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A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate College of Bowling Green State University in partial fulfillment of
The requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2006

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This study examines the role of both the United States and Great Britain during a series of crises that plagued Cyprus from the mid 1950s until the 1974 invasion by Turkey that led to the takeover of approximately one-third of the island and its partition. Initially an ancient Greek colony, Cyprus was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in the late 16th century, which allowed the native peoples to take part in the island’s governance. But the idea of Cyprus’ reunification with the Greek mainland, known as *enosis*, remained a significant tenet to most Greek-Cypriots. The movement to make *enosis* a reality gained strength following the island’s occupation in 1878 by Great Britain. Cyprus was integrated into the British imperialist agenda until the end of the Second World War when American and Soviet hegemony supplanted European colonialism. Beginning in 1955, Cyprus became a battleground between British officials and terrorists of the pro-*enosis* EOKA group until 1959 when the independence of Cyprus was negotiated between Britain and the governments of Greece and Turkey. The United States remained largely absent during this period, but during the 1960s and 1970s came to play an increasingly assertive role whenever intercommunal fighting between the Greek and Turkish-Cypriot populations threatened to spill over into Greece and Turkey, and endanger the southeastern flank of NATO. The American policy in Cyprus was primarily to avert such a war from taking place, and not to broker a long lasting, an approach that frequently put the U.S. in conflict with Great Britain, which still retained
two military bases on the island. Research for this study has relied heavily on recently declassified documents from both the U.S. and British governments and secondary materials that analyze the ongoing Cyprus issue from a number of different perspectives.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have brought the sort of good-natured intentions to this endeavor as only an amateur can. Thankfully, it has been my good fortune to be surrounded by so many capable scholars who helped to guide me along a road frequently serpentine and poorly lit. Firstly I must recognize the contributions of my advisor, Dr. Douglas J. Forsyth, who has shepherded a frequently bewildered student through this process while being generous with his time, patience and insight. Sincere thanks are also due to Dr. Gary Hess who exhibited enough faith in my project to join my committee without being acquainted with my scholarly work. I also must thank Dr. Walter Grunden for supporting what has been frequently labeled an unconventional writing style and Dr. Don K. Rowney for revealing new vistas in the discipline of history to me.

My sincerest thanks go to Luke Nichter for demonstrating what it means to be an academic both by his advice and his example; to Kyle Smith for sharing this journey with me in all its inherent joys and absurdities; and to Peter Kuebeck who faithfully endured many a rant and complaint with good humor. Additional appreciation goes to Jennifer Potocnak and Erin McKenna.

Finally, I must acknowledge the unfailing support of my family. To my father who gave me the first up close and personal look at a scholar, to my mother whose concerns for me frequently lay outside the academic, to my understanding sisters, Laura and Jane, my brother-in-law (though more like a brother) James for his advice and encouragement, and my niece, Maria Rose: I love you all.
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INTRODUCTION: ENTERING THE LABRYNITH

The island nation of Cyprus has long been denied a substantial role in the shaping of its own destiny. Rather, it has been claimed and reclaimed by a succession of emergent powers and frequently exchanged like a token on the gaming table of the Mediterranean. Cursed by its crucial geographical location on the crossroads of Northern Africa and the Middle East, Cyprus has, since the dawn of Western civilization, been the site of power struggles between competing empires whose concerns for regional dominance and expansion region have generally outweighed any regard for the well being of the native Cypriot people.

The 1974 invasion of Cyprus by Turkey and its subsequent partition is the most recent and raw example of this ill-fated legacy. The invasion’s brutality and the seemingly impotent response to it by the United States and Great Britain has led many conspiracy enthusiasts to contend that American and British politicians were both aware of Turkish intents and had been encouraging them to a degree since the mid-1950s. To this end, a number of scholars have allowed the shadow of the 1974 incursion to fall over earlier events to show a clear indication of an American-British cabal that forfeited Cyprus to insure the integrity of NATO’s southeastern flank against the Soviet Union.

Rather, it is the lack of communication, rather than a carefully orchestrated international plot, that doomed Cyprus to its current division, a lack of communication both between the Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities, as well as the dominant countries with interests in the Mediterranean. This thesis is an attempt to chart the sinuous course that lead to the partition of Cyprus from approximately 1952 until 1974 primarily from the perspective of the United States and Great Britain. Rather than peer
into the darker corners of history, as many previous texts have done, this study attempts to frame the Cyrus issue from the perspective of shifting Cold War concerns with an extensive reliance on recently released government documents from both American and British archives to tell the story. With differing policy agendas and political philosophies, the administrations and cabinets that occupied the White House and 10 Downing Street during the nearly three decades this study covers handled events on Cyprus quite differently.

These documents further demonstrate that the governments of both the United States and the United Kingdom were largely off-guard when troubles in Cyprus in the 1960s and 1970s. President Makarios, Cyprus’ leader, himself voiced bewilderment at his ejection in 1974 soon after his rescue by the British military. As a result, the response by American and British policymakers was one based largely on improvisation rather than deceit. This was due both to distracting circumstances, such as the resignation of Richard Nixon, and the fact that on a global scale, Cyprus simply was not a principal concern except within the context of a potential war between Greece and Turkey.

Furthermore, this thesis intends to show that the origins of Cyprus’ partition are rooted in Turkey’s anxiety of encroachment, which began in the nineteenth century due to the combined impact of Greece’s liberation from the weakening Ottoman Empire and Russia’s attempt to exercise greater influence in the East Mediterranean. Such anxiety initially motivated Turkey’s decision to allow Great Britain to occupy Cyprus in 1878 and largely led to Ankara’s decision to ally itself with America in the late 1940s. During the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, the working relationship between the U.S. and Turkey was an amicable one.
In 1952, when both Turkey and Greece became critical members in the new North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the perceived threat of the Soviet Union superseded any preexisting animosity between the two countries. By the time the Cold War began to thaw during the East-West détente of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the situation between Turkey and Greece had changed drastically. The attenuation of the Soviet menace and the presence of military-dominated regimes in Turkey and Greece translated into a more active interest in the local conflict unfolding on Cyprus and an ensuing exacerbation of the situation. Sources of contention between the two countries that had been put aside for the sake of Cold War demands returned to the surface and eventually took precedent over Western containment of the Soviet Union.

Fundamental policy changes were also taking place in the United States and Britain. Forfeiting nearly a century of colonial domination, the British oversaw the implementation of a constitutional framework for the Republic of Cyprus in 1959 and 1960, but maintained a role as one of the three guarantors of the new country along with Greece and Turkey. As the glory of the British Empire began to fade, the United States was compelled to fill the vacuum left in the Mediterranean and uphold the two-fold mission of containing Soviet influence and maintaining relative stability in the increasingly volatile Middle East. To this end, upholding the integrity of NATO’s southeastern flank became the keystone of U.S. policy in the east Mediterranean during both the Eisenhower and Johnson administrations. When Turkey and Greece were nearly drawn into a war over Cyprus in the fall of 1964 and again in 1967, the American diplomatic response was swift and incisive in order to hold the NATO alliance intact. But when the events of the summer of 1974 once more began to take on an increasingly
bellicose character, the U.S. failed to prevent the Turkish invasion and subsequent partition of Cyprus.

Myriad reasons might be cited for the American decision to remain largely on the sidelines: wariness to involve the U.S. in a conflict so soon after Vietnam, the economic turmoil brought about by OPEC’s oil embargo, and the lack of executive initiative in the White House as the Watergate crisis reached its culmination are just a few examples. The cumulative effect of these factors led to a general malaise in American foreign policy that subverted any chance of intervention. Another reason for U.S. hesitance to act is directly rooted in the fact that Secretary of State Henry Kissinger feared that the restoration of Cyprus’ left-leaning President, Archbishop Makarios, would result in greater Soviet influence in the island and, by proxy, the Mediterranean. By appearing ambivalent about Makarios’ fate, Kissinger managed to keep direct Soviet interference minimal, but at the cost of Cyprus’ self-determination. But, like Johnson before him, Kissinger was primarily concerned with preventing a war from occurring between two NATO allies that would risk endangering the southeastern flank, inviting Soviet intervention and contributing to the chaos in the Middle East.

Two major schools of literature have emerged from the morass of the Cyprus issue. The first attempts to depict the invasion as the climax of a long-simmering ethnic feud between the Greek and Turkish-Cypriot populations on the island. The other camp contends that it was the fumbling intervention of four foreign powers, Greece, Turkey, Great Britain and the United States, which augmented a local quarrel into a catastrophe that led to an unjust division following the Turkish invasion. Neither approach is terribly faithful to the facts or constructive in mending the rift between Greeks and Turks on
Cyprus and in their respective homelands. It is equally naïve to suggest that cultural animosity was the sole cause of the partition as it is to portray Cyprus as simply a martyr to Western machinations. The truth lies somewhere in between these two extreme approaches.

As befitting such a contentious topic, a venomous tone has been employed in much of the secondary literature on modern Cyprus. “I wrote this book in a fit of temper in order to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the 1974 invasion of Cyprus,” confides Christopher Hitchens in the preface to the second edition of his book, *Hostage to History*. “The lapse of five years has done nothing to sweeten the memory.”¹ For Hitchens, it also has done little to restore a sense of equanimity or objectivity with a text that essentially accuses Henry Kissinger of being the grand architect behind the events that immediately preceded the 1974 invasion. Such polemical assertions are unsurprising, given that the same author went on to pen a tirade against the former secretary of state’s supposed crimes against humanity that became 2002’s *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*.

The crux of Hitchens’ argument is not without legitimacy, but his means of substantiating it is not. The author debunks the idea of the 1974 Turkish invasion as “the climax of the struggle for union with Greece” but instead sees it as “the outcome of a careless and arrogant series of policies over which the Cypriots had little or no control.”² In Hitchens’ opinion, the partition of Cyprus is a simple case of superpower strategy eclipsing local needs and wants in the name of geopolitical stability. This is not an untrue assessment, but the author is perhaps too simplistic in his assessment. Great

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¹ Christopher Hitchens *Hostage to History: Cyprus from the Ottomans to Kissinger* (London: Verso, 1984): 11.
² Ibid 11.
Britain is accused of maintaining a charade from the mid-1950s as a mediator between Greece and Turkey while secretly advancing Turkish interests in Cyprus.³

But it was during 1964, in the midst of increasingly reckless violence between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities when President Lyndon Johnson dispatched Under Secretary, George Ball, to the region, that Hitchens first identifies the U.S.’s nefarious intentions. The Cypriot President, Archbishop Makarios, had been making overtures to communist nations in an attempt to gain support for a series of constitutional reforms. Fearing that Cyprus might become a “Mediterranean Cuba” and drag two NATO allies into a war, Hitchens contends that Ball made contact with the leader of the Cypriot National Guard and former terrorist leader, George Grivas, to plan and eventually carry out a coup that would oust Makarios and divide Cyprus into Greek and Turkish sections. According to Hitchens, when Kissinger became secretary of state, he became privy to Ball’s plans and carefully integrated them into his geopolitical strategy that would ensure Makarios’ removal, the partition of Cyprus, and overall security in the eastern Mediterranean.

Nixon’s secretary of state and George Ball are again conveniently cast as villains in Brendan O’Malley and Ian Craig’s 2001 book, The Cyprus Conspiracy: America, Espionage and the Turkish Invasion, but he his not the first meddlesome American. According to O’Malley and Craig, President Eisenhower deliberately forced Great Britain to abandon its sovereignty over Cyprus in order to ensure the deployment of nuclear missiles on Turkish soil.⁴ In actuality, the United States rarely asserted a role during the 1950s beyond that of observer. But for O’Malley and Craig, America’s

³ Ibid 44-45.
conspiratorial tendencies asserted themselves more fully in the aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 when the use of electronic surveillance gathering facilities located on British bases in Cyprus became of paramount importance. To ensure that these key sites would remain accessible to American agents, the U.S. placed its strategic needs ahead of Cypriot self-determination and knowingly permitted Turkey to invade Cyprus in 1974.

Kissinger himself weighs in on the Cyprus issue with a chapter in the final volume of his memoirs, *Years of Renewal*. The chapter’s title, “Cyprus, a Case Study in Ethnic Conflict,” leaves little doubt as to where the former secretary of state stands on the issue. Kissinger contends that the partition was inevitable due to centuries-old passions that “ran so deep as to be almost beyond the comprehension of anyone not belonging to either of the two groups.” In Cyprus, Kissinger sees the forerunner of the sort of ethnic conflict that has become all too common as the enmity between the U.S. and the USSR began to subside during the 1980s and 90s. By the time of Nixon’s presidency, President Makarios’ friendly posture to nations hostile to the United States had come to be viewed as “relatively minor irritations” by the administration, but certainly not grounds for a U.S.-supported overthrow of the Archbishop.

Kissinger’s memoir devotes many more pages to the series of telephone conversations he had with the British Foreign Minister, James Callaghan, during the 1974 crisis than he does to constructing a case study of ethnic conflict. That aspect of Cyprus’ history is more fully explored by Michael A. Attalides in *Cyprus: Nationalism and*

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6 Ibid 194.
international politics. The author explores the ongoing friction on Cyprus from the standpoint of competing nationalist movements beginning with the “European-type” nationalism fostered by Greece and Turkey in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, then the “anti-colonial” nationalism that developed against Great Britain, and finally the “regionalism” between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. Attalides is not attempting simply to attribute the partition to the persistent harassment of the Turkish minority by the Greek majority, but rather looks at the evolving ways in which the two communities defined one another. Much of the developing animosity Attalides attributes to “imperial powers” including Turkey, Greece, and Great Britain who have “repeatedly been involved in the development of nationalist movements in Cyprus.” This has taken place directly through governmental structures and diplomacy and indirectly by “their determining influences on the intercommunal system of power.”7 As a result a traditional post such as the Archbishopric of the Greek Orthodox Church on Cyprus acquired political attributes and further alienated the predominantly Muslim Turkish Cypriots. The ramifications of these circumstances will be more fully explored within the body of this study.

This thesis is intended to widen the discourse on the Cyprus debate beyond the narrow scope of underhanded schemes or long-standing ethnic hatreds. To more fully grasp the complexity of the Cyprus issue, scholarship must advance beyond the convenience of the conspiracy theory. To that end, this work uses an approach that subdivides U.S. and British Cyprus policy into three distinct periods: the mid to late 1950s when ethnic fighting compelled the British to allow Cypriot self-determination, the

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mid-1960s as fighting on Cyprus began once more with the support of outside nations, and 1974 when the Greek junta directed a coup against President Makarios led to the Turkish invasion. Chapters are devoted to the 1950s and 1960s and consider the policy of the U.S. and Great Britain within the context of the specific issues and personalities of the time that impacted Cyprus. Two chapters are then devoted exclusively to the events of the summer of 1974 due to the fact that its is the most hotly contested period and the one for which archival materials have most recently become available for assessment.

This thesis will also address a topic that has been sorely ignored: the changing face of diplomatic relations between Turkey and the West. One reason for this lack of knowledge is due to the fact that the Government of Turkey closely guards its archives from both foreign and domestic scholars. Another factor is the closely monitored Turkish media that is forbidden from publishing or broadcasting material that may be deemed unflattering. A third, more sinister, reason is the fact that military coups in 1960 and 1971 prevented many key Turkish politicians from sharing their impressions due to imprisonment or execution. There also remain significant gaps in the archival records of the Nixon Administration during the mid-1970s. At the time of this paper’s writing, new documents are being made available that will hopefully further illuminate American policy at the time of the invasion.

The first chapter of this thesis is a cursory examination of Cyprus’ history beginning with the ancient Greeks who first settled on the island and, by establishing Cyprus’ innate “Greekness,” laid the groundwork for the Greek-Cypriots of later generations in their continual appeals for unification with Greece (enosis). The chapter traces the evolving dynamic between Greek and Turkish Cypriots beginning with the
Ottoman Empire’s subjugation of the island in the late sixteenth century until the beginning of Great Britain’s stewardship in 1878. Furthermore, the role of Great Britain in introducing nationalism and further intensifying existing divisions will be explored leading to the first outbreak of Greek Cypriot violence in 1931. The first chapter concludes with the rise of Archbishop Makarios as the leader of the enosis movement in 1950 and the circumstances that led to a five year long conflict between British forces and the Greek-Cypriot terrorist group, the EOKA.

The second chapter follows how the “special relationship” between the United States and Great Britain was tested during the Eisenhower administration as the fate of British involvement in the Middle East as well as Cyprus was being decided. As the violent struggle between the EOKA and the British raged on, the U.S. and Britain were changing roles with the British forfeiting their colonial roots and America taking on the hegemonic tendencies that continue to this day. In 1954, the United States essentially had no policy pertaining to Cyprus and it was not until Greece began championing the issue of enosis before the UN that one was adopted. Although Eisenhower remained relatively uninformed of the ongoing tension and violence that began in Cyprus in 1955, his secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, managed to fashion a strategy that reflected the U.S.’s twin concerns of the post-war era: Soviet containment and self-determination for former colonies. British policy in the mid-1950s regarding Cyprus changed drastically from a near mania with keeping the enosis a domestic issue to the decision to involve the governments of Greece and Turkey as well as NATO in deciding Cyprus’ destiny. By widening the scope of the Cyprus issue, the British opened a Pandora’s box allowing Greek and Turkish demands to influence and hinder the development of Cyprus’ self-
determination. Great Britain’s decision to vacate much of Cyprus, save a pair of sovereign military bases, was in line with British policy to downgrade its presence in the Middle East and the Mediterranean. But the constitutional government the British left behind was structured in such a way that the political and social differences between the Greek and Turkish-Cypriots became further institutionalized and impossible to overcome.

The increasingly dynamic role of the Johnson administration in the Cyprus issue during the 1960s as violence between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots escalated is the focus of chapter three. In late 1963, fighting between the two communities broke out once more, quickly drawing the attention and eventual involvement of Greece and Turkey and raising the chances of a war between the two. Rather than fully assert control of the worsening situation, the United States instead attempted to cajole Great Britain back into a more dominant position in the Mediterranean. The efforts of the U.S. were largely unsuccessful due to the recent election of the Labour government, which was far less inclined to assert Britain militarily than the previous Conservative cabinet.

Following five costly years of fighting in Cyprus, the British were apprehensive about embroiling themselves in another quarrel in the island. But neither the British nor the Americans were willing to allow Makarios to take his aspirations to dismantle the constitution to the UN, but intended to end the violence under NATO auspices. Assistant Secretary of State George Ball’s trip to Cyprus to meet with Makarios in 1964 did result in the discussion of partition as a potential course of action, but it was simply one of many options, and was not the one favored by the Johnson Administration. Johnson, impatiently wishing to diffuse the crisis sent a vicious letter to Turkish Prime Minister Ismet Inönü. Despite previous support and sensitivity to Ankara’s concerns regarding the
safety of the Turkish-Cypriots, Johnson threatened in his letter to withdraw the support of NATO should a war between Greece and Turkey lead to Soviet military intervention. Such a threat demonstrated to the Turks they were an ally of convenience rather than a staunchly supported member of the alliance, and paved the way to renewed diplomacy with the Soviet Union. Johnson’s tactic was motivated by the desire to enter his re-election campaign without the burden of another crisis, but may also have reflected the Johnson administration’s desire not to appear weak to the Soviet bloc. Although the short-term goal of preventing war between Greece and Turkey was reached, Johnson’s brusque form of crisis management rather than attempting to find a long-term solution to the Cyprus dispute meant that it would remain unresolved.

Chapter four begins coverage of the Nixon years and the circumstances that led to the 1974 Turkish invasion. During the previous decade, both Turkey and Greece underwent drastic changes in government. This was especially true in Greece, which following a coup in 1967, became dominated by a military regime. The Turkish government experienced its own coup in 1971 and, as a result of the detrimental impact of Johnson’s diplomacy, was following a foreign policy course largely independent of the United States. This included a number of agreements with the Soviet Union that led to the closest political and economic cooperation between the two nations since the 1930s. With both Greece and Turkey more forcefully asserting their regional concerns over the larger picture of Soviet containment, it was no longer feasible for the United States to employ the carrot of NATO protection and the stick of Russian invasion. This diplomatic restructuring during the era of détente allowed Greece and Turkey to act with far more boldness in 1974 than was possible during the previous two decades. Chapter four traces
how such boldness resulted in Makarios’ ousting on July 15 and paved the way of the
Turkish invasion five days later.

Chapter five covers the invasion, the American and British efforts to organize and
maintain a short-lived cease-fire, the two sets of failed negotiations in Geneva and
Turkey’s eventual decision to subjugate over one-third of Cyprus. Henry Kissinger acted
with comparative resoluteness from the coup to the establishment of the cease-fire on
July 22, motivated primarily by the desire to prevent a Greco-Turkish war and Soviet
involvement. Afterwards, the Americans failed to support British demands on either
Greece or Turkey at the Geneva conferences with the slightest suggestion of military
reprisals, giving Turkey the needed leverage and sense of security that its plans for
partition would be unopposed. Kissinger has contended that his attention was diverted by
Nixon’s resignation and his intention to prevent incoming President Gerald Ford from
having to deal with a war between two NATO allies. The final chapter presents a brief
summation of the main arguments before tracing the Cyprus conflict to the current day,
specifically in regards to the European Union.
CHAPTER ONE: PLANTING THE SEEDS OF CONFLICT

In the spring of 1878, the British government initiated a search of the eastern Mediterranean for a suitably strategic site from which to protect Turkey and the route to India from possible Russian expansion. The task of compiling a catalog of potential locations was entrusted to an officer in the war intelligence department well acquainted with the area, Colonel Robert Home. Two years prior, Colonel Home had journeyed to Turkey on a reconnaissance mission and spent several months touring a number of sites along the Bosphorus and the Anatolian coast.

On June 8th Home submitted a list of ten possible suggestions and recommendations to his superior, Lord Salisbury. Home’s personal choice, the island of Cyprus, featured both tactical and cultural advantages. Home enthused: “It is inhabited by a very mixed race: -as an experiment in treating the Eastern question fairly, there could be no better place.”¹ The “Eastern question” to which Home refers is possible Russian expansion into the east Mediterranean at the expense of the receding Ottoman Empire.² It has been one of the most constant themes in the history of international relations, dating back to 1696 when the territory of the Tsars extended the northern boundary of the Black Sea.³ The next natural step for the growing Russian state was greater access to the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, leading to struggles with other nations over the next three centuries.

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The prospect of increasing Russian influence did not sit well with the Ottoman and Persian Empires, two powers fast nearing their nadir. Providentially, another European colonial power appeared ready to champion the cause of the waning Eastern empires, Great Britain. An early sign of Russia’s intentions was noted in 1799 by Horatio Nelson when he wrote of Britain’s ally: “The Russians seem to me more bent on taking ports in the Mediterranean than in destroying Bonaparte in Egypt.”\(^4\) The ongoing competition between Russian and British political interests in the eastern Mediterranean manifested itself most vividly during the Crimean War of 1854-56 and remained a prominent issue afterwards. It was pondered in Britain whether or not the ethnically, religiously, and linguistically disparate peoples living in the East Mediterranean could be compelled to set aside their differences and be collectively galvanized by the Union Jack flapping in the wind. In Cyprus, Colonel Home was confident that he had discovered a place where the question might be answered affirmatively:

“What is done in Cyprus will be known all through Syria and Asia Minor. The progress that undoubtedly will follow, were this island a British possession would do more to convince Eastern nations of the value of civilization, and the benefits of good government than anything else. The result would extend British prestige far and wide in the Levant.”\(^5\)

When the British took command of Cyprus in 1878, the island had been held in a submissive status by the Ottoman Empire since 1571. The Greek Cypriots, who proudly traced their lineage back to ancient Greek colonial expansion of the second millennium B.C., greeted the British as liberators, and with seemingly good reason. During the Greek War of Independence in 1821-1828, Great Britain was one of many European nations, including Russia and France, to actively support the Greek revolutionaries. Pro-

\(^5\) Ibid 241.
Greek sentiments in Britain were deeply rooted in the recognition of ancient Greece as the birthplace of Western civilization. Most educated Europeans viewed themselves as the inheritors of a rich political and cultural tradition that originated with the classical Greeks and been preserved throughout the centuries. The lure of the cause was such that many young Englishmen were enticed to volunteer for the Greek side, the most notable being the poet, Lord Byron, whose succumbed to marsh fever in 1823. The fact that the Turks were Muslims oppressing a predominantly Christian people gave further impetus to British support.

