

# The Police in The Fourth-of-August Regime

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The police played a vital role in maintaining Metaxas's dictatorship. No political party was available for this purpose. Nor was the army, since its loyalty lay to the King, who believed—with Metaxas's agreement—that it should stay out of politics. Therefore Metaxas relied mainly on the police to suppress opposition and relied on it heavily in his attempt to reform society. Its success in the former respect was remarkable. From August 1936 until the German invasion in 1941 the army prevented any serious degree of political or industrial agitation. Meanwhile its activities were unprecedentedly varied and far-reaching. It became partly or wholly responsible for: orchestrating demonstrations of mass support; extracting increased sums of money from the public in taxation and irregular levies; regulating amenities for tourists; organizing the official youth movement; issuing certificates of sound social belief to public employees; censoring books, films and newspapers; and enforcing moral standards through such measures as imposing restrictions on gambling and licensing the sale of alcohol. All this was added to a major role in national defense, including counterespionage, precautions against air raids, and—when the war broke out—provisioning the army, interning enemy aliens, and engaging in direct combat.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this paper is to examine why the

<sup>1</sup>S. Linardatos, *4η Αυγούστου* (Themelio, Athens, 1966), pp. 69-71; K. S. Antoniou, *Ίστορία τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Βασιλικῆς Χωροφυλακῆς* (privately published, Athens, 1965), III, 1479, 1481; A. B. Daskalakis, *Ίστορία τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Χωροφυλακῆς* (Tsiveriotis, Athens, 1973), I, 78-9; British Foreign Office Papers (Public Record Office, Kew), 371/21147/223 (R 4453);-/21148/126 (R 8327);-/23770/105, 427-8 (no document numbers).

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police were both able and eager to fulfill a role of such magnitude.

One answer lies in developments of the previous twenty years, when the main police organizations on which the dictatorship depended were either created or strengthened. Various governments contributed to this work, but those headed by Metaxas's arch-rival Eleftherios Venizelos were the greatest contributors between 1910 and 1920, and from 1928 to 1932. A key year was 1929, thanks largely to the Minister of the Interior Constantine Zavitsianos, who was to be Minister of Finance in the Fourth-of-August regime. Among the more noteworthy developments of the period was the acquisition by the *Chorofilaki* (gendarmarie, the dominant force) of a training college for candidate officers in 1919.<sup>2</sup> In 1920-30 the *Astinomia* (city police) was founded and introduced into the major cities, where it learned many of its tasks for the first time, such as how to control road traffic and holiday crowds.<sup>3</sup> After 1923 steps were taken to create a national system of agricultural security to supervise the locally-appointed *Agrofilakes* (agrarian police). But since these had a limited function and low status, the term "police" shall apply in this paper only to the *Chorofilaki* and *Astinomia*.<sup>4</sup>

The first national organization for the purposes of counter-espionage and counter-subversion was created by the Pangalos dictatorship in 1925.<sup>5</sup> In 1929 this was replaced by the *Eidiki Asfaleia* (Special Security) which, under the direction of *Chorofilaki* officers, had the power to hire civilian spies. This group would later become unpopular for its persecutions of many opponents of the government.<sup>6</sup> In the same year the criminological services were strengthened and organized into a national directorate. The function of investigating crimes, taken

<sup>2</sup>D. G. Katsimanglis, 'Η Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἀστυνομικοῦ Θεσμοῦ στὴν Ἀθήνα, Ρώμη, Γαλλία, Ἀγγλία καὶ Ἀμερική (privately published, Athens, 1981), p. 137.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 141-2; N. G. Katrabasas, Ἀστυνομία Πόλεων (privately published, Athens, 1949), Chapter 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ch. Chadzispirou, Ἱστορία τῆς Δημο-Κοινοτικῆς Ἀγροτικῆς Ἀσφαλείας, 1837-1936 (privately published, Athens, 1957), pp. 157-9.

<sup>5</sup>G. F. Fessopoulos, Ἡ Διαφώτισις [*Propaganda*] (N. Tilperoglou, Athens, 1948), pp. 27-8, 44, 117.

