

**On All Fronts:**

**EOKA**

**and the Cyprus Insurgency, 1955-1959**

### **Acknowledgements**

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## Introduction

The insurgency inspired and led by Greek-Cypriot nationalists on the island of Cyprus was neither the first nor the last armed campaign against British colonial rule during the twentieth century. The scale of operations was smaller than in Malaya, Kenya, or even Palestine, but the geopolitical impact of the Cyprus Emergency was significant. Some of the issues that sparked and fed the flames of rebellion still plague the island today. At the same time, the British struggle to retain control of the situation provides lessons for modern states engaged in counter-insurgency (COIN) campaigns.

While events in Malaya and Kenya have been the subject of major works with a strong focus on operations, the insurgency conducted by the National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA)<sup>1</sup> is not as well integrated into COIN literature.<sup>2</sup> A work dealing solely with EOKA's campaign from a COIN perspective has yet to be produced. This thesis concentrates on the Cyprus Emergency as an insurgency, drawing on both British and Cypriot sources for the conduct of the struggle and contextualizing it within the broader framework of counter-insurgencies after the Second World War. Taking advantage of recently declassified government materials and newly assembled sources from insurgents themselves, the thesis examines the strategies of both sides in detail, creating a comprehensive account of the military aspects of the conflict.

In focusing on the operational aspect of the two sides of COIN in Cyprus, the thesis does not neglect the political dynamics of the struggle. Major international issues were at play in Cyprus: the principle of self-determination, Greco-Turkish

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<sup>1</sup> *Εθνική Οργάνωσις Κυπρίων Αγонιστών.*

<sup>2</sup> For Malaya see John Coates, *Suppressing Insurgency: An Analysis of the Malayan Emergency, 1948-1954* (1992). For Kenya see David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (2005).

relations, Britain's regional strategic position, and security and stability in the Middle East. Cyprus was viewed as essential to British regional interests and this created a particular importance (and particular challenges) to the counter-insurgency campaign. The abandonment of the Indian subcontinent and Palestine after the Second World War were fundamental to the repositioning of the British power. The post-war empire would focus itself on territory in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. At the same time, British imperialism was adopting greater flexibility, exerting its influence through economics, military partnerships, and political relationships.<sup>3</sup> Cyprus was a keystone to these policies.

Because of the broader issues at stake, the thesis engages with a wide range of sources while remaining mindful of the interplay between military action and diplomacy. War is indeed an extension of politics, and Clausewitz's maxim to that effect is perhaps even more relevant in insurgencies than in conventional conflicts. Insurgents – armed groups aiming to overthrow the established political order and replace it with a new system – are, by definition, political actors as much as they are combatants. This was certainly true in Cyprus.

Like many campaigns for national self-determination, the Cyprus Emergency is a contested subject today. Widely different perspectives exist on its legitimacy and its efficacy. The canonical Greek-Cypriot view paints EOKA as an honourable organisation dedicated to a legitimate struggle for freedom from colonial oppression. According to this perspective, between 1955 and 1959 a small group of committed patriots was able to achieve a great victory over a mighty empire. Throughout Cyprus, streets, parks, and public monuments bear the names and images of EOKA men. EOKA's members are lionized, occupying a stature approaching that of figures from

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<sup>3</sup> Steven G. Galpern, *Money, Oil, and Empire in the Middle East*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.10.

the Greek Revolution in 1821. They are described literally as the 'heroes' of the struggle; the fallen, identified as 'martyrs' for the cause of freedom. This heroic and victorious image is challenged both from outside the Greek-Cypriot community and, gradually, from within it. The passage of time (and the island's continued troubles) is putting some dross on EOKA's burnished image. Part of the Greek-Cypriot community, particularly the left, maintains a vocal and strident opposition to the men of EOKA, their organisation and their methods. They do not view EOKA's campaign as a victory, but as a defeat for their own left-wing agenda. Several journalists have attacked EOKA for its crimes against Greek-Cypriot political opponents. An internal Greek-Cypriot dialogue is beginning to debate the utility of the struggle and the righteousness of the men and women who waged it.

British opinion, as might be expected, is generally less favourable. Most British writers, particularly those with direct connections to the events dismiss the *enosis* movement as pure terrorism tied to a quasi-fascist extremism and a meddling church. Various British writers have seen the conclusion of the emergency as everything from a rare counter-insurgency victory to a decent result given the broader political climate. Others regard it simply as another episode in a string of dirty colonial counter-insurgency campaigns. For their part, Turkish-Cypriots oppose EOKA with near unanimity, decrying their quest for *enosis* as a brutal campaign designed to eliminate Turkish identity in Cyprus. In their eyes, EOKA's cause was fortunately defeated through the efforts of Turkey and Turkish-Cypriots.

The campaign in Cyprus began on the heels of insurgencies against British rule in Palestine, Malaya, and Kenya. As a result, British policymakers attempted to apply various lessons learned elsewhere in Cyprus. Some lessons, such as the importance of establishing a trustworthy and effective police force or a clear path

toward a political solution, were fairly universal. Others were less so. Universal or not, the application of lessons was uneven and the subsequent results were mixed. As in Palestine, Malaya, and Kenya, there was an ethnic element to the conflict in Cyprus. On Cyprus, the island's two largest ethnic groups, Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, did not share a common vision for the future. While the Greek-Cypriot majority longed for the unification of Cyprus with Greece, the Turkish-Cypriot minority viewed this as a path to discrimination, economic isolation, and political marginalization. As a result, Turkish-Cypriots opposed the campaign for union (*enosis*) with Greece, first through diplomatic channels – including representations made by the Turkish government on their behalf – then as part of the island's law enforcement apparatus, and finally in open paramilitary action against Greek-Cypriots. In spite of this conflict within the conflict, the leaders of the *enosis* movement did not develop their campaign in opposition to the island's Turkish minority; at its inception, it was directed solely against British control. Throughout the conflict, the *enosis* movement was slow to appreciate the extent of Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot hostility to their goal. Greek-Cypriot nationalists never fully realised the power of the Turkish government to influence events.

Geopolitical issues meant that both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots had sovereign states protecting and advocating their interests in the international community. Elements within the Greek government, both officially and unofficially, supported the cause of *enosis* – though more cautiously than either the British or Turkish governments wanted to admit. Policymakers in Athens eventually proved more open to compromise than the Greek-Cypriots who fought the campaign, but their initial support was critical in sparking and maintaining the insurgency. The Turkish government was also an essential player. In its desire to protect the Turkish-

Cypriot minority, and its strategic interests in Cyprus, Ankara opposed *enosis*. The actions of the governments in Athens and Ankara created tension that ran so high that, by 1958, it was feared that Greece and Turkey might go to war. This was a particularly disturbing scenario as the two nations were allied under the aegis of NATO and played a crucial role in protecting southeast Europe from communist encroachment. In addition, Turkey was a major western ally in the Middle East and important for security in that volatile region, particularly through its relationship with Britain as part of the Baghdad Pact. These factors complicated the prospects of a solution. Britain, as the sovereign power on the island, was hesitant to impose any agreement that would risk a conflict between Greece and Turkey. At the same time, the British government maintained its strategic interest in Cyprus. As the Middle East military headquarters from 1954, the island was a key component in Britain's regional position. Troops based in Cyprus protected British interests in Jordan, Iraq, and the Suez Canal. Because of these factors, events on the island affected broader alliance structures and influenced British policy throughout the region.<sup>4</sup>

## Sources

The Cyprus case provides a rare opportunity among insurgencies because of the availability of primary sources from all sides. Secondary sources for Cyprus dealing with the 1950s, however, are limited. Scholarly works, and works produced in English, are fewer still. Several secondary works were produced in the immediate aftermath of events. The most widely-used are: *Grivas and the Story of EOKA*, by W. Byford-Jones (1959), *Grivas: portrait of a terrorist*, by Dudley Barker (1959), *Cyprus Guerrilla: Grivas, Makarios and the British* by Doros Alastos (1960), Charles Foley's

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<sup>4</sup> TNA, CAB 21/2925, 'Report on Colonial Security by Sir Gerald Templer, ' 23 April 1955, p.52.

*Island in Revolt* (1962), and Nancy Crawshaw's *The Cyprus Revolt: an account of the struggle for union with Greece* (1978).

The fortes of these books shadow their faults. All were written hard upon events. Intimacy with what had happened made it difficult for the authors to put the period in perspective and to deal with it impartially. With the exception of Alastos, all the authors were English and viewed the events through somewhat tinted lenses. Dudley Barker is particularly scathing in his description of Giorgos Grivas, the founder and commander of EOKA, whom he regards as a murderous fanatic whose actions corrupted 'a whole generation of Cypriot children... into a delight in indiscipline, violence and murder'.<sup>5</sup> Later in the book, Barker goes so far as to compare Grivas's rhetoric to that of Adolf Hitler.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of their biases, several of these books were written by individuals closely connected to the insurgency. Doros Alastos was a Greek-Cypriot living in London. He was politically active in the 1930s and returned to Cyprus after the London agreement established the independent Republic of Cyprus in 1960. He interviewed Archbishop Makarios III on three occasions for *Cyprus Guerrilla*, and had numerous connections in both Britain and Cyprus.<sup>7</sup> Byford-Jones, a British colonel, enjoyed contact with governors Harding and Foot during their appointments in Cyprus and met Grivas both before and after the insurgency on several occasions. In fact, Byford-Jones writes that he saved the life of the EOKA leader in their first encounter, which took place in Greece in 1944 on the day that the Greek civil war began.<sup>8</sup> Charles Foley, in addition to writing *Island in Revolt*, was the editor of *The Memoirs of General Grivas* (1964), a translation of Grivas' memoirs. He worked

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<sup>5</sup> Dudley Barker, *Grivas: Portrait of a Terrorist*, (London: The Cresset Press, 1959), p.9.

<sup>6</sup> Barker, p.110.

<sup>7</sup> Doros Alastos, *Cyprus Guerrilla; Grivas, Makarios and the British*, (London: Heinemann, 1960), p.9.

<sup>8</sup> W. Byford-Jones, *Grivas and the Story of EOKA*, (London: Robert Hale Limited, 1959), p.30.

intimately with Grivas, interviewing the general, translating passages, and putting the book together. A lifetime reporter, born in India and educated in London, he started *The Times of Cyprus* in 1955, acting as its editor and publisher.<sup>9</sup> In this capacity, Foley followed the events of the insurgency with a bird's eye view and with a reporter's eye for catchy headlines.

Nancy Crawshaw, like Foley, was a journalist. Her book, *The Cyprus Revolt: an account of the struggle for union with Greece* is a comprehensive account of the EOKA insurgency. At the time of its publication, it was the long awaited work of an acknowledged expert on the subject of Cyprus.<sup>10</sup> A review of Crawshaw's book makes the point that it seemed 'as though it had been written some twenty years ago'.<sup>11</sup> Most of Crawshaw's notes date from the 1950s and her book was the result of more than two decades of work as a journalist covering Cyprus. As 'an eyewitness to many of the events described in the course of reporting in Greece and in Cyprus' Crawshaw offers a substantive perspective. *The Cyprus Revolt* was intended as 'a comprehensive study which would deal with the diplomatic and military aspects of the problem'.<sup>12</sup> It is a useful blueprint in identifying the major events and actors of the period. Its politico-military approach dovetails with the perspective of this thesis. Crawshaw's book is particularly successful at interweaving the role of Athens and Ankara into the story. Crawshaw's tone, however, must be treated with some caution. Her journalistic quest to present un-idealized facts occasionally leads her to severe characterizations, particularly of the Greek-Cypriot side. For example, she mentions rather offhandedly that 'Cyprus might have been spared the catastrophe of the EOKA

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<sup>9</sup> 'Tough Times,' *Time*, Monday Sep. 15, 1958.

<sup>10</sup> Crawshaw had in fact reviewed the books of Barker and Alastos for the journal *International Affairs* in 1960.

<sup>11</sup> J.S.F. Parker, Review of Nancy Crawshaw's *The Cyprus Revolt*, *International Affairs*, Vol. 55, No.2 (Apr., 1979), p.314.

<sup>12</sup> Nancy Crawshaw, *The Cyprus Revolt: An account of the struggle for union with Greece*, (London: George Allen & Unwin), p.12.

rising' if Grivas had been captured on his way to the island early in 1955.<sup>13</sup> On the whole, she is content to represent the Greek-Cypriots with broad strokes as lazy, timid, and ineffectual.

The journalistic instincts of Foley and Crawshaw are even more pronounced in the styles of Byford-Jones, Barker, and Alastos, highlighting the lack of academic rigour in these sources. The authors lived through the events they write about, interviewed the major players, and hunted down stories. Proximity in time, however, denied them access to government documents which, under the thirty year rule, were not declassified until the 1980s or later. For the most part quotations are not sourced and, except where they are clearly from major speeches or diplomatic initiatives, cannot be corroborated. There is a great deal of editorializing. As a result, these books cannot be used as foundational sources for building arguments or reconstructing events. These near-contemporary accounts of the EOKA insurgency stand largely alone in the secondary literature. There is room for a new telling of the struggle for *enosis*, one supported by newly declassified material, incorporating evidence from all sides, and written without any personal or national bias.

The finest modern scholarship on the Cyprus Emergency is Robert Holland's book, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*, published in 1998. Holland provides a detailed account of the story from the perspective of British policymakers through a meticulous analysis of the primary and documentary sources. Holland tells the story of the Cyprus Emergency with an eye on its place in the broader history of the end of the British colonial order. His focus is British policy in Cyprus and how that policy was shaped by British politics and the country's international relations. His book is less concerned with two aspects on which this thesis focuses: the Greek-Cypriot

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.106.

perspective, and the nuts-and-bolts conduct of insurgent and counter-insurgent operations.

The first step in analyzing the Greek-Cypriot perspective of the insurgency is the use of Greek-Cypriot primary sources. A significant body of orders, leaflets, letters, and memoirs from individuals involved in the conduct of the insurgency provide a key window into our understanding of events. Numerous EOKA leaflets and orders have survived. These provide a rare picture of the insurgency movement from its own members. Foremost are the writings of Grivas himself. At the same time, many EOKA members are still alive. They have written memoirs and have been interviewed. For this thesis, a number of EOKA members, including three group commanders, were interviewed, along with both Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot political leaders and a member of British intelligence in Cyprus. While memoirs and interviews must be treated critically, they can still provide valuable insights.

There are limited records available from the Cypriot Church, including the minutes of the Ethnarchy Council and Ethnarchy Bureau meetings in the early part of the emergency. The papers of Archbishop Makarios II (r. 1947-1950) are accessible, but those of his successor, Makarios III (r. 1950-1977), remain closed to the public. Makarios III was the moving force behind the political front of the *enosis* struggle. Although he was exiled in the Seychelles from March 1956 until April 1957 (and did not return to Cyprus until after the agreements in February 1959) his role in the conflict was essential. My request to have Makarios III's papers opened was met with absolute refusal by the current archbishop. Hopefully future scholars will be allowed to consult these voluminous papers, which could provide a fuller understanding of the Church's role during the insurgency.

The Council for Historical Memory of the EOKA Struggle in Cyprus (SIMAE) in its present form only came into existence in 2005. Although relatively new, it has been able to acquire a number of unique and useful documents pertaining to EOKA. These include interview transcripts from EOKA members, surviving EOKA leaflets and orders, and correspondence between members of the organisation and others involved in the struggle.

Another significant source is the memoirs and autobiographies published by many of the major actors involved in Cyprus. In addition to two volumes by Grivas, British Prime Ministers Anthony Eden and Harold Macmillan wrote about the challenges presented by the Cyprus issue during their time in office. Hugh Foot, the island's last governor had a section on Cyprus in his memoirs and Dwight Eisenhower discussed the issue on several occasions in his auto-biography, *The White House Years*. Evangelos Averoff, the Greek foreign minister for much of the period, also contributed a volume on Cyprus as did Dimitris Bitsios, the head of the Greek foreign office's Cyprus desk. EOKA commanders Renos Kyriakides and Elenitsa Seraphim-Loizou have published accounts of their experiences during the emergency, as did EOKA's arms supplier, Andreas Azinas, and the first president of the Cypriot parliament, Glafkos Clerides. Finally, Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash has published several books dealing with Cypriot history. While his accounts focus on events after 1959, he was politically active during EOKA's revolt and addresses it. Naturally all these sources are self-serving to one degree or another and provide only the memories and reflections of the individual concerned. Where possible, they have been checked against other sources for accuracy. For all their faults, these books cover a wide range of perspectives.