**Cyprus Under the Ottomans**

Given the inner-communal violence that was to befall the island in the late 1950s, it is no small irony that the Ottoman Turks, after nearly a century of raids, set foot on Cyprus as conquerors at the behest of the native Greek population. The Ottomans were just one in a series of marauding empires to give further shading to the island’s already checkered past which had witnessed its domination by the Phoenicians, Assyrians, Persians, Romans, Byzantines, and a myriad of others. The one constant institution in Cyprus through the centuries was the Greek Orthodox Church. This was the sole denomination on the island until the late 11th century when the Latin house of Lusigian assumed control of the island from Richard Coeur de Lion. The Greek Orthodox Church then became subordinate to the Roman Catholic Church.

At the time of the Ottoman occupation in 1571, following a yearlong campaign, the Cypriots had been struggling beneath the yoke of the Venetians since 1489 when the island a part of their republic. In their Catholic zeal, the Venetians outlawed the

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Orthodox Church and also implemented feudalism reducing many Cypriots to paupers. Given their Muslim faith, the Ottoman Turks seemed anomalous deliverers of the Cypriot Greeks, but quickly exhibited their lenience by abolishing feudalism, restoring Greek Orthodoxy and reinstating the archbishop and the three bishops of the Church of Cyprus to their former posts in 1575. After having established a garrison on Cyprus, the Ottoman administration offered Turkish soldiers fiefs of land, known as *timars*, as an inducement to settle permanently on the island. These first few Turkish settlers quickly established a significant demographic foothold, until, by the 19th century, they made up nearly one-fifth of the Cypriot population, a percentage that has remained largely intact.

The Ottomans favored a system of colonial ruler through established religious, rather than ethnic, institutions known as the *millet*. Millets were initially identified in the Islamic world as any religious group be it Muslim or otherwise. In time, the word *millet* evolved into a technical term used by the Ottomans to apply to “the organized, recognized, religio-political communities enjoying certain rights of autonomy under their own chiefs.” By following this model, the Ottoman Turks recognized the Church’s Archbishop as the Greek Cypriot community’s leading representative (Ethnarch), giving the post a political aspect and sense of privilege it had heretofore lacked and setting the stage for future conflict. The Orthodox Church became the Greek-Cypriot institution through which political representation developed. It acquired key functions, such as the

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8 Ibid.
collection of state taxes, and also served as the origin from which Cypriot national consciousness developed.¹¹

But the fact that the government of the Greek Cypriots in many respects resembled a theocracy added religious fervor to their nationalist aspirations during the late 19¹⁰ and 20th centuries. The Greek-Cypriot millet would also become a source of inter-communal strife by providing an organization separate from the Turks where cultural symbols and ideology could be preserved that were innately opposed to the largely Muslim Turkish Cypriot population. Through the millet, segregation along religious lines was preserved and a forum for the development of legal codes and educational systems separate from the Turkish-Cypriots was provided.¹² Unbeknownst to them, the Ottomans had allowed an ember of hostility to smolder that would burst into flames when the winds of nationalism swept across it in the 19¹⁰ and 20¹⁰ centuries.

The Ottoman Turkish tenure in Cyprus from 1571-1878 was largely a peaceful, with reciprocal consideration and frequent cooperation existing between Turks and Greeks. Though the two communities largely remained culturally isolated from one another in both religion and education, there hardly existed the sort of centuries-old animosity, which many have contended that the violence of the 1950s-1970s was simply an extension of.¹³ Under the Ottomans, the collective nature of group interaction was based on religion rather than nationality or nationalism.¹⁴ Up to the 19¹⁰ century, the Greek Cypriots were identified as “Christian” rather than “Greek” and were just as likely

¹¹ Michael A. Attalides Cyprus: Nationalism and international politics (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1979), 1.
¹³ The most prominent of these being the aforementioned Dr. Kissinger.
to take part in administrative duties such as tax collecting as their Ottoman counterparts.\textsuperscript{15} Both the Muslims and Christians in Cyprus frequently found that their interests coincided such as in 1764 when the two groups united to topple and kill the newly appointed governor, Chil Osman, after his threats to double the existing tax.\textsuperscript{16} The perils of taxation proved an abler unifier than religious differences a divider; from the 16\textsuperscript{th} to the 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries Muslims and Christians predominantly aligned themselves according to class lines rather than theology.\textsuperscript{17}

Whatever hostility emerged on Cyprus beginning in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century was rooted less in domestic matters than in the ongoing feud between the Ottoman Empire and the Greek state that developed in the 1820s. From 1453, with the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans under Mehmet II and the end of Byzantium, until 1832 there was no distinctive Greek political entity. The rise of Greek nationalism during this period was largely in response to the centuries of Ottoman rule.\textsuperscript{18} Much of the modern Greek national identity continues to be rooted in the historic antagonism with Asia Minor that dates back to the Hellenic and Byzantine ages.\textsuperscript{19} In 1821, when Greece initiated the rebellion against the Ottomans, Greek-Cypriots came to identify themselves with a distinctly Greek nationalism for the first time.\textsuperscript{20} But it did not fully capture the hearts of the Greek-Cypriots as later generations contended to give their agendas greater legitimacy. Part of the reason for this tepid response was due to the sheer distance from

\textsuperscript{16} Pollis “Intergroup Conflict,” 585.
\textsuperscript{17} Pollis “Cyprus: Nationalism,” 100.
\textsuperscript{18} Philip Robins \textit{Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War} (Seattle: University of Washington, 2003): 113.
\textsuperscript{20} Kliot and Mansfield, 496.
Greece and the closeness to the Ottoman Empire; outright collaboration with the revolting Greeks was impractical. Archbishop Kyprianos, the head of the Greek Orthodox Church on Cyprus at the time the war began, and many other bishops became vehement opponents of the conflict and actually excommunicated revolutionary heroes who died in the name of Greek independence. In spite of this, Kyprianos and many of his associates were later executed by the Ottomans only to be resurrected years later as early martyrs to the cause of Cypriot independence.

The Archbishop’s death may have been enough of a deterrent to squelch a potential revolt in Cyprus and, while the Ottomans remained in power and most Greek Cypriots remained apathetic, there was no organized agitation for the island’s independence. But Greece’s ultimate victory in 1828 and the emergence of an independent Greek state two years later gave credence to the Megali, or great, idea of enosis. In enosis, or the reunification of former Greek territories, many Greeks saw the mechanism of returning their fledgling nation to a new glorious age that was worthy of Pericles and Alexander the Great. Throughout the 1800s and early 1900s the nascent Greek state’s interest in adding Orthodox Greeks still living in the Ottoman Empire to its population never flagged and many traditionally Greek provinces were returned. In 1864 Greece gained the Ionian Islands from Great Britain, the Ottoman Empire handed over Thessaly in 1881. Crete successfully ejected the Turks in 1898 before joining Greece in 1913. It was not long before Greeks and Greek-Cypriots alike would find a sharing of common interests and the movement of enosis for Cyprus would gain momentum.

21 Pollis “Intergroup Conflict” 588.
23 Beesley 355.
The British “divide and rule” Cyprus

By the mid-1870s Europe’s “sick man,” the Ottoman Empire, appeared to be nearing its demise. Its former territorial possessions, beginning with Greece, continued to break off and become independent states. A war with Russia that began in 1876 was climaxing with the Russian army about to wipe their boots on Istanbul’s doorstep. In 1878 Russian forces had reached the Istanbul suburb of Yeşilköy and it became necessary for the Turks to call upon the services of the British once more. Ever faithful, the British threatened intervention on behalf of their Ottoman allies and then manipulated the resulting Treaty of San Stefano to their specifications, including the return of some of the territory Russia had taken during the war. Great Britain’s fee for its intercession was the occupation and administration of Cyprus as a British province. The Ottomans, under Sultan Abdulhamid, were not anxious to part with Cyprus, but finding themselves too weak militarily to contend with the ongoing Russian threat, they had little choice but to accept Great Britain’s offer. In exchange for a British commitment to maintain the existing borders of Turkish domains in Asia, the Ottomans leased Britain the island. With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the East Mediterranean became critical to British communications between colonial holdings and as a route to India; it was an area with which the British did not wish the Russians to tamper.

Given the support of many Englishmen to the cause of Greek independence, many Greek-Cypriots assumed that their cause of enosis would be met with similar

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24 Muammar Kaylan *The Kemalists: Islamic Revival and the Fate of Secular Turkey* (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books): 149.
encouragement and welcomed the new government accordingly. But the British colonial administration arrived on Cyprus prepared to erect a bureaucracy similar to those that stretched from South Africa to Hong Kong, one that emphasized “divide and rule.” The first requests for union with Greece were summarily dismissed. According to Adamantia Pollis, the policy of British colonizers was frequently based on perceived cleavages between subject peoples along ethnic, religious, linguistic, or cultural lines. These divisions later became the basis for intergroup conflict after independence had been achieved or the movement for sovereignty began to develop. In doing so, the British managed to keep themselves separate from native cultures, but also encouraged the development of differences between groups that had previously been absent.

Such an example of the British’s formal division is the changes made to the Cypriot educational system. After 1878, two separate boards of education were established: one under the leadership of the Greek Cypriot Archbishop and the other controlled by the Turkish Cypriot mufti. Such an arrangement led to the further institutionalization of the existing Cypriot educational system. The Greek-Cypriot schools had long been modeled after schools on Greece and stocked largely with free textbooks furnished by the motherland. “Greek-Christian” schools more than doubled from 94 in 1881 to 238 in 1901 and increasingly became centers of Greek-identity indoctrination rather than intellectual enrichment.

The British carried this pattern of cultural distinctions into the political arena as well. In 1882 the Legislative Council was established with a total of 18 members

27 Pollis “Intergroup Conflict” 576.
28 Ibid 576-578.
30 Persianis 51.
31 Attalides 26.
intended to mirror the island’s ethnic makeup: three elected Muslims and nine “non-Muslims,” and six appointed civil servants. Following numerous complaints from the Greek-Cypriot community, the Council was enlarged to 24 members in 1924, but the number of Muslim members remained at three.\textsuperscript{32} Under British rule, the population of the Greek-Cypriots rose disproportionately, from 73.92% in 1881 to 79.48% in 1931 while the Turkish minority continued to dwindle as many returned to the Turkish homeland.\textsuperscript{33}

After Great Britain’s 1882 occupation of Egypt, Cyprus lost considerable strategic importance. One of the initial justifications for the 1878 occupation was Britain’s acquisition of the Khedive’s shares in the Suez Canal in 1875, and the need to defend its new possession. Having gained Egypt, it was possible for Britain to directly protect the Canal and not by proxy from Cyprus.\textsuperscript{34} The island retained some importance, however, both as a means of barring Russian access through the Bosphorus and protecting the route to India. Despite this, previous plans to expand military installations in Cyprus never came to fruition largely because Alexandria provided facilities that would serve Britain’s needs.\textsuperscript{35}

With the start of World War I and Britain’s declaration of war against Turkey on November 5, 1914, the British announced that the terms of 1878 that allowed them to occupy and administer Cyprus were void. “From and after the date hereof the said island shall be annexed to and form part of His Majesty’s Dominions, and the said island is annexed accordingly.”\textsuperscript{36} Cyprus became integrated into Great Britain’s post-war design

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid 23-24.
\textsuperscript{33} Kliot and Mansfield, 496.
\textsuperscript{34} Rosenbaum, 621.
\textsuperscript{35} Attalides, 3.
\textsuperscript{36} “Annexation of Cyprus by Great Britain” \textit{The American Journal of International Law} Vol. 9, No. 1 (Jan., 1915): 204.
for the Middle East as one of many bases that shielded the region from Russian and French interference.\textsuperscript{37}

**Turkey and Greece: animosity and reconciliation**

Following the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, the triumphant Greeks doubled the size of their territory and population through conquests over the defeated Turks that included parts of Epirus, Macedonia, and most of the Aegean islands.\textsuperscript{38} The dream of *enosis* continued to manifest itself after the First World War and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. Turkey, having sided with the vanquished Central Powers, was now obligated to suffer a similar punishment as her former allies. The unratified Treaty of Sèvres of 1920 was intended to give Greece all of Thrace, with the exception of Istanbul, as well as the coastal city of Izmir and its hinterland. During 1920 the Greek army occupied much of eastern Thrace but, driven by the aspiration to reclaim Constantinople (Istanbul), continued to drive inland until it had taken Kütahya.\textsuperscript{39} Seemingly unstoppable and supported by the British, the Greeks were within 100 kilometers of Ankara in 1922 when a deliverer appeared in the form of Mustafa Kemal, later known as Atatürk, took the head of the Turkish forces and managed to drive the invaders back to Izmir.\textsuperscript{40}

In response to the desires by both the Greeks and the Turks to create homogeneous nation-states unbound from large minority communities, which might be a source of anxiety and potential conflict, the Treaty of Lausanne was drafted in 1923.\textsuperscript{41} The Treaty provided for a boundary line to be drawn through the Aegean across which

\textsuperscript{37} David Fromkin *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Avon Books, 1989): 140.


\textsuperscript{39} Váli 220.

\textsuperscript{40} Beeley 356.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid 351.
foreigners would be forced providing Greece and Turkey with absolute sovereignty in certain territories. Although Cyprus, as a British protectorate, was exempted from the Treaty’s provisions, it would seem only natural that with the systematic division of the Aegean along national lines, both Greeks and Turks would utilize a similar approach towards the island in the years to come.

Atatürk renounced Turkey’s claim to Cyprus in the Treaty of Laussane, but the island would remain fixed firmly in the Turkish consciousness. What largely comforted the Turks was the knowledge that, so long British sovereignty was guaranteed, the security of their brethren on Cyprus was ensured. But should a hostile nation gain control of the island, it would pose a significant challenge to the integrity of Turkey’s southern border since nearly 150 miles of Cypriot coastline lies just 70 miles south of Anatolia’s “soft underbelly.” With approximately 2400 Greek islands spread over the area of 80,000 square miles of Aegean that separates Greece and Turkey, a non-Greek Cyprus was significant in its preventing a “stranglehold over most Turkish outlets to the sea.” As the ultimate goal of some subscribers of the enosis idea included the eventual encirclement or acquisition of Turkey, the potential loss of Cyprus and southern sea-lanes was anathema to most Turks.

For the time being, Cyprus and other Turkish territorial concerns were set aside as Atatürk spearheaded a program of industrialization that mimicked Western models. Such a demanding task discouraged any thought of territorial expansion; Atatürk’s

43 Attalides 7; Robins 117.
44 Kramer 175.
45 Meyer 6.
modernization agenda demanded that the efforts and materials of the Turkish people remain within the borders of Anatolia. Due largely to the charisma of its new leader, Turkey was able to forge comparatively stable diplomatic relations with Greece and its prime minister, Eleuthérios Venizelos, until a mood of détente had been reached by 1930 culminating in the signing of the Ankara Treaty of Friendship on September 14, 1933.\textsuperscript{47}

By Greece’s recognition that the eastern Aegean seaboard was the domain of Turkey, the Treaty helped to alleviate some of the tension over contested territory between the two countries until the mid 1950s violence in Cyprus began.\textsuperscript{48}

Atatürk and Venizelos managed to put land disputes aside, but the streamlined Turkish republic that replaced the Ottoman Empire was still rooted in a fundamental distrust of outsiders and the fear of territorial losses. The republic’s creators were largely military leaders and civil servants who had witnessed first-hand the uninterrupted loss of Turkish territory that had begun in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{49} As a result the Turkish political culture developed the fearful belief that malevolent outside powers are conspiring in unison to undermine and divide Turkey. This conviction, that nations including Greece would someday carry out such plans, has been dubbed the “Sèvres phobia,” and was frequently utilized by the Turkey military when it served the latter’s purposes.\textsuperscript{50}

\textsuperscript{47} Ronald R. Krebs “Perverse Nationalism: NATO and the Greco-Turkish Conflict” \textit{International Institutionalism} Vol. 53, No. 2 (Spring, 1999): 357.


The development of the *enosis* movement and communism in Cyprus

Greece missed a number of opportunities to acquire Cyprus during and after World War I. Once Turkey entered the Central powers camp, the British promptly annexed Cyprus. In 1915 Great Britain offered the island as a bribe to compel the Greeks to join the Allies, but were rebuffed by the pro-German king, Constantine I. They must have been an inherent cruelty to the Greek Cypriots’ continual denial of *enosis*. Their first requests to be united with Greece began soon after the British arrival in 1878 and were based on the assumption that the British, in keeping with their liberal tendencies of the 1820s and 30s, when they had assisted in the emergence of the Greek state, would surely grant Cyprus similar autonomy. The British initially justified their stance against *enosis* due to a treaty obligation to return Cyprus to Turkey should they ever withdraw. Following the signing of the Treaty of Laussane in 1923 and Atatürk’s renunciation of Turkey’s claims on Cyprus, the Greek-Cypriots redoubled their efforts to make *enosis* a political issue by regularly passing resolutions demanding union with Greece.

If any year might be cited as Cyprus’s 1789 or 1917, the moment of a Cypriot national consciousness coming into being, it would be 1931. That year a young religious student named Michael Christodorelou scribbled “*Zito i Enosis*” on the wall of the monastery where he was residing. Christodorelou would become the Archbishop of Cyprus in two decades time, the key leader in the *enosis* moment, and the first president.

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54 Ibid 8.
55 Mayes 18.
He was following in the steps of the clerics whose leadership was instrumental in the first display of militant opposition to British rule in the autumn of 1931.

A revival of the dream of Cyprus’ union with Greece took place the late 1920s and early 1930s, spurred on by the political and religious elites in the Greek-Cypriot community. But it was not solely the cause of *enosis* that precipitated events in 1931. As late as 1927, the British had been taxing Cyprus to pay off old debts incurred by the Ottoman Empire during the previous century. There was four-year reprieve until the British colonial governor, Ronald Storrs, introduced yet another rigorous set of economic measures that included a tax raise. In protest, a number of the Greek-Cypriot members of the Legislative Council resigned and the *enosis* campaign headed by Nicodemus, Bishop of Kitium, suddenly took on a violent character. On the evening of October 23, a “mob estimated at about 5,000 composed of students and the riffraff of the capital (Nicosia)” converged on Storrs’ home. What began with anti-British speeches culminated in stone throwing and a night lit by overturned cars set ablaze before Storrs’ house itself was set on fire. Within twenty minutes, the collection of Greek and Byzantine antiques that it had taken the governor a lifetime to accumulate was incinerated. The British troops called out to control the rioters fired into the crowd, killing one young man; ten more Greek-Cypriots perished as the fighting continued into the next day.

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59 Ibid.
60 Newsinger 85.
The riots were quickly followed by repressive measures. British colonial authorities placed a ban on such national symbols as the Greek flag and national anthem. Harsh penalties were also leveled against the Greek Cypriots: “the cost of reparation of Government property destroyed during the recent disturbances shall be made good by the Greek-Christian inhabitants of the country excluding Government officials.” The fine for the damages sustained was estimated to be nearly £14,000. Furthermore, the Cypriot press became heavily censored and political parties outlawed, paving the way for trade unions to become the primary political forums in Cyprus. It is little wonder that when political parties were reinstated in 1941, one of the first and most vibrant to reemerge, the communist party (AKEL), originated from a politicized trade union.

Both Turkish and Greek journalists exploited the riots to breach the delicate amity that had been established between their two countries, though to different degrees. Governor Storrs bitterly complained to Archbishop Cyril in a November 31 letter that:

“The Athenian Press has let itself go with a most disgraceful and utterly unfounded atrocity campaign which seems to have penetrated into some of the lower British Press. In addition to scandalous accusations against our soldiers, sailors and police, I have been charged with robbing of the Churches in Cyprus of their ikons and trading in them.”

The British Ambassador to Turkey, George T. Clark, alerted Storrs of a similar, but less severe, set of accounts in Turkish newspapers: “There was first a little tendency in the Cypriot Moslems, but it was evidently not encouraged in responsible quarters and died

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61 Attalides, 27.
62 Official government decree, Ronald Storrs papers.
64 11-28-31 letter from Ronald Storrs to Archbishop Cyril, Ronald Storrs papers, Reel 11.
down pretty quickly." But to Turkish-Cypriots, the riots were vivid proof that the Greek majority was willing to go to violent lengths to realize the dream of \textit{enosis} with little consideration for the minority’s apprehension. As a result, the Turkish-Cypriots came to more actively identify British rule as a means of preserving their safety in the face of mounting Greek-Cypriot pressure.

As a result of the 1931 rioting, the government of Cyprus came to a virtual standstill. Besides the ban on political parties, the Legislative Council did not meet again until after World War II. The Greek Orthodox Church was also impacted with the deportation of two out of the four members, on suspicion of having organized the disorder. Immediately afterwards the serving Archbishop, Cyril, died and the remaining bishop refrained from holding elections to determine a potential successor. It would be nearly twenty years until a new Archbishop would appear to resume the fight for \textit{enosis}.

Both Greece and Turkey largely neglected the \textit{enosis} movement from the 1930s until after World War II. Greek Prime Minister Venizelos assumed that it was simply a matter of time before the British granted Cyprus independence, at which point the island would become Greek. As long as the British appeared to be able to guarantee the safety of the Turkish-Cypriots, Turkey was satisfied and continued to focus its efforts on modernizing.

During the 1940s, it was not the cause of \textit{enosis} that presented British authorities in Cyprus with the most grief, but the expansion of communist influence. World War II had generated substantial urbanization on the island and a steep rise in the prices that were not matched with an increase in wages. Under these conditions, the communist Working People’s Reform Party (AKEL) was able to thrive, taking two of the six town

\footnote{11-10-31 letter from British Embassy in Angora to Governor Ronald Storrs, Ronald Storrs papers, Reel 11.}
councils in the 1943 elections. Although the AKEL actively supported the British war effort, the administration in Cyprus feared the challenge to their authority and a possible communist rebellion, a concern that would distort perceptions of the first wave of terrorist attacks in 1955. In fact, the AKEL did organize a series of protests during the mid-1940s and managed to extend their political control by winning two more town councils including the capital of Nicosia. But the communists were pushing an agenda of independence and self-government rather than *enosis*.

While the stringent measures exacted by the British to dissuade the *enosis* movement seem to have prevented acts of violence such as the rioting in 1931, the issue was hardly forgotten. In 1948 the British proposed to offer the Cypriots a form of representative government but were soundly refused by a Greek-Cypriot leadership still holding out for unification.\(^66\) The combined efforts of the Greek Orthodox Church and a coalition of left wing and communist political parties would be required to restart the *enosis* campaign. It seemed an odd pairing, but the Church was forced to recognize the growing power of the communist movement in Cyprus, particularly the AKEL, which won control of all six of the town councils during the 1946 elections.\(^67\) Initially, the Church was hostile to the AKEL and in April 1949, the Church’s governing body, the Ethnarchy, condemned it as a threat to Cyprus, the Church, and the future of *enosis*.\(^68\) But the animosity temporarily lessened the following year when the AKEL proposed the organization of an unofficial plebiscite and assisted the Greek Orthodox Church in collecting the needed signatures. Jointly, the Church and the AKEL urged all Greek-Cypriots to vote in the plebiscite to determine if they favored the existing state of affairs.

\(^{66}\) McDonald 8.  
\(^{67}\) Newsinger 85.  
\(^{68}\) Mayes 35.
or enosis. An overwhelming 96 percent of the voters chose the latter and correspondingly, a newly elected archbishop promised to devote his life to seeing Cyprus’ dream of union with Greece into a reality. Michael Christodorelou, the young monastery student who had become caught up in the enosis movement in 1931, became the Archbishop of Nova Justiniana and Cyprus in October 1950 at the age of 37. He took the new name Makarios III meaning “blessed.”

The newly dubbed Archbishop’s immediate strategy was two-fold: to consolidate the Nationalists’ power and increase international awareness of the plight of his homeland, beginning with a series of sermons. Dismissing the fragile alliance between the Greek Orthodox Church and the AKEL, Makarios set out to further consolidate the Church’s influence over other Greek nationalist groups in Cyprus. Makarios focused on the island’s young, establishing the Pancyprian National Youth Organization in 1951 as a means of instilling awareness of Cyprus’ ties to the Greek mainland, the need for enosis, and the inherent evils of communism.