<sup>6</sup>Ἐφημερίδα τῆς Κυβερνήσεως, Series A, 21 February 1929, pp. 616-7.

from the *Astinomia* by the Pangalos regime, was now restored to it. The section responsible for the work, the *Yeniki Asfaleia* (General Security), was thereafter to include specialists in counter-subversion and counterespionage, among whom was the small *Omas Kommounismou* (Anti-Communist Squad), whose members would take a prominent role in combating communists under the Fourth-of-August regime; they also claimed to have instigated the Idionym Law of 1929.<sup>7</sup> This move expanded the powers and responsibilities of *Astinomia* and *Chorofilaki* in persecuting those whom they regarded as communists, such as the many strikers and leftist sympathizers, who were deported to islands at the rate of several hundred a year during the 1930's.<sup>8</sup> Henceforth the *Eidiki Asfaleia* and *Yeniki Asfaleia* would form the basis of the "political" or "secret" police, and the extensive duplication of their functions would cause friction between them.<sup>9</sup> The capacity of the police to combat espionage was reinforced in January 1936 by the establishment of a Service for the Defense of the State under the Minister for the Army. After 4 August this was replaced by the Service of Aliens under the Sub-Minister for Public Security.<sup>10</sup> In this period the number of police grew greatly. Between 1928 and 1936 the *Astinomia* grew from about 2,500 to 4,200 and the *Chorofilaki* from about 8,500 to 12,200.<sup>11</sup> There is good reason to believe that the quality and effectiveness of the two bodies also improved from the lamentably low level of the 1920's. The *Chorofilaki* hunted down the last brigands in 1930, for

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 8 January 1929, pp. 17-29; N. Charalambidis, *et al.*, "Τὸ Μυστικὸν Ἀρχεῖον τοῦ Μανιαδάκη," Ἐθνικὸς Κήρυξ, 23 October 1949, p. 4 (henceforth cited as Ἐθνικὸς Κήρυξ). Maniadakis and leading security officers contributed directly or indirectly to the series of which the foregoing is a part (see *ibid.*, 9 October 1949, p. 1, and 16 October 1949, p. 1).

<sup>8</sup>FO 371/15237, Annual Report for 1930, pp. 40-2; R. Koundouros, Ἡ Ἀσφάλεια τοῦ Καθεστῶτος (Kastaniotis, Athens, 1978, pp. 90-120).

<sup>9</sup>Ἐθνικὸς Κήρυξ, 23 October 1949, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup>Ἐφημερίδα τῆς Κυβερνήσεως, Series A, 25 January 1936, pp. 269-70; 10 November 1936, p. 2658; Antoniou, Ἱστορία, III, 1474.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 1394-5; Official Census for 1928 Ὑπουργεῖον Ἐθνικῆς Οἰκονομίας, Γενικὴ Στατιστικὴ Ὑπηρεσία τῆς Ἑλλάδος, Στατιστικὰ Ἀποτελέσματα τῆς Ἀπογραφῆς τοῦ Πληθυσμοῦ (1928), V 166; Ἐφημερίδα τῆς Κυβερνήσεως, Series A, 30 December 1936; Κήρυξ Δημοσίας Ἀσφαλείας, 22 September 1936, p. 2 (this reference was found for me by Mr. Diamandis).

example, while the *Astinomia* succeeded in reducing Piraeus's international reputation for crime.<sup>12</sup>

One result of these developments was the enormous increase in the powers and patronage of politicians in office. This was because the Greek police displayed an unusual degree—by the standards of other parliamentary systems in Europe—of centralization and politicization.<sup>13</sup> Centralization was increasing partly in the interests of efficiency. Thus the municipal police were abolished in 1893 and the local control of the *Agrofilakes* was abolished by Metaxas in 1937 (although it was to be partially restored after his regime).<sup>14</sup> As for the *Astinomia* and *Chorofilaki*, the Minister of the Interior controlled them to the extent of interfering in details of personnel and policy. It was common in the 1920's and 1930's—especially among the powerful *Chorofilaki*—for personal or partisan motives to govern appointments, transfers and promotions.<sup>15</sup> It seems also to have been common for police to be used—and commoner still for them to be requested—by politicians to harass their opponents. The police historian K. S. Antoniou believes that this practice was systematized with the foundation of the *Eidiki Asfaleia* by the Venizelos government in 1929.<sup>16</sup> But it is clear that the politicization of the police increased with anti-Venizelists' return to power in 1932. According to Antoniou, the majority in the *Chorofilaki*—especially in the lower ranks—had remained monarchist even during the previous decade of Venizelist dominance.<sup>17</sup> Now the Venizelists in their ranks were steadily reduced. Metaxas, as new Minister of the Interior in 1932, re-

<sup>12</sup>Antonou, III, pp. 1368, 1380-1, 1406, 1412, 1475-6; Katsimanglis, 'Ιστορία, p. 142; *ibid.*, 'Ανέλιξις τοῦ Ἀστυνομικοῦ Θεσμοῦ καὶ Ἀστυνομικῆ Ἐπιστήμῃ στὴν Ἑλλάδα (privately published, Athens, 1974), p. 59; Katrabasas, Ἀστυνομία, pp. 31-6; FO 371/13658/100-1, R. W. Urquhart's report for November 1929; -/14381/353 (C 3041).