## **A Counter-insurgency**

To understand the military and security aspects of the campaign, it is important to examine modern scholarship on COIN. While no single volume deals exclusively with the EOKA campaign, the insurgency in Cyprus is covered in a number of larger works on insurgency. At the same time, works discussing COIN theory and practice raise important issues that can be applied to the study of the emergency even if those works do not have sections devoted to Cyprus. During the 1950s, the proliferation of such conflicts around the world sparked an initial wave of interest. American involvement in Vietnam and the French experience in Algeria generated significant contributions to COIN research during the 1960s. The high-profile insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan have led to a similar explosion of literature dealing with insurgencies and counter-insurgency operations in the past few years.

In his treatise, *Guerrilla Warfare and EOKA's Struggle* (1964), Grivas argues that insurgencies were likely to become more common in the nuclear age. Grivas believed that the development of nuclear and other 'terribly destructive weapons' led to 'dispersion, and concealment in depth and underground' on the part of smaller forces. Small powers confronting larger ones would, by necessity, employ an unorthodox approach.<sup>14</sup> Modern Western powers, argued the general, were 'incapable of dealing with this kind of warfare'. They were unprepared psychologically, unequipped by their reliance on training to fight conventional conflicts, and hamstrung by political expediencies.<sup>15</sup>

An in-depth reading of sources directly connected with the daily conduct of insurgent and counter-insurgent activity in Cyprus from April 1955 until February

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<sup>14</sup> George Grivas, *Guerrilla Warfare and EOKA's Struggle*, Trans. A. A. Pallis, (London: Longmans, 1964), pp.xi-xii.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2-3.

1959 tests Grivas's conclusions. It also provides some perspectives on the conduct and challenges confronting modern commanders of COIN campaigns. While some specialized studies have examined either British policy on the island or the specific role of law enforcement, no single work has examined the insurgency in-depth, utilizing sources from all sides of the struggle. One possible reason for this neglect was that Cyprus, unlike many post-war insurgencies, was not led by communists. Much COIN literature in the 1960s was set in the context of the Cold War, and understanding and suppressing such movements was a priority for western powers, particularly the United States and Great Britain. The fall of the Soviet Union has put a fresh perspective on non-communist insurgent movements and has ended the tendency to associate insurgency and guerrilla warfare with revolutionary communism.

Secondary sources on COIN approach counter-insurgency from their particular perspectives. Some compare cases; others attempt to codify the evolution of policy or theories. A proliferation of literature on counter-insurgency in the 1960s was produced largely as a prescriptive guide to action, which, with the Vietnam war raging, focused on how to combat communist insurgencies. The most influential of these included Robert Thompson's trilogy on Vietnam, published between 1966 and 1969 and Julian Paget's *Counter-insurgency Operations*, published in 1967. Their time of publication and the background of the authors reinforce their focus on the struggle against communism. While Paget's book includes discussions of Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus, all three examples are assessed through the same Cold War lens. The authors' backgrounds also came into play. Thompson, a veteran civil servant who served in Malaya for more than two decades stresses the centrality of politics to defeating an insurgency. In Thompson's view, military force can be

counterproductive and must therefore be used with restraint. Paget, a colonel in the British army sees the issue of force differently, and is more convinced of force's efficacy. The work of Thompson and Paget, along with other authors who share their focus on Cold War issues and communist insurgencies, while useful, has limited explanatory power in assessing a nationalist struggle like the one in Cyprus.

Recently, there have been a number of scholarly studies dealing with insurgency and counter-insurgency more broadly. For the purposes of this thesis, there are two areas of primary importance: those works with a generalist focus and those with a specific emphasis on British counter-insurgency operations. Studies dealing with counter-insurgency in broad terms, and without a focus on Cyprus, are useful in framing the key issues confronting counter-insurgent operations and in helping to define the unique challenges and specific nature of insurgency campaigns as opposed to guerrilla movements or terrorism more broadly. Many can trace their intellectual origins to John Galula's seminal work from 1964, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, which was heavily influenced by Galula's personal experiences as an officer in Algeria.

The emphasis of works following in Galula's footsteps continues to be on learning from past counter-insurgency campaigns and constructing effective counter-insurgency strategies. John Nagl's *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (2002), and John Corum's *Bad Strategies: How Major Powers Fail in Counterinsurgency* (2008) are two recent and influential books in this mould. While they delve into historical examples, they are not historical works. Their primary goal is the shaping of policy, not the writing of history. At the same time, scholars have also addressed counter-insurgency from a purely British perspective. Since such studies usually touch on Cyprus, they are particularly relevant for this thesis. The two

primary examples of analysing British COIN are Thomas Mockaitis' *British Counterinsurgency 1919-1960* (1990) and John Newsinger's book, *British Counterinsurgency from Palestine to Northern Ireland*.

Mockaitis' primary goal was to describe the 'principles' of British COIN and how they 'were applied by soldiers, colonial administrators and police'.<sup>16</sup> Mockaitis is a proponent of the doctrine of 'minimum force' and emphasises British restraint in its counter-insurgency operations. This, he argues, has its roots in the foundations of British common law, and the realisation that combating insurgencies are primarily a civil-police problem. Britain's 'need to use force in a highly selective manner' forced the development of a counterinsurgency strategy 'that combined limited military action with broad-based social, economic and political reform'.<sup>17</sup> As a 'civil-police problem' the doctrine of minimum force prescribed the use of the police force instead of the military wherever possible. Mockaitis' stated formula for success presents difficulties in the context of Cyprus where, because of the conflicting interests at stake in any political reform, the British were 'unable to grant the insurgents' demands or to offer an acceptable alternative'.<sup>18</sup> A political solution in Cyprus required a high degree of creativity, the cooperation of Greece and Turkey, and the blunting of EOKA's operational capabilities. Meanwhile, the island's police were highly unreliable. Greek-Cypriots were intimidated by, or complicit with, EOKA while the use of Turkish-Cypriot constables became progressively unstable as ethnic tensions on the island rose.

John Newsinger's book overlaps Mockaitis for the period under investigation in this thesis. It is an excellent introduction to the theory and practice of British counter-insurgency in different decades and territories following the Second World

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<sup>16</sup> Thomas Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency, 1919-1960*, (London: Macmillan, 1990), p.ix.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p.63.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.134.

War. Its section on Cyprus highlights a number of important aspects of British operations and gives useful details about intelligence gathering. Cyprus is not the focus of Newsinger's book, only a part of a larger work, and several parts of his analysis relating to the island are contradictory. Most notably, he argues that the British were unable to defeat the insurgency because 'it would have taken considerably more brutal methods than the British could use in the prevailing political circumstances'.<sup>19</sup> This statement leaves unclear what these 'more brutal methods' could be. Several pages earlier, Newsinger argues that: 'British success in the intelligence war derived from the efforts of the new interrogation teams that Harding introduced into Cyprus... [when] the security forces resorted to the use of torture to secure intelligence.'<sup>20</sup> The author also describes the killing of EOKA members, heavily armed terrorist-hunter groups similar to 'pseudo-gangs', the execution of convicted terrorists, search and seizure operations, mass roundups, and the use of 'snatch teams' to arrest and interrogate suspects. From other sources, we even know that the British demolished the homes of suspected EOKA members. It would seem that everything that the British could have done with force was done. By arguing that Britain failed to defeat the insurgency in Cyprus due to an insufficient use of force, Newsinger creates a paradigm fundamentally opposed to Mockaitis' doctrine of 'minimum force'.

In addition, Newsinger argues that whatever success British policymakers had over EOKA was not military but political. In fact, the defeat of the *enosis* cause had as much to do with the success of security forces as with political negotiations. By late 1958, most of EOKA's leadership had been killed or captured by security forces; Grivas himself was under severe pressure. Turkish opposition to *enosis* was stronger

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<sup>19</sup> John Newsinger, *British Counterinsurgency: From Palestine to Northern Ireland*, (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2002), p.107.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p.101.

than ever and Turkish-Cypriots had formed their own organisation to fight against *enosis*. British successes in the field undermined EOKA's struggle and encouraged both Makarios and the Greek government to compromise on the issue of *enosis*. Newsinger minimizes these successes on the ground, preferring to argue that Britain's policy of playing the Turks and Turkish-Cypriots off against the Greeks and Greek-Cypriots eventually defeated EOKA politically.

Newsinger makes too much of the time-worn argument that the British government was out to set the Greeks and Turks against each other. This thesis argues that Cyprus was not a genuine example of the policy of 'divide and rule'. In fact, it was precisely because the crisis in Cyprus threatened to divide Greece and Turkey and to cause conflict within NATO that British policymakers adopted a flexible approach in search of a solution. Turkey did not need any encouragement to oppose the union of Cyprus with Greece. Violence between Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots undermined security in Cyprus and its usefulness as a British base and, as a result, Britain's wider strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean. This strategic position was Britain's priority – actively undermining it by simulating Greco-Turkish hostility would have been counterproductive. Moreover, British policymakers were willing to be part of any Greco-Turkish agreement that protected British interests in Cyprus. Once Greek and Turkish policymakers came to an understanding over Cyprus, Britain was easily brought on board. A key basis for the Greek and Turkish agreement was Makarios' shift from *enosis* to independence – a change of heart influenced by EOKA's failure in the field and the continued cost of the struggle.

David Anderson's chapter, 'Policing and Communal Conflict: The Cyprus Emergency' in *Policing and Decolonisation: Politics, Nationalism, and the Police, 1917-65*, edited by David Anderson and David Killingray, focuses on the role of law

enforcement in the counter-insurgency campaign, particularly the difficulty in recruiting and maintaining loyal Greek-Cypriot officers. Anderson is concerned with the social aspect of the police force and the ethnic tensions caused by employing Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots to police a Greek-Cypriot nationalist movement. With the Greek-Cypriots comprising nearly 80 percent of the island's population, it was almost impossible for the British administration to establish an effective police force. Many Greek-Cypriot officers resigned rather than act against EOKA, while those who remained, were subject to intimidation and assassination. Some even became informants for the organisation. Anderson is critical, perhaps overly so, of British policy in Cyprus. His major work, *Histories of the Hanged*, is a comprehensive account of the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya. While it does not deal with Cyprus, it does provide a perspective on how British policymakers dealt with a contemporaneous emergency in another colony. Anderson's account is bitterly critical of British policy and practice in Kenya. These attitudes carry over to Cyprus which, like the conflict in Kenya, he characterises as 'a dirty war'.<sup>21</sup>

Works focused on Palestine, Malaya, and Kenya, are useful in gaining a broader understanding of the evolution and conduct of British counter-insurgency in the aftermath of the Second World War. Malaya has received the most attention for two reasons. First, it was the most successful counter-insurgency conducted by the British during this period. Second, Malaya was a communist insurgency and therefore was thought to hold lessons for later counter-insurgency policy in Indochina/Vietnam. Governor Harding was in close contact with Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer, who was credited with 'winning' the counter-insurgency campaign in Malaya. Many of

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<sup>21</sup> David Anderson, 'Policing and Communal Conflict: The Cyprus Emergency', *Policing and Decolonisation: Politics, Nationalism, and the Police, 1917-65*, ed. David M. Anderson and David Killingray, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p.210.

Harding's actions in Cyprus were modelled on policies Templer had employed in Malaya, which became standard aspects of Britain's counter-insurgency doctrine.

The Cyprus campaign took place not only in the context of other counter-insurgencies, but in the broader framework of a massive reappraisal of Britain's strategic position in the wake of the Second World War. During this period, the British empire was changing, refocusing itself on Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia while reducing the size of its army. Without the Indian subcontinent, British policymakers worked to develop a new paradigm of British power through economic bonds, military cooperation, political influence, and a special relationship with the United States. This multilayered approach to imperial power is evident in John Darwin's work, which tries to unravel the nature and causes of the end of the British empire. Darwin presents the argument that imperialist instincts remained among British policymakers through the 1960s, and that the imperial project only really breathed its last with the devaluing of the pound in November 1967 and the withdrawal of British troops from east of Suez in January 1968. Other historians dealing with the end of the empire, like Robert Holland, assign a greater importance to the 1956 Suez crisis, viewing it as the emphatic end of British empire, both in ambition and in reality. Certainly after Suez, and with the replacement of Eden with Macmillan, traditional imperialist attitudes took a back seat to creating a new and unique role in the world supported on the twin pillars of the Commonwealth and the special relationship with the United States.

Many ingredients shaped the emergency in Cyprus: nationalism, ethnic conflict, international diplomacy, decolonisation, grand strategy, and the ability to project power in the Middle East. Much was at stake for the British in Cyprus and the counter-insurgency campaign reflected this. At the same time, the deal that finally

ended the violence did not satisfy the aspirations of Greek-Cypriot nationalists. Cyprus did not join Greece. British policymakers accepted independence for much of the island while retaining sovereign base areas. As in many other colonies, Britain's withdrawal was earlier than London had hoped, but not as complete as anti-colonialist forces would have liked. This denouement was largely the result of the successes and failures of the counter-insurgency effort and the realities of the international political scene. In a world where the lines between insurgency and terrorism are increasingly vague, where communism is no longer the primary mover of insurgent movements, and where ethnic conflict seems omnipresent, it is worth giving Cyprus a harder look.

## **Chapter I – Causes for the Insurgency: Rejection and Radicalization**

*‘Do not the great mass of people living in Cyprus realize that by belonging to the British Empire they get a square deal?’<sup>22</sup> (Air-Commodore Harvey in the House of Commons, 9 June 1948)*

### **The Cause**

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the Greek-Cypriot majority on the island of Cyprus voiced the desire for self-determination. Contrary to the aspirations of most colonies, this claim did not mean independence, but the union (*enosis*) of the island with an already existing state, Greece. While a preponderance of the island’s Greek-Cypriot majority of nearly eighty percent supported becoming part of the Greek state, the Turkish-Cypriot minority of nearly twenty percent (a holdover from three centuries of Ottoman control) opposed it with near unanimity. This fundamental divide pitted Greece and Turkey against each other. The British government, in the process of reorganization and redefinition after the war, regarded Cyprus as an important possession that had to be maintained. This chapter deals with the first initiatives of British policymakers to neutralize pressure for self-determination in the years immediately after 1945. The failure to reach a negotiated compromise during this period moved the *enosis* forces toward a full-blown insurgency.

Greek-Cypriots were neither the first nor the last colonial people to push the British government for self-determination after the Second World War, but the cause of *enosis* on the small Mediterranean island created international problems disproportionate to its modest size. In the main, these international issues stemmed from two considerations that dominated world affairs at the time. The first was the

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<sup>22</sup> *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) Fifth Series – Volume 451, House of Commons: Official Report, Session 1947-48, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1948), p.2160.*

need to defend Europe from the threat of Soviet communism through a strong NATO. The second was Britain's interest in the Middle East. Cyprus was central to both objectives. As events in the late 1940s and early 1950s increased the importance of Cyprus to British policymakers, the desire for an end to British rule among Greek-Cypriots also grew in intensity. The *enosis* movement threatened the strategic usefulness of Cyprus as a base for British power. Tension on the island also undermined Greek and Turkish cooperation, further compromising Britain's position in the region.

The insurgency waged between 1955 and 1959 would prove a hard struggle. Several hundred were killed and several hundreds more wounded and maimed. Britain's response combined classic diplomatic manoeuvre with the latest counter-insurgent practices, adapted from experiences in other colonies. Security operations interplayed with diplomatic considerations framed by existing alliances and the dynamics of the Cold War. The radical nature of Britain's opponents in Cyprus further complicated the prospects for compromise. A negotiated agreement between Greece and Turkey – facilitated by the shift of Archbishop Makarios from *enosis* to independence – coupled with British concessions, provided the conditions necessary for ending the violence in 1959. Makarios' enthusiasm for the struggle was undermined not only by the increasingly lukewarm support from Greece (spurred by its security concerns vis-à-vis Turkey), but because the *enosis* movement in Cyprus was contained by British security forces.

