

# The Greek Tragedy: Some Things not to Forget, which the New Greek Leaders have not

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*American historian D.F. Fleming, writing of the post-World War II period in his eminent history of the Cold War, stated that "Greece was the first of the liberated states to be openly and forcibly compelled to accept the political system of the occupying Great Power. It was Churchill who acted first and Stalin who followed his example, in Bulgaria and then in Rumania, though with less bloodshed."*

The British intervened in Greece while World War II was still raging. His Majesty's Army waged war against ELAS, the left-wing guerrillas who had played a major role in forcing the Nazi occupiers to flee. Shortly after the war ended, the United States joined the Brits in this great anti-communist crusade, intervening in what was now a civil war, taking the side of the neo-fascists against the Greek left. The neo-fascists won and instituted a highly brutal regime, for which the CIA created a suitably repressive internal security agency (KYP in Greek).

In 1964, the liberal George Papandreou came to power, but in April 1967 a military coup took place, just before elections which appeared certain to bring Papandreou back as prime minister. The coup had been a joint effort of the Royal Court, the Greek military, the KYP, the CIA, and the American military stationed in Greece, and was followed immediately by the traditional martial law, censorship, arrests, beatings, and killings, the victims totaling some 8,000 in the first month. This was accompanied by the equally traditional declaration that this was all being done to save the nation from a "communist takeover". Torture, inflicted in the most gruesome of ways, often with equipment supplied by the United States, became routine.

George Papandreou was not any kind of radical. He was a liberal anti-communist type. But his son Andreas, the heir-apparent, while only a little to the left of his father, had not disguised his wish to take Greece out of the Cold War, and had questioned remaining in NATO, or at least as a satellite of the United States.

Andreas Papandreou was arrested at the time of the coup and held in prison for eight months. Shortly after his release, he and his wife Margaret visited the American ambassador, Phillips Talbot, in Athens. Papandreou later related the following:

I asked Talbot whether America could have intervened the night of the coup, to prevent the death of democracy in Greece. He denied that they could have done anything about it. Then Margaret asked a critical question: What if the coup had been a Communist or a Leftist coup? Talbot answered without hesitation. Then, of course, they would have intervened, and they would have crushed the coup.

Another charming chapter in US-Greek relations occurred in 2001, when Goldman Sachs, the Wall Street Goliath Lowlife, secretly helped Greece keep billions of dollars of debt off their balance sheet through the use of complex financial instruments like credit default swaps. This allowed Greece to meet the baseline requirements to enter the Eurozone in the first place. But it also helped create a debt bubble that would later explode and bring about the current economic crisis that's drowning the entire continent. Goldman Sachs, however, using its insider knowledge of its Greek client, protected itself from this debt bubble by betting against Greek bonds, expecting that they would eventually fail.

Will the United States, Germany, the rest of the European Union, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund - collectively constituting the International Mafia - allow the new Greek leaders of the Syriza party to dictate the conditions of Greece's rescue and salvation? The answer at the moment is a decided "No". The fact that Syriza leaders, for some time, have made no secret of their affinity for Russia is reason enough to seal their fate. They should have known how the Cold War works.

I believe Syriza is sincere, and I'm rooting for them, but they may have overestimated their own strength, while forgetting how the Mafia came to occupy its position; it didn't derive from a lot of compromise with left-wing upstarts. Greece may have no choice, eventually, but to default on its debts and leave the Eurozone. The hunger and unemployment of the Greek people may leave them no alternative.

### The Twilight Zone of the US State Department

*"You are traveling through another dimension, a dimension not only of sight and sound but of mind. A journey into a wondrous land whose boundaries are that of imagination. Your next stop ... the Twilight Zone."* (American Television series, 1959-1965)

State Department Daily Press Briefing, February 13, 2015. Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki, questioned by Matthew Lee of The Associated Press.

Lee: President Maduro [of Venezuela] last night went on the air and said that they had arrested multiple people who were allegedly behind a coup that was backed by the United States. What is your response?

Psaki: These latest accusations, like all previous such accusations, are ludicrous. As a matter of longstanding policy, the United States does not support political transitions by non-constitutional means. Political transitions must be democratic, constitutional, peaceful, and legal. We have seen many times that the Venezuelan Government tries to distract from its own actions by blaming the United States or other members of the international community for events inside Venezuela. These efforts reflect a lack of seriousness on the part of the Venezuelan Government to deal with the grave situation it faces.

Lee: Sorry. The US has - whoa, whoa, whoa - the US has a longstanding practice of not promoting - What did you say? How longstanding is that? I would - in particular in South and Latin America, that is not a longstanding practice.