<sup>13</sup>See, for example, R. B. Fosdick, *European Police Systems* (Patterson Smith, Montclair, N.J., 1969 reprint of 1915 edition).

<sup>14</sup>Katrabasas, Ἀστυνομία, pp. 24-6; Ch. Chadzispirou, Ὁ Κώδιξ Ἀγορικῆς Ἀσφαλείας (Athens, 1949), p. 24; *ibid.*, Τὸ Ἔργον τῆς Ἐπιτροπῆς Α. Ρωμανοῦ πρὸς Σύνταξιν Σχεδίου Νόμου περὶ Ἀγοφυλακῆς (Athens, 1958), foreword by P. Chaldezos.

<sup>15</sup>Antonou, III, 1387-90; FO 371/12926/13, 56, Report on Greek Gendarmerie by Major W. T. Rigg [1928] (no doc. no.).

<sup>16</sup>Antonou, III, 1370, 1389.

<sup>17</sup>Antonou, III, 1438.

placed a substantial number of them. Then there was a minor purge of this force after the Plastiras *pronunciamento* of 1933, followed by a massiv one after the Venizelist rising of 1935. The latter purge involved over a quarter of the commissioned officers, including a disproportionate number of Cretans. There was a much smaller purge of the *Astinomia*, presumably because it was generally less politicized. To judge by available figures of the *Chorofilaki's* numbers in 1936, the gaps thus caused must have been quickly filled among the rank-and-file, while among officers the process seems to have been slower. The replacements were frequently partisan anti-Venizelists and included victims of purges of the 1920's.<sup>18</sup>

Police harassment of Venizelists was severe from 1933 onwards. An early sign of the trend was an assassination attempt on Venizelos himself, organized by the director of the *Yeniki Asfaleia* of Athens (an appointee of the anti-Venizelist Prime Minister), with the help of officers in the *Astinomia* and *Chorofilaki* and the connivance of the director of the *Eidiki Asfaleia*. The motives were private as well as political, and the police were divided by the ensuing scandal. But the culprits had enough backing from fellow police and anti-Venizelist politicians (including Metaxas) to escape judicial sentencing.<sup>19</sup>

Interference by police in elections seems to have been relatively limited under Venizelos's government of 1928-32: there is no mention of such in reports by British observers who stressed, on the other hand, the unprecedented police measures to maintain order. But interference was widespread from 1933, directed against the entire range of the anti-Venizelists' opponents and extending to political meetings and municipal elections. Attempts by governments to influence the last were against convention.<sup>20</sup> In 1933-35 there are several reports—from Patras, Chios and Salonika—of police banning or assaulting lawful

<sup>18</sup>Antoniou, III, 1438, 1446; FO 371/16771/11-12 (C 303), 128-9 (no doc. no.); -/21147, Annual Report for 1936, p. 100; -/10772/89/2; -/19507/237/1-2; 'Εφημερίδα τῆς Κυβερνήσεως, Series A, 10 April 1935, pp. 607-8; *ibid.*, Series C, 14 June 1935, pp. 569-571; *ibid.*, Series C, 18 June 1935, pp. 573-4; Κήρυξ Δημοσίας Ἀσφαλείας, 15 February 1936, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup>Katsimanglis, Ἀνέλιξις, p. 53; FO 371/18393/114; -/19506/366-370 (R 2592).

<sup>20</sup>FO 371/15966/247-8; -/10772/ (C 9791); -/18393/22-3 (R 1162).

anti-government meetings of various complexions.<sup>21</sup> After the Venizelists' abortive revolt of March 1935, the police became still more an instrument of extreme anti-Venizelists. According to British Ambassador Sir Sydney Waterlow the general election of June was "described on all hands as the most corrupt and unreal of modern times." Enforcing a policy of official coercion, the police cited a law for compulsory voting and thus headed villagers to the polls. The referendum of November, which led to the King's restoration, was systematically rigged, largely through the police. Under Kondylis's dictatorship of that time the police engaged in wholesale persecution of political opponents and suppression of civil liberties. Even after the King's return and attempts to restore constitutional practices, the police intervened extensively against Venizelists in the general election of January 1936, openly contravening the government's wishes.<sup>22</sup>