**The militarization of the enosis movement**

Supplying the martial component of the growing resistance movement was Colonel George Grivas, a grizzled, if diminutive, veteran of the Greek army. Grivas had grown up in Cyprus during the animosity of the Balkan Wars and cut his teeth during the ill-fated 1922 Greek invasion of Turkey. During the years of World War II, Grivas established a secret group of Royalist officers and NCOs, given the appropriately mysterious code-name “Khi” (X), dedicated to terminating the Communist-led EAM resistance group. Leading a band of rabidly right-wing guerilla fighters, Grivas displayed

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69 Ibid 41.
70 Ibid 43.
71 Mayes 24.
equal ferocity in dealing with both their German occupiers and the communist opposition. Makarios first established contact with the Colonel in July 1952. Although not a fervent believer in a violent uprising, Makarios had long been entertaining the idea of an organized struggle of sabotage, public disorder, and civil disobedience.\(^{72}\) Grivas, however, was interesting in expanding Makarios’ plans to accommodate his more antagonistic vision. In 1952 the Colonel drafted his first plans for a protracted terrorist campaign against the British, completing several trips to the island on reconnaissance and recruitment missions.\(^{73}\) Over the course of the next three years, Grivas busied himself with assembling a support network for his envisioned struggle drawing volunteers primarily from the Cyprus Farmers’ Union (PEK) and two youth movements. 300 of these recruits were to serve as a well armed and expertly trained main strike force based in the mountains; an additional 700-man auxiliary was intended to operate in the villages.\(^{74}\)

Despite their conflicting viewpoints on how the campaign for *enosis* should be conducted, Makarios and Grivas signed an oath at a secret meeting in Athens in March of 1953: “I swear in the name of the Holy Trinity to keep secret all that I know or come to know about the cause of Enosis, even under torture or at the cost of my life. I shall obey without question the instructions given to me at all times.”\(^{75}\) Unsure if the Greek-Cypriots would support a terrorist operation, Makarios continued to hold out for support from the UN. Neither Makarios nor Grivas entertained the illusion that their tiny resistance movement could successfully unseat the British from Cyprus; rather they were

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\(^{72}\) Newsinger 88.  
\(^{73}\) Ibid 89.  
\(^{74}\) Ibid 90.  
\(^{75}\) Coyle 158.
gambling on an outpouring of international support and pressure on Britain to grant them their independence.

Never say “never”

But the British were less than anxious to part with their crown colony, especially after December 1954 when Britain’s Middle East headquarters was moved from the Suez Canal Zone in Egypt to Cyprus. With the Soviets making headway throughout the Balkans, there was some fear that their next target might be southern Europe including Turkey and Greece. Makarios’ accession to power was accompanied by his redoubled appeals to the British Government for union with Greece, and the British did demonstrate some attempts to comply with the demands. A British offer to set up a form of representative government and a new constitution was made by the British in 1954; yet again the Greek-Cypriots bluntly rejected it. Later in the year on July 28, Henry Hopkinson, the Minister for the Colonies, committed a colossal blunder during a debate over Cyprus in the House of Commons. He stated that there were specific Commonwealth territories “which, owing to their particular circumstances, can never expect to be fully independent.” Hopkinson’s comment was very much in keeping with a statement British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden curtly made to recently elected Greek Prime Minister Field Marshal Papagos that enosis “would never happen.” Such blunt remarks were fuel on the enosis fire and a final validation to its supporters that the British would never abandon Cyprus without a violent confrontation.

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77 Coyle 161.
78 O’Malley and Craig 12.
By this point Grivas and his secret organization, the Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (EOKA) or the National Organization of Freedom Fighters, was more than prepared to initiate its campaign; it only required the permission of Prime Minister Papagos and the resistance movement’s spiritual leader. Convinced that no peaceful avenue remained through which *enosis* could be reached, Makarios gave his blessing to Grivas in January 1955 to set his campaign into motion. During a meeting on March 29, 1955, Grivas outlined his plan for the first round of attacks to be carried out on the night of the 31st. The die was about to be cast, but it had been long in coming. If the Ottoman system of rule through the *millet* was the seed of the conflict and Greek nationalism watered it, then British institutionalism fertilized the sprout as it came to the surface. It was to produce a bitter harvest of hatred and violence in the years to come.
CHAPTER TWO: MANAGING THE “CYPRESS” SITUATION

April 1, 1955 was a grimly suitable day for the EOKA to initiate its campaign of terror against the British who were fooled into thinking that it was communists who were responsible. When the identity of the true culprits had been discovered, the British were shocked to learn that the Greek-Cypriots had been able to mount such an effective assault.¹ In a series of eighteen coordinated attacks targeting government buildings, the EOKA detonated bombs in the cities of Nicosia, Limassol, and Larnaca.² Transmitters of the Cyprus Broadcasting Service were also destroyed and the first in a series of revolutionary leaflets from the EOKA were distributed throughout Cyprus proclaiming:

“With the help of God, with faith in our honorable struggle, with the backing of all Hellenism and the help of the Cypriots, we have taken up the struggle to throw off the English yoke, our banners high, bearing the slogan which our ancestors have handed down to us as a holy trust—Death or Victory.”³

As if God was not enough of an endorser of the terrorists’ cause, comparisons were also drawn to heroes from Greek history including the “warriors” from Marathon to the Greek war of independence who had demonstrated “that liberation from the yoke of the ruler is always won by bloodshed.”⁴ The proclamation concluded bitterly by appealing to the “Diplomats of the World” to: “Look to your duty. It is shameful that, in the twentieth century, people should have to shed blood for freedom, that divine gift for which we too fought at your side and for which you, at least, claim that you fought Nazism.”⁵ The Nazis may have been defeated, but new battle lines had been drawn for a new conflict, albeit one waged at a lower temperature. A new world order with former

³ “EOKA’s First Revolutionary Leaflet, Distributed on April 1, 1955” in Dominick J. Coyle Minorities in Revolt: Political Violence in Ireland, Italy, and Cyprus (Farleigh Dickinson, 1983): 231.
⁴ Ibid.
⁵ Ibid. 232.
allies now foes demanded a new approach to policy; it would become one that consistently failed to take the desires of a small island country into account.

**Turkey and Greece within the Cold War context**

Great Britain’s primary concerns in the decade following the end of the Second World War were overseeing the rearmament of Germany and its membership in NATO, coping with the spread of insurrections in colonies such as Kenya, Malaya, and Cyprus, and reinterpreting geopolitical rules rewritten by the atomic bomb. It was a future that would be dictated largely by a post-war economy in shambles due to a significant drop in manufactured exports, an overvalued pound, and the loss of exclusive access to protected Commonwealth markets.

Under such pressures, the British were forced to reexamine their traditional imperialist character, and eventually liberated India in 1947 and then Ceylon and Burma the following year. As a result of the domestic financial crisis, the British Government announced in February 1947 that it was obliged to immediately suspend all forms of support for Greece. Britain’s policy change compelled the United States to reconsider its role in countering the potential Soviet threat to the Mediterranean’s security.

In spite of Britain’s diminishing power, the lifeblood of oil to the British economy ensured that the Middle East would continue to be a vital region to shrinking empire, one that had to remain free of Soviet contamination. To this end, in 1955 the British oversaw the creation of the Baghdad Pact, a strategic coalition that included Iraq, Pakistan,

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Turkey, and Great Britain. Cyprus was intended to provide the Pact with an airbase for
British nuclear bombers. Such a prospect left the Greek-Cypriots none too pleased, but
the plan was never implemented.\textsuperscript{10}

With the end of World War II and the departure of Britain from the
Mediterranean, America became an integral ally to both Greece and Turkey, both of
which fell under the Truman Doctrine’s commitment “to support free peoples who are
resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” To relieve
such pressures, Congress passed a $400 million aid package for military and economic
aid in 1947, and authorized the dispatch of technical missions to both countries.\textsuperscript{11} Aid to
Greece and Turkey was enlarged the following year and by the fiscal years 1952 and
1953, following the establishment of the Mutual Security Act, more than $13 billion was
set aside for a number of countries in the Near and Middle East. It was the start of the
“golden years” of the 1950s when Greece and Turkey served as focal points for American
foreign policy.\textsuperscript{12} In the popular consciousness of both nations, the United States was
viewed as a defeater of tyranny and the defender of human rights. As such, it was
inevitable that this pristine image would become tarnished in the turbulent decades that
followed

Before its entry into World War II, the United States had little historical or
geopolitical contact with either Greece or Turkey, and less still with Cyprus.\textsuperscript{13} This
changed as the dust of that conflict cleared to reveal the Soviet and American titans as the

\textsuperscript{10} O’Malley and Craig 7.
\textsuperscript{11} Hoskins 189.
remaining principal world powers. With a number of European nations experiencing latent or open civil war, in which Soviet-backed Communist parties played a core role, the Truman Administration instituted a foreign policy intended to secure existing pro-West governments and insulate them from Russian influence. Greece was one such country whose vulnerable political establishment overlapped with America’s new security ambitions.\textsuperscript{14} During the course of the Greek civil war, which began in earnest after the end of World War II in 1945, the United States became increasingly embroiled in supporting the anti-communist, royalist, and nationalist forces against their socialist foes.\textsuperscript{15}

Once the civil war ended in 1949 with the communists’ defeat, Greece’s destiny became irrevocably intertwined with that of the United States,\textsuperscript{14} which was preparing a spot for the Greeks in the newly organized NATO. The ruling National Radical Union Party obediently conformed Greek policy to the advice of the United States. Modeled after and closely linked to the CIA, the State Information Agency (KPY) emerged in the 1950s and became a breeding ground for members of the military dictatorships that would come to the fore during the late 1960s.\textsuperscript{16} To all appearances, Greece was a dutiful protégé of the United States,\textsuperscript{14} but in 1954, the Greeks would go against America’s wishes by taking the cause of Cyprus’ self-determination to the United Nations.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{14} Dimitri Constas “Challenges to Greek Foreign Policy: Domestic and External Parameters” in Dimitri Constas and Theofanis G. Stavrou, eds. Greece Prepares for the Twenty-First Century (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1995): 73.


\textsuperscript{16} Ibid 40.

\textsuperscript{17} Vassilis K. Fouskas “Reflections on the Cyprus Issue and the Turkish Invasions of 1974” Mediterranean Quarterly (Summer 2001): 106.
Turkey was also prominently integrated into America’s strategy for the east Mediterranean as a barrier to potential Soviet expansion into the Middle East.\(^{18}\) There was initially a great deal of resistance to grant Turkey full membership in NATO, especially on the part of Great Britain. It was not until July 1951, after the Turks had demonstrated their loyalty to the West with a significant commitment of troops to the Korean conflict, that Britain and a number of other countries dropped their objections.\(^{19}\) The Turks quickly proved themselves as integral and enthusiastic allies of the West, joining the Marshall Plan, the Council of Europe, and NATO between 1947 and 1952.\(^{20}\)

The foreign policy of Turkey in the late 1940s and 1950s was dictated largely as it had been since the 18\(^{th}\) century: by the fear of potential Russian aggression. The Soviet Union’s drawing of the iron curtain across Eastern Europe leant the Turkish government a sudden urgency to seek out collaboration with the West to ensure its territorial integrity.\(^{21}\) But this renewed sense of fear of the Soviet had been largely absent since World War I. During the 1920s and 1930s open diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union had been the bedrock of Turkish foreign policy.\(^{22}\) Both countries were in their formative years dominated by leaders who would later become the focus of personality cults: Atatürk in Turkey and Lenin and then Stalin in Russia, and thusly came to mutually support one another’s progress and security. This was the start of a pattern that found Turkey hovering between support from the United States and the Soviet Union, depending upon prevailing circumstances. America’s declaration of war on Germany in

\(^{20}\) Rustow 8.
1917 began a ten-year fissure in diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Turkey, despite the fact that the two countries did not go to war with one another. The United States’ image of the new Turkish republic was not helped by its forced expulsion of nearly one million Greek and Armenian Orthodox Christians from the city of Smyrna in 1922-23. Relief for this humanitarian disaster was overseen by American philanthropic organizations whose members were appalled by the conditions they found.\textsuperscript{23} Britain, on the other hand, was more than willing to recognize the new Turkish state and Ankara eagerly sought to form connections with the major power.\textsuperscript{24}

The turning point in Turkish-U.S. relations occurred during World War II when the Soviet Union, disgusted by Turkey’s neutrality, refused to renew the 1925 Treaty of Friendship between the two counties. Furthermore, in 1946, the Soviets demanded a more active role in the supervision of the Turkish Straits and the restoration of territory they claimed was rightfully Russian in northeastern Turkey.\textsuperscript{25} Faced with growing pressure from its northern neighbor, Turkey turned to the United States for economic and military support.

**The Tripartite Conference: August-September, 1955**

The summer of 1955 presented a significant turning point in the conflict between the EOKA and the British in Cyprus with the Tripartite Conference in London. Mounting EOKA violence had resulted in even greater division between the Greek and Turkish-Cypriot communities as they continued to move into separate enclaves.

\textsuperscript{23} For a detailed account of the relief effort by the American Red Cross and the Near East Relief see: Dimitra Giannuli, *American Philanthropy in the Near East: Relief to the Ottoman Greek Refugees, 1922-23*, PhD. diss. (Kent State University, 1992).


\textsuperscript{25} Michael A. Attalides *Cyprus: Nationalism and international politics* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1979): 141.
The deteriorating situation led British Foreign Minister Harold Macmillan to reconsider the necessity of keeping all of Cyprus as a military base. He decided to further explore such an option by hosting a conference to be attended by the crisis' key players.

By formally inviting the governments of Greece and Turkey to take part in the negotiating of Cyprus' fate, Great Britain had allowed what began as a domestic issue to enter an international forum. But the British may have also intended to use the conference as a venue for damage control, hoping to change the global perception of the struggle as one against colonialism to one between Greeks and Turks. In his opening statement on August 30, Foreign Minister Macmillan utilized the customary Cold War rhetoric, stressing that all three nations were “members of the most important alliance perhaps of all history - on which the peace and progress of the whole world may depend - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.”

Many Greeks viewed the conference as little more than a ruse to draw Turkey into the dispute, thus relieving the British of the pressure of settling it single-handedly. It was also an opportunity to undercut Greek efforts at the UN to secure Cyprus’ independence. Regardless of Britain’s intent, the admission of Greece and Turkey as brokers of a solution in Cyprus was to have severe repercussions in the years to come when each came to champion the island as a national cause and grounds for war with one another.

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27 O’Malley and Craig 19.
After 1955, the Turkish elite increasingly argued that Cyprus would be a profound security risk should it ever fall into Greek hands. Adnan Menderes, the Turkish Prime Minister, echoed such a sentiment in London just before the conference when he informed the British that Turkey did not desire to see any substantial alteration to Cyprus’ current regime, but that any change should result in the island’s restoration to the Turks. Unsurprisingly, the Greeks insisted on an immediate plebiscite to decide Cyprus’ independence, and possible unification with Greece, an act that the Turks claimed was contrary to the Treaty of Laussane. With both side willing to accommodate the other, Macmillan proposed the conference be concluded until leaders representing the Greek and Turkish-Cypriot interests could make their case.

The EOKA and the Turkish Cypriots

Dissatisfied with Cyprus Governor George Armitage’s handling of the developing crisis, British Prime Minister Anthony Eden had him replaced by Field Marshall Sir John Harding. The new governor arrived on the island on October 3, 1955 and displayed his military background by immediately combining the administration, military, and police into an integrated security force. But he also later demonstrated some finesse and ability as a negotiator despite a tempestuous working relationship with Makarios. From the start, the two were hopelessly at odds with one another. Harding pledged the Greek-Cypriots a measure of control over domestic matters in exchange for peace, but was rejected by the Archbishop. As a result, punishments against Greek-Cypriots became less lenient, and laws regarding deportation, curfew, and censorship were likewise strengthened. Harding, continuing to showcase the ongoing British fear of communism,

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30 Ioannides 77.
31 O’Malley and Craig, 22.
32 Newsinger 95.
also made the misstep of outlawing the AKEL on December 12, abolishing the only political party with a distinctly anti-EOKA bent. The AKEL had vocally condemned the EOKA once they initiated their violent crusade in 1955. Such repressive tactics only played into the hands of the EOKA by compelling previously moderate Greek-Cypriots to identify with their cause and pledge support. They also aroused sympathy and support for the EOKA in Greece and other nations and compromised Prime Minister Eden’s ability to justify the conflict to both American and UN officials.

As the conflict slogged on, the British continued to be at a disadvantage, lacking the sort of localized intelligence needed to challenge effectively a nebulous enemy such as the EOKA. The Cyprus police had become honeycombed with EOKA insiders feeding their comrades inside information that enabled them to stay comfortably several steps ahead of their adversaries. To combat this situation, Harding decided to step up the recruitment of Turkish-Cypriots into the police force. By the end of 1956, there were 4000 Turkish-Cypriot policemen to 1000 Greek-Cypriots, in a complete turnaround of the ratio that had existed before the fighting had begun. Such a reversal could only lead to widespread violence once these new Turkish officers began to openly confront Greek-Cypriots.

Initially, the EOKA’s campaign was limited to exclusively to British military and colonial officials and certain Greek-Cypriot “collaborators.” On the day of the first wave of attacks, the terrorists left behind leaflets in the Turkish-Cypriot quarters of Nicosia assuring the minority that they intended them no harm, but also warning them not

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33 Attalides 110.
34 O’Malley and Craig 27.
35 Newsinger 97.
to side with the British.\textsuperscript{37} Unfortunately, it was not long before the Turkish-Cypriots became targeted by the EOKA for doing that very thing. The reason was rooted in the British decision to readopt their “divide and rule” policy, drawing a number of Turkish-Cypriots into the conflict as members of the Cyprus police force.\textsuperscript{38} British authorities also often turned a blind eye to the increasingly violent activities of the Turkish Resistance Organization (TMT), an underground group consisting of Turkish-Cypriots and led by nationalistic Turkish officers created as a countermeasure to the EOKA.\textsuperscript{39} As a result, the Turkish minority suffered their first casualty on January 11, 1956 when Ali Riza, a Turkish-Cypriot police sergeant was slain by the EOKA.\textsuperscript{40} By 1958, Turkish-Cypriots were being killed with regular frequency throughout Cyprus and the relations between Turkey and Greece, which had been generally cordial at the start of the EOKA’s campaign, became increasingly strained.

**The EOKA intensifies its campaign**

1956 would prove to be an especially bloody year in Cyprus as the EOKA stepped up its attacks and the British intensified their responses to them. In late February, the schoolchildren of Cyprus organized a revolt that was violently crushed. One young boy was killed and the island’s school system was shut down. Infuriated by Makarios’ refusal to denounce the EOKA’s ongoing campaign of terror, Harding ordered the Archbishop’s arrest on March 3. Shortly thereafter, Makarios was deported along with the Bishop of Kyrenia to the relative comfort of the Seychelles, but his absence failed to produce anything approaching a calming effect. During the last three weeks of March, the EOKA

\textsuperscript{37} Holland, 52.
\textsuperscript{38} Ioannides, 108.
\textsuperscript{39} Fouskas 118.
\textsuperscript{40} John L. Scherer *Blocking the Sun: The Cyprus Conflict, A Modern Greek Studies Yearbook Supplement* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 1997): 13.
carried out 246 separate attacks throughout Cyprus. The British stepped up their efforts to bring Grivas to justice with a pair of well-planned operations that led to the capture and arrest of twenty EOKA fighters and the recovery of several thousand critical documents. Although Grivas himself managed to elude his pursuers, the recovered documents provided the British with invaluable insight into the structure of the EOKA and revealed the animosity that existed between Makarios and his militant comrade.

Hangings of convicted EOKA prisoners and retaliatory executions of both British officials and their Turkish-Cypriot associates continued into the summer of 1956 until August 18 when Grivas, under pressure from the Greek Government, unexpectedly called for a cease-fire in the hopes that it would lead to negotiations with Makarios. Harding misinterpreted the cease-fire as evidence of the EOKA’s weakening; therefore on August 27 when the underground organization resumed its fight with nothing having been achieved. Once the Suez crisis began unfolding matters on the island got bloodier.

The British and French intervention in Suez during October 1956 proved to be a decisive event for the British both in Cyprus and in the Middle East. In what was to be the last grand gesture of a once regal power, Great Britain conspired with France and Israel to reclaim the Suez Canal from the Egyptian government led by Gamal Abdel Nasser. Nasser’s dealings with the communist bloc to assist him in his national industrialization project had compelled the United States on July 19 and other Western powers soon after to withdraw funds for the Aswan Dam across the Nile River. As retribution, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal on July 26 to assist in paying for the dam despite its ownership by a British-controlled corporation. When attempts at international

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41 Newsinger 98.
42 Fouskas 108.
negotiations failed and the most critical oil route appeared lost, Britain and her allies decided that military action to take the canal back was the most appropriate course of action. Many within the British military feared that Nasser would form an alliance of Arab republics that would then control the oil fields needed so desperately by the West.

With Cyprus serving as a critical launching point for many of the planned operations in Suez and much of the British attention diverted elsewhere, Grivas found himself with a golden opportunity to strike. Throughout the first half of August, the EOKA struck British military and police targets on a daily basis, hampering efforts to prepare for the strike against Egypt. By the time the expedition against Nasser had been completed, thirteen British military personnel had been killed in Cyprus, more than had lost their lives fighting in Suez. Without the support of the Eisenhower administration, the Suez operation was doomed to failure, painfully confirming to the British that they were no longer capable of a unilateral military action. Facing a future in the shadow of American military superiority, Britain was now forced to reconsider the necessity of maintaining all of Cyprus. Needing an esteemed representative from the Greek-Cypriot community with whom to negotiate, the British released Makarios in late March 1957 who returned home to find a hero’s welcome.

**America’s role in the peace process**

During the years of turmoil in Cyprus, the Eisenhower Administration maintained a largely silent and unobtrusive role. Many leaders in Greece assumed the U.S. to be at least tacitly supportive of enosis because it would result in Cyprus becoming

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43 O’Malley and Craig 38.
44 Ibid. 40.
a part of a staunch American ally. But America remained dispassionate over the issue and refused to support Greece’s efforts from 1954 to 1958 to have the Cyprus dispute mediated by the UN. Part of the reason for this was the fact that the conflict failed to conform neatly to either of the main tenets of American foreign policy in the early Cold War: opposition to the retention of colonies by former imperialistic nations and firm deterrence against Soviet expansion. The British retention of Cyprus as a base of military operations allowed it to fit in the latter U.S. policy concern, but the fact that it remained a subservient colony violated the former. But America’s overall indifference towards the turmoil in Cyprus, despite connections to Greece and Turkey, was primarily due to the fact that it was perceived as a British problem.

That is not to say that the Eisenhower Administration was not compelled to action when it was deemed necessary, for instance voting against a 1954 Greek proposal to place the Cyprus issue on the UN agenda. The United States consistently attempted to steer the conflict off the floor of the United Nations, preferring a more intimate setting that did not extend beyond Greece, Turkey, and Great Britain. On August 20, 1954, as the Greek-Cypriots continued to bristle at Hopkinson’s insinuation that it could never expect to be free, President Eisenhower dispatched a note to then Prime Minister Winston Churchill inquiring how the redoubtable statesman intended to “handle the Cypress situation.” As it was one of Great Britain’s “family problems,” Eisenhower did not

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45 Attalides 8-9.
47 Ibid.
48 Document #1031; August 20, 1954 “To Winston Spencer Churchill” The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower, Volume XVI.
intend to offer his own perspective on the developing crisis, but was concerned how the American public’s perception of Cyprus could damage Anglo-U.S. relations.49

Not only was the United States troubled with Britain’s denial of self-determination to the island, but also with its critical location and overall importance in the Eastern Mediterranean. This was a matter of increasing importance, which began to grate on Eisenhower when the British continued to be furtive in their dealings with all parties involved. “We have wanted them to make a clear-cut statement about their intentions in Cyprus,” Eisenhower recorded in his diary in January 1956, “outlining a program that would be perfectly acceptable to the Greeks, the Cypriotes, and at the same time would protect Western world interests in the Eastern Mediterranean.”50 As they had endlessly “dilly-dallied” over Cyprus, Eisenhower was concerned that the British had caused undue anxiety in Turkey and Greece as well as in the island itself.51

America’s perception that its ally was mishandling Cyprus led to a gradual dissociation from British policy in 1956. U.S. officials roundly condemned the deportation of Archbishop Makarios and urged a resumption of negotiations between the British and the Greek-Cypriots. Regardless of the ongoing strife in Cyprus, the United States’ overall policy regarding the Mediterranean from the mid-1950s onward was a consistent one. Strengthening allies on the fringes of the Soviet Union such as Yugoslavia, Turkey, and Greece was a main tenet as was providing Israel with the resources to counter potential Russian gains in the Arab states.52 Maintaining naval superiority was crucial to these goals, and the U.S. Sixth Fleet served as an imposing

49 Ibid.
50 Document #1681; January 10, 1956 “Diary” The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower, Volume XVI.
51 Ibid.
reminder to America’s allies of their benefactor’s regional interests, especially as the British presence in the Mediterranean became virtually non-existent.  