### **Early Conflict and a Constitutional Offer**

Cyprus first came under Britain's control in 1878 through the Treaty of Berlin. When Turkey joined the Central Powers in World War I, Britain formally annexed the

island; in 1925, it became a crown colony. In 1915, Britain offered Cyprus to Greece if the latter would enter the war on the side of the Entente, but Greece's pro-German king refused. By the time Greece changed its orientation and entered the war, the British offer had been taken off the table. The island's Greek-Cypriot majority at first looked to the British as potential liberators from Ottoman rule and hoped that Britain would allow Cyprus to follow the example of Crete and join the Greek state. In this aspiration, however, they were continually disappointed. For military and political reasons, Britain retained the island and *enosis* remained a perpetual but elusive cause.

*Enosis* agitation against the British first became violent in 1931. The British government officially refused the request of a Greek-Cypriot delegation for union in 1929. In October 1931, government attempts to balance the budget and revamp the education system led to disturbances, a refusal to pay taxes, and the boycott of British goods. Rioters burned a police car and the governor's residence. Governor Sir Ronald Storrs called out the police force and army units to restore order. Six civilians were killed, thirty were wounded, and four hundred arrested. Thirty-eight policemen were injured.<sup>23</sup> Several high-ranking members of the Cypriot clergy, who were thought to have been involved in inciting the crowd, were exiled. This display of force temporarily restored order, but the events of 1931 were a harbinger of the violence to come. The end of World War II reinvigorated the *enosis* movement and presented British policymakers with important decisions about Cyprus.

A decade before violence began, the British government made use of diplomatic initiatives in an attempt to defuse political pressure for *enosis*. The failure of London's early moves to reach a solution that would allow for the continuation of British sovereignty, while at the same time giving the Cypriot people a degree of self-

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<sup>23</sup> Colin Baker, *Retreat from Empire: Sir Robert Armitage in Africa and Cyprus*, (London: IB Tauris Publishers, 1998), p.99.

government, highlighted significant differences among the British government, the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities, and eventually Athens and Ankara. These key differences served as the final sparks for the *enosis* struggle during the 1950s, and would, to some extent, define its course. At issue were the security of British interests in Cyprus, the nature and scope of Cypriot self-government, the rights of Turkish-Cypriots, and the future of the *enosis* movement itself.

The case of Cyprus confronted the British government with three distinctive challenges that were to shape London's policy and complicate a possible solution in the years to come. First, rhetoric on the island centred on political union with Greece instead of the traditional colonial goal of independence and the establishment of a new, autonomous state. This fundamental goal created a particular set of difficulties since it involved a second sovereign nation, Greece, and, *ipso facto*, considerations of that nation's allies and rivals. Second, London considered Cyprus to be an integral British possession. Because of its small size, British policymakers were convinced that sovereignty could be maintained on the island even as the empire scaled-back its overseas possessions and military establishment. Finally, in Cyprus, Britain faced a community divided into two distinct groups. What made this society unique among other religiously or ethnically divided British colonies, was the powerful reality, that in Cyprus, both communities had established states, Greece and Turkey, as their patrons, advocates and, if necessary, protectors. Further complicating the issue were the relationships both Greece and Turkey had with Great Britain and with each other. Both countries were British allies and, after February 1952, of special political importance as members of NATO. Although Greece and Turkey were allies, nearly one hundred years of constant struggle between the two peoples meant that relations were perpetually strained.

The initial policy of the British government was an attempt to marginalise the *enosis* forces with a new constitution. It was hoped that expanded powers of self-government for the people of Cyprus would reduce the pressure for self-determination leading to *enosis*. At the end of October 1946, Arthur Creech Jones, the Secretary of State for the Colonies under the new Labour government, announced the plan for a new Cyprus constitution. His written statement sounded a hopeful note that such an initiative would pave the way for social progress, economic development, improvements in infrastructure, and increased political freedom for the citizens of the island.<sup>24</sup> The plan also called for a consultative assembly of Cypriots (from both the island's Greek and Turkish communities) to work in concert to define the terms of the constitution and the creation of a new legislative assembly to represent the Cypriot people. This assembly would work in close conjunction with the British-run Cyprus government on domestic issues and would provide a degree of representation to the Cypriot population. It was hoped that, when put into practice, this offer would allow Britain to maintain control of Cyprus by under-cutting support for *enosis* through material progress and increased local participation in the domestic government. Significantly, the proposals involved the cooperation of Cyprus's Greek majority and Turkish minority.

In spite of the high hopes, the announcement was met with a discouraging reception among Greek-Cypriots. In immediate reply to the parliamentary comments of 23 October, the Cypriot ethnarchic council<sup>25</sup> cabled London, rejecting 'categorically and with indignation any solution of the Cyprus question not granting [the Cypriot people] their national liberty by union with Greece which constitutes our

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<sup>24</sup> Speech by Arthur Creech Jones, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 18 December, 1946, *Hansard, House of Commons: Official Report*, Session 1946-47, Volume 431, (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1947), p.1943.

<sup>25</sup> The assembly of leading clerics, the archbishop and the bishops, as well as other notable Greek-Cypriots, local politicians, lawyers, etc.

only national claim and aspiration'.<sup>26</sup> Undeterred, the British government responded with a two-track offensive designed to improve Cypriot perceptions of the British administration. The first prong emphasised British plans for the development of Cyprus's economy and social welfare. These reforms and improvements would continue as part of a decade-long project designed to address the island's infrastructural needs from transport to agriculture, health, electricity, and water supply. Four million pounds were made available to aid the British goal of bringing the consultative assembly to 'meet in the hopeful atmosphere created by a long-term programme of economic development'.<sup>27</sup> Malaria was the focal point of the health drive as resources were devoted to eradicating the disease through the widespread spraying of pesticides. Cypriot agriculture was targeted with schemes of reforestation and irrigation, designed to improve the yield of farmland and to prevent food shortages in drought years. Plans were laid out for upgrading the island's unsophisticated road system, creating a modern electricity grid, and for expanding the airport facilities. The goal was 'to establish a contented Cyprus as a self-governing member of the Commonwealth'.<sup>28</sup>

Concurrent with the reform programme, the British openly pursued a policy of reconciliation with the Greek-Cypriot majority after the events of 1931, which had resulted in the suspension of the Cyprus constitution. The legislative council of local notables (responsible for minor aspects of local government) had been dissolved. As punishment for their role in the riots, the Bishops of Kition and Kyrenia were deported. Archbishop Kyrillos III, who was allowed to remain in Cyprus, died in 1933 and the absence of the two deportees, coupled with a series of laws implemented by

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<sup>26</sup> Cable from the Ethnarchic Council of Cyprus to the British Government, quoted in *The Times*, 24 October 1946.

<sup>27</sup> *The Times*, 25 October 1946; Issue 50591; col B

<sup>28</sup> TNA, T 220/366 Crombie CA (47) 19 'Constitutional Reform in Cyprus,' 19 December, 1947.

the British in 1937, prevented the official enthroning of a new archbishop. The most restrictive of these, Law No. 34, stated that in all future elections for the archiepiscopal throne, the archbishop-elect would not be enthroned until approved by the governor.<sup>29</sup> As part of the reconciliation agenda of October 1946, the laws restricting the election of a new archbishop were revoked and the deportees of 1931 were permitted to return.

A new governor was appointed to oversee these changes. The Labour government entrusted the programme of Cypriot development and political rapprochement to the former minister for civil aviation, Reginald, Lord Winster. Winster would assume the dual role in Cyprus of governor and commander-in-chief. Winster's appointment broke with the recent tradition of appointing senior civil servants as colonial governors. Leading figures within the civil service naturally bristled at this development, complaining that it would undermine their prospects for recruitment. Winster wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies to justify his appointment: 'I realize that we are endeavouring to inaugurate a new era in the island and that the matters [the constitutional proposals and public spending campaign] above fully justify departing from the usual procedure of appointing an officer of the Colonial Service to the post.'<sup>30</sup>

The incoming governor's commitment to his responsibilities, however, was open to question. In his early correspondence with Creech Jones, Winster seemed more immediately concerned with the reduction of his time away from London than with the establishment of a new and workable regime in Cyprus. Initially, the Colonial Office favoured a standard appointment of five years. In a letter of 22 January 1946, Winster made his contrary intentions clear, writing: 'As regards the

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<sup>29</sup> L. Lloyd-Blood, 'Mediterranean,' *Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law*, (Oxford University Press, 1939), p.2.

<sup>30</sup> TNA, CO 67/358/1 No. 90752, Letter from Winster to Creech-Jones, 9 January 1947.

length of my appointment... a year or eighteen months at most should amply suffice for what I have to do, and that is the length of absence from this country which I am contemplating.<sup>31</sup> Creech Jones was quick to reply that eighteen months would be the barest minimum and that a commitment of two years was probably more likely. Winster, however, was clear about his priorities. Once the new constitutional proposals were adopted, he wished to return to England at once, 'in order to resume my political activities which, as far as I can see at present, I have no wish or intention to abandon'.<sup>32</sup> On one major point, however, the secretary and the reluctant new governor were in agreement – no change to the sovereignty of Cyprus was being contemplated. At most, the possibility was that, after working under the 'Winster Constitution' for a trial period, control of domestic governmental affairs could be turned over to the Cypriots while Britain retained that of foreign affairs and defence policy.<sup>33</sup> Whether the concessions would be sufficient to reduce pressure for *enosis* was another question.

Just as the British were to have a new political figure in Cyprus, so the Greek-Cypriot side, freed from the constraints of Law No. 34, proceeded to elect an archbishop for the first time since 1916. In keeping with a tradition that reached back at least as far as the Greek Revolution of 1821, the archbishop acted as a lightning rod for the cause of *enosis*.<sup>34</sup> Lacking senior political representatives, the Greek-Cypriot people entrusted their prelate with the dual roles of spiritual and political leadership.

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<sup>31</sup> TNA, CO 850/206/12 No. 20402/88, Letter from Winster to Creech-Jones, 22 January 1947.

<sup>32</sup> CO 67/358/1 No. 90752, Letter from Winster to Creech-Jones, 9 January 1947.

<sup>33</sup> TNA, T 220/366, Memorandum by Mr. Crombie, 19 December 1947, C.A. (47) 19 'Constitutional Reform in Cyprus.

<sup>34</sup> In 1821, the Archbishop of Cyprus, like the Archbishop of Constantinople, was hanged by the Turkish authorities to discourage resistance.

An autocephalous<sup>35</sup> branch of the Greek Orthodox faith, the Church in Cyprus occupied a unique position of wealth, power, and influence on the island.

Under Ottoman rule, the Church maintained and championed the ‘Greek’ identity of Cyprus. The archbishop also claimed the title of ethnarch (national leader) and enjoyed political as well as spiritual power as the leading figure of the Greek-Cypriot community. Under British rule, leading clerics became more and more involved with the island’s political affairs, becoming ‘the most active members of the Legislative Council established under the constitution granted in 1882’.<sup>36</sup> As political awareness in Cyprus increased, the political authority of the archbishop over the Greek-Cypriot community became increasingly overt.

In early 1947, Leontios, Bishop of Paphos and the *locum tenens* secured his election to the archiepiscopal throne. Leontios was quite different from his predecessor, Kyrillos III, who had neither spoken out for *enosis* nor participated in the riots of 1931. After being officially enthroned on 20 June, Leontios continued to express his strong support for union and his vehement opposition both to the constitutional concept and to any compromise that would leave Cyprus separate from Greece.

To the casual observer, Leontios’ vehement commitment to *enosis* and his strong denunciation of continued British control in Cyprus might seem strange. Greece, after all, had suffered enormous hardships under German occupation. Between 1944 and 1949, it was engaged in a bitter civil war, fought between nationalist and communist forces. The *enosis* movement was based on a deep cultural attachment, prevalent throughout the Greek-Cypriot population, to Hellenism. Cyprus

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<sup>35</sup> A privilege from the time of the Roman Empire, meaning that the Orthodox community in Cyprus is independent of the authority of the Greek-Orthodox Church. The Archbishop of Cyprus is thus the sole authority for the Orthodox Church in Cyprus.

<sup>36</sup> TNA, CO 926/489, *The Church and Terrorism in Cyprus: A Record of the Complicity of the Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus in Political Violence*, 24 October, 1956, p.1.

was within the Greek orbit since the late Bronze Age. It was part of the Hellenic and Hellenistic worlds, a province of the Roman and Byzantine empires, and participated (unsuccessfully) in the Greek War of Independence in 1821. Hellenism among Greek-Cypriots was fostered in generation after generation from childhood and reinforced on linguistic, religious, and cultural levels. Regardless of the poverty, political instability, or civil war in Greece, most Greek-Cypriots felt themselves to be Greek and longed for the political unification of their island with Greece. The Church was at the forefront of nurturing such feeling and secondary school education, often undertaken by teachers from Greece supported it as well.<sup>37</sup>

In 1951, Archbishop Makarios III, who led the Cypriot Church and the *enosis* movement from October 1950 onwards, told journalist Sefton Delmer in Athens, ‘that he realized that Enosis would result in a fall in the standard of living, in the level of civil liberties and in the efficiency of government: nevertheless, the Cypriots desired Enosis regardless of the sacrifice that it might entail’.<sup>38</sup> A later British publication described this feeling through a traditional Greek-Cypriot saying quoted by a Nicosia taxi driver: ‘Better a poor mother than a rich aunt!’<sup>39</sup>

Greek-Cypriots hoped that their island could follow the example of Crete, where Greeks had fought for unification with the Motherland since the revolution of 1821, achieving it only in 1913. The Cretan example was regarded as a paradigm by the more radical element in Cyprus, and stood in contrast to the example of the Ionian Islands. Both territories eventually became part of the Greek state, but while the Ionian Islands achieved *enosis* through patient negotiation and international

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<sup>37</sup> TNA FO 371/112862, United Kingdom Policy in Cyprus and the Enosis Demand, 17 September, 1954.

<sup>38</sup> TNA, FO 371/95133, G1081/75, Telegram from British Embassy (Athens) to Southern Department (Foreign Office), 15 June 1951.

<sup>39</sup> ‘Cyprus: Background to Enosis,’ *Information Department Memorandum*, (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1957), Appendix I, p.viii.

agreement, the people of Crete attempted to join Greece nearly once a decade between 1821 and 1913 through armed rebellion.<sup>40</sup> In late 1946, however, Cyprus differed from Crete both in its distance from the Greek mainland and in the composition of its population. While Crete had been part of the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey in 1923, thus removing the island's Turkish minority, Cyprus had not. As a result, Cyprus remained a mixed island, and its Turkish minority wanted nothing to do with *enosis*.

In Ankara, the Turkish government was acutely aware of both the security concerns of the Turkish minority, emanating from demographics, and the strategic concerns rooted in geography. For Turkish policymakers *enosis* for Cyprus was not a viable compromise; it was a *casus belli*. Turkey was adamant on this point for two reasons – one emotional, one practical. Emotionally, Turkish rhetoric claimed that Turks refused to live under Greek rule. Turkish-Cypriots feared that under Greek rule their identity and rights would be eroded and that they would be faced with the stark choice of losing their Turkish identity or losing their homes. Practically, the Turks claimed that they had reason to fear the spectre of communism in Cyprus and that a British withdrawal might precipitate a communist takeover, throwing the strategically-placed island into Soviet hands and choking Turkey's southern ports. Whether Turkish fears on this score were justifiable in 1948 is moot. Even if the threat was imagined, the fear was real enough and that fear drove the actions of Turkish policy makers.

