

Post
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Fulbright on Acheson

In the mellow and kindly spirit that we expect of our distinguished elder statesmen, Mr. Dean Acheson urges you, in his letter of Dec. 20, to take a more tolerant editorial view of the Greek military dictators. I note with interest Mr. Acheson's friendly feelings for the Greek dictators because they contrast so sharply with the viewpoint he expressed in 1947 in support of the Greek-Turkish aid program and, incidentally, suggests that, by the criteria spelled out by Mr. Acheson twenty years ago, that aid program has been a dismal failure.

Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 24, 1947, Mr. Acheson, who was then Acting Secretary of State, strongly urged adoption of the Greek-Turkish aid program on the ground, among others, that, if we failed to provide such aid, "The rule of an armed minority would fasten itself upon the people of Greece." Our aid, he said, would "pave the way for peaceful and democratic developments."

Further on in his statement of March 24, 1947, Mr. Acheson said: "It is our object to help to maintain the present constitutional system of Greece so long as the majority of Greeks desire it, and to help Greece create conditions in which its free institutions can develop in a more normal fashion."

Making the same point even more explicitly, Mr. Acheson said: "Since our primary purpose is to help people who are

struggling to maintain their independence and their right to democratic development, we would not, of course, want to continue this aid if we should find that our efforts were being frustrated by anti-democratic practices."

Mr. Acheson is, of course, quite right in pointing to the difficulties of constitutional and democratic government. It puzzles me, however, that his tolerance of authoritarian rule in Greece does not seem to be matched by a similar tolerance for other totalitarian regimes such as that of Ho Chi Minh in North Vietnam. It may be, however, that the former Secretary is inhibited by the fear of being thought "soft on communism." For my own part, I shall be prepared to take the Senate floor any time, as indeed I did some years ago, to defend him against such a calumny.

To illustrate the danger of constitutional government going awry, Mr. Acheson points to forthcoming hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in which he fears the casting of leading figures in our government in roles that he deems inappropriate. In order to alleviate this danger and help set things straight, I would be delighted to have Mr. Acheson appear as a witness before the Committee casting himself as Metternich, Rasputin, or in any other role that he finds congenial.

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Relations, United States Senate,
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