The police as a whole were intensely anti-communist, as was natural in view of the broad range of interests which the communists threatened: the tendency of the political world was to see the communists' hand in every outbreak of industrial unrest. The police, however, saw themselves as more alive to the peril than most politicians. It was in the guise of industrial unrest that most police came into conflict with "communism" during the year before the Fourth-of-August regime. These encounters could be gruelling for police. In the worst confrontation, in Salonica in May 1936, they faced hostile crowds for ten days without rest and under constant provocation. From such ordeals they emerged feeling aggrieved against those whom they saw as ringleaders, and against the many commentators who criticized their conduct.<sup>23</sup> But there is no doubt that their own behavior was excessively brutal and, on this account, provocative. From the mid-1920's participation in industrial unrest was commonly punished by deportation after a summary trial by a local Security Commission: a police officer was always present at such a trial. When, in 1929, twenty-three workers

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 19506/138 (R 1904); -/19508/109-110, 330 (no doc. no.).

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 19507/211/1-5 (R 3909); -/19509/225 (R 6554); -/20389/291; B. Birtles, *Exiles in the Aegean* (Gollancz, London, 1938), pp. 75-8.

<sup>23</sup>FO 371/20389/125 (R 3310); Antoniou, III, 1382; Ἐθνικὸς Κήρυξ, 16 October 1949, p. 1.

were acquitted by a court in Salonica for their part in a demonstration, the local chief of the *Chorofilaki* publicly attacked the verdict as an encouragement to communism and thereby earned a condemnation for impropriety.<sup>24</sup> When unrest stemming from economic grievances increased in 1933-36, some observers often found the *Chorofilaki* to blame for much of the violence that occurred in Heraklion, Kalamata, Pylos, Vostitsa (near Patras), and especially in Salonica. On the Salonica incident, the considered verdict of the British Consul-General was that "the police acted with unnecessary brutality, as was their custom." The local chief of the *Chorofilaki* was especially blamed by some for the fact that hardly a meeting had occurred there without police violence during the previous two years.<sup>25</sup>

These cases of excessive violence were not caused merely by anti-communism. In several instances—such as demonstrations by currant-producers in the Peloponnese or Venizelists in Salonica—communist influence was small or altogether absent. Blame for violence seems sometimes to have been attributable to under-qualified and partisan officers who were appointed to replace purged Venizelists. As a result, there were what Waterlow called "vicious elements" in both *Astinomia* and *Chorofilaki*.<sup>26</sup> On the authority of a prominent Venizelist, a British official reported in mid-1936 that the police were imposing a "petty tyranny" in Venizelist districts.<sup>27</sup> In Crete the purge of 1935 broke the convention that the majority of public servants should be Cretan, and the dismissed police officers began agitating against the government.<sup>28</sup> A longer-term reason for the *Chorofilaki's* violence was their excessive military training, which expert observers (foreign and Greek) commonly criticized as limiting their ability to deal peacefully with the public. This disability was especially serious in places noted for industrial unrest and in remote areas, where police patrols were only seen when engaged on unpopular missions. The main reason, in

<sup>24</sup>Koundouros, Ἐσφάλαια, p. 116; FO 371/13658/251.

<sup>25</sup>FO 371/23770/355-6; -/20389/125-6 (R 3310).

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, -/21147, Annual Report for 1936, p. 100; -/18393/114 (R 6065).

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, -/20389/136-142 (R 4167).

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, -/19507/237 (R 4118), 240 (R 4153).

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, -/12926/28, 88-9, 105-8 (Rigg Report); Antoniou, III, 1482, 1492; Chadzspirou, Ἰστορία, p. 189.

fact, that brigandage had survived until 1930 was the public's alienation from the police in these remote regions.<sup>29</sup>

The *Chorofilaki* seems to have become unprecedentedly unpopular by mid-1936. To Cretans they now seemed an alien force. This must have been true also of many Macedonians and Thracians, as a result of the harsh suppression of industrial unrest at the time. During and after the general election of January, Venizelists as well as communists demanded the abolition of the *Eidiki Asfaleia*, citing its political persecution.<sup>30</sup> To the police, on the other hand (as to many other observers), the unprecedented industrial unrest of 1935-36 must have suggested a general slide into anarchy which was being exploited by the communists. Such considerations presumably disposed the *Chorofilaki* to support Metaxas's dictatorship. The police officers must have been anxious, moreover, as were the army officers, to avoid the reinstatement of cashiered Venizelists, as the price of the liberals' participation in government. Metaxas provided a barrier against this danger. Metaxas, for his part, having few followers among politicians or soldiers, needed police support in his bid to concentrate political power in himself. Waterlow cited this as the reason for Metaxas's failure to fulfill a widely-recognized need to purge the *Chorofilaki* of its "vicious elements" after he became dictator.<sup>31</sup> There are no grounds for thinking that he executed any sort of purge, except that later, in the interests of efficiency, he retired some officers who had reached their positions by political influence.<sup>32</sup>