The hostile feelings of most Greek-Cypriots certainly contributed to the lukewarm welcome given to Lord Winster upon his arrival on 27 March 1947. While many Turkish-Cypriots waved British flags and cheered, the majority of the Greek-

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<sup>40</sup> Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, *The Cyprus Question, 1878-1960: The Constitutional Aspect*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), pp.13-14.

Cypriot population remained subdued. At the reception the next day, leading Greek-Cypriots including the archbishop-elect, the Bishop of Kyrenia, and the Mayor of Nicosia were notable by their absence. Only a few secondary government officials attended. The rocky beginning was a harbinger of the difficulties that would follow.

In July, Winster invited senior local officials, various union leaders, and the heads of a number of professional associations to assist in forming the consultative assembly tasked with framing the new constitution. The Church and the nationalist right, dissatisfied with anything short of *enosis*, refused to be part of the constitutional process and rejected Lord Winster's invitation. As a result, only eighteen of the forty members invited by the governor participated in the constitutional debate. These were a Maronite, eight leftist Greek-Cypriots, seven Turkish-Cypriots, and two Greek-Cypriots appointed by the British government, and therefore sympathetic to its positions. Sir Edward Jackson, the Chief Justice of Cyprus, served as chairman.<sup>41</sup> The formation of the assembly hit an almost immediate snag when, on 26 July, Archbishop Leontios died suddenly of typhus. He was succeeded by the aged Makarios II, Bishop of Kyrenia, another *enosis* hardliner and veteran exile of 1931. Even before the assembly's first meeting in November 1947, the Church, led by the new archbishop, began to pressure the Greek-Cypriot assembly members to avoid concessions to the British and not to compromise on the cause of *enosis*.

The negotiations of the consultative assembly during the spring of 1948 were contentious even without the representatives from the Church and the Greek-Cypriot right. The central principle at issue was the degree of self-government that would be exercised by the Greek-Cypriot population. As the island's majority, the Greek-Cypriots regarded self-determination and self-government as nothing less than their

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<sup>41</sup> 'Cyprus: Background to Enosis,' *Information Department Memorandum*, (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1957), p.7.

democratic rights without which they could not consider themselves a free people. The British position was not as simple. In drawing up a new constitution for the island, Britain felt the need to balance its strategic and political requirements – bases and supply centres to project power throughout the Middle East and Africa – with the principle of Cypriot self-government. In addition, London felt strongly that any new constitution in Cyprus would have to protect the rights of the Turkish-Cypriot minority and avoid creating tensions with Turkey, which could undermine the security of Cyprus and Britain's broader regional concerns.

Greek-Cypriot leadership seemed to ignore the reality that Turkey and Turkish-Cypriots supported the continuation of British sovereignty in Cyprus and were vehemently opposed to the notion of self-government. Turkey and Turkish-Cypriots knew (as the Greek-Cypriot side openly proclaimed) that self-government in Cyprus was a stepping stone towards *enosis*. Rather than accept this, the Turkish government threatened London that it would press its rights as the former sovereign and demand the return of the island on the grounds that, by abandoning Cyprus, Britain was reneging on the terms of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which had formalized the annexation of the island by Great Britain.

The constitutional proposals discussed by the assembly included universal manhood suffrage for men aged twenty-one and over (the voting rights of women remained to be taken up at a future date at the discretion of the assembly). There would be a unitary legislature of twenty-two members, eighteen elected from the Greek-Cypriot community and four from the Turkish-Cypriot. Four additional seats would be reserved for several important appointed officials of the British government in Cyprus: the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General, the Treasurer and the Senior

Commissioner.<sup>42</sup> ‘The presence of these officials’, it was argued, ‘would ensure that the Legislature is properly informed on executive subjects and on the policy of the Government, both by speeches and by answers to members’ questions, and would also ensure that the members of the Legislature themselves, as the representatives of public opinion in the Island, would be able to make their views known directly and in the free exchange of debate to the most senior officials’.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, the Greek-Cypriots would enjoy a clear majority in the assembly, satisfying an aspiration dating to the very beginning of British rule. Although this was an important concession to the Greek-Cypriots, significant issues remained unresolved.

Three critical gaps existed between British and Greek-Cypriot aspirations: the control of ministries (excluding foreign affairs and defence), the ban on debating the position of Cyprus within the Commonwealth in the Cypriot legislature, and the strong executive powers of the governor.<sup>44</sup> The Greek-Cypriot representatives wanted to have their own citizens as ministers within the new Cyprus government. Britain balked at this idea, feeling that it moved Cyprus towards self-government too rapidly at a time when the stability of British control needed to be strongly maintained. Ministries controlled by the Greek-Cypriots would be seen as marginalizing the island’s Turks and threatened to create an unstable political dynamic between the two communities. The British government felt that debate on the position of Cyprus in the Commonwealth, would only foster disunity between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots, essentially nullifying any benefit derived from the new constitution by constantly calling Britain’s position in the island into question. Finally, the strong executive power of the governor, including the right to veto legislation and to enact legislation

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<sup>42</sup> Cyprus Constitution: Despatch dated 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1948, from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governor of Cyprus, (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1948), Colonial Office Dispatch No. 227.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Hatzivassiliou, p.46.

unilaterally, was thought necessary to maintain stability and to protect British interests. To Greek-Cypriots, it smacked of pure imperialism.

The British government realized that the constitutional process was on treacherous ground. In a memorandum of 26 April 1948, the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs openly acknowledged that ‘it is necessary to remember that to offer less than a certain minimum degree of self-government is to court entire rejection’. Then, he speculated that ‘[i]f the move made by His Majesty’s Government in October, 1946, to grant Cyprus a more liberal form of Government were now to end in total rejection of our proposals by the Consultative Assembly, the dissident element in the Island would be greatly strengthened, with adverse consequences within and possibly outside Cyprus.’<sup>45</sup>

Under heavy pressure from the Ethnarchy, the Greek-Cypriot members insisted on their demands. The British government conceded only that after five years of functioning under an interim constitution, it would be acceptable to consider transferring the ministerial portfolios excluding defence and foreign affairs to the Greek-Cypriots.<sup>46</sup> This offer too fell short of what the Greek-Cypriots were willing to accept. On 7 May, the office of the Secretary of State for the Colonies sent a message to Governor Winster, copies of which were to be distributed to the members of the consultative assembly on 11 May. The letter confirmed that:

[as] intimated in the House of Commons on 28<sup>th</sup> January... His Majesty’s Government saw considerable difficulties in the way of accepting the proposals of the eight Greek members, which embodied the principle of fully responsible government in the internal affairs of Cyprus. Further consideration of these proposals since that date has confirmed His Majesty’s Government in the view that they are unacceptable and that the interests of Cyprus at this juncture will best be served by the adoption of a form of government which, without entailing any violent break with the existing administrative structure, will, nevertheless, provide for the active participation of the people of Cyprus

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<sup>45</sup> TNA, T 220/366, Memorandum by the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, 26 April 1948.

<sup>46</sup> Memorandum by Mr. Crombie, 19 December 1947.

in the conduct of their internal affairs, both through the normal processes of debating and voting by their elected representatives in the Legislature and through a close association between the Legislature and the executive side of Government.<sup>47</sup>

With the minimum demands of the two sides apparently irreconcilable, and with every negotiating point seemingly exhausted, the eight elected Greek-Cypriot representatives voted against the new constitution on 20 May and withdrew from the assembly.<sup>48</sup> The composition of the consultative assembly, however, meant votes in favour of the proposals from the ten remaining representatives carried the constitution. Given the nature of the constitution's 'success', the British government decided that the process could not move forward. The assembly was dissolved on 12 August, and a 'temporary shelving of the constitution' became the government's stated policy.<sup>49</sup>

The failure was a blow to the British government and especially to Governor Winster who had come to the island primarily to establish a new constitution. In his yearly budgetary address to the executive council early in 1949, recounting events of the previous year, Winster spoke bluntly about the disappointment:

1948 also saw the abandonment, I hope only temporary, of a political measure in which I had reposed high hopes. I refer to the Consultative Assembly, which foundered upon the rock of a demand for the transfer of a vastly greater degree of authority than I could possibly regard as advisable in the interests of the people of Cyprus. To prejudice those interests by being too precipitate in this matter would have been the negation of responsible government.

Winster continued, pulling no punches against those he felt responsible for the constitution's failure: 'The action of certain members of the Assembly in refusing what was possible because they were not given what it would have been disastrous to

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<sup>47</sup> TNA, CO 67/358/1, Report from Colonial Office, Listowell to Winster, 7 May 1948, p.1.

<sup>48</sup> Hatzivassiliou, p.46.

<sup>49</sup> TNA, T 220/366, Memorandum from W. Russell Edmunds to Mr. Pitblado, Commonwealth Affairs Committee, 22 July 1948.

grant, was in itself a reflection upon the sense of responsibility with which I had credited them, and upon their fitness to exercise the powers they were demanding.’<sup>50</sup> Because of the failure of the constitutional initiative, Winster, who had accepted his appointment only reluctantly, concluded by announcing his resignation. ‘I do not seek to minimize the grave disappointment caused to me by the lack of success which has attended the task which was my primary purpose in coming to Cyprus’, he said. ‘That purpose having failed with the breakdown of the Consultative Assembly I informed the Secretary of State last July that I felt the time had come for me to withdraw at some moment convenient to himself and in accordance with the understanding with him on which I accepted my appointment.’<sup>51</sup>

Naturally, Greek-Cypriot opinion did not agree with Winster or His Majesty’s Government concerning the reasons for the failure of negotiations. In response to Winster’s address, the Pan-agrarian Union of Cyprus (PEK), an important network representing village farmers, issued a statement that was published in the newspaper *Neos Kypriakos Phylax* on 17 February 1949. ‘The Consultative Assembly has failed’, they contended ‘because it was based on foreign psychology. The Government has never been able to trace the road leading to the Cyprus soul. In the case, however, of the Consultative Assembly it was kept far away from the Cyprus soul in a deplorable manner’.<sup>52</sup> Even without elaboration from PEK, it was clear that this ‘deplorable’ separation from the ‘Cyprus soul’ centred on the failure of the consultative assembly’s constitutional proposals to allow for the union of Cyprus with Greece.

Although the ‘Winster Constitution’ was never implemented, it influenced the political landscape in Cyprus for years to come. The disagreements which had

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<sup>50</sup> SA1 470/1948/1, Governor’s Address to the Executive Council, January 1949.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> SA1 470/1948/2, Statement of PEK published in *Neos Kypriakos Phylax*, 17 February 1949.

plagued its drafting remained contentious. In many ways, the Winster proposals represented a more advantageous solution to the Greek-Cypriot side than the agreement reluctantly signed later on in 1960. As with the nearly concurrent UN proposal for the partition of Palestine, it seemed in retrospect to offer a more stable situation than that which developed in both territories after years of struggle and significant human trauma. In both instances, the resort to violence served to harden prejudices, increase mistrust, and add to the divides that negotiations would seek to bridge. The British government's choice to abandon Palestine at this time directly influenced its stance on Cyprus. With Palestine under the control of Arab nations and the new state of Israel, Britain adopted a less compromising attitude over Cyprus. Sovereignty over Cyprus was now a necessity in order to maintain British power in the region. In spite of these considerations, the offer on the table in 1948 satisfied important Greek-Cypriot demands; it moved the island towards self-government and had the potential for eventual self-determination. It had no provisions for direct Turkish interference in Cypriot affairs. With the benefit of hindsight, many Greek-Cypriots might wish that the offer had been met with something less than absolute hostility.

### **Plebiscite and Procrastination**

The collapse of the constitutional proposals of 1948 left Cyprus politically deadlocked and deeply divided. The British and Turkish-Cypriots favoured a continuation of the British administration while the Greek-Cypriots continued to clamour for *enosis*. The constitutional offer remained open in the unlikely event that the Greek-Cypriot community chose to accept it at a later date. Britain's failure to

improve the offer of 1948 spurred the *enosis* forces in Cyprus to action and provided the impetus for the unification of opinion of left and right on the subject. By 1949, even the Cypriot communist party (AKEL)<sup>53</sup>, under the new leadership of Ezekias Papaionannou, became a vocal advocate of *enosis* while continuing to excoriate the Greek government as a ‘monarchist-fascist’ regime.<sup>54</sup>

The explanation of AKEL’s support for *enosis* is somewhat problematic. If Cyprus had become part of Greece in 1949, it is unlikely that the Greek government’s anti-communist sentiments would have spared AKEL members from persecution and possible imprisonment. One theory advocated in parts of the British government argued that Greek-Cypriot communists were gambling that Turkey and Great Britain would simply not agree to *enosis*. AKEL was therefore willing to support it as a way to sow dissent within the Western Alliance. As a later British policy report stated:

The cynicism of the Communists’ support for Enosis is patent, as the first result of the cession of Cyprus to Greece would be their suppression and the imprisonment of their leaders. While it may be that they hope that their strong organization may be used for subversion in Greece, it is clear that the major factor in their stand is the desire of international communism to profit from any confusion caused in the Eastern Mediterranean. It has little to do with the interests of Cyprus.<sup>55</sup>

AKEL’s ideology opposed British imperialism and supported any movement which undermined it.

The explanation favoured by AKEL itself was that Greek-Cypriot communists placed more faith in their cultural identity as Greeks than in their political affiliation. The government of Greece could change, but the bond between Greeks and Greeks in Cyprus would not. AKEL articulated this view openly in 1954:

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<sup>53</sup> Ανορθωτικό Κόμμα Εργαζόμενου Λαού. Progressive Party of Working People.

<sup>54</sup> Evangelos Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost Opportunities: The Cyprus Question, 1950-1963*, Trans. Timothy Cullen and Susan Kyriakidis, (New York: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1986), p.7.

<sup>55</sup> TNA, FO 371/112862, G1081/587, ‘United King Policy in Cyprus and the Enosis Demand,’ September 17, 1954.

Some people abroad find it difficult to understand why the people of Cyprus should fight for union of Cyprus with Greece when Greece itself had a monarchofascist regime and is actually under American subjugation and control. The struggle of the people of Cyprus for national rehabilitation must be viewed in relation to the struggle of the Greek people for national independence and not separately. It is part and parcel of the same struggle. Governments come and go in Greece but the Greek people are always there. When the people in Greece and Cyprus have achieved their national freedom, they will then be able to decide for themselves the type of regime they wish to live under – without any foreign intervention or influence.<sup>56</sup>

Finally, along similar lines, it is possible that with so many Greek-Cypriots supporting *enosis*, the communist party worried that opposition to *enosis*, whatever their misgivings, would erode their own support among the people. As a later governor in Cyprus explained: ‘AKEL, has perforce to ride on the Nationalist bandwagon as regards Enosis in order to get a popular support.’<sup>57</sup>

In the wake of the failed consultative assembly, and with an archbishop supported by the right in power, the *enosis* movement looked away from AKEL for its political direction in 1949. On 5 December of that year, the archbishop and the ethnarchy council took their agenda to the people, announcing a plebiscite on *enosis* for the middle of January 1950. Through this plebiscite, Greek-Cypriots would be given the chance to express openly their unyielding desire for union with Greece. The plebiscite’s organisers hoped that an overwhelming ‘yes’ vote would clearly demonstrate the unified desire of the Greek-Cypriot population to the British government. At the same time, it was hoped that the result would draw criticism of British colonialism from all over the world.

Significantly, the genesis and execution of the plebiscite rested with the Orthodox Church; the Greek-Cypriot community alone was asked to participate, but those who held government positions under the British administration were

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<sup>56</sup> TNA, CO 926/1056, AKEL Leaflet Quoted in Note on the Communist attitude and strength in Cyprus, September 1957.

<sup>57</sup> TNA, FO 371/112859, Despatch from Governor Armitage to Alan Lennox-Boyd, August 28, 1954.

excluded.<sup>58</sup> To influence the result further, strongly-worded sermons were preached daily, threatening the denial of burial and baptismal rites for those who failed to sign the petition in support of *enosis*.<sup>59</sup>

Given the growing political tensions on the island and the full support of the Church, the results were hardly surprising. A communiqué issued by the ethnarchy council on 27 January 1950 proudly announced that 215,108 of the 224,744 Greek-Cypriot voters – almost ninety-six percent – had signed their names in support of union with Greece.<sup>60</sup> It was a significant victory for the *enosis* movement and a clear, if not unimpeachable, expression of the sentiments of the majority of the Greek-Cypriot population. The will of this majority, the Church and nationalists maintained, was all that mattered. The assumption implicit in the plebiscite design was that the voice of the island's Turkish-Cypriots (who had not been given the chance to participate) was not relevant to the Greek-Cypriot dream of union with Greece.

