

Ministry of Co-ordination

The Minister

February 1st, 1947

No Conf 114

His Excellency  
Mr. Charles Stucki,  
Swiss Minister to Greece

Athens.

Your Excellency,

To You, who are well acquainted with the extent of devastation and losses sustained by my country as a result of the war, the enemy occupation and internal agitation, there is no need to explain the reason for which Greece despite the assistance granted to it after the liberation and the untiring efforts of our productive classes, is still in a very difficult economic situation.

Greece's difficulties in the economic field still continue today, and actually to such an extent that, in addition to the extensive reconstruction needs a considerable deficit in the Balance of Payments of Greece is foreseen for 1947.

It is remarkable that in the recent estimates worked out in cooperation with the representatives of the British Economic Mission, the American representative of the Currency Committee and the UNRRA Mission to Greece, we have reached the unanimous conclusion that on an austerity basis the import requirements of Greece mainly in consumer goods will amount to \$ 329,000,000 in the year 1947. On the other hand, based on ideal assumptions, our exports could amount to the value of \$ 88,600,000, while it is a question whether our other revenues from remittances and extraordinary sources will approximate \$ 65,200,000. Thus, it is foreseen that Greece's balance of payments will show a deficit of at least \$ 176,000,000, based on a very strict estimate of our import requirements and on ideal assumptions for realizing our exports. It is evident that this deficit would be much larger if estimates had not been made on an austerity basis but on an adequate basis ensuring a tolerable subsistence level for the entire Greek population.

Consequently, it is evident that the increased needs of the completely indigent Greeks and of the supplementary child feeding are not covered on the basis of the above estimates, so that the perils of starvation of the above categories of the population during this year would not disappear completely even if the aforesaid deficit should be covered entirely by foreign assistance.

In this letter I wish to avoid the enumeration of detailed items and figures which however, I hold at your disposal. In any event I wish to acquaint you with the fact that on the basis of scientific ascertainments, the number of indigent Greeks with



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an income lower than 25,000 Dr. monthly has been estimated by UNRRA Services as amounting to 1,500,000, while the number of Greek children 0 - 18 years of age, which have an immediate need of supplementary feeding amounts to 2,848,000 approximately.

Unfortunately the discontinuation of UNRRA works will create a tremendous gap in this country, which will become fatal to the survival of the Greek people if the United Nations will not give a timely assistance to devastated Greece. I hope that you have been able to ascertain personally that the dislocation of our Administrative machine has lately begun to be systematically confronted, so that now I am able to assure you responsibly that the effective, fair and equitable utilization of the assistance to be granted will be accomplished in the best possible way.

In the field of Social Welfare, we have drawn up a scientific programme based on the principles followed by the most progressive Countries, so that it can be certain that the assistance to be granted for relief purposes will be utilized to ameliorate the production, will absorb a large part of unemployment, and generally will attain a "Social Investment" in Greece.

Your Excellency is already aware of the fact that the United Nations, in view of the termination of UNRRA works, have adopted the proposal of bilateral agreements according to which, Countries requiring assistance may apply to other Countries which have not exceedingly suffered from the evils of the war.

Considering this recent resolution of the General Assembly of U.N.O. I have the honour, on behalf of the Greek Government, to submit through Your Excellency to the Swiss Government the proposal for the conclusion of a bilateral agreement to cover a part of the consumer needs of Greece during the year 1947.

The Greek Government hopes that the Swiss Government will favourably accept this proposal and is quite prepared to furnish the necessary data and information, and to suggest the way whereby the above bilateral agreement would not become particularly burdensome to your Country.

The Greek people, who are very grateful for Switzerland's contribution to their survival during the occupation, would deeply appreciate a further gesture on your part which would now enable them to overcome the difficulties of this transitional period and obtain, finally, a relative economic self-sufficiency.

I wish to assure Your Excellency that my Countrymen, fully aware of your sympathy toward them, especially rely on your whole-hearted support of their present request with the gallant Swiss Nation.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express to Your Excellency my highest consideration.

The Minister

sig. St.Stephanopoulos.