To coordinate the drive by the police against enemies of his dictatorship Metaxas promptly created the post of Sub-Minister of Public Security, to which he appointed one of his closest colleagues, Constantine Maniadakis. Thereafter the two jointly controlled the police. Metaxas's role was of course more distant, except for his dealings with the Director of the *Eidiki Asfaleia*, Major-General Antonios Angelatos. Angelatos became one of his most powerful agents, reporting to him on suspicious

<sup>29</sup>Birtles, pp. 236, 239.

<sup>31</sup>FO 371/20389, S. Waterlow to A. Eden, 30 July 1936.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, -/21147, Annual Report for 1936, p. 100; Daskalakis, I, 76. Unpublished lists of Χωροφυλακή officers were kindly supplied to me by Major A. Anastasopoulos and Mr. S. Diamandis, and a published list of Chiefs of the Αστυνομία was supplied by Captain S. Andonakos.



activities of all prominent figures, including palace officials and—with the concurrence of the Commander-in-Chief—army officers.<sup>33</sup> The official *raison d'être* of the Department of Public Security was the fight against communism, although it actually dealt with every type of political opposition. Under its command came nearly all police services, including those for counter-espionage and civil defense. The *Agrofilakes*, however, presumably because of their political insignificance, remained directly under the Ministry of the Interior.

We can see from the account later written by security officers that Maniadakis established a close working relationship with them in the campaign against communism. He especially enjoyed discussing plans face-to-face with them rather than on paper. Whereas previous governments had fomented rivalry between different sections of the police (particularly between *Eidiki* and *Yeniki Asfaleia*), he coordinated their efforts and gave each its due importance.<sup>34</sup> According to Antoniou—who was evidently relying on personal information—morale in the *Chorofilaki* rose as it became known that political considerations ceased to be considered in promotions and that merit would be duly recognized. Police were now saved from the old onus of conflicting demands from different ministries as well as from politicians. Antoniou added that relations between officers and men improved in this period and became less military in character.<sup>35</sup>

Presumably Maniadakis, like Metaxas, had ulterior motives for cultivating the goodwill of police officers. But both earned the admiration of the police for their efficiency and ideals. They saw the police as a means of reforming public morality and social values in a manner which the police themselves generally approved. This helps explain why the police served the regime with conspicuous enthusiasm and little, if any, dissension. It is clear from the surviving references that intrigues

<sup>33</sup>Metaxas Papers (General State Archives, Athens), file 43 (investigation into the Platis affair), and file 28 (report on S. Gonatas); S. Hourmouziou, *No Ordinary Crown. A Biography of King Paul of the Hellenes* (Weidenfield & Nicolson, London, 1972), p. 103; 'Εθνικός Κήρυξ, 5 November 1949, p. 4; 371/24909/173/4.

<sup>34</sup>See above, n. 7.

<sup>35</sup>Antoniou, III, 1482, 1484, 1487.

against the regime were very limited among the police. It also seems significant that the police, unlike the army, escaped infiltration by communists.<sup>36</sup>

Metaxas and Maniadakis though energetic in reforming and strengthening the police, mainly conformed with the intentions of previous governments. The increase in size of the police was an example. From mid-1936 to the outbreak of the war with Italy the actual (as distinct from legally ordained) strength of the *Chorofilaki* increased from 12,200 to 14,600 (with the proportions of different ranks staying much the same), while the legally ordained strength of the *Astinomia*, fixed at 4,200 in December 1936, thereafter increased only slightly. In the interests of efficiency, the numerous but poorly paid and ill-qualified *Agrofilakes* were reduced, all in continuation of previous governments' work.<sup>37</sup> Whereas their actual strength in the early 1930's was estimated at over 16,000, their legally ordained strength after 1937 was only 10,000. If it be asked why the *Astinomia* and *Chorofilaki* were increased by so little, one answer is that they were supplemented by a state machine which was expanded and even more centralized than before. The *Agrofilakes*, for example, now subject to appointment by nomarchs, became available for such government work as the campaign of afforestation; officials of the Agricultural Bank used their financial leverage over peasants to organize welcoming crowds for Metaxas; and the youth organization provided spies for the regime.<sup>38</sup> Another answer is that the political police were disproportionately strengthened. The Anti-Communist Squad of the *Yeniki Asfaleia* increased from under fifteen to about eighty selected men. It collaborated under Maniadakis's supervision with the *Eidiki Asfaleia*, which had its Anti-Communist Bureau, and formally extended its responsibilities from Athens to the whole country.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 1486; Linardatos, 4η Αδγούστου, pp. 381-2; 'Εθνικός Κήρυξ, 11 October 1949, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup>See above, n. 11; Κήρυξ Δημοσίας 'Ασφαλείας, 15 August 1939, p. 10, with a note by Mr. Diamandis who found this reference for me; 'Εφημερίδα τῆς Κυβερνήσεως, Series A, 30 December 1936; 31 December 1937, p. 3358; 4 October 1938, pp. 2346-7; 4 December 1940, p. 3093.

