of various Greek organizations around the world and especially those in the USA. However, not all those organizations accept its leadership and guidance.

Differences in political philosophy, goals and tactics, but also personal differences lead sometimes to clashes among these groups but nevertheless common actions have been achieved in other cases.

Rivalries, for exemple, between AHI-PAC and the SAE are well known and the Manatos and Manatos professional firm acting on behalf of the SAE, PSEKA and some other groups has been criticized not only by AHI-PAC but also by friends of Tsakopoulos who established their own lobby group.²⁷

It is worth noting that Manatos and Manatos worked for a long time with the UHAC (United Hellenic American Congress) established in June 1975 and presided by Andrew Athens, the actual president of the world SAE. UHAC was regarded as the creation of Archbishop Iakovos.

The same Andrew Athens has signed a memo drafted - according to Christopher Hitchens - by Andrew Manatos addressed to the then President of Cyprus, George Vassiliou, asking for a five year commitment of \$200,000 *per annum* - a mere million - for the activities of Manatos and Manatos. The memo published by the Wall Street Journal on January 10, 1990 was described as «a bottom line appeal from a US citizen to the head of a foreign state to gain influence in Congress over US foreign policy».²⁸

Philip Christopher, President of PSEKA and a close ally of Athens, repeated the same demand in Nicosia on the occasion of the annual meeting of its organization on August 1994. Mr. Christopher, «whose community and lobbying efforts in New York and Washington are well known, told his audience - which included President Glafcos Clerides, Foreign Minister Alecos Michaelides, and Archbishop Chrysostomos - that if Cyprus would give \$ 50 million annually to the lobbying cause, then «our national question will be solved in three years». Pro rata, that's only \$ 150 million to clean up the Cyprus dispute. Not bad!».²⁹

These assertions damage Greek causes and give a cynical impression. Of course money is important to lobby effectively in Washington, and fundraising for American politicians is very important, but there are much smarter ways to go about the matter.

On the other hand, there is no assurance that the money given by taxpayers either in Cyprus or in Greece is well spent. Critics inside the Greek-American Communities but also in Greece and Cyprus raise the question from time to time and consider the activities of the Greek lobby as a failure. Especially when they compare the Greek lobby with what they consider as a succesful pro-turkish lobby in Washington.

Another important evolution inside the Greek-American lobby was the the fact that Archbishop Iakovos quitted in 1996. Not only did a new leader take his place, Archbishop Spyridon, but also the Archdiocese was weakened since the Patriarchate of Constantinople decided to remove Canada and Latin America, creating independent dioceses in these areas. The new Archbishop does not have the personality, experience or connections of Iakovos to play a major role as a leader of the Greek-American community.

The 'reverse influence phenomenon'; i.e., the influence of the Greek-American lobby on the formulation of the foreign policy of Greece, is another important evolution of the Greek-American lobby, especially given the Americanization through successive generations of Greek-Americans. The American administration succeeded in using the Greek lobby to promote its policy either on the Cyprus question or on Greek-Turkish relations. The latest example of this reverse influence phenomenon is the promotion of Richard Holbrooke's mission on the Cyprus issue in a way that embarrasses the Greek side and gives a chance to the Americans to exercise more pressure on the Cypriot and Greek governments. Yet another recent example is the visit of AHEPA's leadership in Ankara, Athens and Nicosia in April 1998. These visits have been viewed as promoting American interests and policy in the region and were organized in part by official American channels. Some Greek-Americans were very critical of this visit since they felt it was an American pressure tactic applied to the Cypriot and Greek governments.

Under these circumstances, the Greek and Cypriot governments will be forced to re-examine their own strategies and tactics on how to lobby Washington as well as their relations with the Greek-American lobby. Obviously the first thing to do is to establish clear objectives on the Greek-American lobby's expectations. The 'honeymoon' relationship is definitely over.

Another important evolution in the 1990's is the fact that the Greek causes to defend in Washington have multiplied. The Cyprus question still occupies an important place, but the whole spectre of Greek-Turkish relations is now a major issue, especially after the Aegean crisis. After the cold war ended, disputes with Balkan neighbours, especially the Macedonian question, took on a certain importance in the activities of the Greek-American lobby. Under these circumstances the Greek-American lobby was obliged to fight on different fronts with the result that they spread themselves too thin.

Of course the question of the Greek-American lobby is extremely complex; hence more documented case studies are necessary for a more enlightened judgement. On the other hand, even if one concedes little success to this lobby, the question remains: what would Greek causes be without the lobby's presence in Washington? Obviously the use of such terms as «success» or «failure» must be nuanced. Neither term gives the real image of the Greek-American lobby. The Greek-American lobby has experienced both successes and failures but what remains certain is that with more coordination and effective communication of its objectives, the lobby would be more successful.