**The Zurich-London Agreements**

By 1958, Great Britain’s war of attrition with the EOKA had reached a virtual standstill. The combined expense of engaging the EOKA and administering Cyprus in the name of the Cold War, a larger struggle in which the British were now playing a secondary role, made it increasingly difficult to justify the loss of life. During the summer, the TMT demonstrated its own cruelty by carrying out a series of massacres against Greek-Cypriots thereby inciting EOKA retaliations. Ongoing terrorist attacks in 1958 and 1959 led the United States to take a more hands-off approach in order prevent the estrangement of Greece or Turkey from the Western alliance.

Britain was fast losing the determination and support to keep fighting. By the late 1950s, the Labour Party had wrested control of the British government from the Conservatives and were able to hasten the process of decolonization. This included the Middle East and eastern Mediterranean where British influence had shrunk down to the island of Cyprus, and its own usefulness was increasingly being called into question. Lacking substantial ports, Cyprus failed to accommodate the primary units of the British Mediterranean fleet, although it did provide necessary landing fields for the RAF and French Air Force as well as surveillance facilities. With the post-war British Empire continuing to crumble, Ghana was liberated in March of 1957, and Cyprus became the

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53 Ibid 607.  
54 Attalides 48.  
55 Laipson 57.  
next possible candidate for release. Governor Harding even offered Makarios a plan for eventual independence that might lead to *enosis*, but the Archbishop refused to consider it. Increasingly, British leaders began to shun the idea of “Cyprus as a base” in favor of establishing and maintaining military bases in island to maintain their presence in the Mediterranean. On June 19, 1958, the British government produced the Macmillan Plan, an outline of an independent Cyprus. It provided for rule by separate Greek and Turkish-Cypriot houses of representatives and a legislative council made up of four Greeks and two Turks intended to deal with issues of a general nature. Although the plan was never implements, some of its elements would be ultimately integrated into the Cyprus Constitution.

In both Turkey and Greece, politicians were starting to feel the strain of the ongoing conflict and its peripheral impact on the two countries. It was becoming apparent to the Greeks that the UN was not the proper forum to in which to implement unification and that the plans for partition favored by many Turks had to be avoided. An independent Cyprus became a solution upon which both Turkey and Greece were willing to compromise on. February 5-11 1959, Prime Ministers Menderes and Papagos met in Zurich to devise a final resolution to the Cyprus issue. As summarized by James Callaghan, the conference was intended to result in Great Britain deserting its sovereignty over the island, Greece renouncing its plans for *enosis*, and Turkey abandoning plans to partition the island that had been considered since 1956.  

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59 Union of Journalists of the Athens Daily Newspapers 25.
60 Callaghan 334.
The birth of the Republic of Cyprus

On July 29 1960, the British Parliament ratified a bill enabling the British Government to grant Cyprus its long sought-after independence. Representatives from Cyprus, Greece, Turkey, and the United Kingdom gathered in Nicosia to sign the Cypriot constitution on August 16. Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus also signed a Treaty of Alliance and added their signatures, along with the United Kingdom, to a Treaty of Guarantee and a Treaty of Establishment. To ensure that it would maintain a military presence in the eastern Mediterranean, the British secured two large sections of the island to serve as Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs).

The blueprint for the Republic of Cyprus became one of the most complicated documents of the modern era, drafted with the input of all parties involved except those who would be living under its laws: the people of Cyprus. As a charter intended to bind together a new nation, the constitution reflects a distressingly divisive sensibility that boiled Cyprus’ governance down to a matter of ratios and proper balances. It also has the unhappy distinction of being the first constitution to deny majority rule and give the minority disproportionate rights to ensure that enosis would be unachievable.\(^1\) The island’s president was to be a Greek-Cypriot elected exclusively by the Greek-Cypriot majority while the vice-president was to be a Turkish-Cypriot chosen by his constituency.

In order to guarantee an appropriate number of Turkish-Cypriots had a hand in running the island’s affairs, official proportions were established for many governmental positions. Although only representing one-fifth of the island’s total population, Turkish-Cypriots were guaranteed 30% of all positions in the civil service and 40% in both the police force and the military. Such divisions carried over to the largest settlements in

\(^1\) Attalides 14.
Cyprus, which were to be supervised by separate Greek and Turkish-Cypriot municipal authorities. The constitution also created communal chambers for the cultural affairs of both communities, intended to determine the proper educational and religious regulations; in these bodies the Turkish-Cypriots received an imbalanced 28.5% of control.  

Additionally, the constitution provided for the creation of two analogous political institutions to serve the two communities, each of which was capable of blocking the decisions of the other through national representatives. Voluntary associations such as trade unions and political parties were also placed under similar constraints with membership in the AKEL limited solely to Greek-Cypriots for example. The cumulative effect of such government-sanctioned percentages and divisions was the continuation and augmentation of the existing sense of competition between Greek and Turkish-Cypriots. Perhaps the most disquieting feature of the 1959 negotiations was the allotments of troops from the Greek and Turkish militaries to be stationed on Cyprus that the Treaty of Guarantee provided for. The presence of these soldiers ensured an element of antagonism from the two motherlands would be carried over to the island.

Makarios claimed that he was never fully consulted during the process of the constitution’s drafting and was coerced into signing it. But the Archbishop seemingly had no qualms about serving as Cyprus’ first president. General Grivas, however, was not so anxious to fully join the political establishment and founded the Cyprus Enosist Front in 1960, a political organization dedicated to keeping the dream of union with

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62 Attalides 53.
Greece alive. In the end, the constitution of 1960 only served to further fragment the two ethnic groups along institutional and legal lines. Such polarization insured that the newly born Republic of Cyprus’ childhood would be a short and traumatic one.

The United States, despite playing a marginal role in its creation, immediately recognized the emergent Cypriot Republic. Fraser Wilkins was nominated to serve as the first American Ambassador to Cyprus by President Eisenhower and confirmed on August 27 by the Senate. Wilkins reached Cyprus on September 16 and was received by President Makarios three days later.

Almost immediately, the newly independent island nation became a battleground between U.S. and the Soviet interests with imported grain as the weapon. After three consecutive years of drought and poor harvests, Cyprus was facing a scarcity of wheat; barley, and corn reserves were forecasted to disappear by the spring of 1961. Ambassador Wilkins predicted that the new Soviet ambassador would soon arrive bearing shiploads of Russian grain as an inducement. “I would hope that, if we decide to help,” Wilkins wired Washington, “we will move before [the] Soviets do.” Cyprus had been largely negligible in American foreign policy less than a decade before, but as an independent republic, it was now integrated into the overall strategy of Soviet containment.

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64 Attalides 120.
65 Pollis 593-594.
67 Ibid.
CHAPTER THREE: ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL

“I think that the British are getting to where they might as well not be British anymore if they can’t handle Cyprus” confided President Lyndon Johnson to Under Secretary of State George Ball during a January 25, 1964 phone conversation. 1 In some respects Johnson was correct: the British were eschewing their traditional role as the arbiters and enforcers of peace in Cyprus and compelling the United States to increasingly assert itself in the region. While during the early 1950s the British had done their utmost to avoid internationalizing the Cyprus problem, by December 1963 they were more than willing to encourage intervention by both NATO and, to a lesser degree, the UN when inter-communal violence on Cyprus broke out once again.

Over the next three years, as the conflict between the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus continued to rage, the United States dispatched a series of diplomatic missions to arbitrate both sides and search for a peaceful resolution. Unfortunately, Johnson made a critical misstep in the summer of 1964 by sending a letter he sent to Turkish Prime Minister Ismet Inönü that threatened an apathetic NATO response should tension in the region lead to a Soviet invasion. LBJ’s crude message set a tone that underlay much of Turkey’s foreign policy with the U.S. and other nations up to the invasion. To a degree, the Turkish Government’s ultimate decision to invade Cyprus in 1974 was made the moment Inönü first read the message from Johnson.

U.S. Foreign Policy in the Johnson Years

Subtlety was rarely a hallmark of American diplomacy during the Johnson Administration. Two decades of regarding the Cold War as a monolithic struggle

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1 Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of Telephone Conversation between President Johnson and Ball, January 24, 1964, 2:05 p.m., Tape F64.07, Side B, PNO 4. FRUS, 1964-1968: Cyprus; Greece; Turkey, Document 2.
between East and West had become deeply ingrained in the collective psyche of American policymakers. Much of the Kennedy-era approach to the Cold War as an open conflict between the Soviet Union and America was retained and reflected in the frequent tendency to typify leaders and situations in the most pejorative and evocative of terms.² An article published in fall 1965 by the Chinese Defense Minister, Lin Piao, entitled “Long Live the Victory of People’s War” was described by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara as the Chinese Mein Kampf. By making such comparisons, “it was possible for the Johnson Administration to identify Mao as the Asian Hitler, Vietnam as the new Czechoslovakia, and, importantly, domestic critics as would-be appeasers.”³ When Brazil appeared threatened by a communist revolution in 1963, Johnson regarded the brief crisis with concern that the South American country would not simply become “another Cuba,” but “another China” in the Western Hemisphere.⁴

Applying a similar mindset, President Makarios’ ambiguous relationship with the AKEL and the Soviet Bloc led to his being dubbed “the Castro of the Mediterranean” and “the Red Priest.” Makarios was therefore dealt with accordingly once the U.S. became embroiled in events, with threats and intimidation. The foremost objective of America’s intervention in Cyprus was to maintain the integrity of NATO’s southeastern flank. Any demands made by the governments of Cyprus, Turkey, and Greece were secondary to overriding security concerns. Given Johnson’s reputation for solving problems with little

consideration of the long-term consequences, Cyprus hardly received the sort of American attention that it merited.

**Violence on Cyprus begins anew**

Since its establishment, the Republic of Cyprus had foundered as President Makarios and the Greek Cypriot leadership haggled endlessly with high-ranking Turkish-Cypriots, led by vice-president, Dr. Fazil Küçük, over the letter of the law. The 1960 Constitution was quickly proving to be unsatisfactory to both sides in establishing a workable political framework. It had largely failed to resolve the long-standing social, economic, and political issues that divided the two communities and, in some instances, only served to exacerbate them. Concerns over the establishment of a Cypriot army, the matter of separate Turkish-Cypriot boroughs, and the allocation of civil service posts along the 70:30 ratio are just a sampling of the myriad disputed issues that eventually caused the central government to cease functioning.\(^5\) It is more than possible that President Makarios, still focused on *enosis*, only half-heartedly attempted to bridge the schism between the Greek and Turkish communities and had no real interest in overseeing the creation of a new Republic. Whatever the case, neither Makarios nor Vice President Küçük demonstrated marked willingness to cooperate in the creation of a unified Cypriot national identity.\(^6\)

Makarios’ indifferent outlook was largely shared by most in a Greek-Cypriot majority unwilling to share leadership duties with their Turkish neighbors. The frequently vague constitution did little to alleviate matters as evidenced by the


\(^6\) Mehmet Ugur *The European Union and Turkey: An Anchor/Credibility Dilemma* (Brookfield, USA; Singapore; Sydney: Aldershot, 1999): 164.
controversy over the composition of the army of the Republic. According to the constitution, the army was to consist of two thousand recruits, 1200 Greeks and 800 Turks, but failed to specify if the troops were to be integrated, as Makarios wished, or segregated as was desired by Vice President Küçük. Eventually, the Vice-President took advantage of his power of veto to bring the army’s development to a standstill.

But it was only the first round in a series of disagreements; a more ominous debate centered on the creation of separate Turkish-Cypriot municipalities. In 1958, the British Government allowed distinct Turkish-Cypriot municipal councils to develop that would oversee the running of separate Turkish quarters with such duties as tax collection. These municipalities were further guaranteed by the 1959 agreements. For the Greek-Cypriots, such boroughs were the beginnings of partition. In 1962 Makarios proposed the integration of these communities as well as Turkish representation in proportion to the population. This attempt to tamper with the rights of the Turkish Cypriots raised the ire of the İnönü Government. On November 22 while Makarios was visiting Ankara, the Turkish Prime Minister warned him that his nation would not idly stand by and allow the constitution to be tampered with.

Despite the Turks’ warning, Makarios remained undeterred in his course of action. With the encouragement of the British High Commissioner in Nicosia, Sir Arthur William Clarke, Makarios set about formally altering the constitution. On November 30, 1963, Makarios presented thirteen points to Vice-President Denktash that would consolidate his power at the expense of the Turkish minority and allow a more efficient government to develop. Upon reading the initiative, Commissioner Clark told Makarios:

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7 Dominick J. Coyle Political Minorities in Revolt: Ireland, Italy, and Cyprus (Farleigh Dickinson, 1983): 233.
“Your Beatitude, what you are doing today is an act of great statesmanship.” The proposals opened by stating that the constitutional structure “suffered from fundamental defects which impeded the smooth functioning of the State,” since it “did not emanate from the free will of the Cyprus people.” Although some of the points did include concessions intended to improve conditions for the Turkish-Cypriots, most of the proposals were specifically intended to benefit the Greek-Cypriots. These included removing the vice-president’s veto, decreasing the mandatory numbers of Turkish-Cypriots in the military and civil service, and the unification of the municipalities. To further demonstrate his commitment to constitutional change, Makarios dispatched a message to the governments of Greece, Turkey, and Great Britain on December 5 declaring his intention of eliminating the 70:30 ethnic proportion guidelines in the civil service as well as unifying the divided city councils. Unsurprisingly, the proposals were immediately rejected both by Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots as simply a prelude to enosis.

One week later, tensions spilled over from the corridors of government to the streets of Nicosia. On December 12, a pair of Greek-Cypriot plainclothes police officers demanded identification cards from a group of ten Turkish-Cypriots near a brothel in the Turkish quarter of the capital and were refused. Events moved swiftly as a large crowd gathered before culminating in a scuffle and an exchange of gunshots. Greek-Cypriot reprisals were swift and brutal. Within days, General Grivas and his paramilitary forces attacked a number of Turkish-Cypriot villages, killing 300, taking nearly 700 hostages,

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and driving still hundreds more from their homes in what became known as “the Bloody Christmas Massacre.”

Cyprus’ three guarantor powers quickly called for a cease-fire, but only Turkey asserted itself militarily by deploying its 650-man Turkish contingent in Cyprus across the road between Nicosia and Kyrenia. Ankara dispatched a series of low-altitude flights by Turkish warplanes over the island on December 25. More ominously, the Turkish fleet began to steam directly for the island. Turkey’s suggestion of a potential joint military intervention with the two other guarantor powers went unheeded in both Great Britain and Greece. But Makarios, fearful of a Turkish invasion, agreed to a cease-fire to be brokered by the 7000 British troops from the two SBAs. As 1963 came to a close, the British Commonwealth Secretary, Duncan Sandys, scrambled to contain the developing crisis, fleshing out agreements regarding the exchange of prisoners and hostages and overseeing the drawing of a “Green Line” between the Turkish and Greek sections of Nicosia.

On January 16, 1964, at the behest of the British Government, representatives of the three guarantor powers and the two communities in Cyprus convened in London to attend yet another conference. The Greek-Cypriot panel argued for the dissolution of the constitution, specifically the paragraphs sanctioning Turkish intervention, in order to maintain the rights of the Turkish minority. They further lobbied for a unitary state and the elimination of any special rights guaranteed the Turkish-Cypriots by the 1959 Agreements. Furthermore, Makarios demanded that the 1960 constitution be replaced with an unfettered government capable of making revisions to the constitution as needed.

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At the opposite end, the Turkish minority argued for partition citing the violence that had erupted as damning evidence that the two communities could not peacefully coexist. The Turkish-Cypriot solution was a Federal State of Cyprus with Greek and Turkish provinces separated by a border to be called the Attila line; the Greek-Cypriots decisively rejected the plan. A third plan, drafted by the British, was structured as a compromise but was quickly dismissed by both sides.

The British Government intended to contain the crisis as quickly as possible, fearing that any formal participation by the UN might lead to an inquiry into the legality of its SBAs. London moved to establish a permanent force in Cyprus to be under NATO’s sponsorship. West Germany, France, Italy, and the United States were each approached to take part. America was the only country to respond positively. But there were two caveats that may have intended to undermine the British proposal, the first being that the Cypriot Government approve of the force and the second that the three guarantor powers defer their intervention privileges on the island for three months. It had been well established that Makarios would never allow NATO intercession, and Ankara was equally unlikely to temporarily relinquish its right to intervene. Nevertheless, on January 31, the United States and Great Britain formally offered Nicosia 10,000 NATO troops. Angry Greek-Cypriots did more than inspect the gift horse’s mouth. On February 4, the U.S. embassy was bombed, prompting an evacuation of American citizens in the island and a suspension of missions from the US Information Agency (USIA) and the Agency for International Development (AID).

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13 Ibid., 158.
15 Ibid.
America’s gradual intervention

A number of United States officials regarded the Cyprus dispute as the gravest international situation since the Cuban missile crisis.\(^{16}\) As the violence escalated in Cyprus and negotiations in London proved ineffective, the Johnson administration continued its agenda of keeping the issue limited to NATO, rather than UN, involvement. Secretary of State Dean Rusk feared a strong military response by the U.S. against the Turkish-Cypriots could result in severe repercussions for the 17,000 American troops stationed in Turkey.\(^{17}\) The anti-American violence during February appeared to validate such fears. Should a military contingent be dispatched to settle the dispute, the United States preferred a British-led operation, but Britain was less than anxious to reenter the fray, preferring to toss the hot potato to NATO, or if need be, the UN. Johnson and Undersecretary of State George Ball saw a British appeal to the UN as “the worst possible alternative.” The Afro-Asian majority within the United Nations would have undoubtedly favored Makarios’ and the Greek-Cypriots position, opening a window of opportunity for Soviet interference. Johnson and his advisers were not enthusiastic about the prospective UN peacekeeping force “which would be beyond our control and in which the Russians and the Yugoslavs would undoubtedly want to participate.”\(^{18}\)

Despite the risk of a Soviet infiltration and Britain’s insistence that it could no longer carry the island’s burden alone, Johnson categorically refused to commit

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American troops to Cyprus until every possible diplomatic solution had been explored.\textsuperscript{19} Undersecretary Ball also emphasized that the U.S. should avoid playing an active mediating role in Cyprus because: “Anyone who settles this is going to come down hard on the Greeks.”\textsuperscript{20} In terms of containment, Turkey, with its larger and better-equipped army and its shared border with the Soviet Union, was bound to carry more weight in the peace-brokering process.

On January 31, 1964, a joint proposal from the United States and Great Britain for the formation of a peacekeeping force in Cyprus made up of soldiers from NATO members was dispatched to Ankara and Athens. The proposal met with resistance from the Governments of Greece and Cyprus, both of which insisted that any peacekeeping mission should operate under the UN Security Council.\textsuperscript{21} Such insistence didn’t entirely discourage the United States, but the American leadership stressed that the composition of the peacekeeping force should be decided before going to the Security Council and that a Soviet veto would not affect a possible intervention.\textsuperscript{22} But on February 4, Makarios strongly rejected any NATO interference in Cyprus, compelling a response from the U.S. Johnson and Ball continued to stand firm on keeping American troops out of Cyprus, and believed Makarios was in agreement fearing that “US forces would be [a] special target of hit and run tactics of Greek Cypriots.”\textsuperscript{23} The preferred tactic of the Johnson

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19} Geyelin 114.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Memorandum of Conference, January 25, 1964.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Telegram From the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State. London, February 9, 1964, midnight. Department of State, Central Files, POL 28-8 CYP. Confidential; Flash. Repeated to Athens for Ball. Relayed to the White House, JCS, OSD, CIA, USUN, CINCEUR, and CINCSTRIKE. \textit{FRUS Volume XVI}. Document 8.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State. Athens, February 10, 1964, 10 p.m. Department of State, Central Files, POL 23-8 CYP. Confidential; Immediate; Exdis. Repeated to USUN. Passed to the White House, CIA, JCS, OSD, CINCEUR, and CINESTRIKE. \textit{FRUS Volume XVI}. Document 9.
\end{itemize}
Administration was to remain on the periphery of the negotiations so that the three guarantor powers would not shirk their responsibilities by expecting the U.S. to resolve the crisis. Yet at the same time, it was necessary to assure the ever-anxious Turks that the United States had no intention of backing out of the international intervention, thus depriving Ankara of a greater justification to invade.

Throughout the first half of 1964, the inter-communal fighting in Cyprus tallied up distressing numbers: 191 Turkish-Cypriots and 131 Greek-Cypriots confirmed dead, 209 Turks and 41 Greeks missing and presumed dead, and 20,000 Turkish-Cypriot refugees forced from their homes to the safety of the Turkish quarters of Nicosia and Kyrenia. Such a mass influx of Turkish-Cypriots, fleeing from the violence of the Greek majority, only served to give greater credence to those in the Turkish minority who touted partition as the only possible solution. British troops manage to preserve the cease-fire in Nicosia, but a particularly violent raid on the Turkish-Cypriot section of the city of Limassol resulted in a second threat of a Turkish invasion from the Inönü Government. The massacre in Limassol fundamentally shook Turkey’s faith in the British ability to serve as a guarantor power since its troops were under strict orders not to shoot. But Turkey was equally apprehensive of a UN force that “they would regard as an instrument of Soviet or Third-World politics and subject to manipulation by Makarios.” It would be left to the United States to quell the violence through overt diplomatic pressure and keep Cyprus within the NATO fold by dissuading Makarios from inviting a UN intervention.

24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
George Ball’s diplomatic mission

America’s most effective weapon in the Cyprus dispute would prove to be the tenacious Undersecretary George Ball who was dispatched to the eastern Mediterranean. Perhaps best remembered as the dissenting voice in Johnson’s cabinet concerning the Vietnam War, Ball had been sent to Paris earlier in the spring to confer with French President Charles De Gaulle on the developing Asian conflict.\(^{27}\) Despite his initial misgivings over U.S. involvement, the Undersecretary was given *carte blanche* in February as a special presidential envoy to organize a peacekeeping force and negotiate a peaceful resolution.\(^{28}\) His mission would take him to London, Ankara, Athens, and Nicosia. Before departing, Ball met with America’s UN Ambassador, Adlai Stevenson, whose previous dealings with Makarios led him to regard the Archbishop as “a wicked, unreliable conniver who concealed his venality under the sanctimonious vestments of a religious leader.”\(^{29}\) The only method of dealing with Makarios, Stevenson assured the Undersecretary, was by “giving the old bastard absolute hell.” Later actions would show that Ball took Stevenson’s advice to heart.

