

imes 3/4/70

SOME CALL IT TREASON

The colonels' regime in Greece, now almost three years old, has yet to execute any of its enemies. The sedition trial, whose verdicts were announced yesterday, showed that a measure of judicial freedom remains. The accused were able to state in open court that they had been tortured and, in spite of the prosecution's demands and the exhortations of the Prime Minister, no death sentences were imposed. This will be a great relief to the many friends of the accused abroad—and to all who have been watching the trial.

The 34 were charged with plotting to overthrow the regime with violence, and all but seven were convicted. There was a fundamental weakness in the case, which the defendants and defence witnesses delighted to point out. They were being tried in the name of a regime which came to power three years ago by violently overthrowing the legitimate government. The contradiction was flagrant. If Professor Karayorgas is

guilty, then Mr. Papadopoulos is more guilty still. Harington's adage has never been more apposite: "Treason doth never prosper, what's the reason? For if it prosper, none dare call it Treason."

The future of the opposition in Greece is bleak. The regime has announced that it intends to relax some of the rigours of martial law, but this can be of little consolation to Greek democrats. There can be no doubt that the colonels would reimpose their authority with all necessary force if ever it were seriously challenged.

The best chance of a peaceful return to democracy probably lies in a realization by those classes which now support the regime that a military dictatorship is quite unnecessary and is harmful to Greece's present position and future hopes. This is why Greece's forced withdrawal from the Council of Europe was important, and why the democracies must continue to protest at the continued denial of liberty in Greece.