Conclusion

To be effective, an ethnic lobby needs organization, technical efficiency, coordination, clear objectives and leadership. None of these characteristics has been fully present in the case of the Greek-American lobby. Its organization is weak; technical efficiency is too limited; coordination is not systematic; objectives are confused and the lack of leadership - with few exceptions - is more than evident for any careful observer. Some of the leaders of the Greek-American lobby may be successful in business but they usually lack the necessary intellectual capacities for lobbying. By the same token, intellectuals are either eliminated as «dangerous» because of their liberal ideas or they have voluntarily retired from public affairs because of disillusionment.

The inadequacy of the leadership of the Greek-American lobby may partially be the result of the dominant role of the Greek Orthodox Church and recently, the role of the Greek governments — especially in the case of SAE — which exercised influence over the choice of lobby leaders.

One way or another, these problems do not permit the Greek-American lobby to earn the full financial and political support of the Greek community.

On the other hand, the reverse influence phenomenon as Coufoudakis put it, the influence of the Greek-American lobby on the formulation and conduct of the foreign policy of Greece becomes more and more important.³⁰ The American administration is aware of the possibility to use the Greek-American lobby as a channel of pressure on the Greek government using subtle tactics and sophisticated methods. As a result of the Americanization, this triadic relationship is now an integral part of the lobby game and if Greece expects help from the Greek-American lobby, in return Greece will have to listen to its demands. Simply put, the Greek-American lobby will no longer identify automatically with Greece and Greek interests and objectives.

This is, therefore, a transition period for the Greek-American lobby. Greece and Cyprus have to analyse the present situation in terms of realistic considerations rather than in the usual sentimental fashion. The Greek-American community will continue to maintain ties to the 'homeland', but in the meantime a stronger loyalty toward the host country will appear in future generations.

ENDNOTES

1. See Joseph P. O'Grady Ed., *The Immigrants' Influence on Wilson's Peace Policies* n.p.: University of Kentucky Press, 1967.
2. Cited in Evangelos Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost Opportunities The Cyprus Question, 1950-1963* New Rochelle, NY: Caratzas, 1986. p. 41.
3. "Oi Thesouroi ton Archeon Anaktoron tis Kyprou" *Engyklopaïdikon Imerologion* New York: Herald Printing Syndicate, 1930 p.427.
4. *Atlantis*, April 4, 1955.

5. *Atlantis*, August 19, 1956.
6. Department of state, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Report No 8047 "Analysis of the Cyprus Agreements" July 14, 1969, *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* Vol. XI No. 4 Winter 1984 p. 31.
7. *Ethnikos Kyrix*, March 16, 1964.
8. *New York Times*, August 22, 1964.
9. *Ethnikos Kyrix*, March 3, 1964.
10. Saloutos Archive Box 75, FF 761, Immigration History Research Center, Minneapolis.
11. Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, Circular, August 25, 1964.
12. *Boston Sunday Globe*, August 11, 1974.
13. *Boston Evening Globe*, Wednesday August 21, 1974.
14. Dennis Kux, "Ethnic Groups and Foreign Policy: The Greek Example" Executive seminar in National and International Affairs, Department of State, 1977-78 p. 18.
15. *AHI-PAC Newsletter*, Vol. 1, No. 1 January 10, 1975.
16. Bernard Gwertzman "Crucial House Vote near on Arms Sale to Turkey" *The New York Times*, July 21, 1975
17. C.L. Sulzberger "Middle Eastward Ho for Ford" *The New York Times*, June 4, 1975.
18. Russell Warren Howe and Sarah Hays Trott, "The inside workings of the U.S. Greek lobby" *The Sunday Sun* (Baltimore) September 7, 1975, section K. See also by the same authors *The Power Peddlers: How Lobbyists Mold America's Foreign Policy* New York: Doubleday, 1977.
19. Letter, AHI-PAC to Theodore Saloutos 10-4-1975, Box 79, Saloutos Papers, Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota.
20. *The Wall Street Journal*, July 31, 1978.
21. Adam Clymer, "House by 208-205 votes to drop ban on arms to Turkey" *The New York Times*, August 2, 1978. See also Paul Findley *They Dare To Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby Westport CT: Lawrence Hill & Co, 1985.*
22. *Time*, August 7, 1978.
23. Graham Hovey "Senate acts to lift arms ban on Turks, but adds warning" *The New York Times*, July 26, 1978.
24. John Rourke, *Congress and the Presidency in U.S. Foreign Policymaking, A Study of interaction and influence, 1945-1982*, Boulder: Westview, 1983. p. 267.
25. *Congressional Record*, House September 24, 1974 p. 32425.26. See, for example, the devastating article of Christopher Hitchens, *The Decline and Fall of the Greek Lobby in America*, *Odyssey*, November/December 1995. But even more moderate critics, conceded off-the -record that there is a decline of the Greek-American lobby after 1978.
27. Van Coufoudakis refers to these divisions existing between AHI-PAC and the groups served by Manatos and Manatos even before the creation of SAE. Van Coufoudakis, "The Reverse Influence Phenomenon" in D. Conostas and A. Platias, *Diasporas in World Politics*, The Macmillan Press, London 1993, p. 51-75.
28. Christopher Hitchens, *op. cit.*, p.30 .
29. *Ibid*, p.30.
30. Van Coufoudakis, *op.cit.*