On February 8, Ball reached London and then stopped over briefly in Ankara where he met with Turkish Prime Minister Ismet Inönü. At eighty years old, Inönü’s illustrious career extended back to the early 1920s when he had served as a chief of staff under Atatürk when the Greek army invaded and then as the first prime minister from 1925 to 1937.\(^{30}\) Following the death of modern Turkey’s founder, Inönü became President from 1938 to 1950 and continued to oversee the modernization process his

\(^{28}\) Geyelin 115.
\(^{29}\) Ball 340-341.
predecessor had begun. Now a living monument to Turkey’s democratization, İnönü
warned Ball that Turkish public opinion was beginning to shift in favor of intervention.31
He further added that Turkey was not secure in any guarantee enforced by British troops
who were under orders to act in an advisory capacity and not to intervene with force.32

Ball arrived in Nicosia on February 12 to find the city “an armed camp” divided
along the “green line” by barbed wire.33 Although sent to mediate the situation and
attempt to dissuade the Archbishop from continuing to seek out the support of the UN
Security Council, Ball’s message to Makarios might be aptly described as a threat draped
in the thinnest of veils.34 As Ball later recounted in his memoirs, if Makarios refused to
quit his obstinacy then “I planned to say to the guarantor powers: take the problem to the
Security Council but understand that America will supply no component for any UN
force.”35 Doing so might have given Ankara the needed justification for an intervention.
By threatening the possibility of such a scenario, Ball had the leverage to warn Makarios
that the U.S. might not protect him if he continued to impede a NATO solution.36

Ball and the British High Commissioner, Sir Cyril Packard, confronted Makarios
on the afternoon of February 13 at the presidential palace. Initially, the defiant
Archbishop reiterated his intention of sending an expedition to the Security Council to
request a resolution that guaranteed the territorial integrity and political independence of
Cyprus. In doing so, the Treaty of Guarantee would be voided and outside intervention
by a guarantor power made illegal. Packard was on the same page as his American

31 Bill 183.
32 Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State Athens, February 10, 1964.
33 Ball 343.
34 Bill 184.
35 Ball 342.
36 Ibid.
counterpart and before long the two “told off Makarios and his extremist ministers in a manner unfamiliar to diplomatic discourse” in which they painted “a lurid picture of the consequences that would entail from the folly he has proposed.” The specter of a Turkish invasion taking place in the absence of a Western response appeared to shake Makarios. “Even his beard seemed pale,” a jubilant Ball reported to Johnson after the meeting had concluded.

**The creation of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus**

Pale beard or no, the wily Archbishop stood firm and rejected Ball’s proposal for a NATO-led arbitration, allowing the violence to continue largely unchecked. President Makarios was not alone in his defiance of a NATO occupation. On February 5, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev had contacted several Western leaders alerting them that the USSR would not stand idly by while the NATO alliance took over Cyprus. Although Khrushchev was cryptic as to what course of action the Soviets would take should the West occupy the island, his message introduced a sinister Cold War element that Johnson and his staff had sought to keep out. The Russians’ pledge of support also enabled Makarios to stand in defiance of British and American demands to keep the UN out of the negotiations. Additionally, it led to speculation in the West that the Soviets had promised Makarios that they would prevent a Turkish invasion.

In spite of the United States’ wish to keep the Cyprus dispute confined to NATO members, conditions had reached a critical junction that demanded outside intervention,

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37 Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State. Nicosia, February 13, 1964, 1:45 a.m. Department of State, Central Files POL 23-8 CYP. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Repeated to USUN. Passed to the White House. JCS, OSD, CIA, CINCEUR, and CINCSTRIKE. *FRUS Volume XVI.* Document 11.

38 Ibid.

39 Briscoe 160.

even if the source of arbitration was the United Nations. During Ball’s meetings with Makarios, a group of Greek-Cypriot guerillas carried out an assault against Turkish-Cypriot positions in the city of Limassol. Despite a standing cease-fire agreement, the Greek-Cypriot forces used mortar and bazooka shells and then bulldozers to destroy several buildings, killing approximately fifty Turkish-Cypriots in the process.\textsuperscript{41} With Ankara incensed at the attack and considering a possible intervention, George Ball was required to smooth things over with the İnönü government before returning to Washington. Arguing that any Turkish aggression would give the Greeks the necessary proof to demonstrate to the UN that it should remove Ankara’s right to intervene, Ball was able to secure İnönü’s promise that Turkey would continue to watch events in Cyprus disapprovingly, but not react.\textsuperscript{42}

But Ball remained convinced that, should another incident such as the one at Limassol occur, the Turks would be provoked to action and would likely pull Greece into the maelstrom.\textsuperscript{43} Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou said as much when he told Ball that, though he considered war with Turkey to be “insane,” if the Turks “open [the] door to the insane asylum, then he would have to accompany İnönü inside.”\textsuperscript{44} In a report submitted on February 17, Ball glumly predicted a 50% chance of a civil war between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots that had the potential to expand to Greece and Turkey.\textsuperscript{45}

Ball’s recommendation was U.S. assistance in the creation of a UN peacekeeping force,

\textsuperscript{41} Ball 345, Bill 184.
\textsuperscript{42} Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey, Washington, February 14, 1964, 8:48 p.m. Department of State, Central Files, POL 28-8 CYP. Secret; Exdis. \textit{FRUS Volume XVI}. Document 14.
\textsuperscript{43} Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, February 18, 1964, 5:55 p.m. Department of State, Central Files, POL 23-8 CYP. Confidential; Immediate; Exdis. \textit{FRUS Volume XVI}. Document 15.
\textsuperscript{44} Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, Athens, February 21, 1964, 3 p.m. Department of State, Central Files, POL 23-8 CYP. Secret; Immediate. \textit{FRUS Volume XVI}. Document 17.
\textsuperscript{45} Bill 185.
and with Greece steadfastly refusing to allow any sort of NATO involvement, the
Johnson administration reluctantly consented to UN involvement.

On March 4, 1964, the UN Security Council passed resolution 186 establishing
the 6000-man United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and a UN
mediator. The UNFICYP’s infantry units were drawn from a combination of NATO
members and neutral European nations: 3500 troops from Great Britain, 500 from
Ireland, 1150 from Canada, 700 from Finland, 700 men from Sweden, and a handful from
Denmark.\textsuperscript{46} Such a pedigree, free from any eastern bloc element, made the UNFICYP a
practical alternate to a NATO-led contingent. Notably absent was an American
contingent, but the U.S. did pledge financial assistance and offered to take part in the
airlift of the new task force.\textsuperscript{47} Although the 1959 treaties remained intact, as did the
duties of the guarantor powers, there were initial rumblings from Ankara, which was
dissatisfied with yet another military detachment forbidden to use deadly force but
intended to deter violence simply by its presence.

Even the enigmatic Makarios seemed pleased by the arrangement and announced
that, barring possible future troubles, conditions on the island were bound to improve.\textsuperscript{48}
In spite of the stabilizing presence of the UNFICYP, Makarios, guided by a pronounced
sense of self-preservation, began in April 1964 to secretly assemble a personal army of
10,000 men from the Greek mainland.\textsuperscript{49} He also set about brokering armament deals with
contacts in Sweden and Finland, but primarily through Nasser’s government in a deal that

\textsuperscript{46} Briscoe 171.
\textsuperscript{47} Laipson 60.
\textsuperscript{48} Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State, Nicosia, March 23, 1964, 9 p.m.
Department of State, Central Files, POL 23-8 CYP. Confidential. \textit{FRUS Volume XVI}. Document 27.
\textsuperscript{49} Joseph S. Joseph \textit{Cyprus-Ethnic Conflict and International Concern} (New York · Frankfurt am Main:
Peter Lang, 1985): 89.
would include aircraft and be partially funded by the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{50} With the creation of the Greek-Cypriot National Guard to be headed by General Grivas, Makarios was now dictating the agenda he had largely been denied during the first three years of his presidency when he had been hampered by Turkish-Cypriot demands. Most of the Turkish minority, estimated at between 45-50,000, had been driven from their homes, and now dwelled in armed enclaves effectively under an economic blockade. Under such dangerous conditions, it was virtually impossible for the Turkish-Cypriots to assert themselves politically. Any and all governmental posts became the sole domain of members of the Greek-Cypriot majority.

By May 1964, Cyprus superficially appeared to be at peace once more. Beneath the façade of calm, Greek and Turkish soldiers were secretly slipping into the island throughout the summer, reaching numbers that far exceeded the limits set by the agreements of 1959. Some reports placed the number of troops as high as 10 to 15,000.\textsuperscript{51} Adding to the undercurrent of tension was the fact that the UNFICYP proved to be incapable of protecting the Turkish-Cypriot minority from attacks and coercion. With the more radical elements of the Greek-Cypriot community continuing their campaign of violence, Ankara decided a demonstration of disapproval was in order by moving its fleet closer to Cyprus and stepping up the number of sorties over the island. American officials did not take Turkey’s belligerent moves seriously, although there was some debate over how militarily capable the Turks were of coordinating a landing on Cyprus.

\textsuperscript{50} Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State, Nicosia, May 22, 1964, 6 p.m. Department of State, Central Files, POL 23-8 CYP. Secret. \textit{FRUS Volume XVI}. Document 47. \\
\textsuperscript{51} Laipson 61.
Johnson did not wait to find out, and composed what George Ball described as “the most brutal diplomatic note I have ever seen.”

**Johnson’s poison pen letter**

It is probable that President Johnson was unaware of the full extent of the damage his infamous June 5, 1964 letter to Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü would have on future Turkish-U.S. relations. To Henry Kissinger, it “transformed the NATO guarantee from a strategic necessity into a whim of American policy,” thereby causing Turkey to question its role within the alliance. Although the letter provided an immediate solution that prevented a Turkish intervention, it provided tangible proof to many in the Turkish elite that the alliance between the two countries was little more than a “marriage of convenience” dictated by Soviet containment and Turkey’s strained relationship with Europe. The readiness with which Johnson appeared to dismiss Turkey accelerated Turkish fears of abandonment sparked in 1962 during the Cuban missile crisis when Kennedy risked making Turkey, as well as Germany, a theatre of conflict between the two superpowers. The honeymoon period that had begun in the early 1950s with open and friendly relations between Ankara and Washington was over.

Having been notified of Turkey’s intent to invade and “occupy a portion of Cyprus” under the provisions of the Treaty of Guarantee, Johnson identified the inherent hypocrisy of an operation that would lead to partition, which was excluded by the same

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52 Ball 350.
treaty. But it was Johnson’s reminder that Turkey’s responsibilities to NATO should outweigh any potential war with Greece that contained the crucial threat. If a Turkish intervention should “lead to direct involvement by the Soviet Union,” Johnson wrote:

“I hope you will understand that your NATO allies have not had a chance to consider whether they have an obligation to protect Turkey against the Soviet Union if Turkey takes a step which results in Soviet intervention without the full consent and understanding of its NATO allies.”

Johnson’s harsh warning was an unexpected tactic given the fact that Turkey was the centerpiece of American policy in the Middle East. In the event of a war with the Soviet Union, the Turkish Straits could be closed down by NATO, effectively bottling up the Black Sea and U.S. bombers stationed in Turkey were prepared to strike targets far behind Soviet lines. Furthermore, The Johnson Administration had been notably sensitive to Turkish demands throughout 1964 and complementary of the resolve shown by the İnönü Government. “İnönü is a hero,” Johnson told Turkish Foreign Minister F. C. Erkin during an April 29 meeting, and added that the United States was “tremendously grateful that he had acted with such statesmanship at a time when others did not display the same qualities.” The president further assured Erkin that his administration did not have a better friend than İnönü, professed his admiration for the Turkish people and enthused: “We are always going to be stout allies.” Such glowing approval would be ironic less than a month later.

Turkey’s concerns in Cyprus were fast becoming lost in a mounting pile of potential international calamities. The Johnson Administration was already overtaxed

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56 “Letter from President Lyndon B. Johnson to İsmet İnönü” in Coyle, 235.
57 Ibid. 236.
58 H.W. Brands Into the Labyrinth 95.
60 Ibid.
with the widening conflict in Vietnam, ongoing tension with the Soviets, and other crises taking shape in the Congo, Panama, and Indonesia. In addition to this list of global concerns, Johnson had his own political future to consider. With his reelection on the line in November 1964, Johnson informed his staff that he did not need a second war to break out and damper his chances of winning. 61 Within the circus of Soviet containment, Cyprus was a mere sideshow, one in which American foreign policy could be capriciously adjusted as needed.

Most likely, Johnson did not consider Cyprus in 1964 to be a matter of any great importance or one that might tarnish his personal prestige, hence his willingness to delegate management responsibilities to George Ball. 62 Even though Johnson lost a number of votes from the Greek-American community, he still managed to secure his reelection. 63 But if, as John Lewis Gaddis asserts, the Johnson administration’s greatest fear was not the spread of communism but “the threat of embarrassment” or appearing to be impotent, then the U.S.’s heavy handed-approach to Turkey seems more clear. 64 The ongoing tug-of-war between two supposedly loyal NATO allies over Cyprus was undoubtedly perceived as an indicator of Western weakness, necessitating a bold move by Johnson to allay such a perception.

**Troubles resume once more: 1967**

Seemingly incapable of sustained tranquility, the eastern Mediterranean once more experienced another cycle of tumult during the autumn of 1967. In April the Greek

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62 Geyelin 116.
63 Cohen 285.
military, led by Colonel George Papadopoulos, toppled the civilian government in Athens and established a junta far more willing to settle the Cyprus dispute with force. Despite the fact that the junta had brought about the end of a democratic regime, both the Johnson and later Nixon administrations were able to establish close ties with the junta, fueling later speculation regarding America’s role in Cyprus’ partition. Tension resulting from the coup in Greece served to re-ignite intercommunal fighting on Cyprus in November. With the loss of support from a democratic government and a new right-wing government now in place, there was far less of an incentive for Makarios to continue his enosis campaign, despite the junta’s strong support of it. A pragmatist such as Makarios was more that aware that a Greek dictatorship would not allow him to fully assert his own presidential autonomy. On the other side of the equation, the pro-West and anti-communist junta was less than enthused to interact with a president with a history of cooperation with the Soviet Union that included arms deals. The result of such incompatible doctrines was Makarios’ decision to consolidate his power and maintain Cyprus’ self-determination and the junta’s increasingly hostile attitude towards the Archbishop.

Another reason for the new outbreak of fighting was linked to the widening schism between the formerly staunch allies, President Makarios and General Grivas. As the commander of the Greek-Cypriot National Guard, Grivas, whose political views closely resembled those of the newly established junta, was already a dangerous element to the Turkish-Cypriot minority. With the government in Athens now drastically

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65 Brands *The Wages of Globalism* 82.  
66 Lenczowski 104.  
67 McDonald 15.
changed, and Makarios beginning to withdraw his commitment to the cause of *enosis*, the Archbishop would soon find himself with enemies outside the island and within.

With renewed backing from the Athens junta, General Grivas was emboldened enough to carry out organized assaults on Turkish-Cypriot enclave of Kophinou with a force of 15,000 Greek-Cypriot and 20,000 regular Greek soldiers on November 15. Ankara angrily demanded the immediate recall of Grivas and the abolition of all regular Greek troops with the exception of those guaranteed by the 1959 London-Zurich agreements. Once more, Turkish jets began to conduct sorties in the skies over Cyprus and assemble its naval forces just off the island.

For the Johnson administration, the events taking place during the autumn of 1967 were eerily reminiscent of those that had taken place in 1964. As it was three years before, the focus of the U.S. was on preserving NATO’s cohesion. For this next developing crisis, Cyrus Vance, a dogged negotiator, was tapped to serve as the American mediator as George Ball had since resigned. Vance’s mission would be the third and final time that the United States was able to convince its Turkish allies that an intervention would be injudicious. The combination of Vance’s efforts and the threat of Turkish hostility proved to be enough for the junta to comply with Ankara’s demands. The junta removed Grivas and troops that exceeded the limits set in 1959 were also withdrawn. Publicly, Prime Minister İnönü commended Vance for his efforts in bringing the predicament to an end, but the student demonstrations throughout Turkey attested to the fact that the sting of Johnson’s 1964 letter was still acute.

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68 Lenczowski 103.
69 Laipson 65.
Makarios proved once again to be a spoiler in 1967 by refusing to allow his own private army, the National Guard, to be disbanded.⁷⁰ It was a move he would later come to regret when it, like the Praetorian Guard, became the instrument of his removal seven years later at the junta’s behest. But the Archbishop remained a redoubtable presence in Cyprus, taking 95% of the vote in the 1968 election against a pro-enosis candidate and winning again in August of 1973 without any competing challengers.⁷¹

Excluding Greek-Americans, there were few in the United States, politicians or otherwise, who followed the ongoing Cyprus crisis in the 1960s with any diligence. Part of the reason for this was the groups were difficult to differentiate, thus discouraging the ability to back one or the other on moral grounds.⁷² With moral considerations set aside, the Johnson administration primarily dealt with Cyprus from a strategic standpoint. Like Henry Kissinger after him, Johnson’s primary concern was to avert a possible war between two NATO allies. By attempting not to demonstrate favoritism towards either side, the U.S. only managed to aggravate both and raise suspicions in both Athens and Ankara regarding future American policy.⁷³

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⁷² Brands *The Wages of Globalism* 62.
⁷³ Laipson 59.
CHAPTER FOUR—“POISONED FRUIT”

Given the sundry troupe of political players taking their places on the Mediterranean stage in the summer of 1974: a Machiavellian secretary of state, a president succumbing to scandal, an archbishop beset by former allies, and a maniacal Greek dictator, it is not difficult to be caught up in the inherent drama of the events that unfolded. Such drama has arguably prevented objective and authoritative accounts of these events from being written. In their place are analyses that largely condemn the Nixon administration, and Henry Kissinger in particular, for either allowing or engineering events in Greece and Cyprus to spiral out of control. What remain largely unexplored, with regards to the fateful days of 1974, are the wider implications of the foreign policy of the United States and Great Britain on the Cyprus issue and Turkey’s eventual intervention on the island.

American and British foreign policy: the changing of the guard

If many of the actors had changed from the crises of the 1960s to 1974, then so too had the backdrop. The era of détente was in full swing with the Warsaw Pact and NATO no longer the impenetrable monolithic blocs they once were. Individual countries were now much more free to formulate their own policies with countries both inside and outside their blocs. Khrushchev’s dismissal in 1964, after antagonizing the Russian military, allowed the entry of more calculating party members, such as Leonid Brezhnev and Aleksei Kosygin, who were more willing to cooperate with the United States if the circumstances demanded it. The Soviet boogeyman was becoming a Cold War bedtime story that many in the NATO fold were finding hard to believe. Nixon noted the change

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1 Michael A. Attalides Cyprus: Nationalism and international politics (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1979): 139.
during a July 29, 1967 speech he made to the Bohemian Club in San Francisco: “The winds of détente have blown so strongly from East to West that except for Germany most Europeans no longer fear the threat from the East.”² The future president wondered if NATO would be able to withstand the stiff breeze as he quoted Harold Macmillan that “Alliances are kept together by fear, not by love.”³

Nowhere was Macmillan’s adage more applicable than the increasingly brittle relationship between Turkey and Greece, NATO allies who had nearly gone to war with each other on a number of occasions during the 1960s. The simple bipolar model of East vs. West which had served American defense schemes for nearly two decades had to be scrapped, NATO’s raison d’être had to be reconsidered, and Europe’s responsibilities for its own security recalculated. Diplomatically, the incoming Nixon administration was drifting into uncharted waters and the assertive approach to Cyprus LBJ had utilized in the sixties would be unthinkable less than a decade later.

Henry Kissinger addressed the reasons for the diplomatic shift that was developing in the age of détente in a 1969 essay. “The age of the superpowers is now drawing to an end,” Kissinger proclaimed.

“Military bipolarity has not only failed to prevent, it has actually encouraged political multipolarity. Weaker allies have good reason to believe that their defense is in the overwhelming interest of their senior partner. Hence they see no need to purchase its support by acquiescence in its policies.”⁴

As the mutual perception of the Russian threat dissipated in Europe, NATO membership was no longer an indicator of shared interests and the very survival of the alliance came

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³ Ibid.
into question. A report circulated in the U.S. State Department in January 1974 warned of a “critical juncture” for NATO due to the fact that Europe’s incoming generation was “devoid of historical memory of World War II, Berlin, Cuba” and was therefore “prone to doubt the utility of the Alliance.”\(^5\) Such European doubt surfaced after America’s handling of the Arab-Israeli conflict of October 1973 and would produce more animosity after the Cyprus invasion.

The schism that had developed between the Soviet Union and Communist China further obscured who the true villain of the piece was. But what was most dramatically shaping the United States’ relationship with Europe was the fact that, politically and economically, Europe had become robust enough to break free from American sponsorship.\(^6\) When the Nixon Administration, after five years of neglect of the U.S.’s continental allies due to dealings with Vietnam, China, and the Soviet Union, announced that 1973 was to be the “Year of Europe,” many Europeans looked upon the declaration with derision.\(^7\) It seemed more than apparent that Europe did not require America as its caretaker any longer.

Despite this new era of geopolitical uncertainty, there was no denying that the United States had now fully assumed hegemonic duties in the Eastern Mediterranean from Great Britain. The process of America’s accession to world prominence began with World War I, which both drained Britain’s economy and hampered her international prestige, despite the Allied victory.\(^8\) The Second World War further accelerated the process of British decolonization until 1968 when the British government decided to

\(^{6}\) Ibid 73-74.  
\(^{8}\) Kathleen Burk Britain, America and the Sinews of War (Boston: George Allen & Unwin, 1985): 1.
systematically withdraw from its ring of bases that began east of the Suez Canal and ended at Singapore. The sacrifice of these bases did not sit well with many in the British public and government who lamented the loss in both emotional and historical terms, and feared the softening of Britain’s voice in world affairs. From this point on Britain’s activities would be limited largely to the European, rather than global, arena.

Britain’s renewed commitment to European matters was reflected by its joining the European Economic Committee (EEC) in 1973 after a decade of being prohibited from doing so by French president Charles de Gaulle. Following de Gaulle’s resignation, the “Euro-enthusiastic” British Prime Minister, Edward Heath, oversaw Britain’s entrance into the EEC. Despite the long-standing cooperation between the two countries, Heath alerted Nixon that the U.S. would have to abandon any expectations of wielding influence in the EEC through Britain; he refused to allow his country to serve as America’s Trojan Horse. American and British relations in 1973 were at their most tense since the Suez debacle of 1956.

The following year held the promise of reconciliation with the election of the Labour Party with Harold Wilson as Prime Minister and James Callaghan as Foreign Secretary. Eschewing the Heath Administration’s Euro-centric policy, Wilson was committed to keeping his nation an international actor stating in 1964 that: “Britain is a world power or we are nothing.” The new Foreign Secretary shared such a vision, and was determined to strengthen Britain’s relationship with the United States in order to

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11 Nicolet, 376.
fulfill the larger strategic goal of global participation. Callaghan planned to utilize
British membership in international organizations such as the EEC and NATO as
mediums though which to wield British influence rather than relying on military
leverage.\textsuperscript{13}

While the sun continued to set on the British Empire, the Nixon administration
was crafting a new foreign policy adapted to function in the new atmosphere of détente
with the Soviet Union. Aspects of this new policy with the USSR included arms control,
a widening of trade, renewed scientific collaboration, and technological and cultural
exchanges.\textsuperscript{14} Through such advances Nixon and Kissinger hoped to improve U.S.-Soviet
relations both to increase diplomatic transparency and boost American leverage.\textsuperscript{15} The
approach was largely a successful one, particularly from 1969-1972, as Brezhnev
established his preeminence in Soviet foreign relations and answered Nixon’s call for “an
era of negotiation” to replace confrontation and build “a structure of peace.”\textsuperscript{16} Improved
diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and the United States continued to take
place despite the stockpiles of ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles) being amassed
in both countries during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Between the end of the Cuban
missile crisis in 1962 and 1967, the number of Soviet ICBMs jumped from 75 to 570 in
comparison to the 1054 missiles in America’s arsenal.\textsuperscript{17}

A fundamental shift in the Nixon Administration’s foreign policy also influenced
America’s response to the events in the Mediterranean during the summer of 1974. From

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid. 155.
\textsuperscript{14} Franz Schurmann \textit{The Foreign Politics of Richard Nixon: The Grand Design} (University of California,
\textsuperscript{15} Raymond L. Garthoff \textit{Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan}
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid. 13, 25.
\textsuperscript{17} Brendan O’Malley and Ian Craig \textit{The Cyprus Conspiracy: America, Espionage and the Turkish Invasion}
1969 to October 1973, Nixon and Kissinger attempted to dismantle the bipolar interpretation of the international system that had dominated strategic thinking during the presidencies of both Kennedy and Johnson.\(^\text{18}\) As the U.S. continued to extract itself from the mire of the Vietnam Conflict, American foreign policy increasingly reflected a desire to foster reconcilable relationships with adversarial Communist countries.\(^\text{19}\) In doing so, it would be possible to delegate responsibility for international stability to developing regional powers and reduce the possibility of nuclear annihilation. Both Nixon and his Secretary of State tended to view foreign policy formulation as essentially a presidential domain that relied heavily on “maneuver and manipulation” resulting in unparalleled isolation from Congress and centralization.\(^\text{20}\) A primary factor for Kissinger and Nixon’s view was rooted in their shared disdain for bureaucracy, which they saw as a detriment to the administration’s ability to “evaluate separate issues in relation to each other” and prevented a timely and decisive response to crises as they arose.\(^\text{21}\) The détente model was a primary feature of American foreign policy until the Arab-Israeli War of October 1973 illustrated the limitations of the Nixon-Kissinger strategy to encourage regional stability, resulting in a loss of confidence in the strategy.\(^\text{22}\)

**The Soviet Presence in the Mediterranean**

Despite the appearance of improved U.S.-Soviet relations, the Soviets continued to attempt to undermine the integrity of NATO’s southeastern flank by exploiting the rift between Turkey and America in order to increase its presence in the eastern


\(^{19}\) Ibid 54.

