

The Politics Of Loyalty: The White House And The Communist Issue, 1946-1952

Greek McCarthyism: A Comparative Assessment of Greek Post-Civil War Repressive Anticommunism and the U.S. Truman-McCarthy Era

by MINAS SAMATAS*

The study of politico-ideological repression in formal democratic states is very useful for understanding the mechanisms of sociopolitical control, the limits of tolerance, and the fragility of civil liberties under governments presumed dedicated to freedom and democracy. Such a study is frequently avoided by those who wish to forget the actual history of capitalist democracies and to present instead an ideal picture of the "free world" as opposed to the "evil" communist states.

This article attempts a brief comparative study of post-war political repression in Greece and in the United States of America. It focuses on both the similarities and differences between the Truman-McCarthyite anticommunist crusade in the U.S. and its Greek post-Civil War counterpart. Both Greece (the "cradle of democracy") and the U.S. (the "land of the free") have experienced politico-ideological repression too frequently for this repression to be considered accidental. In this century alone, Greece has had mostly authoritarian regimes, including two major dictatorships. Currently, although Greece is enjoying one of the most liberal periods in its modern history, and although anticommunism has been officially abolished by the socialist government, remnants of the authoritarian past and its repressive proclivities are still embedded in the state apparatus. Similarly, in this century the U.S. has also experienced "two Red Scares, concentration

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