<sup>38</sup>Τέσσαρα Χρόνια Διακυβερνήσεως 'Ι. Μεταξᾶ (Subministry of Press & Tourism, Athens, 1940), III, 219; FO 371/23770/148 (R 3993); N. Alivizatos, *Les Institutions Politiques de la Grece à Travers les Crises, 1922-74* (R. Pichon & R. Durand-Auzias, Paris, 1979), p. 348.

Whereas its original strength in 1929 was 190, under Metaxas it reached 445 officers and NCO's. Thirty political agents and 1,200 privates, a third of whom were equipped with sub-machine guns and motorcycles with sidecars: the latter seemed imposing at the time and not in the army's possession. The political forces could call at will on the rest of the police for such needs as the synchronized mass arrests of communists. They disposed of abundant means of transport and funds for these purposes, hired numerous spies and assembled a comprehensive archive of communist personnel and activities.<sup>39</sup>

At the outbreak of the war with Italy, the *Chorofilaki's* numbers were greatly increased so that they could perform their varied defense role. The motorcycle unit and newly-established combat regiment were much expanded. A force of *Politikofilaki* (Political Police) was established under the joint control of the army and Maniadakis for counterespionage and civil defense. Although little was new in principle about such uses of the police in wartime, their scale reflected the government's anxiety over political subversion and infiltration by fifth columnists in the event of foreign attack.<sup>40</sup>

Although Maniadakis assumed the responsibilities and resources of a military figure, the army leaders apparently made no serious objection. Their tolerant attitude can be explained by the King's backing of the regime and by the common enemies they faced: Venizelists, communists and potentially hostile foreign powers whose agents were increasing throughout the country. One example of the resulting community of interest between the Subministry of Public Security and the General Staff was their cooperation in unearthing communist networks in the army. The annual influx of national servicemen made this a long-term task. Another example was their cooperation in examining in 1940 the German affiliations of a senior officer of the General Staff, C. Platis. It is true that during the war with Italy the Commander-in-Chief Alexandros Papagos tried to lessen Maniadakis's involvement in the promotion of Venizelist officers who had been readmitted to active service. This dissension

<sup>39</sup>ΕΘΝΙΚΟΣ Κήρυξ, 20 & 26 November 1949, p. 4; 16 December 1949, p. 1; 17 & 18 March 1950, p. 3; Antoniou, III, 1394-5; FO 371/23769/12 (R 330).

<sup>40</sup>Daskalakis, I, 67, 78-9, 82-3; Antoniou, III, 1390, 1495; L. Archer, *Balkan Journal* (Norton, New York, 1944), p. 189.

was of secondary importance, however, compared with the interest he shared with Maniadakis in restricting Venizelist influence in the officer corps.<sup>41</sup>

The improvements in the pay, pensions, equipment and welfare provisions of all sections of the police were, in general, a larger-scale continuation of the work of recent governments. Numerous observers attest that there was immense room for improvement in the early 1930's.<sup>42</sup> The regime was evidently influenced by its desire to win the police's favor<sup>43</sup> and to increase their efficiency. With no elections to distract it, this regime was better qualified than its predecessors to increase expenditure for ends which were not particularly popular. This was especially true of the *Agrofilakes*, where improvement was most needed and where the local councils had been reluctant to levy the necessary rates. Metaxas solved part of the problem with the wholesale abolition of local councils: this was one of his few radical measures in police administration. The great increase in expenditure on the *Agrofilakes'* wages and uniforms was met by government grants and by more efficient collection of rates. Another old obstacle to agrarian security, the confusion of relevant laws, was overcome by a major measure of codification.<sup>44</sup>

Metaxas's and Maniadakis's eagerness to increase the status and efficiency of the police was shown also by their interest in the reform of training. Many of the regime's voluminous laws about the police—some of which were drafted by Maniadakis—regulated training colleges in establishing prerequisites for entry,

<sup>41</sup>Εθνικός Κήρυξ, 4 November 1949, pp. 1, 3; 5 November 1949, p. 4; 26 November 1949, p. 4; Metaxas Papers, file 43; I. Metaxas Τὸ Προσωπικὸ τοῦ Ἡμερολόγιου (ed. P. Vranas, privately published, Athens, 1951-64), vol. D2, pp. 544-5, 558 (16 December 1940, 12 January 1941).

