

Markos Wounded, Greece Learns; Rebel Leader Reported in Albania

Communist Commander Now Recovering—Army Retakes Ground in Vitsi Area

ATHENS, Sept. 23 (UP)—Gen. Markos Vafiades, Communist commander of the Greek rebel forces, had been wounded in the fighting in northern Greece and was now recuperating in a hospital at Tirana, Albania, Greek military circles reported tonight.

The informants were uncertain whether General Markos was wounded during the past few days' bitter fighting in the Vitsi area or in last month's campaign when the Greek Army routed the guerrillas from the Grammos Mountains.

With the Greek Army now recovering ground in the Vitsi Mountains, near the juncture of the Greek, Yugoslav and Albanian borders, Army sources here unofficially admitted that the guerrillas' temporary successes of the end of last week came when a Markos force estimated at 6,000 men penetrated the lines of the United States-equipped Fifteenth Division, whose commander was replaced recently on the recommendation of Lieut. Gen. James A. Van Fleet, chief of the United States military mission.

Army reinforcements halted the guerrilla advance, but there were indications that morale was low in some units of the army, especially among men who had fought in the mountains since early last spring, informants said.

General Markos reportedly has his headquarters now at the Greek village of Pyle on Little Lake Presba, twenty miles northwest of Kastoria. The town is on the western shore of the lake, three miles from Albanian territory.

The Greek General Staff said tonight that the guerrilla ranks now numbered 20,000 to 21,000—several thousand more than last year. The continued strengthening of the rebel forces was attributed to steady recruiting among dissatisfied elements, kidnappings and aid from Slav Macedonians along the northern frontiers.



Gen. Markos Vafiades
The New York Times (Paris Bureau)