The majority equated their desires with those of the island's population as a whole. Makarios, the Bishop of Kitium (and soon to be the next archbishop) expressed these sentiments clearly at a press conference in February. When asked about attitudes towards the Turkish minority in the event of *enosis*, he replied

I can assure you that the anxiety of the Turks in Cyprus about Enosis is not well-founded. When the Turks claim union with Turkey in the event of Britain leaving Cyprus they don't really mean it themselves. We must always have in mind that it is the majority's wish that counts and not that of a minority. The Turks in Cyprus will have nothing to lose as a minority under Greek rule in Cyprus. They will have all the usual privileges as is the case with the Turkish element in Thrace.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Andreas Varnavas, *A Brief History of the Liberation Struggle of EOKA*, (1955-1959), (Nicosia: EOKA Liberation Struggle Foundation, 2001), p.8.

<sup>59</sup> *The Church and Terrorism in Cyprus*, p.3.

<sup>60</sup> Ethnarchy Communique on the results of the plebiscite, 27 January 1950, FO 371/87716.

<sup>61</sup> TNA, FO 371/87717, Answers of the Bishop of Kitium to the Press following statement of the Ethnarchy Council on Plebiscite, 17 February 1950.

Makarios's reasoning was flawed on almost every point. The Turks were serious when they spoke about union with Turkey; in fact their politicians still argued that the entire island should revert to Turkey if British sovereignty ended.<sup>62</sup> The wish of the minority, in this case, required consideration because both the British and Turkish governments, each more powerful than the Greek government, would not accept a solution which did not take into account those feelings. Finally, whether the rights of Turks in Cyprus would be secure or not under Greek-Cypriot government was immaterial given the fact that Turkish-Cypriots regarded their rights as threatened. Statements like those made by the soon-to-be archbishop would hardly have given them confidence.

For its part, the British government appeared as uninterested in the will of the Greek-Cypriot people expressed in the plebiscite as the Greek-Cypriots seemed in that of the Turkish-Cypriots. Once it was clear that the plebiscite had failed to shift the attitude of the British in any way, the Greek-Cypriots widened their attack, seeking material support for their cause in Greece and moral support from the rest of the world. A delegation from the ethnarchy visited the United States and Greece at the end of 1950, but neither nation was receptive. In America, burgeoning Cold War tensions made disturbing Britain, or the Mediterranean balance, unpalatable. Self-determination for the Greek-Cypriots was peripheral to maintaining peace and stability in the eastern Mediterranean. Although America was sympathetic to Greek-Cypriot opposition to British colonialism, Britain was too important an ally to offend over such a minor matter. And in Greece, politically divided and weakened from the upheavals of its civil war, the government was in no position to champion the Cypriot cause at the risk of damaging its critical relationship with Great Britain.

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<sup>62</sup> For example see the statement of the Turkish National Party of Cyprus, reproduced in *The Times*, 26 April, 1950; pg.5; Issue 51675; col C.

The lack of American support had the double effect of further deflating support for *enosis* in Greece. As the British ambassador in Athens noted in a January 1951 telegram to Ernest Bevin at the Foreign Office: ‘No other single factor is likely to have so much influence here [in Greece] as the knowledge that the United States Government are opposed to the raising of the question in present circumstances.’<sup>63</sup> Prophetically, Ambassador Clifford Norton remarked that, although the Cyprus question had been pushed into the background by ‘the gravity of the international situation’, he feared that ‘all those interested [would]... do their utmost to ensure that it is not allowed to remain there’.<sup>64</sup> The absence of Greek support was critical; the *enosis* movement could hardly move forward politically or otherwise without material or even tacit backing from the Motherland. For the present, it would be up to the people of Cyprus to change attitudes in Greece and abroad.

In Turkey, and among Turkish-Cypriots, attitudes towards *enosis* were already strong and well formed. The early days of April 1951 saw a great deal of official British correspondence devoted to developments in the Cyprus issue and the heightening of Turkish feeling. On 6 April 1951, Governor Sir Andrew Wright, who had replaced Winster in August 1949, wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies that members of Cypriot-Turkish associations had requested an interview to bring to his ‘notice anxiety felt by the Turkish community over Enosis and ‘to request whether anything could be done’ to alleviate great uneasiness felt by local Turks on this account’.<sup>65</sup> According to Wright, ‘Turks and other Cypriots have been genuinely disturbed by recent events relating to Enosis... [which had taken on a] more menacing aspect than usual because from press reports the Greek government now appears to be

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<sup>63</sup> TNA, FO 371/95132, Report from Clifford Norton (Athens) to Mr. Ernest Bevin (Foreign Office), 2 January 1951.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> TNA, FO 371/95133, G1081/42, Telegram from Sir A. Wright to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 3 April 1951.

treating Cyprus as a claim to be negotiated rather than as an aspiration to be pursued'.<sup>66</sup> Wright had a great deal of experience in Cyprus having served there in the colonial service from 1922 until 1943. He had become Colonial Secretary of Cyprus in 1937. Between 1947 and 1949 he had served as Governor of Gambia.<sup>67</sup>

As in Turkey, pressure was also building in Greece. The new archbishop, Makarios III, visited Athens between 13 March and 13 April 1951, in a highly publicized trip, devoting himself 'solely to furthering the cause of Enosis'.<sup>68</sup> As Greek opinion rose in favour of *enosis*, Turkish opinion rose to counter it. The British Ambassador in Ankara wrote to the Foreign Office on 23 April:

Turkish public opinion would be bitterly opposed to the cession of Cyprus to Greece for several reasons. First, there is the legitimate anxiety of the Turks about the fate of the Turkish minority under Greek rule. Secondly, the Turks are determined not to see any more islands off the Turkish coast fall under Greek rule... agitation about Cyprus has recently stimulated interest in the Dodecanese, and more than one Turkish journalist has threatened that, if the Greek demand for Cyprus is pressed, Turkey will retaliate by demanding the return of these islands. Thirdly, the Turks are sensitive to the Communist threat in Cyprus and fear that if the island is handed over to Greece, this threat will become more acute and the strategic uses of the port of Iskenderun will be completely nullified. Lastly, there is the Turkish historical claim to Cyprus which, in Turkish eyes, is far more solidly based than that of Greece.<sup>69</sup>

The radicalization of both sides was beginning in earnest. When a group of Turkish-Cypriot notables met with Governor Wright in April, they toed the Ankara party line. Wright tried to mollify their concerns by reaffirming Britain's commitment to the status quo in Cyprus. The Turkish-Cypriots, however, were adamant that conditions on the island were taking a new and dangerous turn:

Mr. [Fadil] Plumer [Advocate] said that during the past seventy years, the question of Enosis had often come to a head, but it had never been so

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> *The Times*, 10 May 1949, p.4.

<sup>68</sup> TNA, FO 371/95122, G1081/47, Memo from Sir Clifford J. Norton (Athens) to Mr. Herbert Morrison (Foreign Office), 20 April 1951.

<sup>69</sup> TNA, FO 371/95133, G1081/55, Telegram No. 98 from British Embassy, Ankara (Noel Charles) to Herbert Morrison (Foreign Office), 23 April 1951.

vehemently written about as now. He felt that the Turkish villagers must be assured that Enosis would never come. During his visits to villages, he had been told that the same thing might happen in Cyprus as had happened in Palestine and in India. Britain had been spending a good deal of money in those territories and promoting many developments and yet despite this, they had left. How could the people of Cyprus be assured that this would not happen to them also. His Excellency [Wright] said that there were important differences. In the first place, Palestine was never a British possession. It was held in trust under international arrangements. This was not so with Cyprus. Again India was well on the way to self-government and the process had been sharply accelerated. In Cyprus they were a long way from self-government.<sup>70</sup>

Wright's exchange with Plumer highlighted another kind of historical lesson in which both British and Turkish policymakers showed a keen awareness. Sobered by the violence that had followed Britain's withdrawals from India and Palestine, Turkish-Cypriots feared a similar result in Cyprus. British policymakers too were determined not to repeat these mistakes.

Britain's determination in Cyprus was supported by the strategic importance of the island. A report from the British Chiefs of Staff on 24 April 1951 was clear on the need for both a strategic presence in Cyprus and a firm stance by the British government on the issue of Cypriot sovereignty. British troops would not be moved around the Middle East haphazardly. A clear commitment to maintaining Cyprus 'as a firmly held British stronghold', was needed. Full control of the island and its garrison was a strategic imperative.<sup>71</sup> The chiefs recommended an 'unequivocal statement... that His Majesty's Government will not consider any alteration to the status of Cyprus'.<sup>72</sup>

The change from a Labour government to a Conservative government in the election of October 1951 brought little adjustment to London's position on Cyprus; the Winster proposals remained on the table and no change in the sovereignty of the

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<sup>70</sup> TNA, FO 371/95133, Communication issued to the Press, April 6 of Interview at Government House accorded to representatives of Turkish Associations on 5 April 1951.

<sup>71</sup> TNA, FO 371/95133, G1081/61, Chief of Staff Committee Report, 24 April 1951.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

island was contemplated. Ritualistically, for the next several years, the question of Cyprus, its constitution, and *enosis* was raised in Parliament. Time and again the issue of bridging the chasm between the Winster constitution and the result of the plebiscite came to the floor only to receive the same response: no change in the sovereignty of the island was contemplated and the proposals of 1948 remained open for discussion.

The terms of the 1948 constitution, however, were far from what the new archbishop, Makarios III, was willing to accept. Makarios succeeded to the throne in October 1950, at the age of only thirty-seven, supported by the Cypriot right. Although Makarios II had headed the church during the plebiscite, Makarios III had been instrumental in its organisation.<sup>73</sup> Makarios III shared his predecessor's political affiliation and goals, and fully adopted the nationalist slogan of '*enosis* and only *enosis*'. The new archbishop was born Mihalis Mouskos in rural Paphos, educated at the University of Athens and later at Boston University on a World Council of Churches' scholarship. In the years to come, Makarios's energy and cosmopolitan experience made him a fixture on the international scene, canvassing support for Cypriot self-determination.

Evangelos Averoff, soon to be the Greek foreign minister, was not alone in believing that from Makarios's elevation to the ethnarchic throne at the end of 1951, '[i]t was clear that there was a new and rapid change of course. The overall organization of the struggle became more efficient and the issue assumed greater urgency in Cyprus, in Greece and in the international arena... Truly, Archbishop Makarios moved heaven and earth to bring the Cyprus issue to a head.'<sup>74</sup> From the pulpit he preached the gospel of *enosis* and the liberation of Cyprus from British control. Makarios took Cyprus's cause to the world, travelling to Athens in 1951,

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<sup>73</sup> Dr. P.N. Vanezis, *Makarios: Faith and Power*, (London: Abelard-Schumann Ltd., 1971), p.84.

<sup>74</sup> Averoff, p.15-7.

Washington, New York (where he visiting the UN General Assembly), London and Athens in 1952, Greece, Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria in 1953. In 1954, he was again in Athens and New York, once more attending the UN General Assembly. 1955 brought the archbishop to Indonesia for the Afro-Asian Conference and yet again to Egypt and Athens.<sup>75</sup>

Makarios changed the character of the *enosis* movement within Cyprus as well. In January 1951, he created the Pancyprian National Youth Organization (PEON).<sup>76</sup> The organization and its members, drawn from those aged 18 to 28, served a dual purpose as a counterweight to the island's communist youth organizations and as a structured force working in favour of *enosis*. Early in its existence, PEON's activities were restricted to small-time acts such as local graffiti and the distribution of leaflets. Soon, however, PEON's organization was taken over, at least in an advisory capacity, by Colonel Giorgos Grivas, a Cypriot-born officer who had served in the Greek army. Grivas introduced the will and capacity to employ violent methods in order to achieve the nationalist goals of the Greek-Cypriot people. Turning this aspiration into reality, however, would require resources and support from the Greek government and the approval of the archbishop for a violent solution.

Grivas had both political and military experience. He had served in the Greek army during both world wars and also during the Greco-Turkish war (1919-22). Between the wars, he taught infantry tactics at the War College in Athens and spent time in Paris at the *École de Guerre*. A vehement nationalist, accused by his detractors of being a crypto-fascist, he formed the resistance organisation, *Xhi*, after the destruction of the regular Greek army. For three years in German-occupied Greece, he learned 'by hard experience the organisation and handling of a clandestine

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<sup>75</sup> Averoff, p.18.

<sup>76</sup> Πανκυπριος Εθνικη Οργανοσις Νεωλαισας.

para-military force'.<sup>77</sup> During the Greek Civil War, *Xhi* continued its existence fighting on the Royalist side and became notorious for its brutal anti-communism.

Grivas returned to Cyprus in the summer of 1951 determined to forge the nascent PEON into the voice of the Cypriot nationalist right. Grivas's actions were shaped by his commitment to *enosis*, his Orthodox faith, and an appreciation of the effectiveness of insurgency warfare carried out by committed nationalists. On this last point, the initial phases of Mustafa Kemal's campaign in Anatolia, which eventually destroyed Greek territorial aspirations in Asia Minor, were both instructive and deeply personal.<sup>78</sup>

Grivas was remarkable for his zeal and energy. A hostile contemporary biographer put a less than flattering slant on this trait describing him as doing everything, fighting, exercising, praying, or stamp collecting, 'with a fanaticism that verges on the insane'.<sup>79</sup> His MI6 profile characterized him as a man of enormous industry with an unremitting attention to detail. His 'great grasp of detail [and] his lucid mind', gave him an 'exceptional facility for expressing himself clearly'.<sup>80</sup> He was 'personally always clean and regularly shaved... neither smoked nor drank and was abstemious in matters of food to the point almost of vegetarianism'.<sup>81</sup> The same report also described him as '[i]nhuman, austere, malevolent, [and] bad tempered'.<sup>82</sup>

MI6's analysis of Grivas betrays the hostility of the report's author along with certain general prejudices about Cyprus and its 'peasant' society. There was, however, some truth in the assessment. Grivas believed deeply in the cause of *enosis* and was

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<sup>77</sup> IMW, GB62, Papers of General Sir Kenneth Darling, Report on General Grivas, WMT Magan (MI6), 11-16 March 1959, p.3.

<sup>78</sup> Giorgos Grivas, *The Memoirs of General Grivas*, ed. Charles Foley, (London: Longmans, Gree and Co. Ltd., 1064) p.4.

<sup>79</sup> Dudley Barker, *Grivas: Portrait of a Terrorist*, (London: The Cresset Press, 1959), p.14.

<sup>80</sup> IMW, GB62, Papers of General Sir Kenneth Darling, Report on General Grivas, WMT Magan (MI6), 11-16 March 1959, p.49.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p.44.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p.39.

prepared to pursue it with complete ruthlessness. He was also very much a product of his time, straight-jacketed in an almost fascist mindset from the 1930s of strict discipline, absolute nationalism and the belief that violence was essential, effective, and a legitimate expression of one's beliefs. These beliefs directly influenced the nature of the struggle against British rule in Cyprus and contributed to the difficulty of finding a solution.

Before Grivas would be allowed to proceed with any campaign of violence, both the Greek government and Makarios needed to be convinced that there was no possibility of a diplomatic solution to the issue of *enosis*. The leadership in Athens was cautious about damaging its relationship with Britain and hoped to settle the issue on a bilateral basis. There was limited support within Cyprus for violence and no real political support from the Greek government. For now, the battle for Cyprus would continue to be fought with words, in bilateral talks between Britain and Greece, at the United Nations, and in the court of public opinion.