<sup>42</sup>FO 371/12926/48; -/19517/12; Antonίου, III, 1360, 1488; Εθνικός Κήρυξ, 23 October 1949, p. 1; Chadzispirou, Ἱστορία, pp. 194-5.

<sup>43</sup>One indication is that an important measure to increase the Χωροφυλακῆς pensions and clothing allowances was ratified three days before Metaxas made himself dictator (Ἐφημερίδα τῆς Κυβερνήσεως), Series A, 8 August 1936). Later measures to similar ends are in *ibid.*, 29 December 1938, pp. 3220-2; 4 December 1940, pp. 3081-4.

<sup>44</sup>Chadzispirou, Κώδιξ, p. 35; *ibid.*, Ἱστορία, p. 202; Ἐφημερίδα τῆς τῆς Κυβερνήσεως, Series A, 3 June 1938, pp. 1281-1295; Τέσσαρα Χρόνια, III, 223; Ἐλεύθερον Βῆμα, 31 July 1940, p. 1. Although the sources for expenditure on the Ἀγροφύλακες are official propaganda, there seems no reason to disbelieve them.

curricula and conduct of examinations.<sup>45</sup> In accordance with his belief in the importance of intellectual training, the curriculum and teaching in the college for *Chorofilaki* officers were upgraded to tertiary level and a similar college for *Astinomia* officers was begun in 1938.<sup>46</sup> The principles of Marxism-Leninism and of communist organization formed part of these colleges' basic curriculum, while some candidates received special training in anti-communist work. In other respects, too, the authoritarian and conservative values of the regime were imparted to the police. Metaxas, for example, presided over each graduation ceremony for *Chorofilaki* officers, addressing graduates on their high role as representatives of the state and on the evils of the parliamentary system.<sup>47</sup> In the *Chorofilaki's* case, the regime eventually renewed most of the junior officers, lowered the retirement age for their seniors by four years, retired the ill-qualified and maintained a steady intake into the relevant college.<sup>48</sup> This last measure is especially significant because, from 1926-1935, the college had been closed after a surplus of officers, appointed through political motivations, had glutted it.<sup>49</sup>

In many respects, the administration of the police by Metaxas and Maniadakis was very successful. Reforms were effected which may be assumed to have improved its efficiency in the long term: the graduates of the new or improved colleges were, for example, to lead their organizations in late years. The regime's claims to have reduced considerably many sorts of crime have been accepted by police historians and were believed by Waterlow at the time. Some of the problems which were overcome had for many years baffled previous governments. One such problem was the prevalence of animal-rustling, which had persisted because the rustlers often enjoyed support from politicians. The destruction of communist organization had fol-

<sup>45</sup>Antoniou, III, 1492; *Ἐφημερίδα τῆς Κυβερνήσεως*, Series A, 21 February 1938, pp. 415-430; 12 July 1939, pp. 1871-4; 24 May 1940, pp. 1366-8.

<sup>46</sup>Daskalakis, I, 76; Antoniou, III, 1492; D. Ifandis, "Ὅταν Πρωτολειτουργήσει ἡ Σχολὴ Ὑπαστυνομικῶν," *Ἀστυνομικά Χρονικά*, March-April 1981, p. 181.

<sup>47</sup>Daskalakis, I, 77; Antoniou, III, 1472, 1492; *Ἐφημερίδα τῆς Κυβερνήσεως*, Series A, 21 February 1938, pp. 415-430; 24 May 1940, pp. 1366-8.

<sup>48</sup>Daskalakis, I, 77-8; Antoniou, III, 1489, 1492.

