

NIX AD

The Weak State Of Greek Army



Jack Anderson

BEHIND the Greek military posturing in the Mediterranean, confidential NATO documents warn that the Greek armed forces are so divided and weak they couldn't whip the Turkish army in a badminton match.

A May, 1974, draft report to the North Atlantic Assembly declares bluntly: "The effect upon the (Greek) armed forces of almost seven years of dictatorship, accompanied by periodic upheavals and a succession of savage purges, has been severely to distort their command structure and to create an atmosphere of suspicion and antagonism among factions of the officer corps with differing political views and sharply divided loyalties."

★ ★ ★

NEVERTHELESS, the Nixon Administration has insisted upon backing the Greek junta. As late as June 26, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger testified before the Senate that "as far as the military side of the alliance is concerned, Greece remains an effective member."

This is disputed by confidential NATO information, which is available to Schlesinger. States one document: "There are growing doubts about the extent to which the Greek armed forces as a whole, dissipated as they are and dissipated by police

and supervisory functions, are capable of playing their part in the NATO defense strategy."

From other classified documents and confidential sources, we have gleaned the following intelligence items:

- The Nixon Administration, in the language of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, is "tilting" toward the Greek officers who overthrew Archbishop Makarios in Cyprus. Kissinger realizes this is an unpopular position among State Department bureaucrats and European allies. Indeed, he has already started leaking stories about how agonized he is by the necessity to support military dictators. But he sees the new junta leader, Nikos Sampson, as preferable to Makarios.

- The ruthless Sampson, formerly a guerrilla assassin, has been receiving secret CIA financial support for years. Our CIA sources say this is merely the intelligence agency's standard hedge of supporting both sides in a dispute.

- For that matter, Archbishop Makarios also collected CIA cash. Extremely reliable sources told us that Makarios simply blackmailed the CIA.

- President Nixon and Secretary Kissinger appear to be the last holdouts in the free world in their support of the Greek and Cyprus juntas.