Makarios' international lobbying effort seemed to succeed at the end of 1952 when a small victory was won at the United Nations. In December, a resolution supporting the universal principle of self-determination as a right for non-self-governing and trust territories, the validity of plebiscites, and a ruling that such questions were within the purview of the UN Committee on Human Rights was passed by the 403<sup>rd</sup> Assembly. Greece naturally supported the measures, but, as in 1950, was reluctant to court an open breach with Great Britain through explicit referral to Cyprus. This cautious policy drew criticism from Makarios, first privately, then publicly. Evangelos Averoff, who served as Greece's Foreign Minister during the Cyprus emergency, but was the Deputy Foreign Minister in 1952, recounts a testy exchange with the archbishop during the latter's visit to Athens during that year.

I [Averoff] reminded the Archbishop... that Greece had still not recovered from the havoc wrought by ten catastrophic years, that neither the prosperity nor the national identity of the Greek Cypriots was at risk and that there was no danger of any change in the ethnic composition of the island's population. For the time being, therefore, there were for us just two matters of paramount concern: first, to do all we could to feed the hungry, to house the homeless and in general to raise the Greek people's standard of living; second, to do nothing that might rebound on the precious Greek community in Constantinople... Coolly, and with clinical detachment, the Archbishop replied that he agreed in principle, but with two important differences: first, that the liberty of Greek people takes precedence over their living standards; second, that the Greek community in Constantinople, though precious indeed, was doomed to annihilation for a variety of reasons. It is hardly being overdramatic to say that his words stabbed me to the heart.<sup>83</sup>

By the summer of 1953, Greece's unwillingness to give active support to Makarios's uncompromising position prompted the archbishop to unilateral action. In a sermon at Nicosia's Phaneromeni Church on 28 June, he expressed his disappointment with Greek inaction and the continued lack of a solution. In the most forceful terms yet, Makarios claimed

we do not rely entirely on the Greek government, nor do we put our faith exclusively in the United Nations. We rely above all on our own might and we put our greatest faith in *the struggle on our own soil*. Banded together and in unity and accord under the flag of the ethnarchy, we shall fight with consistency and determination, by day and by night, *using every method and every means available*, [Averoff's italics] with our eyes turned always towards one goal: liberty and union with our mother country.<sup>84</sup>

On 10 August, a letter was sent to New York asking specifically for the self-determination of Cyprus to be inscribed on the UN agenda for that summer's council. Since Cyprus was not a sovereign state, a full member of the UN was needed to sponsor the motion. The natural choice was Greece, but the Greek government was still reluctant to antagonize Great Britain. In September 1953, the Greek representative to the United Nations, Alexis Kyrou, delivered a compromise statement

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<sup>83</sup> Averoff, p.19.

<sup>84</sup> Makarios's sermon of 28 June, 1953, from Phanermoni Church, Nicosia, quoted in Averoff, p.23.

before the General Assembly. Kyrou raised the issue of Cyprus, even though it was not on the session's agenda. He referred to a resolution from December 1952, which had reaffirmed the principle of self-determination, and to the strong feelings of the Greek population in support of the Greek-Cypriot majority's desire for self-determination. Kyrou, however, stopped short of directly asking the UN Assembly to take charge of the issue. 'No one,' he said,

appeals to a court of law or to an international forum such as this before giving a fair chance to the possibility of direct conversations. My Government, therefore, does not at this moment contemplate bringing the matter before this Organization, since it is convinced that the close relations that, so happily, exist between Greece and the United Kingdom make it incumbent upon us not to underestimate either the resources of diplomacy or the political foresight of our British friends. My Government definitely prefers the method of friendly bilateral discussion, since that is warranted by the very nature of our long-standing cordial relations with the United Kingdom and by the felicitous identity of purpose which has always animated the peoples of the two countries.<sup>85</sup>

The Cyprus problem, in spite of Kyrou's diplomatic language, was beginning to strain the 'cordial relations' and 'felicitous identity of purpose' between the two nations. At this stage, the British government was unwilling to discuss the Cyprus issue, or even to admit that there was one. On 15 March 1954, Anthony Eden, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, articulated the government's position in response to a question from Lena Jeger, the Labour MP from Holborn and St. Pancras South. Jeger asked, 'what official approaches have been made by the Greek Government for bilateral talks about the future relations of Greece with Cyprus; and what reply has been sent'. Eden replied that 'Certain informal approaches have been made and there have been statements by Greek official spokesmen indicating that the Greek Government would like to hold bilateral discussions, but, as has been made

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<sup>85</sup> 439<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, 21 September 1953, *United Nations, Official Records of the General Assembly, Eighth Session*. Plenary Meetings, 15 September – 9 December 1953. (New York: United Nations), p.66-7.

clear to the Greek Government, Her Majesty's Government cannot agree to discuss the status of Cyprus.'<sup>86</sup> The issue seemed closed.

### **Hopkinson's 'No' and the Failure of Politics**

Greece's cautious performance in New York preceded a series of unsuccessful backchannel overtures to Britain on the Cyprus issue. By an unfortunate coincidence, the importance of Cyprus to British grand strategy increased at the same time as opposition to British rule on the island was becoming most active. The withdrawal from India had convinced many high-ranking British officials, both civilian and military, that Britain's future as a great power lay in her continued influence in the Middle East and Africa.<sup>87</sup> The vision was to create a remodelled British empire, which would project power from eastern Mediterranean roots stretching branches deep into Africa and the Middle East. Cyprus was essential to this policy. Britain's departure from Palestine had added to the importance of Cyprus. A policy memo on the strategic importance of the island, issued by the Ministry of Defence in September 1954, encapsulated the prevailing wisdom. It differed little from the similar document of April 1951, maintaining that Cyprus's value was based on the importance of the Middle East to Britain's strategic position as 'the one major power with special responsibilities for the stability and general strategic interests of the area'. Cyprus was essential to upholding British treaty obligations to Iraq, Jordan, and Libya. The Middle East as a whole was 'an important link in our Commonwealth sea and air communications', and, finally, of 'long established economic interests'.<sup>88</sup> The report characterised Cyprus as:

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<sup>86</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 525, p.8.

<sup>87</sup> Ashely Jackson, 'Empire and Beyond: The Pursuit of Overseas National Interests in the Late Twentieth Century,' *The English Historical Review* 2007, CXXII (409): 1350-1366, p.1355.

<sup>88</sup> TNA, FO 371/112862, G1081/592. Draft Memo on the Strategic Importance of Cyprus.

the only remaining British territory in the Middle East [although Aden was added by hand in the draft]... the only place which can provide permanently and free from risk of inadequate internal security and of externally imposed restrictions on our military requirements, a peacetime base for our Middle East land and air headquarters where we can keep troops permanently in peacetime to meet sudden emergencies of any kind.<sup>89</sup>

Britain had reason for concern about future emergencies. The position of British troops and economic interests in Arab lands was delicate. The newly created state of Israel was precarious, as were the British supported regimes in Jordan and Iraq. British policymakers were still engaged in counter-insurgency operations in Kenya. Troops based in Cyprus provided an important counter to these concerns. During the summer of 1954, the Cyprus issue became too significant to ignore. First, London, under pressure from the Egyptian government, took the decision to abandon the military bases in Suez and substitute its functions with expanded facilities in Cyprus. This move had been agreed in principle in December 1952 and planning began in January 1954.<sup>90</sup> Second, the Greek government, rebuked in its bilateral attempts to come to an understanding with Great Britain, announced in June its intention to bring the Cyprus issue to the United Nations later that summer. The British government had at once to assert its control over the island more firmly while at the same time providing a shield for its policy in the United Nations.

On 21 July, Woodrow Wyatt, the Labour MP for Birmingham Aston, pressed the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Anthony Nutting:

Would not the hon. Gentleman bear in mind that, as it is intended to expand the base in Cyprus as a result of removal from Suez, it would be as well to ensure in advance that the same political conditions which made an end of the base in Egypt do not occur in Cyprus? Is it not a good idea, instead of evading questions in this rather inane way, to give some thought to the future of Cyprus?

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> TNA, CAB 129/65, C (54) 26, 'Memorandum by the Minister of Defence,' 23 January, 1954.

Nutting's response was hardly conducive to building a compromise with the Greek-Cypriot population. 'The hon. Gentleman has entirely missed the point. Cyprus is British territory.'<sup>91</sup> This absolute line was not satisfactory to either the government or the opposition. The claim that Cyprus was British territory and the subsequent implication that no question of change in its political status could be contemplated was controversial and put the government in an uncomfortable position if it ever chose to modify its stance.

A week after the comments of the foreign minister, Henry Hopkinson, the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, took the floor in the House of Commons and announced another 'fresh initiative in the development of self-government institutions in Cyprus'.<sup>92</sup> Just how fresh this initiative could be – with its accompanying constitution designed to support the continuation of British rule and foster amity between the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot populations – was open to debate. Its main purpose was to build support for Britain in the United Nations through improvements in the conditions in Cyprus. The plan's freshness was further circumscribed by Hopkinson's wish to 'make it clear once again that [the government] cannot contemplate a change of sovereignty in Cyprus'.<sup>93</sup> The apparent dichotomy of Hopkinson's statement, promising substantive steps towards self-government while insisting on no change in British sovereignty, sparked immediate challenge from the opposite benches. James Griffiths, the Labour MP from Llanelli, countered sharply:

It is the declared policy of both sides of the House and of the whole of this Parliament that our policy in the Colonies is to guide and assist them gradually towards self-government within the Commonwealth, and we have always declared that self-government will reach the stage at which they will be, within the meantime of the Statute of Westminster, independent and entitled at

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<sup>91</sup> *Hansard* – Volume 530, p. 1361.

<sup>92</sup> *Hansard*, Volume 531, p.504.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

that stage to decide for themselves their future relations with the Commonwealth. Are we now to understand that, so far as Cyprus is concerned, it is not proposed that this constitutional development shall take its normal course which it has in other places, in conformity with the policy of this House?<sup>94</sup>

Hopkinson returned to the substance of his previous statement, insisting that:

‘It has always been understood and agreed that there are certain territories in the Commonwealth which, owing to their particular circumstances, can never expect to be fully independent.’ Boos echoed through the House and Hopkinson muddled on: ‘I think the right hon. Gentleman will agree that there are some territories which cannot expect to be that [fully independent]. I am not going as far as that this afternoon, but I have said that the question of the abrogation of British sovereignty cannot arise – that British sovereignty will remain.’<sup>95</sup>

On a political level, maintaining British sovereignty was becoming more and more difficult. Domestic forces questioned its necessity as the international community prepared to debate its validity and forces in Cyprus gathered to challenge its legitimacy. Arms and funding were dribbling into the island from Greece and the ideology of the *enosis* movement increased in radicalism with every ‘no’ from the British government. As the 28 July debate closed, Richard Crossman, the Labour MP from Coventry East, warned prophetically: ‘May I say that the tragedy of the Middle East is that there is not a country there whose people have got their rights from the British without murder? In every case we have resisted as long as they made their demands peaceably, and we conceded appeasement when they began violence against us.’<sup>96</sup> Violence in Cyprus was now simmering just below the surface and one final ‘no’ remained to bring the pot boiling over.

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., pp. 507-8.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p.508.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p.546.

### **The Final ‘No’ from the United Nations**

Hopkinson’s statement stung the Greek government. ‘It was a stupid thing to say’, wrote Averoff in his book on Cyprus, ‘first because there is no such word as ‘never’ in human affairs and secondly because in this particular instance it ran counter to the obligations which Britain had accepted by signing the United Nations Charter’.<sup>97</sup> The rigid position of the British government on Cypriot self-determination allowed Greece to proceed at the United Nations with a clear conscience and with hopes that their motion would win enough international support to carry the day.

While Greece planned its case at the UN, Grivas continued to plan the armed uprising which, he was confident, would accomplish what the politicians could not. As an experienced soldier, Grivas was not under any false illusions about what his small group could accomplish on a strictly military level. The preparatory ‘General Plan’, which he drew up in Athens during 1954, makes this point clear. The objective was ‘[t]o arouse international public opinion, especially among the allies of Greece, by deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice, which will focus attention on Cyprus until our aims are achieved’. Grivas’ paramilitary organisation, the National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA) would not be capable of defeating the British in the field, but could make them ‘continuously harried and beset until they are obliged by international diplomacy exercised through the United Nations to examine the Cyprus problem and settle it in accordance with the desire of the Cypriot people and the whole Greek nation’.<sup>98</sup> On 26 October, Grivas departed Piraeus. If, and when, the United Nations route failed, he would be ready to continue the struggle through violent means. On 10 November, he landed in Cyprus.

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<sup>97</sup> Averoff, p.28.

<sup>98</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.204.

The United Nations debate during the autumn of 1954 opposed the Greek delegation's position that the Cyprus problem was one of the self-determination of peoples, and therefore a fundamental right to be defended by the international community, against Britain's position that the United Nations had no authority to interfere with the sovereignty of a member state. Both the British spokesman, Selwyn Lloyd, then joint Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and the Greek UN representative Alexis Kyrrou were in agreement, however, on the principle that the Cyprus dispute posed a much greater threat than simply the agitation of the United Nation Assembly. Naturally, they differed on predicting the form this agitation would take.

It was Britain's position that even debating the future of Cyprus at the UN would cause problems. The debate would, in the words of Lloyd, 'do nothing but exacerbate feelings, set Christians against Moslems and produce internal strife which the Cypriots and hitherto been spared. The resulting tension might extend far beyond the island of Cyprus itself'.<sup>99</sup> For their part, the Greeks contended that the United Nations needed to take up the cause of Cypriot self-determination in order to avoid unrest in the island directed at British control. The Greek government was bringing the Cypriot case to the United Nations and putting its faith in the international system in order to avoid a more direct and violent method of achieving *enosis*. Kyrrou laid out his case to the assembled delegates in plain language:

There has already been disquieting signs of the gravity of the situation in Cyprus, and I must assure the Members of this august body that, had it not been for the prospect of resort to the United Nations, the situation in that island would have taken an even more ominous turn... Passive resistance has already begun. Clandestine publications, bearing such titles as 'Freedom or Death,' or something similar, and posters inciting to revolt, are in the hands of almost everyone in Cyprus. The apparent calm is the quiet that precedes the

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<sup>99</sup> United Nations, Official Records of the General Assembly, Ninth Session. General Committee, 21 September – 17 December 1954. (New York: United Nations), p.9.

storm. It is the elementary duty of the Greek delegation to draw the attention of the General Assembly, as seriously as possible, to the safety valve which is provided by the United Nations. If the safety valve is shut, there will be no other means of lowering the tension.<sup>100</sup>

The response from Selwyn Lloyd touched on several key points in attempting to discredit Kyrrou's argument. First, Lloyd challenged the Greek representative's bleak picture of Cyprus, denying that any violence existed on the island and sniping that: 'The only place where people have been sent to prison for differing with the political views of the Government is, in fact, in Athens.'<sup>101</sup> Second, toeing the government line, Lloyd insisted that the Cyprus case was a matter of 'domestic jurisdiction' which naturally fell outside the purview of the United Nations. Interference in the domestic affairs of a country was dangerous business. 'Look where you are going', Lloyd cautioned; 'If this principle is accepted, then no frontier would be permanent. The way would be open to foment discord, to agitate for territorial adjustments, to cause racial and religious discord, and to use this Organization for these purposes.'<sup>102</sup> Third, and critically, Cyprus did not represent 'a question of self-determination and independence in the accepted sense of those terms'. This was because, in addition to the Greek majority, Cyprus had a Turkish minority that currently numbered slightly less than nineteen percent of the population. In the case of Greek-Cypriot self-determination (leading to *enosis*), the Turkish-Cypriot community, Lloyd argued, would under no circumstances 'be given the right to determine its own future' by the Greek-Cypriots.<sup>103</sup> This unequal process of self-determination rendered its application impossible in the view of the British government. The Turkish-Cypriot minority, he continued, remained 'bitterly opposed to *enosis*... This Turkish-speaking

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p.52.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p.53.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

community of Moslems is composed of 100,000 people just as devoted to their religious beliefs, just as conscious of their racial and cultural ties with Turkey as the Greek-speaking people are with the Greek Church and with Greece'.<sup>104</sup> It was an accurate message that neither Greeks nor Greek-Cypriots wanted to hear. Finally, Lloyd emphasized the importance of Cyprus to Britain's position in the Middle East and its centrality to the defence of that region through NATO.