<sup>49</sup>FO 371/12926/29 (Rigg Report).

lowed years of strenuous persecution which had failed to prevent the expansion of communist activities. In another sphere, the police seemed successful in countering German and Italian espionage. Foreign observers, for example, testify to police efficiency in catching the many Italian spies who entered northern Greece in 1939-40.<sup>50</sup>

For all their successes, however, the new policies made the police still more unpopular and repressive. Thus, the regime's purposes were defeated in serious ways. The *Chorofilaki*, for example, because of their unpopularity in Crete, were unable to catch the leaders of the defeated rising of 1938. One unit attempting to do so was overwhelmed and disarmed by villagers.<sup>51</sup> Another example was police harassment of the Slavophones in Macedonia, who, sympathetic to Bulgaria, seemed to pose a security threat. A typically heavy-handed reaction of the authorities was to penalize these people for speaking Slav Macedonian in public.<sup>52</sup> In the country as a whole, the old alienation between police and mountain villagers worsened. A British visitor in Arcadia in 1939, for example, found himself "invaded" by complaints directed "mainly against overtaxation by an overly centralized administration, which allowed no place for the representation of local opinion and regarded any attempt at the expression of a local grievance with suspicion." Besides these grievances was a draconian ban on goats in many mountain regions.<sup>53</sup> As the coercive agents of the regime, the *Chorofilaki* must have been the target of much of this discontent.

Most damaging of all was the political persecution by the police, which was so extensive and harsh that it destroyed the moral influence of the regime and strengthened that of its opponents. Reports of the torture of arrested suspects circulated widely from the early days of the dictatorship. In many cases

<sup>50</sup>Antoniou, III, 1482; J. O. Iatrides (ed.), *Ambassador MacVeagh Reports: Greece 1933-47* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1980), p. 278; S. P. Andonakos, *Ντοκουμέντα* (privately published, Athens, 1983), p. 103; FO 371/21148/270; -/23770/427; -/23981/343.

<sup>51</sup>FO 371/22371/106.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, -/23770/106, Salonica Report no. 90; Antoniou, III, 1485.

<sup>53</sup>FO 371/23770/207; 'Εφημερίδα τῆς Κυβερνήσεως, Series A, 28 September 1937, pp. 2465-9; L. Baerentzen (ed.), *British Reports on Greece, 1943-4* (Museum Tusulanum Press, Copenhagen, 1982), pp. 27-8; E. Kalandzis, *Σαράντα Χρόνια Ἀνάμνησις* (privately published, Athens, 1969), p. 42.

such reports were clearly well-founded.<sup>54</sup> There are also many reliable reports of people being penalized for trivialities: one man was reprimanded by a nomarch and threatened with further punishment for failing to comply with a police order to display the flag on 4 August; a manufacturer was deported for refusing to make an exorbitant contribution to the youth movement; a newspaper was suspended for failing to show enough enthusiasm for the government; individuals were arrested merely for helping the hungry dependents of deportees; people were rounded up who, on the private admission of the police officer responsible, were sure to be released again for lack of evidence. Noting that those persecuted in the last case were of diverse social backgrounds and political views, the British Consul-General in Salonica concluded that the authorities were on the verge of creating the anti-dictatorial front with the communists whom they claimed to be combating.<sup>55</sup> Many people harassed on suspicion of communism were likely to have become more sympathetic to it as a result: the journalist Bert Birtles, before the dictatorship, interviewed people who claimed to have been converted to communism by police maltreatment. This movement was likely to have been especially common in Macedonia and Thrace, where large-scale arrests continued for much of the life of the dictatorship and were often accompanied by conspicuous brutality.<sup>56</sup> Much of the blame for the indiscriminate use of the communist label attaches to Maniadakis and Metaxas themselves, who had an interest in exaggerating the "red menace." They had no justification for doing so, because the skills needed to assess its true extent were quickly acquired by the forces under Maniadakis's supervision.

After the German invasion it was not difficult for EAM to exploit the grievances thus created.<sup>57</sup> Thus, Metaxas's direction of the police contributed to the polarization of opinion in the country in the 1940's.

<sup>54</sup>FO 371/21147, Annual Report for 1936, p. 100; -/24909/152; Iatrides, *MacVeagh*, p. 96; Linardatos, 4η Αυγούστου, pp. 60-4.

<sup>55</sup>FO 371/22371/90 (R 10205); -/23770/105, 320, 414-7, 429, 433; Kalandzis, Σοφάντα Χρόνια, pp. 46-7.

<sup>56</sup>Birtles, *Exiles*, pp. 131, 296, 304-5; FO 371/22361/388; -/21148, F.A.G. Cook's report on Patras for 1936; Linardatos, 4η Αυγούστου, pp. 223-4; Ἐθνικὸς Κήρυξ, 23 March 1950, p. 4.

<sup>57</sup>Baerentzen, *British Reports*, p. 15.