\(^{20}\) Ibid 49-50.


\(^{22}\) Litwak 121.
Mediterranean. Throughout the 1960s the Soviet Union set about establishing a series of naval facilities in Alexandria, Port Said, and Latakia, Syria to sustain the Soviet Mediterranean Fleet.\(^\text{23}\) A combination of factors had converged in the mid to late 1960s including Britain’s departure from “East of Suez,” France’s decision to leave NATO’s military command, domestic political chaos in Italy, and the unresolved crisis in Cyprus. With a reshuffling of coalitions between former allies, it was an opportune moment for the Soviets to slip into the Mediterranean. Until the Soviets had begun their naval buildup, the U.S. Sixth Fleet, supplemented by navies from other NATO nations, had dominated the Mediterranean. The Soviets’ motive behind the naval presence, based more on psychological reasons than strategic ones, was to serve as a “visible counterweight” to the Sixth Fleet and improve Russia’s standing with the Arabs.\(^\text{24}\) It was a strategy that would have undoubtedly met with stiff resistance from Turkey had not their relationship with the U.S. cooled so considerably.

Following the crushing impact of Johnson’s 1964 letter, the Soviet Union intensified its ongoing diplomatic courtship with Turkey, appealing to the Turks’ bruised self-worth within NATO. In November 1964, the two countries signed a cultural agreement. Both nations signed an economic agreement in 1967 in which the Soviet Union pledged $200 million in cheap credits to Turkey.\(^\text{25}\) Strong indicators of the thaw between the two nations were noticeable by the beginning of Nixon’s term. A 1970 CIA report warned that the association had improved “as a consequence of a major Soviet effort-begun almost a decade ago-to recast its image into that of a peace-loving and

\(^{24}\) Váli, 214.
\(^{25}\) Philip Robins *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003): 132.
benevolent neighbor.”26 The Soviet Union successfully wooed the Turks with financial assistance to the point that, by 1972, Turkey and the Soviet Union signed a Declaration of Principles of Good Neighborly and Friendly Co-operation.27 Close economic and political bonds had been established between the two nations by the time of the Cyprus crisis. The ultimate goal of the Soviets was to disengage Turkey from NATO, thus endangering American military installations on Turkish soil. Although America increased its military aid to Turkey during the Nixon years, many Turks continued to see the U.S. as insensitive to its regional welfare, security, and economic growth.28 Turkey’s improved relationship with the USSR and the possibility of pushing the Turks further into the arms of the Soviets must have been an overriding concern of Kissinger’s and help to explain the U.S.’s ostensibly non-committal stance in 1974.

The Mediterranean begins to boil

Throughout the early 1970s Greece and Turkey continued to drift farther from their Truman Doctrine era responsibilities as de facto allies. A significant reason for the continued hostility lay in the regime changes that took place in both countries within a short period of time. By early 1971, Turkish Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel’s government had become so riddled with factionalism and burdened by student violence that it was powerless to pass any significant legislation relating to social or economic reform in the assembly.29 Once more, the Turkish army was compelled to intervene though in a far more benign fashion than in 1960. On March 12 Demirel received a memorandum from the chief of the general staff demanding an end to the “anarchy” and

26 “Soviet Policies in the Middle East and Mediterranean Area” National Intelligence Estimate Number 11-6-70 (March 5, 1970): 10.
27 Robins, 132.
the passage of series of reforms “in a Kemalist spirit.” Rather than protest, Demirel resigned and the baton was passed to a series of would-be reformers until 1973 when Bülent Ecevit, a great critic of the Turkish military, became prime minister and then a national hero for his handling of the Cyprus crisis the following year.  

1973 also witnessed political upheaval in Greece when on November 25, following a violent student demonstration at Athens Polytechnic University, the head of the military police, Brigadier General Dimitrios Ioannides, overthrew Colonel George Papadopoulos. But the student demonstration, which resulted in 30 deaths, served as the key event that turned most Greeks against the junta and ensured its imminent demise. This did not prevent the next strong man in Greece from causing great change; once Ioannides, a brutal absolutist, ardent nationalist and virulent anti-communist, rose to power Makarios’ days were numbered. The new dictator had served on Cyprus during the violent days of 1964, and during his time there he had developed a pronounced hatred for both the Archbishop and the Turkish Cypriot minority. Makarios’ recognition of enosis’ impracticality due to resistance from the Turkish Cypriots and his decision to remain autonomous marked him as a left-wing traitor by many in both Greece and his homeland. As the new leader of the junta, Ioannides intended to reward such treason by overseeing the removal of Makarios and the forced enosis of Cyprus. His harsh agenda resulted in a much more inflexible foreign and domestic policy that compelled the

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30 Ibid.
31 Ibid 274.
resignation of three of the top civilian officials including the Foreign Minister, Spyros Tetenes. With military-dominated governments in place both in Ankara and Athens, attitudes on the Cyprus issue would quickly become intractable and thwart a solution amenable to all.

Events in the eastern Mediterranean unfortunately coincided with the climax of the Watergate scandal that paralyzed the executive branch of the U.S. government and prevented it from adequately attending to the crisis as it unfolded. Nixon’s preoccupation with his political survival meant that the Cyprus situation became Henry Kissinger’s responsibility. But the fact that Cyprus had been comparatively quiet for seven years meant that the United States paid scant attention to matters on the island and not formulated an expedient response once trouble began. As summarized by H. W. Brands: “In keeping with the long standing U.S. approach to Cyprus, that country’s visibility in American foreign policy lessened as its volatility in regional affairs diminished.”

Neither Nixon nor Secretary Kissinger had any substantial dealings with the Greeks, Turks, or Cypriots until events in July 1974 demanded their attention. President Nixon, despite promises made to Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit on several occasions, never visited Turkey during his term of office, nor did Kissinger. But the fact the Cyprus dispute was so intricate and vague from an American policy-making standpoint made it close to impossible to devise a consistent approach to the island. Consequently, it was

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38 Ioannides, 30.
41 Attalides 149.
often left to Greece and Turkey to haggle over the island’s status without the benefit of a clear sense of the American position.

The junta’s coup against Makarios: July 15-18

The genuine position of the Nixon Administration towards President Makarios described in much of the literature has been overwhelmingly negative, asserting that he was viewed as “the Red Priest” or “the Castro of the Mediterranean”: a threat to NATO’s security in the Near East. Such derogatory nicknames were more a product of the Johnson years when the fear of Cyprus becoming communist was more of a concern than during the Nixon presidency. In his memoirs, Kissinger is less than harsh in his appraisal of the archbishop, dismissing him as “more a nuisance than a menace” whose “talents were too large for his island.” And he further rejects the contention that he or Nixon consciously planned a coup that would topple Makarios: “At no time during my period in office did we take any measure to reduce his hold on power. We maintained an aloof, respectful, and wary relationship with him.”

Undoubtedly, Makarios’ friendly relationship with the Soviet Union and other members of the Eastern Bloc would have aroused suspicions amongst many American policymakers. But Makarios was a moderate in comparison to an ardent supporter of enosis like Grivas, who, had he gained power of Cyprus, could have easily plunged Greece and Turkey into the sort of inter-NATO conflict that the United States had sought to avoid for so long. Therefore, it seems likely that the U.S. would have viewed the Archbishop over Grivas as the preferred, if not ideal, regional stabilizer.

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42 Nicolet, 421.
44 Ibid.
Regardless of Kissinger’s contentions, Makarios’ status was the overriding determinant of both America’s and Britain’s response to the Greek-sponsored coup against the Archbishop, but in markedly different ways. The British supported Makarios’ restoration, but not as hastily as most of the governments of Europe desired. Kissinger was far more hesitant to support any plan that would reinstate the Archbishop. Makarios’ ambiguous relationship with the communist element in his own nation as well as the Eastern Bloc during his presidency continued to make him a liability to the West. Despite the fact that Makarios’ overtures to the Soviets were more indicative of his desire to maintain his position than his own communist leanings, Kissinger was concerned that the Cyprus issue could become a conduit for greater Soviet influence in the Mediterranean. Accordingly, the Secretary of State coordinated a response to the coup that upheld the existing Cypriot Constitution, but prevented Makarios from authorizing a Soviet response that would add an unwanted international dimension. Such concerns undoubtedly influenced Kissinger’s seemingly apathetic response to Makarios’ plight in public.

The sword of Damocles that had been suspended over Makarios’ head by the Greek colonels fell in the summer of 1974 in response to the Cypriot President’s first open statement of opposition to the junta.45 Makarios’ increasingly vehement stance against the junta was linked to the covert return to Cyprus of his former comrade, General George Grivas, in September 1971. Still clinging to the hope of enosis and supported by the junta, Grivas assembled a new underground movement he unimaginatively christened the EOKA-B. With an agenda intended to undercut Makarios’ rule and any progress in intercommunal negotiations, the EOKA-B went about their business of terror. Makarios

45 Birand 1.
now found himself in the paradoxical position British authorities had occupied two decades before.

Following Grivas’ death from heart failure in January 1974, the EOKA-B turned their fallen hero into a martyr and stepped up its campaign of violence under the aegis of Ioannides with Makarios as the ultimate target. Frustrated by a series of failed assassination attempts and the mounting pile of damning evidence recovered from raids on EOKA-B strongholds, Makarios decided to confront his internal enemies. In April the Cypriot government announced that Athens was directing EOKA-B operations and funding it with nearly $2.5 million per year. On May 3, Makarios dispatched a letter to the Greek Foreign Minister, Spyros Tetenes, listing Greek officers in Cyprus accused of undermining the government. Ioannides’ predecessor, General George Papadopoulos, had told Makarios that such activity by any Greek officer would result in an immediate recall. But the more obdurate Ioannides summarily dismissed the letter.

Undeterred, Makarios fired off a second angry letter to the junta on July 2, this time to the Greek President, General Phaidon Ghizikis, that reiterated his accusations of plotting against him and demands for the immediate withdrawal of the treasonous Greek officers in the Cyprus National Guard. Makarios was certain that Ioannides was holding the EOKA-B’s leash. His letter included the passage: “the root of evil is too deep and reaches as far as Athens. From there it is fed and from there it is conserved and spreads growing into a tree of evil, the bitter fruit of which Greek Cypriots are tasting today.”

46 Attalides 163.
47 Nicolet 414.
The second letter may have been as speedily rejected by the junta as the first had Makarios not submitted it to the international press for publication as a further sign of his resolve. This was a move that could not go unpunished by the junta. In an officially sanctioned demonstration, posters and leaflets accusing Makarios of being a “power-hungry monk” who had perpetrated “treason against the Greek nation” appeared throughout Athens.⁴⁹ There was also a secondary motivator behind junta’s push for Makarios’ removal. With much of the country turning against Ioannides, Cyprus provided him with a tailor-made opportunity to unite the Greek people behind an issue of national importance.⁵⁰ All that was needed was the proper leader to take Makarios’ place.

The man selected by the junta to take Makarios’ place was Nicos Sampson, a one-time photojournalist and leader in the EOKA who, while still in his teens in the mid-1950s, had been personally linked to 25 murdered British soldiers as the leader of an assassination unit.⁵¹ The name Sampson was adopted by the young guerilla when he began his career as a terrorist.⁵² Although he changed his vocation to a newspaper publisher after Cyprus’ independence in 1960, his name, as well as his fanatical devotion to the cause of enosis, remained the same. Sampson demonstrated his conviction at Grivas’ outdoor funeral in late January. Wrapped in a Greek flag, he mounted the platform where his former comrade’s casket lay and began striking it with his fist shouting: “We will avenge you, Digenis!”⁵³ Marc Anthony couldn’t have done it better.

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⁴⁹ Roberts “Athens Junta,” 73.
⁵⁰ Ioannides 75.
At 8:25 A.M. July 15, Makarios was meeting with a group of schoolchildren from the Cairo Orthodox Community when several T-54 tanks began to surround the Presidential Palace in Nicosia. A factory siren suddenly began to wail and gunshots ran out signaling the commencement of the junta’s coup, code-named “Operation President.” Throughout the city armored cars and trucks carrying commandos from the Greek National Guard raced to occupy vital sites. Upon the urging of his staff, the Archbishop fled through a back window with a pair of bodyguards, crossed a withered riverbed and reached a deserted road. From there, Makarios managed to commandeer a car and escape to Paphos, the mountain town of his birth, with the National Guard close at his heels. Initially, it was both reported and widely assumed that the Archbishop had been killed, further complicating the international response to the coup. But the seemingly indestructible Makarios managed to make a final radio broadcast from Paphos in which he confirmed his survival and urged his countrymen to resist the junta. He then contacted the British who agreed to dispatch an RAF helicopter to rendezvous with the Archbishop and carry him to safety on the condition that he accept evacuation to Great Britain.

The prospect of Cyprus’ government being headed by Nicos Sampson was also a bitter one for Ankara to accept. Sampson, an avowed hater of Turks, had personally murdered a number of Turkish-Cypriots during the bloodshed of the mid-1960s and then cheerfully posed for photographs next to his victims like a triumphant hunter. In 1964, 

54 “Record of a Conversation between the Prime Minister and President Makarios at 2:30P.M. on Wednesday 17 July 1971 at 10 Downing Street” Records of the Prime Ministers Office: Correspondence and Papers PREM 16/20/01, The British National Archives: 2. Dominick J Coyle Minrorties in Revolt: Political Violence in Ireland, Italy, and Cyprus (Farleigh Dickinson, 1983): 189.
55 O’Malley and Craig 169.
56 Ioannides 115.
57 TELECON Secretary General Waldheim/Secretary Kissinger (July 16, 1974, 11:50am) Kissinger Transcripts.
Sampson had visited President Makarios hoping to obtain his blessing for a scheme that would eradicate the Turkish-Cypriot enclaves for good.\textsuperscript{58} Although there was initially no violence directed at the Turkish-Cypriot enclaves following the coup, and Sampson publicly pledged that intercommunal peace talks would continue, the Turkish government remained skeptical.\textsuperscript{59} The combination of Sampson’s past history as an EOKA hit man and Ioannides’ vocal disgust of Turkish-Cypriots led many in Cyprus and Turkey, including Prime Minister Ecevit, to fear the worst: forced \textit{enosis} and the possible extermination of the Turkish minority.\textsuperscript{60}

The question of whether or not to recognize Sampson as Cyprus’ new president became a crucial issue in Washington. Allegedly, there had been cheers in the Pentagon when Cyprus Radio erroneously reported Makarios’ death, indicating that not everyone in American government had stopped thinking of the Archbishop as the “Red Priest.”\textsuperscript{61} Despite the lack of American condolences for the Cypriots, Sampson’s takeover of the island was the most egregious violation of the 1960 Constitution since its inception and presented a menacing situation that easily matched those of 1964 and 1967. The fact that Kissinger did not roundly condemn the coup and its instigators was one of the greatest American blunders early on in the crisis due to its appearance of the U.S.’s implicit approval of Makarios’ removal, thus further legitimizing Turkey’s motive for invading.\textsuperscript{62} Perhaps if the United States had immediately asserted its disapproval by threatening the

\textsuperscript{59} Coyle, 189.
\textsuperscript{60} McDonald, 17-18.
\textsuperscript{61} Ioannides 117.
\textsuperscript{62} Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, 93\textsuperscript{rd} Congress, 2\textsuperscript{nd} sess. \textit{Crisis on Cyprus: 1974} (Oct. 14, 1974): 54.
junta with military and economic sanctions, the ensuing invasion and division of Cyprus might have been avoided.

But Kissinger’s initial concern was to seal off Cyprus from Soviet influence rather than stabilize the island. The day of the coup Soviet officials, hoping to introduce Russian troops to help restore order in Cyprus, reportedly contacted both the U.S. State Department and the British High Commissioner in Nicosia.63 Kissinger spoke to British Foreign Secretary James Callaghan the following day, before Makarios’ evacuation, and explained his hesitance to recognize the Archbishop as the legitimate leader since “we don’t want him leading an outside movement and ask for Soviet help.”64 Until the civil war on the island had subsided, Kissinger refused formally to endorse Makarios. As he told Callaghan: “If Makarios is leaving the Island I have to make a different assessment than if he is leading a civil war. My main concern is to keep outside powers out.” He then restated his position to the British Foreign Minister: “Once there is an outcome, then we can do something.”65

Despite Kissinger’s wish to “keep outside powers out,” the Soviet Union pledged its immediate support to Turkey to assist in the restoration of Cyprus’ independence. “We are supporting those who are fighting against insurgents,” declared the Soviet Ambassador to Turkey, Vasily F. Grubyakov, to a group of reporters, as he was leaving the presidential palace in Ankara on July 16.66 That same day in London, Prime Minister Wilson received the Soviet Ambassador, N.M. Lunkov, who wished to relay an oral

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63 TELECON Ambassador Dobrynin/Sec. Kissinger (July 15, 1974, 5:30 pm) Kissinger Transcripts.
64 TELECON Foreign Secretary Callaghan/ Secretary Kissinger (July 16, 1974, 10:15 am) Kissinger Transcripts.
65 Ibid.
66 “Soviets Reported In Offer to Turks” Special to The New York Times (July 17, 1974): 12.
message from Brezhnev to Wilson. Lunkov asserted the Soviets’ knowledge that the colonels had organized the coup and:

“…hoped that the British Government were in these circumstances guided by the same desire to avoid any aggravation of the situation in the Mediterranean, and that the British Government would take appropriate measures to stop the current interference in the internal affairs of Cyprus. The leadership in Moscow was proceeding on the assumption that the British authorities would in fact avoid doing anything to aggravate the situation.”

Callaghan assured Lunkov that Great Britain “had already acted in the sense desired by the Soviet Government” by continuing to recognize Makarios as the president of Cyprus and reiterating to Athens and Ankara their collective responsibilities as guarantor powers. As yet, the Turkish Government appeared to be “behaving responsibly,” but Lunkov disclosed his concern that the events in Cyprus would be an impediment to general détente.

Great Britain shared in this concern, and acted quickly to prevent bellicose actions by the Turkish military that might lead to a Mediterranean war. Fully equipped Turkish troops were already converging on ports along the southern Anatolian coast, facing Cyprus, for an invasion. As the most powerful of the three guarantor powers and custodian of two crucial bases, the British considered placing a fleet between Turkey and Cyprus to act as a barrier to an invasion force, but decided on a more modest option. Prime Minister Wilson ordered the assault carrier, Hermes, rerouted from Malta to Cyprus and that its 700 commandos be prepared to deploy within 24 hours. The Devonshire, a guided-missile destroyer, and two frigates, Rhyl and Andromeda, further

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67 “Record of a Conversation Between the Prime Minister and the Soviet Ambassador at 10.50 a.m. on Tuesday 16 July at 10 Downing Street” Records of the Prime Ministers Office: Correspondence and Papers PREM 16/20/01, The British National Archives: 1-2.
68 Ibid 2.
69 Ibid 2-3.
70 O’Malley and Craig 171.
supplemented the *Hermes* as did a full complement of Lightning fighters and Vulcan bombers.\(^{71}\)

All of Europe was weighing in on the coup in Cyprus and reaching similar conclusions as Kissinger complained to a sequestered Nixon during an afternoon phone call on July 17:

“The problem in Cyprus is the Europeans have taken a united position that Makarios ought to be brought back and they want us to bring pressure on the Greeks. My worry is that Makarios now has to lean on the Communists and Eastern bloc. All our evidence is that the opposition is in total control of the Island. My recommendation is that first, we get someone over there to make our view clear and secondly, we work for a compromise in which neither Makarios or the other guy (Sampson) take over…They want us to rake the Greeks but if they get overthrown then that will jeopardize our whole solution.”\(^{72}\)

Kissinger feared for NATO’s stability: “The danger is this, if everyone runs to Makarios embracing him [as] the legitimate head…and if the Soviets are the only ones to offer to help restore him, we have no basis for resisting it.”\(^{73}\) Kissinger’s strategy was to stall Makarios’ restoration until an “internal solution” presented itself. To come out against a fast-weakening junta might cause it to fold, “then a left wing could take over or a bunch of Greek colonels who could thrown [sic] in with the Quadafi group,” Kissinger said as a comparison.\(^{74}\) In a further act of European solidarity on the Cyprus issue, the European Community released a public demarche to the Greek Government on July 17 condemning the coup and demanding a withdrawal of the Sampson regime.

Kissinger’s non-committed stance on Makarios had not escaped the attention of the Democratic opposition in Congress. On July 18, Representative Ogden R Reid, a New York Democrat announced to the press that the United States would be foolish to

\(^{71}\) Ibid.
\(^{72}\) TELECON President Nixon/Secretary Kissinger (July 17, 1974, 4:30 PM) Kissinger Transcripts.
\(^{73}\) Ibid.
\(^{74}\) Ibid.
withdraw recognition from Makarios’ Government without Congressional approval. “To reject long-standing American policy in Cyprus and rebuff our NATO allies by unilateral action would be a disaster,” said Reid following a State Department meeting. Like Turkey, Reid detected an American tilt towards the newly installed Sampson regime indicated by the lack of assertive condemnation of the coup. It was a perception that would come to haunt the Secretary of State in the months ahead when Congress utilized the Cyprus crisis to challenge Kissinger’s executive authority.

After being whisked off Cyprus by a British plane for the safety of London via Malta, Makarios was greeted by Prime Minister Wilson at the doorway to 10 Downing Street on the afternoon of July 17. Wilson kindly arranged for a new cassock to be found for the Archbishop, who had been wearing the same one since the crisis began, and provided a shirt of his own since they shared the same collar size. Makarios confessed that had been caught off-guard by the coup and, despite the repeated warnings, “he had not believed that the Greek junta would have dared to undertake it, and had been sure that it would prove a great mistake.” Such a disclosure corroborates Kissinger’s claim that one of the primary reasons for the U.S.’s lack of assertive leadership during the coup was the fact that Makarios had failed to ask for American assistance or even mention any concern of a coup during the Secretary of State’s visit to Cyprus the previous May. But U.S. State Department analysts had advised Kissinger in April to act in order to prevent the junta from acting against the Archbishop. Makarios may have been shortsighted in

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76 Ibid.
78 “Record of a Conversation between the Prime Minister and President Makarios”: 1-2.
79 Kissinger *Years of Renewal*, 203.
80 Attalides 167.
not anticipating the coup, but he assured the British that it had been organized by the
Greek Government and carried out with the assistance of Greek officer in the National
Guard.\textsuperscript{81} There was no doubt that the British would never recognize the legitimacy of
Sampson’s new regime “whom we knew to be a convicted criminal and to have
associations with the I.R.A. here.”\textsuperscript{82}

As one of Cyprus’ guarantor powers, Great Britain had the option of reinstating
Makarios using military support. The Ministry of Defense explored the feasibility of
such a scenario should all diplomatic options fail and realized. The judgment planners
reached was that such a mission would be faced with circumstances similar to those that
had plagued British operations during the Cyprus conflict of the 1950s and were currently
being faced in Northern Ireland. As a Ministry of Defense report stated: “Bitter
experience has shown us that even a small number of dedicated men with support from
the local population can pin down an inordinately large force for an indefinite period and
we might end up facing an open-ended and expensive situation, similar to Northern
Ireland.”\textsuperscript{83} The report forecasted that in order to ensure Makarios’ long-term stability, a
commitment of three brigades or more in Cyprus would be required that might “seriously
affect the availability of forces for Northern Ireland.”\textsuperscript{84}

But even if the British had decided to mount a significant military response in
Cyprus, it would have doubtlessly taken place without Kissinger’s blessing in a repeat of
the Suez crisis: British jaws snapping without the benefit of American teeth. Just after

\textsuperscript{81} “Record of a Conversation between the Prime Minister and President Makarios” 4.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{83} “Re-instatement of President Makarios in Cyprus by Means of British Military Support” Ministry of
Defense Report, Records of the Prime Ministers Office (July 17, 1974) Correspondence and Papers PREM
16/20/01, The British National Archives: A-3.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid A-4.
Makarios departed 10 Downing Street, Kissinger contacted Callaghan for a status update before the Turkish Prime Minister arrived in London that evening. Again, Callaghan aligned the British position up with that of Europe: he favored the return of Makarios; but he was unsure of how it was to be accomplished diplomatically. He expressed his hope that Kissinger might pressure the Greek Government into withdrawing the National Guard officers who had taken part in the coup as a means of weakening Sampson and assuring Ankara that a Turkish unilateral action was unnecessary. But Callaghan had little faith in a diplomatic solution, laying odds at “three to one or five to one that it won’t succeed.” Despite his British counterpart’s pessimism, both men agreed that Sampson needed to go before the Soviets accused him “of running a Fascist regime” and used such a claim as a pretext for increased involvement.