Selwyn Lloyd's arguments, however, struck deaf ears and the assembly voted for the inclusion of the item by forty votes to nineteen with eleven abstentions (including the United States). The Soviet bloc had supported the Greek motion along with the Caribbean nations and the Arab world. The rest of Europe had supported Britain. The match, however, was not over. Before the motion came for debate on the floor of the general assembly, the British used the New Zealand delegation to outflank the Greek proposal. New Zealand sponsored a resolution to shelve the Cyprus debate. Another contentious argument loomed. In order to avoid this, Colombia and El Salvador stepped forward with an amendment to New Zealand's resolution, adding that debate on Cyprus should be shelved only 'for the time being'. In the previous vote, El Salvador had voted with Greece, while Colombia had voted against inclusion. Now, this key addition, spurred, in all likelihood, by the US State Department, prevented a deepening of the developing rift between Greece and Britain.<sup>105</sup> On 17 December, the New Zealand resolution, with the key addition of the Colombian and El Salvadorian amendment, passed in a landslide. The last-minute addition, by allowing the debate to be resumed at a future date, gained the assent of almost the entire assembly, including Greece. The resolution was adopted by fifty votes to none, with eight abstentions.

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p.54.

<sup>105</sup> Averoff, p.31.

It was a diplomatic defeat for both the Greek-Cypriot cause of *enosis* and the Greek government. The Greeks had lacked the necessary broad-based support for a more strongly-worded resolution. Anthony Nutting took the floor first and triumphantly declared that ‘the vote which has just taken place represents a great and important victory for common sense’. There was, in the opinion of the British government, as expressed by Nutting, ‘no useful purpose’ in a full-blown debate on the Cyprus issue. The victory was an endorsement of the British view that ‘it would be unwise to bring this explosive matter into the arena of contentious debate’.<sup>106</sup> The British government had played the United Nations game well and had dodged the bullet of a debate on its colonial control in Cyprus, but the success was hardly permanent. In less than four months, a very different kind of bullet would threaten British control in Cyprus and explosions of dynamite rather than debate would force a substantial reappraisal of London’s position.

Watching the Cypriot case collapse in the United Nations, Grivas confided to his diary:

The first news from the UNO is unfavourable for Greece... Our wise diplomats who were boasting that a solution would be found through UNO, what do they intend to do now? How was it that the Archbishop was so confident that he forbade us to commit some violence which would probably have influenced the UNO decisions? ... Freedom is only obtained with blood, sacrifices and stubbornness. If our diplomatic representatives have lost the game, we are going to win it with the sword.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> United Nations, Official Records of the General Assembly, Ninth Session. Plenary Meeting, 21 September – 17 December 1954. (New York: United Nations), p.539.  
<sup>107</sup> IMW, Grivas Diary, 16 December, 1954, quoted by WMT Magan (MI6), Report on General Grivas, 11-16 March 1959.

## Chapter II – Insurgency: The Continuation of Politics through Force

*‘During a lifetime devoted to the arts of war I have fought three times with the British; twice, in world conflicts, alongside them, and once, in a struggle of my own making, against them. History will vindicate my claim that on each occasion I was fighting for the same ideal: freedom.’*<sup>108</sup> (Giorgos Grivas, *Memoirs*, 1964)

### The Struggle Begins

‘I saw Gen[ikos]<sup>109</sup>.... WE CAN START. He gave me his blessing. God is with us.’<sup>110</sup> With this diary entry on 29 March 1955, Grivas recorded the decision to begin the EOKA struggle. After decades of waiting for political and diplomatic solutions, the most radical elements of Greek nationalism in Cyprus made their bid to achieve *enosis* through force. At 0030 hours on 1 April, men armed with dynamite and homemade explosives attacked wireless stations, police stations, and army barracks inflicting damage on property rather than specifically attempting to kill or injure security personnel. Sixteen separate explosions rocked Cyprus’s four major towns: Nicosia, Famagusta, Larnaca, and Limassol.<sup>111</sup> Inauspiciously for EOKA, the only casualty was its member Modestos Pantelis, who electrocuted himself as he attempted to cut power lines in the city of Famagusta.<sup>112</sup>

Later that morning, EOKA released a proclamation announcing the beginning of ‘the struggle to throw off the English yoke’.<sup>113</sup> Grivas, styling himself ‘Dighenis’ after a legendary Byzantine hero, tied his organisation’s cause to the greater ideals of

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<sup>108</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.1.

<sup>109</sup> A codename for Makarios.

<sup>110</sup> Grivas’ Diary, entry March 29, 1955 from *Terrorism in Cyprus: The Captured Documents*, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1956), p.20.

<sup>111</sup> *The Times*, 2 April, 1955, pg.4; Issue 53200G; col A.

<sup>112</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.33.

<sup>113</sup> EOKA Revolutionary leaflet, distributed April 1, 1955. Grivas (1964), p.208.

Hellenism and freedom.<sup>114</sup> EOKA, however, could not claim universal support in Cyprus, even among Greek-Cypriots. The central committee of AKEL responded to the bombings with a public statement of their own on 1 April, arguing that ‘such activities can only cause damage to our cause and struggle [for *enosis*].... History has no example where a people have won their freedom except through the heroism of a united mass struggle. The patriotic people of Cyprus are in no way connected to these terrorist activities’.<sup>115</sup> Although AKEL’s political leadership maintained support for the principle of *enosis*, it vehemently opposed EOKA and its methods.

This chapter will focus on three key divides caused by EOKA’s resort to violence: the split between right and left among Greek-Cypriots; the difference of opinion on the scope of violence between Makarios and Grivas; and the split between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots which manifested itself in the island’s security forces and on the international scene between Greece and Turkey. Before addressing these points, however, it is important to understand the nature of the organisation that sparked the tinder beneath the Cyprus powder keg.

### **Radical Portrait**

EOKA was a radical organisation. To achieve *enosis*, it carried out the assassination and beating of political opponents and ‘traitors’, bomb attacks, sabotage, and the targeted killing of policemen and British military personnel. ‘Traitors’ referred not only to members of AKEL and supporters of the Greek-Cypriot left, but to anyone who spoke out against EOKA or offered information to the British. Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot members of the island’s police force were also a particular

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> *ΑΚΕΛ: Το Κομμα Του Εργαζομενου Λαου*, ‘Αναφορά στην Αποφάση του ΠΓ της ΚΕ ΑΚΕΛ Σχετικά με τα Γεγονότα της 1ης Απριλίου 1955’, p.145.

target. EOKA's radicalism comprised three strands: its nationalism, its intimate links with the reactionary Cypriot Church, and its violent anti-communism.

EOKA's nationalism was founded on Greek identity and the desire to unite Cyprus with Greece. Achieving *enosis* by driving the British out of the island was, theoretically, the organisation's purpose. EOKA would not, however, tolerate an increase in the power of the Cypriot left and would not cooperate with political opponents to achieve its goals. On 17 April, Grivas, aware of the threat posed by communism to his organisation, recorded in his diary that he issued 'a warning to leading communists and AKEL officials to cease reacting in any way to our work [operations against the British]; otherwise we shall punish them and report their acts to the Greek and Cypriot people'.<sup>116</sup> EOKA's struggle represented not only a war against the British, but a battle for control of the political future of Cyprus.

Grivas was clear, both in his proclamations during the struggle and in his memoirs published in 1964, that EOKA would have no truck with communism. '[t]he Cypriot liberation movement' he wrote in 1964, 'refused to accept co-operation with Communism, nor would it allow the latter to exploit it. For this reason', according to Grivas, 'EOKA was fiercely opposed by the local Communists who therefore co-operated with the British authorities'.<sup>117</sup> While the antagonism between AKEL and EOKA was real and eventually bloody, the alleged 'cooperation' between AKEL and the British authorities did not happen. In fact, in December 1955, AKEL was outlawed and 135 leading Cypriot communists were arrested; certainly an ironic response to individuals cooperating with the authorities. The British crackdown on the communist party in Cyprus was coloured by the ever darkening Cold War. EOKA's

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<sup>116</sup> Grivas Diary, 17 April 1955, from *Terrorism in Cyprus: The Captured Documents*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956), p.27.

<sup>117</sup> George Grivas, *Guerrilla Warfare and the EOKA Struggle*, Trans. A.A. Pallis, (London: Longmans, 1964), p.2.

right-wing ideology made it the exception to the rule of post-Second World War insurgencies. Such movements were most often led by communists who aimed at establishing new Marxist societies. This was the case in China, Malaya, Vietnam, and Cuba. As a nationalist and anti-communist movement, EOKA had far more in common with the Irgun and Stern Gang in late-1940s Palestine. This reality caused confusion among many British policymakers, who found it difficult to recognise that the armed campaign in Cyprus was the work of the extreme right, and not of the extreme left.

Because of Grivas's central role in the creation of EOKA, its political credentials and organisation were a legacy of the Greek Civil War and the ideals of *Xhi*. After the disintegration of the Greek army in 1941, Grivas formed *Xhi* as a resistance organisation to combat the Nazi occupation. Almost as soon as it was formed, however, *Xhi* engaged in violence against the rival communist underground.<sup>118</sup> Once Germany withdrew its forces from Greece, *Xhi* played a small role in the civil war, where its anti-communist role was front and centre. As one historian writes: 'Upon Liberation it [*Xhi*] suddenly blossomed out as an aggressive, anti-Communist body.'<sup>119</sup> *Xhi*'s rather dull performance during the occupation and its invigorated activity after the liberation meant that a number 'of its [*Xhi*'s] associates were tainted with the stigma of collaboration; and its weapons, on the Colonel's [Grivas's] own admission, were obtained from the enemy [Germany]. For this reason, the British refused X[hi]'s offer to help fight the Communists in 1944'.<sup>120</sup>

The similarities between *Xhi* and EOKA were more than superficial. Grivas and the other royalist officers of *Xhi* shared right-wing political views and adhered to

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<sup>118</sup> Magan, pp.3-4.

<sup>119</sup> Edgar O'Ballance, *The Greek Civil War 1944-1949*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p.93.

<sup>120</sup> Nancy Crawshaw, *The Cyprus Revolt: An account of the struggle for union with Greece*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), p.91.

the ideal of Greater Greece. This *Megali Idea* or ‘Great Idea’ was the irredentist principle that all ethnic Greeks should be part of the Greek state. By 1955, Cyprus remained the largest community of Greeks not under Greek rule, although significant minority communities remained in a few Turkish cities, particularly Istanbul. The emphasis on the ethnic identity of these groups dove-tailed with EOKA’s quasi-fascist pedigree and reinforced the rhetorical ideals of the virtues of Greek civilisation, the heroes of 1821, and the superiority of Greek blood.

These were not the only fascist echoes. EOKA portrayed violence as a cathartic obligation, and its leaders, particularly Grivas, valued absolute ruthlessness especially towards members who betrayed it. The EOKA initiation oath plainly captured some of these aspects:

I swear in the name of the Holy Trinity that: I shall work with all my power for the liberation of Cyprus from the British yoke, sacrificing for this even my life. I shall perform without question all of the instructions of the Organisation which may be given to me and I shall not bring any objection, however difficult or dangerous these may be. I shall not abandon the struggle unless I receive instructions from the Leader of the Organisation, and after our aim has been accomplished. I shall never reveal to anyone any secret of the Organisation, neither the names of my chiefs nor those of any other members, even if I am captured and tortured. I shall not reveal any of the instructions which may be given me, even to my fellow fighters. If I disobey this oath I shall be worthy of every punishment as a traitor, and may eternal contempt cover me.<sup>121</sup>

As the oath makes clear, commitment to the organisation and its goal was unconditional. Grivas was literally ‘the leader’, absolute and unchallenged in his authority.

EOKA’s nationalist and anti-communist agenda fitted well with the ideology of the Cypriot Orthodox Church. This cooperation between religion and the far right was reminiscent of the Spanish Civil War two decades earlier. From the beginning of

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<sup>121</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.25.

the post-war period, the Cypriot Church spoke against communism. In September 1948, the Holy Synod, comprising the bishops of Cyprus and headed by the archbishop, delivered a strongly worded address to the island denouncing communists as unbelievers and enemies of Christ.<sup>122</sup> In addition to its stand against communism, the Church was the guardian of Greek identity in Cyprus and the historic champion of the *enosis* cause. It supported this position from both the classroom and the pulpit. The Church also financed EOKA, providing funds that were essential to the organisation's survival. For example, Grivas recorded in his diary on 11 February 1955 that Makarios had given him £100 'for the purchasing of arms'. These weapons would be used to start the struggle.<sup>123</sup>

Grivas himself was deeply religious. His proclamations are redolent with religious invocations, and, on occasion, with surprisingly puritanical (and apparently trivial) invectives. In February 1959, for example, he declared in an EOKA bulletin directed at 'the Unscrupulous and Frivolous' that

1) The coffee shops of Mandria [are] to remain closed for five days because they were open during divine service. 2) A coffee shop and cooperative store of Trimiklini must remain closed for five days because they, too, were open during divine service. 3) Card-playing must stop everywhere. 4) I hope, or rather, I am sure that the travelling salesman of the Singer Company from Trimiklini will learn later on that he must contribute to the [church] collections.<sup>124</sup>

In this case, not only was the leader threatening card players and coffee shop owners, but he was doing so in a group of mountain villages 80 kilometres from Cyprus's political centre in Nicosia. The links between EOKA and the Church did not go unnoticed by the British and were a significant factor in shaping their actions during

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<sup>122</sup> Archebiscopal Archives, Nicosia. Leontios, Δ45.

<sup>123</sup> The Grivas Diary, 11 February 1955, from *Terrorism in Cyprus: The Captured Documents* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956), p.13.

<sup>124</sup> TNA, CO 926/942 86394, EOKA Proclamation, EOKA 51/59, February 10, 1959.

the conflict. Grappling with the most effective means of neutralising the influence of the Church on violence became a key issue for British policymakers.

In the spring of 1955, the forces at Grivas's disposal were hardly formidable. EOKA mustered approximately eighty fighting men, most of whom were still in their late teens with no military experience.<sup>125</sup> Equipment was limited to a few leftover arms from *Xhi* and what Grivas had been able to purchase with the money from Makarios. Over the months preceding the violence, EOKA was able to smuggle a few pistols, sub-machine guns, and homemade explosives into Cyprus. Against these forces, the governor, Sir Robert Armitage, had more than a brigade of British troops in Cyprus and a police force of 1,400 men.

The disparity of forces facing them, coupled with the limited resources at their disposal, meant that EOKA's campaign relied on restricted armed action and social resistance working in tandem with political manoeuvre. Along this model, there were a number of examples to follow. Small-scale insurgent operations by Jewish settlers had been a significant factor in forcing the British out of Palestine several years earlier. Guerrilla campaigns directed against British authority were under way in both Kenya and Malaya. Although neither EOKA's leadership nor its members had formally studied these events, they were aware that small groups of dedicated insurgents had forced changes upon British policymakers.<sup>126</sup>

### **Radical Divisions**

The violent *enosis* movement centred on Grivas and Archbishop Makarios. In spite of their partnership, relations between the two men were tense. Grivas, the

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<sup>125</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.31.

<sup>126</sup> See the speech of the Bishop of Kyrenia from 15 August 1954 at Kakopetria, quoted in, TNA, CO 926/489, *The Church and Terrorism in Cyprus: A Record of the Complicity of the Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus in Political Violence*, 24 October 1956, Secretariat, Nicosia.

soldier, did not flinch from killing to achieve *enosis*; Makarios, the priest, was reluctant to commit to a no-holds-barred campaign that would lead to open armed conflict and bloodshed. Instead, the archbishop preferred a campaign focused on sabotage.<sup>127</sup> Grivas argued to one of his subordinates that Makarios did not understand the nature of combat: ‘He cannot grasp military developments, nor can he anticipate the reaction of fighters or security forces on the battlefield, what developments will be like and how one controls them. A fire cracker, a firework, a shot in the air and no one can tell how the crowd will react.’<sup>128</sup> It was Grivas’s opinion, and probably a correct one, that once unleashed, violence would be difficult to control. Once Makarios gave the green light for the struggle he would have to accept the consequences.