Psaki: Well, my point here, Matt, without getting into history -

Lee: Not in this case.

Psaki: - is that we do not support, we have no involvement with, and these are ludicrous accusations.

Lee: In this specific case.

Psaki: Correct.

Lee: But if you go back not that long ago, during your lifetime, even - (laughter)

Psaki: The last 21 years. (Laughter.)

Lee: Well done. Touché. But I mean, does "longstanding" mean 10 years in this case? I mean, what is -

Psaki: Matt, my intention was to speak to the specific reports.

Lee: I understand, but you said it's a longstanding US practice, and I'm not so sure - it depends on what your definition of "longstanding" is.

Psaki: We will - okay.

Lee: Recently in Kyiv, whatever we say about Ukraine, whatever, the change of government at the beginning of last year was unconstitutional, and you supported it. The constitution was -

Psaki: That is also ludicrous, I would say.

Lee: - not observed.

Psaki: That is not accurate, nor is it with the history of the facts that happened at the time.

Lee: The history of the facts. How was it constitutional?

Psaki: Well, I don't think I need to go through the history here, but since you gave me the opportunity -- as you know, the former leader of Ukraine left of his own accord.

...

Leaving the Twilight Zone ... The former Ukrainian leader ran for his life from those who had staged the coup, including a mob of vicious US-supported neo-Nazis.

If you know how to contact Ms. Psaki, tell her to have a look at my list of more than 50 governments the United States has attempted to overthrow since the end of the Second World War. None of the attempts were democratic, constitutional, peaceful, or legal; well, a few were non-violent.

The ideology of the American media is that it believes that it doesn't have any ideology

So NBC's evening news anchor, Brian Williams, has been caught telling untruths about various events in recent years. What could be worse for a reporter? How about not knowing what's going on in the world? In your own country? At your own employer? As a case in

point I give you Williams' rival, Scott Pelley, evening news anchor at CBS.

In August 2002, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz told American newscaster Dan Rather on CBS: "We do not possess any nuclear or biological or chemical weapons."

In December, Aziz stated to Ted Koppel on ABC: "The fact is that we don't have weapons of mass destruction. We don't have chemical, biological, or nuclear weaponry."

Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein himself told CBS's Rather in February 2003: "These missiles have been destroyed. There are no missiles that are contrary to the prescription of the United Nations [as to range] in Iraq. They are no longer there."

Moreover, Gen. Hussein Kamel, former head of Iraq's secret weapons program, and a son-in-law of Saddam Hussein, told the UN in 1995 that Iraq had destroyed its banned missiles and chemical and biological weapons soon after the Persian Gulf War of 1991.

There are yet other examples of Iraqi officials telling the world, before the 2003 American invasion, that the WMD were non-existent.

Enter Scott Pelley. In January 2008, as a CBS reporter, Pelley interviewed FBI agent George Piro, who had interviewed Saddam Hussein before he was executed:

PELLEY: And what did he tell you about how his weapons of mass destruction had been destroyed?

PIRO: He told me that most of the WMD had been destroyed by the U.N. inspectors in the '90s, and those that hadn't been destroyed by the inspectors were unilaterally destroyed by Iraq.

PELLEY: He had ordered them destroyed?

PIRO: Yes.

PELLEY: So why keep the secret? Why put your nation at risk? Why put your own life at risk to maintain this charade?

For a journalist there might actually be something as bad as not knowing what's going on in his area of news coverage, even on his own station. After Brian Williams' fall from grace, his former boss at NBC, Bob Wright, defended Williams by pointing to his favorable coverage of the military, saying: "He has been the strongest supporter of the military of any of the news players. He never comes back with negative stories, he wouldn't question if we're spending too much."

I think it's safe to say that members of the American mainstream media are not embarrassed by such a "compliment".

In his acceptance speech for the 2005 Nobel Prize for Literature, Harold Pinter made the following observation:

Everyone knows what happened in the Soviet Union and throughout Eastern Europe during the post-war period: the systematic brutality, the widespread atrocities, the ruthless suppression of independent thought. All this has been fully documented and verified.

But my contention here is that the US crimes in the same period have only been superficially recorded, let alone documented, let alone acknowledged, let alone recognized as crimes at all.

It never happened. Nothing ever happened. Even while it was happening it wasn't happening. It didn't matter. It was of no interest. The crimes of the United States have been systematic, constant, vicious, remorseless, but very few people have actually talked about them. You have to hand it to America. It has exercised a quite clinical manipulation of power worldwide while masquerading as a force for universal good. It's a brilliant, even witty, highly successful act of hypnosis.