Besides the threat of provoking a Soviet hornets nest, the United States and Great Britain were equally attuned to the demands of damage control with Turkey. The 1960 Treaty of Guarantee provided for intervention by one or all three of the guarantor powers, but failed to specify the nature of the intervention or the circumstances that would justify it. Regardless, Turkey was more than prepared to dispatch its assembling invasion force, a threat felt acutely on both sides of the Atlantic. On July 17 Kissinger dispatched Undersecretary of State Joseph Sisco on a mission to contain the conflict that would take him to London, Ankara, and Athens and meet with very little success. Additionally a Cyprus Task Force was quickly convened by Kissinger to determine the most pragmatic course of action. The approach recommended by the Task Force was a “constitutional

85 TELECON Foreign Secretary Callaghan/Secretary Kissinger (July 17, 1974, 2:50 pm) Kissinger Transcripts.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.
strategy” which involved pressure on Greece to recognize the restoration of a rightful government in Cyprus using the threat of sanctions from America and other Western nations.\textsuperscript{88} Though it was an inherently mild approach to the crisis, it was still rejected by Kissinger who continued an ambiguous course so as not to alienate either member of NATO.

The evening of July 17, Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit arrived in London to discuss the situation in Cyprus with Wilson and Callaghan. Following dinner at 10 Downing Street, the dialogue began with Ecevit expressing his appreciation for the British decision not to recognize the Sampson government. Ecevit then voiced his refusal to support further inter-communal negotiations, which had obviously proven to be a pointless endeavor.\textsuperscript{89} Ecevit claimed to have attempted to communicate with the Greek government without success and “was not deceived by the apparent restraint from the use of force against the Turkish communities so far, and regarded the present situation as a form of unnamed enosis.”\textsuperscript{90} Although the Turkish leader claimed that intervention would remain a last resort, he stressed some sort of action that would prevent the Sampson regime from taking root and disabling NATO’s southeastern flank. Such an action should include a joint statement that demonstrated that neither nation recognized Sampson’s Government and demanded the restoration of Makarios. Ecevit further asserted that the United States ought to warn the Greek junta of the violation of the independence of Cyprus that had occurred and demand the removal of Greek forces.\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{88} Nicolet 430.
\textsuperscript{89} “Record of Conversation between the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and Commonwealth Secretary, and the Defense Secretary, and the Prime Minister, the Acting Foreign Minister, and Minister of the Interior after dinner at No, 10 Downing Street on Wednesday 17 July 1974” Records of the Prime Ministers Office: Correspondence and Papers, The British National Archives: 1-2.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid 2.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid 3.
the event that such a passive approach failed to work, Ecevit proposed either a bilateral military response utilizing the British SBAs, or a unilateral one undertaken solely by Turkey. The former, Ecevit enthused, would be satisfactory to both the U.S. and the Soviets, and restore Cypriot democracy and NATO’s Eastern Mediterranean integrity in one fell swoop. 92 A most interesting claim made by Ecevit was the Turkish desire to see Makarios restored since Turkey was “almost weeping” over his departure. 93

While Ecevit’s proposals were very much in tune with those of the Wilson Government there was some disagreement as to the timetable. Both Wilson and Callaghan wished to see Makarios’ restoration take place through elections rather than force. Furthermore Callaghan was unsure what legal basis existed for the use of the SBAs by Turkish troops. 94 The Foreign Secretary then relayed Kissinger’s assurances that the U.S. would not acknowledge the legitimacy of the Sampson regime, but that “the Russians had made several approaches to the Americans and had hinted things that were certainly very disagreeable.” 95 Callaghan echoed Kissinger’s fears that deliberations before the UN Security Council would pave the way for Soviet interference and offered a tripartite meeting of all three Guarantor Powers as a means of circumventing any UN action. But neither Callaghan nor Wilson was an ardent subscriber to the notion of the Soviet Union as a credible military or ideological threat. Both men viewed the USSR as too economically weakened and in need of productive interaction with the West to be wholly consumed with a containment strategy. 96

92 Ibid.
93 Ibid 5.
94 Ibid., 6.
95 Ibid 7.
96 Lane 157-158.
The fact that Turkey would unleash her forces on the shores of Cyprus a mere two
days after Ecevit’s meeting with Wilson at 10 Downing Street is a clear indicator of
Ankara’s impatience and resolve to intervene with or without Western backing. Both the
Americans and the British suspected as much and interpreted Ecevit’s conferences with
the Wilson cabinet largely as a ploy to gain the “legal” right to intervene as provided by
the 1960 Constitution. 97 The negotiations were something of a trial by fire for Callaghan,
who came to assert leadership of Britain’s response to the developing conflict. Callaghan
possessed little existing knowledge of Cyprus and while serving in Parliament in the
Labour Party he was frequently aligned with its more overtly pro-Greek members who
blamed the Conservative governments for aggravating the antagonism between the Greek
and Turkish-Cypriots. 98 Kissinger noted the Foreign Secretary’s tendency to personalize
foreign policy issues in his memoirs, contending that Callaghan shifted his anger from the
junta to Ecevit as the crisis progressed. 99 As a result, Kissinger saw himself as innately
more capable of grasping the crisis’ inherent complexities than the British. 100 The cool
detachment with which Kissinger handled the situation fundamentally contrasted with
Callaghan’s more resolute, if emotional, method and would result in different
management approaches to the events following the Turkish invasion.

97 Nicolet 433.
98 John Reddaway The British Connection with Cyprus since Independence (Oxford: University Printing
99 Kissinger Years of Renewal 209.
100 Ioannides 106.
CHAPTER FIVE-BY WHAT WE HAVE LEFT UNDONE

America’s inherent predicament in dealing with the Cyprus crisis of 1974 is neatly exemplified by the shared origins of the Greek, Turkish, and U.S. warships converging in the eastern Mediterranean on July 19. All had been constructed in American shipyards with the intention of defending the agreed upon tenets of NATO, and now two members of the alliance were on the cusp of going to war with one another. In essence, instruments of war intended for a 1950s monolithic conflict were gathering to do battle in the far more muddled era of détente. To a large extent, the United States had provided each nation with the means of fighting one another and now was faced with finding a solution that would circumvent war and at the same time prevent NATO’s disintegration. Nixon summarized America’s quandary in the summer of 1974 during a 1986 interview:

“Here we had two allies, the Greeks and the Turks, and it was terribly difficult for us to line up for one against the other. And in the United States from a political standpoint you line up with Greeks because there are a lot more Greek-Americans than there are Turkish-Americans.”

Domestically, Greece was by far the more popular of the two nations with a culture more ostensibly attuned to the West than the predominantly Muslim Turkey. Indeed, the Greek-American community’s outrage against the perceived American mismanagement of the Turkish invasion was such that it enabled lobby groups to successfully pressure Congress in 1975 to pass a suspension of military aid to Turkey that lasted four years.

Kissinger’s clandestine maneuvers in dealing with Cyprus has enabled conspiracy theorists to interpret his actions, or lack thereof, as part of a larger plot to discourage British military action and throw Cyprus to the Turkish wolves. The truth of the matter is

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1 Laurence Stern “Bitter Lessons: How We Failed in Cyprus” Foreign Policy No. 19 (Summer, 1975): 66.
far less colorful and can be boiled down to the fundamentally different approaches to the summer crisis utilized by the United States and Great Britain. To the Americans, the invasion was a predicament that might lead to the twin threats of NATO’s dissolution and increased Soviet influence in the Mediterranean. Accordingly, the American strategy was intended not to reflect a detectable bias towards either Greece or Turkey in order to bring both parties to the negotiating table. In contrast, Great Britain was facing the invasion of a commonwealth state and therefore maintained the understandable viewpoint that the Turkish invaders were a more credible threat than Greece. Although British troops in Cyprus functioned as a part of the UNFICYP rather than as a separate agent, the British conducted their negotiations with a notably anti-Turkish bent.3

With far more immediately at stake in Cyprus, including sovereign rights over 3% of the island, Britain had exhibited far greater resolve in dealing with both Greece and Turkey in the immediate consequences of the coup by rescuing Makarios and holding meetings with emissaries from both sides. It was the most active role the British had played in resolving turmoil in Cyprus since early 1964. By contrast, Nixon was holed up in San Clemente, pondering his fate, while Joseph Sisco raced between Athens and Ankara in a frantic effort to circumvent the outbreak of a Mediterranean war. It is possible that the beleaguered President might have diminished the impact of the crisis had the Watergate scandal and his resultant loss of popular support not been an issue.4 But there existed a fundamental difference in the crisis management approaches of the United States and Great Britain that became increasingly pronounced as events unfolded, and this prevented pragmatic cooperation from taking place. Kissinger’s actions reflected

3 Robert McDonald “Adelphi Papers 234: The Problem of Cyprus” (Printed by Brassey’s for the IISS, Winter 1988/89); 4 Sulzberger 137.
a predilection to view the crisis in terms of an East/West issue that could further unravel
the already fraying NATO alliance. As a result, the U.S. tended to express and
demonstrate greater sensitivity to Turkey, a critical NATO ally, than did the British.
Great Britain, on the other hand, was facing a possible showdown with a country
invading an island where thousands of British civilians and military personnel resided
and two crucial bases were located. Once Turkish forces were deployed on Cyprus, it
was not long before they found themselves on a potential collision course with the
British. On more than one occasion, the British Government would be faced with having
to determine if it was acting on behalf of its own interests or those of the UN.
Throughout the chaos and attempts to negotiate a peace settlement, Harold Wilson would
later note in his memoirs that “the intervention of the United States was missed.”

Turkey commences the invasion

At 6:30 A.M., Prime Minister Ecevit announced on Turkish National Radio that
the invasion of Cyprus had begun, vowing that the mission was intended as a peaceful
one. “We in fact are going to carry peace and not war to the island, and not only to the
Turks but also to the Greeks” he said before thanking both the United States and Great
Britain “which have displayed well-meaning efforts to have the dispute settled through
diplomatic means.” Approximately one hour prior to Ecevit’s radio address, the invasion
had commenced with an aerial assault by F-100 fighters on Nicosia immediately followed
by an amphibious attack that established a beachhead at the coastal city of Kyrenia before
driving inland. Turkish landing craft began to unload troops along the northern shoreline

Michael Joseph, 1979): 64.
6 Radio Ankara, July 20, 1974 in Theodore A. Coulombis The United States, Greece and Turkey: The
and paratroopers from nineteen C-13 transport planes began to descend into the primary Turkish enclave located between the Nicosia and Kyrenia.\(^7\) As the Turks deployed their first wave of troops, a Soviet minesweeper of the coast of Kyrenia kept a vigilant watch, relaying reports back to Moscow.\(^8\)

The initial phase of the Turkish invasion was largely an uncoordinated and amateurishly executed affair. One Turkish naval unit missed its intended landing spot by several miles and scores of paratroopers were dropped well beyond their planned drop zones.\(^9\) Luckily for the Turks, they were facing opposition that was hardly prepared to face a sizeable invasion force, incompetent or not. Sampson had neither the time nor the resources to rally an effective defense. Broadcasts made over Cyprus radio appealing to any Greek-Cypriots possessing arms to make a stand against the invasion force went largely ignored.\(^10\)

Many in Washington were caught off guard by the invasion. The long-established opinion in the Pentagon was that Turkey lacked the capability to mount an amphibious assault of any ambition due to a shortage of suitable landing craft.\(^11\) Also, the fact that Turkey had previously organized flotillas in 1964 and 1967 but refrained from making landings further reinforced the American view that an invasion was unlikely. It had been widely assumed in both the Defense and State Departments that, at the very least, the Turks would give Sisco one more day to complete his race through the diplomatic gauntlet before intervening. Surprise at the Turkish action was not limited to American

\(^7\) James H. Meyer “Policy Watershed: Turkey’s Cyprus Policy and the Interventions of 1974” (WWS Case Study 3/00): 1.


\(^9\) Sulzberger The World and Richard Nixon, 140.


diplomatic circles. In both the Soviet Union and the United Nations, it was implicitly understood that Ankara would wait for the Security Council to make its ruling on the Cyprus issue.\(^{12}\) With Turkish troops now in Cyprus, the focus of the United States shifted from averting an intervention to preventing its intensifying into a war between Greece and Turkey.

Such concerns did not preclude the omnipresent concern of Soviet exploitation of the situation. An alarming situation presented itself when the Agence France-Presse began to report on July 20 that, in response to the invasion, the Soviet Union had placed seven airborne divisions, a force of 49,000 men, on alert.\(^ {13}\) Even more disquieting was the fact that the Soviets had activated these same divisions during the Arab-Israeli Conflict of the previous October when Kissinger’s risky game of brinksmanship had led to both sides considering an exchange of nuclear missiles.\(^ {14}\) Defense Department officials were unsure exactly how the Soviet forces might be deployed in Cyprus and ultimately dismissed that it was “a psychological gesture designed in some manner to inhibit any military action by the United States.”\(^ {15}\) Despite this dismissive analysis, a possible Soviet mobilization introduced a new and volatile element to the proceedings and lent greater credence to Kissinger’s approach to the situation in the Mediterranean as a conflict between East and West. The Secretary received word of the invasion while attending a party being held in San Clemente in his honor and left without thanking his hosts. He first contacted Soviet Foreign Secretary Gromyko, and then both the British and French


\(^{14}\) For a detailed description of the events of October 1973, see Raymond L. Garthoff Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan, 368-386.

\(^{15}\) Finney 1.
Kissinger ordered a marginal troop alert, only activating the First Battalion, 509th Infantry stationed at Vicenza, Italy to assist in a potential evacuation of the 1,000 Americans in Cyprus. The Secretary of State assured the press just before flying back to Washington that there was no reason for American military involvement. “We had been urging both sides not to go to war,” said a Kissinger aide, “But so far there is nothing to bet money on.”

With the Turks steadily rolling southward, the United States moved to quickly cobble together a strategy that would prevent a Greco-Turkish conflict. Both Ankara and Athens appealed to their American benefactors that each was acting in the right as they edged ever closer to the precipice of war. Within four hours of Turkish forces setting foot on Cyprus, the Turkish Ambassador to Greece, Kamuran Gürün, was summoned to the office of the Greek Foreign Minister. Gürün was told that if Turkey failed to halt the invasion and withdraw all its forces within 7 1/2 hours, “Greece will not be not be answerable to the consequences.” Regardless of the threat, Gürün informed the Greeks that, given the timetable, such a retraction of Turkish forces was quite impossible; war between the two countries appeared unavoidable. President Phaidon Gizikis, the puppet through which Ioannides ruled, announced a general mobilization in response to Turkey’s invasion over Athens radio. To all appearances, the junta appeared united behind a war, but in actuality long festering factionalism within the Greek government was about to lead to its collapse.

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16 Birand 24.
18 Ibid.
19 Birand 24.
Continuing his unenviable task of damage control, Joseph Sisco flew into Athens as the invasion was occurring for a series of talks with military and civilian leaders in the Greek government. His appeals mirrored those initially demanded by the Ecevit government: the removal of Sampson from office, a guarantee for the safety of the Turkish-Cypriot minority, and the replacement of the 650 Greeks officers in the Cypriot National Guard who had initiated the coup under orders from Athens.\textsuperscript{20} As a sign of the U.S.’s sensitivity to Ankara’s displeasure with Sampson’s presidency, Sisco further suggested that the constitutional line of succession be followed with the installation of the leader of the House of Representatives, Glaftos Clerides, as the new president. Clerides, a moderate who had managed to gain some support amongst the Turkish-Cypriots, should have been a far more palatable choice for the Turks than Nicos Sampson, whom Ankara had publicly condemned as a murderer. Despite these demands, Sisco’s role was mainly to serve as a fact-finder and guide to a peaceful resolution rather than as an emissary of American fortitude. It was still largely unknown in Washington exactly what Turkey’s true intentions in Cyprus were. As result, a high-ranking White House official summed up Sisco’s diplomatic mission as one “to distinguish between what is possible and what is desirable, and to see what our influence on the parties actually is.”\textsuperscript{21}

A confrontation of any significant length between Greece and Turkey would have resulted in the NATO’s main sea frontier being pushed 1,000 to the west, impairing the Sixth Fleet’s operational capacity in the eastern Mediterranean with the loss of naval port facilities located in Greece. Additionally, a key U.S. Air Force repair and maintenance base in Turkey would be made inaccessible. If America had come down with too much

\textsuperscript{20} Alvin Schuster “U.S. Puts Pressure on Greeks and Turks” The New York Times (Jul. 20, 1974): 8.
force on the junta, it might have triggered a violent response from the unstable Ioannides and war with Turkey, putting U.S. military personnel in both countries in jeopardy. In such a scenario, the ability of the United States to monitor the influx of weapons and other supplies to hostile Arab nations being shipped by the Soviet Union would have been greatly compromised and this might have aggravated another dispute in the Middle East. Already, Syria’s armed forces had been placed on maximum alert and the Egyptian Navy was ordered to stay close to port for fear that Israel might become involved. The possible defection of both Greece and Turkey from NATO would have further enfeebled an alliance already weakened by proclamations by the Dutch government that it intended to dramatically reduce its troop commitments and a British defense review intended to further trim its defense budget by several hundred million dollars.

Wilson and Callaghan’s response to the Turkish invasion was restricted by the need to take the safety of service families who lived outside the base areas into account. Great Britain dispatched a naval task force that reached the Cyprus area by July 18 and doubled the existing force on the two SBAs with 3300 troops and a marine detachment to protect the 30,000 British military personnel, their dependents, and tourists on the island from the Turkish threat. But the shadow of Suez continued to linger over Britain’s preparation: with the unity of NATO hanging in the balance, it was impossible to act without both military and diplomatic cooperation from the United States. Humanitarian, rather than military, efforts became the primary focus of the reinforced British military as

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25 Ioannides 122.
they began the process of rescuing Greek-Cypriots from the Turkish onslaught, which, as Prime Minister Wilson recalls, “sought to occupy areas of Cyprus which could not by any stretch of the imagination be regarded as Turkish Cypriot territory.”

At a July 20 news conference, Callaghan outlined his government’s three primary objectives: a cease-fire, the prevention of a Greek attack against Turkey, and a round of meetings in London between Greeks and Turks to reach a preliminary settlement. Earlier that morning, Callaghan had separately met with the Turkish Ambassador to Britain, Turgut Menemencioglu and Nicholas Diamontopoulos, the Greek chargé d’affaires. Callaghan informed Menemencioglu that Britain vehemently opposed the Turkish attack. But Callaghan played no favorites, telling Diamontopoulos it was the opinion of his government that the coup led by the Cyprus National Guard had been sponsored by the junta and been responsible for the Turkish attack.

Kissinger’s objectives largely coincided with Callaghan’s, but he found it difficult to convince either side to comply. In less than twelve hours after the invasion began, the U.S. threatened to halt all military aid to Greece and Turkey should the two countries decide to go to war. On July 21, Ecevit informed Kissinger that the Greeks had disguised several ships to appear Turkish by flying the crescent flag and staffing them with crews “that are speaking Turkish they learned in NATO” and would therefore not agree to a cease-fire. Unfortunately, the Turkish Air Force sank one of their own

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26 Wilson 63.
28 Ibid.
30 Nicolet 436.
31 Conversation between Secretary Kissinger and James Callaghan, British Foreign Secretary (July 21, 1974 – 11:15) Kissinger Transcripts.
destroyers due to the mix-up, leaving the British to rescue 72 of the survivors. On the afternoon of July 22, Kissinger, with the support of French Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues and Callaghan, in a rare demonstration of American resolve, threatened to remove all U.S. nuclear missiles from both sides of the Greco-Turkish border in Thrace if a cease-fire in Cyprus failed to be reached. Furthermore, Kissinger, with the support of both France and Britain, insisted on a series of British-sponsored meeting between the three Guarantor Powers’ Foreign Ministers to be held in Geneva. Turkey grudgingly complied with the terms.

Western coercion initially did little to dissuade the unstable Brigadier Ioannides who insisted on an all-out attack on Turkey along the Thracian border. The day of the invasion, a general mobilization of up to 160,000 troops was ordered by Athens and Greek armor advanced up to the border with Turkey to counter any “expansionist Turkish acts.” Thankfully, clearer-headed members of the junta overruled Ioannides’ demands to invade as impossible against superior forces and Athens followed Ankara lead in acquiescing to America’s demands to attend the Geneva Conference.

The commencement of the cease-fire on Cyprus on July 22 appeared to be a success for Kissinger’s frequently opaque approach to mediation. War between two NATO allies had been avoided, and a potentially dangerous internationalization of the crisis had also been thwarted. Kissinger confided to Governor Nelson Rockefeller that the situation in Cyprus “has come out perfectly.” When asked by Rockefeller to reveal the reason for the success, the Secretary tersely replied: “They didn’t know the

32 “This note summarizes the position at 3 p.m. on Friday 26 July” Records of the Prime Ministers Office: Correspondence and Papers PREM 16/20/01, British National Archives: 1.
33 Kissinger Years of Renewal 222.
strategy.”\textsuperscript{35} But there was precious little time to savor the triumph; despite the anticipation of a long and drawn-out peace process, Kissinger had not foreseen that yet another round of fighting would occur in Cyprus during the weeks ahead.\textsuperscript{36}

**The Athens junta falls, drama at the Nicosia airport, and the Geneva conferences**

While Cyprus contended with both the coup and invasion, equally dramatic events began to unfold in Greece with a stunning rapidity that would quickly change the perceived character of the Turkish intervention. With the coup against Makarios, which he had promoted a washout, and his proposed attack on Turkey rejected, Brigadier Ioannides had liquidated any political collateral he once possessed. On July 23, the Athens junta collapsed, opening the way for Constantinos Karamanlis to return as Prime Minister. Nicos Sampson, now lacking the protection of his former master, resigned as the President of Cyprus on the same day as Ioannides leaving the post to Glafkos Clerides. Upon the shoulders of the former head of the House of Representatives felt the lofty task of uniting his country, although Makarios still expected to return to his former duties within a few weeks.\textsuperscript{37}

But the exiled Archbishop was now too tainted by the continual support of the Soviet Union since his ouster to be palatable to the Americans. The restoration of the left-leaning Makarios had been Moscow’s single most important goal, despite its wary approval of Turkey’s invasion.\textsuperscript{38} By July 20, Kissinger had determined that Makarios “has had it” making his July 29 meeting with Cyprus’ former president little more than a

\textsuperscript{35} TELECON Governor Rockefeller/Secretary Kissinger (July 23, 1974) Kissinger Transcripts.
\textsuperscript{36} Kissinger 224.
goodwill gesture.\textsuperscript{39} The Turks, meanwhile, had gone from “almost weeping” over Makarios’ removal on July 17 to informing Joseph Sisco six days later that they would never recognize him as the President of Cyprus.\textsuperscript{40} Ankara also considered Clerides to be equally undesirable as leader of the island. It was a clear indicator that the Turks were bound and determined to see that Cyprus’ political future adhered closely to their vision.

