
Greek Elections

Papandreou is a second Mitterrand

by Nancy Coker

The sweeping electoral victory of Greek Socialist leader Andreas Papandreou is the fruit of a years-long operation by British intelligence to catapult its long-time agent into power.

Like his father, the late Prime Minister George Papandreou, Andreas Papandreou is a longstanding operative of British circles and their adjuncts in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, namely the Georgii Arbatov faction in Moscow and the leadership circles in Bulgaria and Romania. A closet Marxist, Papandreou is also known to maintain active ties to Muammar Qaddafi in Libya through the Libyan-backed Mediterranean People's Congress, a radical organization instrumental in engineering the Khomeini takeover in Iran.

As the leader of Greece's Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), Papandreou calls himself the "Mitterrand of Greece," and has pledged to pursue policies "virtually identical" to those of his close friend, French President François Mitterrand. According to intelligence sources, it was Mitterrand's electoral victory in France, as well as the merger of Greece's centrist parties with PASOK, that led to Papandreou's Oct. 18 electoral triumph.

Another factor was the curious inability of the incumbent New Democracy Party to rally a counterattack. With the exception of Defense Minister Evangelos Averof, who unequivocally explained to the Greek population the dangerous national and regional implications of a Papandreou victory, the New Democracy Party and Prime Minister George Rallis led a lackluster campaign that failed utterly to dispel the Papandreou mystique.

The collapse of the centrist parties resulted when George Mavros, former foreign minister and leader of the Democratic Center, announced several weeks ago that he had broken with the United Center Rally Party and had joined PASOK. Mavros was soon joined by Manolis Glezos, secretary of EDA, another centrist party, undercutting the New Democracy's chances for winning over the center and securing an election victory. In the end, PASOK won 48 percent of the vote, while the New Democracy secured a mere 36 percent.

The entire Socialist International wholeheartedly threw its weight behind Papandreou. In the last days of the campaign, Spanish Socialist leader Felipe González, Swedish Socialist Olof Palme, and French Cultural Minister Pierre Lang visited Greece in a show of support. From West Germany, Willy Brandt announced that Europe's Socialists would welcome Papandreou as prime minister of Greece.

The effect on the West

Papandreou's victory, predicted one political analyst, will lead to a "cloudy political horizon that may bring instability, internal conflict and, more important, serious international frictions that will compound NATO's difficulties in that part of the world."

Papandreou's victory is indeed expected to wreak havoc in the region. Papandreou favors Greece's withdrawal from NATO and the European Economic Community, as well as the expulsion of all U.S. bases from Greece. Although Papandreou has recently begun to tone down his pre-election rhetoric and at this point is not expected to demand a total pullout from NATO, there is growing apprehension that Greece, as a NATO member, may now attempt to block Spain's entry into that organization later this year.

Thus, Papandreou, by further weakening the U.S. position in the region and playing into the Anglo-Soviet strategic gameplan for the area, is in fact exacerbating East-West tensions.

Greek-Turkish tensions

Papandreou is also focusing on neighboring Turkey as the main danger in the region, scrapping the efforts of the New Democracy government to ease tensions with the Turks through mutual diplomatic overtures. Last spring, in a gesture of friendship to Ankara, Greek Defense Minister Averof referred to Turkish chief of state Kenan Evren as "a wise man and a democrat," a statement that elicited outraged denunciations by Papandreou at the time. Evren in turn let it be known that Turkey favored a Papandreou defeat.

That Papandreou is pushing for a crisis with Turkey is underscored by his recent provocative demands for Turkish concessions on Cyprus, demands made prior to any negotiations, let alone feelers to Ankara.

The Soviets are eagerly showing their support for the new Papandreou regime in an effort to build up their chips in the region. The Soviet trade-union newspaper *Trud*, in a departure from recent Soviet policy, has suddenly opened attack on Turkey for its repression of leftist Turkish labor leaders. Such attacks on Turkey have been accompanied by effusive praise for Papandreou in the rest of the Soviet press. Moscow is expected to press its "nuclear free zone" proposal for the Balkan region under the new circumstances.