Cuba made simple

"The trade embargo can be fully lifted only through legislation - unless Cuba forms a democracy, in which case the president can lift it."

Aha! So that's the problem, according to a *Washington Post* columnist - Cuba is not a democracy! That would explain why the United States does not maintain an embargo against Saudi Arabia, Honduras, Guatemala, Egypt and other distinguished pillars of freedom. The mainstream media routinely refer to Cuba as a dictatorship. Why is it not uncommon even for people on the left to do the same? I think that many of the latter do so in the belief that to say otherwise runs the risk of not being taken seriously, largely a vestige of the Cold War when Communists all over the world were ridiculed for blindly following Moscow's party line. But what does Cuba do or lack that makes it a dictatorship?

No "free press"? Apart from the question of how free Western media is, if that's to be the standard, what would happen if Cuba announced that from now on anyone in the country could own any kind of media? How long would it be before CIA money - secret and unlimited CIA money financing all kinds of fronts in Cuba - would own or control almost all the media worth owning or controlling?

Is it "free elections" that Cuba lacks? They regularly have elections at municipal, regional and national levels. (They do not have direct election of the president, but neither do Germany or the United Kingdom and many other countries). Money plays virtually no role in these elections; neither does party politics, including the Communist Party, since candidates run as individuals. Again, what is the standard by which Cuban elections are to be judged? Is it that they don't have the Koch Brothers to pour in a billion dollars? Most Americans, if they gave it any thought, might find it difficult to even imagine what a free and democratic election, without great concentrations of corporate money, would look like, or how it would operate. Would Ralph Nader finally be able to get on all 50 state ballots, take part in national television debates, and be able to match the two monopoly parties in media advertising? If that were the case, I think he'd probably win; which is why it's not the case.

Or perhaps what Cuba lacks is our marvelous "electoral college" system, where the presidential candidate with the most votes is not necessarily the winner. If we really think this system is a good example of democracy why don't we use it for local and state elections as well?

Is Cuba not a democracy because it arrests dissidents? Many thousands of anti-war and other protesters have been arrested in the United States in recent years, as in every period in American history. During the Occupy Movement two years ago more than 7,000 people

were arrested, many beaten by police and mistreated while in custody. And remember: The United States is to the Cuban government like al Qaeda is to Washington, only much more powerful and much closer; virtually without exception, Cuban dissidents have been financed by and aided in other ways by the United States.

Would Washington ignore a group of Americans receiving funds from al Qaeda and engaging in repeated meetings with known members of that organization? In recent years the United States has arrested a great many people in the US and abroad solely on the basis of alleged ties to al Qaeda, with a lot less evidence to go by than Cuba has had with its dissidents' ties to the United States. Virtually all of Cuba's "political prisoners" are such dissidents. While others may call Cuba's security policies dictatorship, I call it self-defense.

The Ministry of Propaganda has a new Commissar

Last month Andrew Lack became chief executive of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, which oversees US government-supported international news media such as Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the Middle East Broadcasting Networks and Radio Free Asia. In a *New York Times* interview, Mr. Lack was moved to allow the following to escape his mouth: "We are facing a number of challenges from entities like *Russia Today* which is out there pushing a point of view, the Islamic State in the Middle East and groups like Boko Haram."

So ... this former president of *NBC News* conflates *Russia Today* (RT) with the two most despicable groups of "human beings" on the planet. Do mainstream media executives sometimes wonder why so many of their audience has drifted to alternative media, like, for example, RT?

Those of you who have not yet discovered RT, I suggest you go to [RT.com](http://RT.com) to see whether it's available in your city. And there are no commercials.

It should be noted that the *Times* interviewer, Ron Nixon, expressed no surprise at Lack's remark.

## Notes

1. William Blum, *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and C.I.A. Interventions Since World War II*, chapters 3 and 35
2. "[Greek Debt Crisis: How Goldman Sachs Helped Greece to Mask its True Debt](#)", *Spiegel Online*(Germany), February 8, 2010. Google "[Goldman Sachs](#)" [Greece](#) for other references.
3. [U.S. Department of State Daily Press Briefing](#), February 13, 2015
4. [Overthrowing other people's governments: The Master List](#)
5. *CBS Evening News*, August 20, 2002
6. *ABC Nightline*, December 4, 2002
7. "60 Minutes II", February 26, 2003
8. *Washington Post*, March 1, 2003
9. "60 Minutes", January 27, 2008
10. *Democracy Now!*, February 12, 2015, Wright statement made February 10
11. Al Kamen, *Washington Post*, February 18, 2015
12. *Huffington Post*, May 3, 2012
13. *New York Times*, January 21, 2015

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