July 25 was set as the date for a first conference to be held in Geneva by the Guarantor Powers that would lay the preliminary groundwork for negotiations and confirm the cease-fire.\textsuperscript{41} A second round of talks in Geneva to determine Cyprus’ political future was scheduled to begin on August 8. As had been the case during the 1959 negotiations, representatives from Cyprus were notably excluded from the peace-brokering process. Despite their exclusion, the clouds of war seemed to be diminishing over the Mediterranean with the restoration of a democratic government in Athens and the Sampson regime’s downfall. There appeared to be little reason for Turkey to continue its occupation of Cyprus, but the Turks began to suspiciously widen their operations soon after the cease-fire had been declared.

Just as the three Guarantor Powers were about to convene in Geneva for the first conference, a critical juncture was reached between Great Britain and Turkey on the evening of July 24. Following four days of relative calm, intercommunal fighting had again broken out along the boundary line separating the Greek and Turkish quarters in Nicosia and spread to the airport. Prime Minister Wilson was at the House of Commons when at approximately 8:00 PM he was notified that the Turks had informed the British

\textsuperscript{39} TELECON/HAK – Buffum joined (7/20/74 – 1:45 p.m.) Kissinger Transcripts.
\textsuperscript{40} TELECON Mr. Sisco/Secretary Kissinger (July 23, 1974-8:06 PM) Kissinger Transcripts.
\textsuperscript{41} Kissinger \textit{Years of Renewal} 224.
Government of their intention to bomb the Nicosia airport.\textsuperscript{42} There were a number of UN soldiers stationed at the airport, the largest constituent being British soldiers from the 16\textsuperscript{th}/5\textsuperscript{th} Lancers, who risked being casualties if such an attack was carried out. Wilson immediately contacted Ecevit and attempted to talk him out of the plan, but to no avail and the conversation was terminated. Soon afterwards, Ecevit called Wilson after having conferred with his military advisors and familiarized himself with the location of the British troops, and offered to spare them in exchange for the UN positions occupied by Canadian and other units.\textsuperscript{43} Despite this seemingly generous offer, Wilson refused and warned that RAF fighters would mobilize and shoot down any Turkish planes that attempted to strike the airport. The second phone call ended on a sinister note of uncertainty.

An hour and a half later Ecevit called Wilson a second time. The British Prime Minister reiterated his warning to Ecevit: “I have to tell you that if that happens we cannot stand by.”\textsuperscript{44} Ecevit attempted to justify the recent movements of Turkish forces around the airport as being due to confusion over its occupation. Greek forces had initially held the Nicosia airport, he explained, who had “been using it for sending military reinforcements to the island;” as it was not an intended target of the Turkish invasion, the Turks requested that the UN forces assume control over it.\textsuperscript{45} After the UN contingent failed to appear “for a considerable period of time,” the Turkish forces “had no alternative but to take control of the airport.” Upon their eventual arrival, British

\textsuperscript{42} Wilson 63.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{44} “Record of a Telephone Conversation Between the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Turkey on 24 July 1974” Records of the Prime Ministers Office: Correspondence and Papers PREM 16/20/01, The British National Archives: 1.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid. 2.
troops began to haggle with the Turks over legal control of the area before the Turkish forces concurred that the British claims to “certain facilities on the Nicosia airport” were legitimate under international agreement. But once Ecevit questioned the legitimacy of the UN’s control of the airport, Wilson countered: “You cannot separate the British, Canadians or anybody else from the United Nations…The UN have the responsibility. I cannot face the situation that British or Canadian troops are killed by your action.” The Turks could expect swift retribution if such deaths resulted. Duly informed of the risks in pursuing an aggressive course of action, Ecevit pledged that no attack would occur that evening ending a possible predicament that Wilson later characterized as, with the exception of Suez, “probably the nearest that Britain came to war with another nation since 1945.”

Following his series of strained conversations with Wilson, Ecevit contacted Kissinger and repeated the circumstances of the mix-up over control of the Nicosia airport virtually verbatim. Kissinger informed Ecevit, a former student of his at Harvard, that the Turkish Ambassador in Cyprus had notified him that Turkish forces had every intention of taking the airport. Ecevit denied the report and pledged to send a liaison officer “in good spirits with excellent english [sic]” the following day. While Ecevit appeared more than willing to test the limits of Great Britain’s commitment to Cyprus, to Kissinger he dismissed the misunderstanding over the airport as a simple break in communication.

46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
48 Wilson 64.
49 TELECON PM Ecevit/Secretary Kissinger (July 24, 1974, 2:05 p.m.) Kissinger Transcripts.
50 Ibid.
The Turkish Prime Minister was developing a knack for cloaking his true intentions in feigned ignorance, but he failed to dupe his former professor. Kissinger was more than aware that the Turks had been planning an attack on the airport and that intervention led by the UN, Britain, and himself had managed to prevent it. But such apparent duplicity on the part of the Turks did nothing to stiffen America’s policy in dealing with them. As the conference in Geneva was convening on July 25, a confidential memo was distributed throughout the British Government concerning America’s position on the negotiations. It referred to warnings made by the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Arthur Hartman that “the general United States line will be that any kind of hasty action or solution which does not allow the situation to mature, would be inadvisable.” The Kissinger strategy of appearing to have none was still very much in effect. Instead Kissinger’s representative at the conference, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs William Buffum, was to “encourage the parties to discuss the problem in the hope that they would come up with some ideas of their own.” Turkey’s true objectives in Cyprus were still apparently largely unknown by the U.S., influencing the hands-off approach at Geneva. Until Ankara’s motivations were revealed, Kissinger instructed Buffum in a telegram to “listen and to assist in whatever we can in developing a good atmosphere so that Greeks and

51 TELECON French FM Sauvagnargues/Secretary Kissinger (July 24, 1974, 4:45 p.m.) Kissinger Transcripts.
53 Ibid. 2.
54 Department of State Telegram, (July 26, 1974) Subject: Turkish Ceasefire Violations, National Security Archives, Europe File: 1.
54 Ibid. 2.
Turks will find it easier to talk to each other again.” Buffum was not provided with “any ready-made solution,” instead he was to promote “sufficient flexibility so that an acceptable consensus can begin to emerge.”

But the Turks were seemingly in no mood to talk or demonstrate flexibility. While the conference was commencing, Turkey continued to bolster its existing invasion force with troop and supply reinforcements to Kyrenia. By the afternoon of July 26, the Turks had amassed the largest military presence on the island with a force that included 10,000 troops, 88 helicopters and 44 tanks. Following the restoration of democracy in Greece, international support began to shift gradually away from the Turkey and their efforts to ensure the safety of the Turkish-Cypriots to the Karamanlis Government. While much of the West assumed that the fall of the Sampson regime and the junta’s removal would clear the way for Makarios’ return and a restructured Republic of Cyprus, Turkey was not inclined to remove its forces so quickly. Turkish forces continued to advance, taking the city of Bellapais on July 26. Within four days of the cease-fire, the Turks had managed to double their amount of captured territory.

The increased Turkish military presence and the collapse of the junta had resulted in a much harder line in negotiations in Geneva overseen by Foreign Minister Turan Güneş. Before the invasion Turkish demands on the Greek government pertained to a return to the status quo ante in Cyprus, but they had expanded considerably since then. To Ankara, the coup had provided ironclad proof that enosis was indeed alive and well in Cyprus and would continue to pose a threat to the Turkish minority. This necessitated the

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55 Department of State Telegram, (July 25, 1974) For Buffum, National Security Archives, Europe File.
56 Ibid.
57 Confidential memo to Prime Minister Wilson, “Cyprus: This note summarises the position at 3 p.m. on Friday 26 July,” Records of the Prime Ministers Office: Correspondence and Papers PREM 16/20/01, British National Archives: 1.
establishment of two autonomous regions, one of which, the Turkish zone, would occupy approximately 34% of the island and could be readily partitioned off should the Greek-Cypriots again try for *enosis*. Such a plan, so the Turks argued, would give the long-oppressed Turkish-Cypriot minority the sense of security they had been denied for nearly two decades.

In Turan Güneş, Callaghan found a “dark, loquacious character who looked somewhat like Groucho Marx but without the humor.” As Güneş continued to erect roadblocks to the negotiations’ progress, Callaghan grew convinced that the Turk was stalling for time while he tried to arrange a cease-fire and a settlement between the two Cypriot communities that would negate the need for Turkish troops in Cyprus. But Güneş, perhaps pushed by military officials in Ankara, had strayed to hard-line stance of partition and could not be lured back. To further reinforce the position of Turkish military forces in Cyprus, a declaration was signed on July 30, the last day of the first Geneva conference, stating that measures regarding the removal of troops would only take place once peace and mutual trust had been established. Additionally, the declaration specified that the issue of two self-governing administrations in Cyprus would not be discussed until the second conference beginning on August 8. Ankara had accumulated enough leverage to lay the cornerstones of a policy of partition that had been gaining momentum since the late 1950s. With the Greek government in the process of reorganization, the United State playing its cards close to its vest, and Great Britain incapable of acting until it was evident what sort of hand the Americans were holding, the Turks were free to impose their agenda with little interference. Callaghan did manage to

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59 Ibid. 349.
60 Nicolet 437.
hammer out an official cease-fire agreement that included a termination of all offensive activities, a scheduled withdrawal of all outside forces, and established a buffer zone between the Greek and Turkish-Cypriots to be monitored by UN troops.\(^{61}\)

By the start of the Second Geneva Convention, Clerides was convinced that the acceptance of the bizonal federation was the only viable solution that would satisfy Turkish demands. But he was overruled both by Makarios and the new Karamanlis-led government, which, despite its democratic pedigree, retained the junta’s nationalistic streak to the point that they it was willing to risk war once again. George Mavros, the Greek Foreign Minister informed Clerides: “Greece between a national humiliation and war would choose war.”\(^{62}\) Such an entrenchment on the Greek side and the Turks’ refusal to budge on the issue of partition imperiled the second conference. Despite the fact that Callaghan chaired the conference, he was powerless mediate effectively, particularly since Kissinger had distanced himself from the proceedings. There had been an evident coordination between the U.S. and Britain up to the cease-fire of July 22. From that point on, Kissinger seemed content to remain in the shadows and allow Callaghan and Wilson to take command of the peace process, but within certain limitations.

**Britain “rattles the saber” while Kissinger clears the field**

America’s lackadaisical presence at the Geneva conferences undoubtedly granted Turkey the additional latitude it needed to ensure that its demands would be met. Kissinger’s emissary at the second conference, Assistant Secretary of State Arthur Hartman, followed the same stage directions as Buffum, his predecessor, in adopting a position of reconciliation rather than resolution. Either the United States had

\(^{61}\) Kissinger *Years of Renewal* 226.  
\(^{62}\) Nicolet 438.
fundamentally misjudged the potential seriousness of the situation, or Washington’s attention was substantially diverted by the changeover taking place in the Oval Office. Kissinger later contended that the transition acted as a constraint on America’s options in that it prevented his personal appearance at the conference and precluded military action because it would fall into the lap of a non-elected president with little knowledge of the events.  

In spite of Callaghan’s concerted efforts, the second conference in Geneva quickly disintegrated. Ankara now insisted on a federal system covering 38% of Cyprus that would provide the Turkish-Cypriots with a separate administration to supervise their affairs. Additionally, Turkey demanded a cantonal arrangement that would set aside a number of smaller areas to be governed by Turkish-Cypriots. An angry Mavros attempted to have the conference adjourned, but was overruled. Although Turkish Foreign Minister Güneş refused to budge on the issue of partition, he did twice reassure Callaghan that, despite the enlarged contingent of Turkish forces in Cyprus, Ankara had no intention of advancing. But Prime Minister Ecevit raised the issue of the UNFICYP’s judicial right to function in a region controlled by a guarantor power with UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim. Ecevit advised the removal of all UN forces located in the Kyrenia-Nicosia enclave. It was becoming evident to British observers in the area around Kyrenia that the Turks were preparing to break out of their foothold as tanks and mobilized units began to assemble. They sent several reports to this effect to London.

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63 Kissinger Years of Renewal 227-228.
65 Callaghan 350.
66 Ioannides 129.
Sensing the imminent danger, Callaghan placed several Phantom fighters on alert and airlifted an additional 600 troops bringing the total of number of British troops in Cyprus to 11,000. Such an action violated the American insistence on finding a solution via diplomatic channels. Arthur Hartman informed Callaghan of Kissinger’s extreme displeasure with actions that could easily be interpreted as warlike. Callaghan countered that his forces were continuing to function as UN peacekeepers, but would return fire if threatened by the Turks. It was only a veneer of defiance; Callaghan was fully aware that military action without Kissinger’s sanction would be an abortive one.

With Britain emasculated and the United States seemingly unconcerned with Cyprus’ fate, Turkey made its move. On August 13, Turkish Foreign Minister Güneş presented a final ultimatum to Mavros and Clerides demanding the immediate acceptance or rejection of Ankara’s demands. The Greek and Greek-Cypriot leaders requested 48 hours to confer with Athens and Makarios and were refused. Upon hearing of the conference’s abrupt termination, Ecevit ordered another Turkish intervention.

**The second Turkish incursion: August 14**

As the sun rose over Cyprus on the morning of August 14, the Turkish army recommenced operations, steamrolling southwards and meeting little in the way of opposition. Two days later, Ecevit announced that all military objectives had been achieved and agreed to a cease-fire as well as a resumption of negotiations in Geneva to decide Cyprus’ fate. Despite Ecevit’s pledge of friendship to Greece and an expressed willingness to cooperate with Athens to find a solution, Karamanlis was unmoved.

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67 O’Malley and Craig 211.
68 Callaghan 352-353.
69 Ibid.
August 16, Greek President Karamanlis announced that his country was pulling out of NATO’s military command, although Greece did not fully remove itself from the organization.

With the conclusion of its second phase of military operations, Turkey was in possession of approximately 40% of the island in which nearly three-fourths of the island’s economic resources were located. Tens of thousands of Greek-Cypriots, who had fled their homes from the advancing Turks, were now displaced refugees facing starvation and an uncertain future.

Within a week of the second Turkish intervention, Kissinger was already bemoaning to Cyrus Vance how his approach to the 1974 crisis would be interpreted. He cited his decision not to publicly support the British as “a technical disagreement,” but it had still resulted in the removal of Sampson. As for the Turks widening their occupation “it coincided with one week of a Presidential resignation and one week of a transition.” Regardless of America’s intentions to restore the Republic of Cyprus to its previous state, Kissinger sighed: “We will never be able to prove it.” The number of conspiracy-laden books and articles on Cyprus has validated Kissinger’s initial concerns.

Kissinger had considered the possibility of an arms embargo against Turkey as early as July 17 in the event of a Turkish intervention that “accelerated into an international confrontation.” Why he opted not to follow through with this tactic once such a confrontation presented itself is not completely understood. By the time of the second phase of the Turkish invasion, Washington was dealing with the fallout of Watergate and Kissinger was occupied with showing the ropes to a new president.

71 Ioannides 131.
72 TELECON Cyrus Vance/The Secretary (August 21, 1974, 7:45 p.m.) Kissinger Transcripts.
73 TELECON Sen. Fulbright/Sec. Kissinger (July 17, 12:55 p.m.) Kissinger Transcripts.
Aftereffects

In the aftermath of the invasion the Greek-American community became galvanized, organizing mass demonstrations in a number of American cities and compelling a Congressional response. The Ford Administration became the focus of Greek-American wrath and their accusations of conspiracy. Eugene Rossides, the leader of the powerful Greek-American lobby group, contended that Kissinger’s penchant for dictatorships over democracies was the reason why the secretary of state “instigated” the Greek-backed coup and then “initiated” the Turkish invasion. Human rights advocates chalked up the tragedy on Cyprus as one in a series of catastrophes in Chile, Bangladesh, and Pakistan that could be traced to Kissinger’s marionette strings. But the more common criticism from both members of Congress and the international community fed up by Kissinger’s enigmatic foreign policy was its perceived favoritism towards Turkey.

The allegations that Kissinger exhibited a consistent bias towards Ankara gave greater impetus to Congress’ campaign to end the Secretary of State’s secretive approach to foreign policy. Taking advantage of the Greek lobbies’ momentum and a new sense of boldness, Congress was able to successfully pass an arms embargo against Turkey. Ankara’s response to the embargo was very much in keeping with what Kissinger hoped to avoid: the closure of six U.S. bases in Turkey, renewed communications with the

74 Ioannides 67.
75 Slengesol 96-97.
USSR, and an easing of restrictions on Soviet warships passing through the
Dardanelles.  

During a 1976 session of a Select Committee of the House of Commons,
Callaghan was asked if Great Britain had the right to intervene, he answered: “I dare say
legally we had. In political, practical terms we had none because the constitution had not
been working since the early 1960s.” Practicality also dictated that, given the absence
of American support, a military showdown with Turkey was undesirable. But the British
military was less than encouraging in its forecasts of such an engagement. Troops were
already contending with events in Ireland, and a conflict in the Mediterranean might have
led to an over-commitment of men and resources. Callaghan may have believed himself
to be morally in the right and publicly, he blasted the Turks for allowing the conference
to fall apart, but beyond that, there was little else he could do.

For the Turkish military, the successful occupation of Cyprus became a rallying
point from which they were able to lead a third coup in 1980. Virtually overnight, Ecevit
became a Turkish national hero whose photograph was frequently hung alongside
Attatürk’s in all public office and official buildings in Northern Cyprus. Following his
arrest for criticizing the military a few years after the 1974 “peace operation,” his
likeness was summarily removed. But his fleeting notoriety was indicative of how
strongly the Cyprus issue was intertwined with the national sentiment of the Turkish
people, a crucial aspect of the crisis that was largely underestimated by American

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77 Ioannides 33.
78 Woodhouse 91.
analysts. Cyprus became the focal point in the ongoing competition between Turkey and Greece that was renewed once the relative stability of détente had been established in the late 1960s. It may very well be that Turkey’s intentions behind the July 20 invasion were limited to the restoration of Makarios and the protection of the Turkish-Cypriot population. But the fall of both the Sampson and Ioannides regimes three days later coupled with Nixon and Kissinger’s attention being diverted by Watergate may have presented Ankara with a golden opportunity to guarantee the safety of the Turks on Cyprus permanently with partition. So long as most of the Turkish archives are protected under lock and key and the true motives of Turkey are revealed, speculation will have to suffice.

If one reason might be cited for the United States’ inability to effectively manage the crisis of 1974, it is the change in the prevailing attitudes of the parties involved rather than a series of accidents, misjudgments, or plots. Up to the mid-1960s, American supremacy and the need for NATO cohesion to contain Soviet regional penetration were the cardinal rules of the Eastern Mediterranean. By 1974 such simplistic geopolitical regulations were no longer so clear, although much of America’s approach to foreign policy continued to reflect a residual East vs. West slant.
CONCLUSION

On July 15, 1974, with Makarios removed from office and presumed dead, Richard Nixon recorded a meditative passage in his diary:

“The Cyprus thing brought home the thought that with the world in the situation it is, with the peace as fragile as it is in various parts of the world, a shake-up in the American presidency and a change would have a traumatic effect abroad and a traumatic effect at home.”

But it was not simply the consequences of Watergate that led to the partition of Cyprus. Watergate was a symptom of an illness in American foreign policy towards the island marked by inconsistencies and uncertainties. In the 1950s, Cyprus was representative to the U.S. government of Britain’s misguided colonial heritage. But by 1960 and Cyprus’s independence, the island was immediately integrated into the monolithic struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. It’s not surprising that American shipments of grain to a destitute Cypriot people were motivated more by a sense of propaganda and competition with Russia than by a sense of humanitarianism.

Such a mindset continued into the Johnson years. Britain, now ensconced on two military bases in Cyprus, had largely removed itself from the island’s affairs. But President Makarios’ reaching out to Eastern bloc members and imperiling NATO’s southeastern flank with a war between Greece and Turkey necessitated a resolute response by Washington. Obviously unacquainted with the subtleties and complexities of the struggle in the eastern Mediterranean, the Johnson administration’s actions only served to alienate Turkey, a critical ally. In doing so, a rift was created between the two countries, which persists to this day. It’s little wonder that films with anti-America themes are popular with the Turkish public or that the Turkish press prints articles that

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speculate on the possibility that an American nuclear device was responsible for the tsunami of December 2004. As an “ally of convenience,” Turkey has come to view the United States less as a steadfast benefactor and more as hegemonic nation. Such a perspective has seeped into the Turkish popular consciousness and bears the attention of American policy-makers, particularly with the advent of Islamic political parties in Turkey in a post 9-11 world.

In a diplomatic career that encompassed some of the most dramatic events in the history of American foreign policy, Henry Kissinger later confessed that he believed his handling of the 1974 crisis on Cyprus to be his greatest mistake.² In many respects, Kissinger was simply following the path treaded by Johnson ten years before in his refusal to view the crisis as little more than a potential struggle between the U.S. and Soviet Union.

But where Johnson and Kissinger both fundamentally failed was in a lack of watchfulness. So long as the sparks from the intercommunal violence in Cyprus did not risk setting off the Greco-Turkish powder keg, American policy seemed to assume that some resolution to the problem would present itself without its input. Rather than carefully manipulate events in Cyprus, as some theorists have claimed, the United States was too far-removed or poorly versed with the circumstances to react effectively. If America is to bear responsibility for the events of 1974, its should be for failing to mount an effective and well-defined response and not for manipulation.

Assignment of blame aside, the contemporary implications of the Cyprus issue are most keenly felt in Turkey’s applications for full membership to the European Union (EU), an agonizing process that has been unfolding for over four decades. Despite its

² Sulzberger, 148.
initial application in 1960, Turkey remains the only candidate country that has not begun the process of accession negotiations. As a predominantly Muslim nation, Turkey already presents itself as contentious member among the primarily Christian members of the EU. As such, the Cyprus issue has been a useful stumbling block to those seeking to prevent Turkey’s entry. Additionally, as full members of the EU, both Greece and Cyprus have used the EU as a forum in which to exert pressure on Ankara.

Cyprus continues to maintain its population percentages with the Greek-Cypriots making up 80% of its residents and occupying the southern two-thirds of the island. The remaining one-third is the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” (TNRC), a region that only Turkey formally recognizes and provides with a force of 36,000 troops to maintain its security.³ Between the two areas the UN continues to maintain a peacekeeping force. Despite several rounds of meetings and negotiations between both sides mediated by the UN, there has been little in the way of tangible progress. The EU may prove to be the venue through which Cyprus may be made whole once more.

Cyprus and the European Community formalized their association in 1973 with the signing of an Association Agreement. The invasion of the following year did little to damper Cyprus’ progress to join the EC, and in 1987 the Republic of Cyprus completed a Customs Union Agreement. The tenets of this agreement refer to Cyprus in its entirety, and not just the region controlled by the Republic’s government.⁴ Cyprus further demonstrated its commitment to EU membership by applying to join the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1990, but was rejected three years later due to the

existing division on the island. Despite its unconventional status, Cyprus’ patience was rewarded with full admittance to the EU on May 1, 2004, but only in the Greek-Cypriot section. The TNRC remained a non-entity in the mind of EU leaders causing bitterness amongst the Turkish-Cypriots and, by proxy, to the Turkish mainland.\(^5\)

In its current divided state, the small island of Cyprus continues to wield more power than its diminutive size might suggest. Should the TNRC continue to remain isolated and economically atrophied from the rest of the island, it may lead to an exacerbation of the existing resentment felt by many in Turkey. As a result, Turkey may forgo its ongoing negotiations for EU membership in favor of an alliance with any number of Middle Eastern states, leading to the loss of a crucial ally of the West’s. But if Cyprus might at last manage to disentangle itself from the memories of conflict and bloodshed and mend its long-standing division, the symbolic healing process might radiate outward and provide a first step on the road to reconciliation.

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