The differing conceptions of the two men were a reflection of their personalities. Grivas, for better or worse, was ‘a man of action’ and was not prone to calculation.<sup>129</sup> As his MI6 profile described, he was ‘rough, blunt and primitive... straightforward and sincere’.<sup>130</sup> For the most part, it was an accurate if unflattering portrait. Makarios, on the other hand, was a more educated man having studied in both Athens and Boston. In most accounts, he comes across as a shrewd politician given to labyrinthine negotiations. Grivas himself records Makarios urging restraint on action while at the same time preaching *enosis* with all means, at all costs. For all his nuances, Makarios was not a weak individual. In spite of his exalted ecclesiastical rank, he staunchly resisted British demands to condemn violence categorically. In his frequent bouts with British officials he was perceived as pedantic if not trivial, but

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<sup>127</sup> Andreas Azinas, *50 Years of Silence: Cyprus's Struggle for Freedom, my EOKA secret file*, Vol. A. (Nicosia, 2002), p.209.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., pp.209-10.

<sup>129</sup> Magan, p.13.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p.33.

always as a tough negotiator.<sup>131</sup> At the end of the emergency in 1959, his uncompromising belief in *enosis* – towards which he led the Cypriot people through three and a half years of violence and death – gave way to an agreement for a sovereign Cyprus, independent from both Britain and Greece. It was not the solution he had urged others to fight and to die for, but it was one which assured his dominance as leader of the Cypriot people as both their archbishop and president. This ‘betrayal’ of the *enosis* cause resulted in a break between Grivas and Makarios; animosity on this score divided the two men until Grivas’s death in 1973.

It is not surprising that Grivas’s MI6 profile noted that: ‘The relationship between Grivas and Makarios was never easy. They appear as mutually unsympathetic characters, and a note of contempt is discernible in many of Grivas’s references to him.’<sup>132</sup> Grivas suspected that Makarios’s personal ambitions interfered with the conduct of EOKA’s struggle. ‘National struggle cannot be fought by self-seekers’, he wrote in his diary on 4 March 1955. ‘In saying this I was referring to Genikos.’<sup>133</sup> The colonel was wary of Makarios; he also wanted freedom of action and accepted that loss of life would go hand in glove with the campaign to free Cyprus from British control.

In this struggle against the British, Grivas outlined three avenues of action. In the course of the insurgency all three would be used with varying degrees of success, and would employ a variety of actors. If negotiations or British counter-measures closed one path, others could be pursued. The three pillars of EOKA’s operations were: ‘1) Sabotage against Government installations and military posts. 2) Attacks on British forces by a considerable number of armed fighting groups. 3) Organisation of

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<sup>131</sup> TNA, CO 926/949, Telegram No. 89 from Prime Minister to Foreign Office, 24 March 1957.

<sup>132</sup> Magan, p.29.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

passive resistance by the population.<sup>134</sup> Passive resistance was the most versatile tactic, ranging from the taking down of British flags outside schools and public buildings to strikes and demonstrations. It also had the potential to involve segments of the population not normally directly involved in insurgency operations such as women and students. Grivas viewed the struggle as a progression. In a letter to Makarios on 23 May 1955 he explained the course he envisaged:

At the beginning we shall organise acts of sabotage in the towns and in important communication centres, with simultaneous attacks on police stations, especially in mountainous areas, in order to compel the enemy to disperse its forces. If this effort is crowned with success, then we shall go on with activity by small groups of armed men in mountainous areas which will make sudden attacks and then hide themselves. The targets will be police stations and Army camps. Finally, if the above are crowned with success, we shall organise a general uprising of the youths in the towns and the country with militant demonstrations. The organised population will also participate.<sup>135</sup>

These activities were directed, in Grivas's words, to the single purpose of 'causing as much confusion and damage in the ranks of the British forces as to make it manifest abroad that they are no longer in complete control of the situation'. Explicitly acknowledging the material limitations of EOKA, Grivas continued: 'It should not be supposed that by these means we should expect to impose a total material defeat on the British forces; our purpose is to bring about a moral defeat by keeping up the offensive until the objectives stated... are realized.'<sup>136</sup> Part of the 'moral defeat' of the British forces would come from their responses to Greek-Cypriot resistance. Counter-measures such as curfews, cordons, mass imprisonments, judicial executions, and the suspension of civil liberties while facilitating success against the insurgents, would raise international condemnation and, more importantly, alienate

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<sup>134</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.204.

<sup>135</sup> Letter of Grivas to Makarios, 23 May 1955, quoted in Brigadier GH Baker, *The Cyprus Emergency* (Nicosia: March 1958), p.7.

<sup>136</sup> 'Preparatory General Plan' in Grivas (1964), p.204.

elements within the Greek-Cypriot population from British rule.<sup>137</sup> Such actions could be turned to good advantage both in the arena of the United Nations and through diplomatic representations in New York, Washington, Athens, and even London.

Within Cyprus, it was precisely the sort of alienation caused by iron-handed security measures that Grivas was banking on. Like other guerrilla leaders, he was aware of the vital connection between insurgent forces and the local population. As he wrote in 1964:

A revolutionary movement and a guerrilla war in particular, stand no chance of success, whatever the qualities of their leader, unless they have the complete and unreserved support of the majority of the country's inhabitants, for it is to them that the movement will turn for assistance of every kind (cadres and fighters, hiding places, concealment of equipment and men, liaison agents, food supplies, propaganda, etc.).<sup>138</sup>

The acceptance of this principle is common among guerrilla leaders, evoking Mao Tse Tung's now famous line that guerrilla fighters are like fish, supported by the sea of the population around them. Mao also provided a less poetic, but more practical description when he wrote that 'guerrilla warfare basically derives from the masses and is supported by them, it can neither exist nor flourish if it separates itself from their sympathies and co-operation'.<sup>139</sup>

In another way, however, Grivas expressed views on the evolution and the denouement of guerrilla war that differed from those of better-known guerrilla leaders like Mao and Ché Guevara. In Mao's treatise on guerrilla warfare, he argues that guerrilla operations are a necessary part of a revolutionary campaign, but 'must not be considered as an independent form of warfare. They are but one step in the total war,

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<sup>137</sup> Grivas, *Guerrilla Warfare*, p.11.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.* p.10.

<sup>139</sup> Mao Tse-Tung, *Guerrilla Warfare*, Trans. Samuel B. Griffith, (London: Cassell & Company, 1961), p.33.

one aspect of the revolutionary struggle.<sup>140</sup> 'The concept,' Mao claimed, 'that guerrilla warfare is an end in itself and that guerrilla activities can be divorced from those of regular forces is incorrect.'<sup>141</sup> According to this theory, guerrillas, in time, must give way to (or become) conventional forces who achieve the final victory that the guerrilla forces are incapable of attaining. Ché Guevara echoed Mao's sentiments almost to the letter. Ché also wrote that: 'It is obvious that guerrilla warfare is a preliminary step, unable to win a war all by itself.'<sup>142</sup>

Contrary to the opinions expressed by Mao and Ché, Grivas believed that depending on the objective and on the means employed, it was 'sometimes possible for a guerrilla organisation as an independent military movement to attain the desired political objective alone'.<sup>143</sup> Given the limitations of Cyprus, a conventional war against Great Britain was impossible and something that Grivas never contemplated. Violence against the British could only be carried out on the small scale of guerrilla operations with specific and limited targets.<sup>144</sup> By launching the EOKA campaign, Grivas was testing his belief that a small group of resilient insurgents could accomplish their political goals through harassment, sabotage, targeted violence, assassination, and political manoeuvre.

A mass uprising was excluded because only part of the Cypriot people supported EOKA and its methods. The Turkish-Cypriot minority opposed EOKA and so did the island's political left. Spearheaded by AKEL and also composing the island's Old Trade Unions, the Cypriot left represented a large and well organised opposition to EOKA. In a report from September 1954, the Foreign Office estimated

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p.31.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p.41.

<sup>142</sup> Ernesto Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare*, Trans. Harries-Clichy Peterson, (London: Cassell & Company, 1961, p.114.

<sup>143</sup> Grivas, *Guerrilla Warfare*, p.78.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid. p.5.

that communist forces commanded approximately thirty-five percent of Greek-Cypriot voters.<sup>145</sup> By November 1955, AKEL's general secretary, Ezekiel Papaioannou, boasted that official party membership, spurred by EOKA's actions, had risen to 6,000.<sup>146</sup> Although the Cyprus Intelligence Committee questioned the number itself as a possible exaggeration, they agreed 'that the intense political activity of that period did cause many left-wing supporters more firmly to formulate their ideas and join the party'.<sup>147</sup> Not only did the Cypriot left oppose EOKA, but the organisation's actions strengthened that opposition.

Conditioned by a Cold War mindset, British policymakers had a difficult time acknowledging that the inspiration for violence in Cyprus was not somehow connected to communism. Their inability to separate EOKA violence from the rhetorical support of communists in Cyprus for *enosis* hindered the early stages of the fight against EOKA. Only later, under the governorship of Sir Hugh Foot, was communism's role in Cyprus put in its proper perspective. By then, however, the conflict between the left and right *within* the Greek-Cypriot community had increased to the point of rioting, beatings, and occasional killings.

As a political party, AKEL supported the principles of *enosis* and Cypriot self-determination, but had no armed organisation and did not participate in the campaign of violence. In fact, AKEL propaganda continually denounced violence and advocated 'peaceful and united action... [as] a better way of achieving the goal of self-determination'.<sup>148</sup> The role of the left during the emergency is complex and often contradictory. While it supported the idea of *enosis*, its implementation would

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<sup>145</sup> TNA, FO 371/112862, 'United Kingdom Police in Cyprus and the Enosis Demand,' 17 September 1954.

<sup>146</sup> TNA, CO 926/526, Cyprus Intelligence Committee, 'A Survey of Communism in Cyprus Since August 1955,' CIC (56) Twenty-three, 21 September 1956.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

probably have resulted in their political marginalisation and possibly persecution by the right-wing government that ruled Greece. British intelligence forces in Cyprus were convinced that AKEL's commitment to *enosis* was purely opportunistic. It was 'designed primarily to enlist popular support: [since] no political programme [in Cyprus] which did not call for Enosis would gain any significant following'.<sup>149</sup> While this cannot be discounted, it was not a clear-cut case of political opportunism. Undoubtedly, many Greek-Cypriot members of AKEL regarded their Greek identity as superior to their party membership. At the same time, it should be remembered that AKEL did not argue in favour of immediate *enosis*, but pushed for self-government with the goal of achieving union at a later stage – perhaps at some time when the political climate in Greece was less hostile to it. There is also the possibility that hardcore communists felt that an AKEL-led Cyprus could act as a Trojan horse and restore the party's fortunes in Greece.

In 1958, when communist opposition both to British rule in Cyprus and to EOKA was at its most vocal, the party received a boost, scoring a notable success during the Greek national elections on 11 May. Although Constantine Karamanlis and his centre-right government were returned to power, the communists achieved the second highest number of seats in Parliament and established themselves as the main opposition party. The election shock demonstrated the changing political climate in Greece; the communists had doubled their strength since the election of 1952. From the perspective of a Cypriot communist, *enosis* in 1958 was more palatable than ever and the prospect of political persecution in Greece during the civil war and its immediate aftermath seemed distant. In Cyprus, the stunning gains of the communist party in Greece resulted in a series of violent attacks by EOKA on left-wing Cypriots.

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

The British attitude towards AKEL was shaped not by its actions in Cyprus but by the constraints of the nascent Cold War. AKEL enjoyed substantial membership and had real political influence. Like all communist parties it received its orders from Moscow and the Kremlin had no desire to see Britain's or NATO's power secure on Cyprus. Throughout the insurgency (and even in the following years) AKEL opposed bases on Cyprus – British, Greek, NATO, or otherwise – as a tool of Anglo-American imperialism. For minds conditioned by the Cold War, the strength of the Cypriot communist party could not be ignored. As a result, British intelligence in Cyprus felt that: 'It would be unwise, merely because the Party gives an appearance of quiescence and inactivity, to underestimate Communism in Cyprus as a serious long-term threat to the interests of Britain and her allies in this region'.<sup>150</sup> Whether this conclusion reflected reality was entirely another matter. Not surprisingly, government opinion both in London and in Nicosia moved firmly against AKEL.

On 13 December 1955, Harding outlawed AKEL and other leftist organisations. The next day, 135 leading communists from all over the island were arrested and taken to detention centres. The organisation's headquarters was raided and AKEL's newspaper was outlawed. Historian Robert Holland remarks on the irony in this action, which first filled 'the detention camps, destined to be such a feature of Cypriot life... with men who were deeply opposed to EOKA'.<sup>151</sup> The arrest and imprisonment of the communists was not only ironic, it was counterproductive. During those early months, EOKA attacks had been fewer in areas dominated by AKEL. The suppression of the communist party – the only significant counterweight to the alliance of the nationalists and the Church – 'was a measure of the contradictions emerging from the mixing up of an older colonial orthodoxy in

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Robert Holland, *Britain and the Cyprus Revolt 1954-1959*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p.105.

Emergency policy'.<sup>152</sup> Britain's new defence policy dictated that communism was the root of insurgency agitation and a threat to stability. It needed to be suppressed. It was clear that under Harding's administration the Cypriot left would be treated with the same suspicion as the extreme right and the governor would use the same methods against it.

The realization that AKEL was not complicit in the violence in Cyprus was slow to materialize. But, in the face of mounting evidence, it was accepted. As Harding wrote to Lennox-Boyd on 24 March 1956:

There is no, (repeat no) direct evidence of communist complicity in murders of either Cypriots or expatriates... Reports of AKEL's preparation to commence terrorist activities and of some recent outrages having been the work of the communists have remained without confirmation. In view of the known anti-communist and Greek royalist sympathies of EOKA leadership, it is considered unlikely that the latter would consider any formal alliance with AKEL. There have been however reports that EOKA weapons have been handed over on an opportunistic basis to persons considered by EOKA to have communist sympathies... While it is probable that anti-British incitement is being fomented by Soviet organisations in Beirut and Prague, there is no (repeat no) evidence of current instigation available here.<sup>153</sup>

Ironically, as Harding began to understand that AKEL was not cooperating with EOKA or engaging in acts of violence, the dynamics of the struggle were evolving. Dr. Vassos Lyssarides, (Makarios's personal physician after 1960) became involved with EOKA in 1955, treating fighters who had been wounded in operations against the British. As an EOKA sympathizer, he was approached about joining the organisation and did so later that year. Lyssarides's political views, however, were left of centre. He was an active supporter of trade unions and a self-proclaimed 'AKEL voter' during this period.<sup>154</sup> Nevertheless he was a sworn member of EOKA who carried guns, transferred messages, and treated wounded fighters. Lyssarides was

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<sup>152</sup> Holland, p.105.

<sup>153</sup> TNA, CO 926/417, Telegram No. 643 from Harding to Alan Lennox-Boyd, 24 March 1956.

<sup>154</sup> Author's interview with Dr. Vassos Lyssarides, 3 April 2009.

most active in the political side of the fight. In his frequent correspondence with Grivas during 1956 and 1957, he attempted to convince the colonel to expand the struggle from a fight dominated by right-wing nationalism into a pan-Cypriot movement against colonialism.<sup>155</sup> Balancing his own political beliefs with those of EOKA was challenging, but his commitment to the ideal of *enosis* overrode any animosity towards Grivas's political views. 'I knew who he was. I knew what he had done with *Xhi*, but I couldn't stay out [of the *enosis* movement] simply because I didn't like the military leader.'<sup>156</sup>

Others on the left shared Lyssarides's willingness to compromise. Thassos Sophocleous, one of EOKA's area commanders, although solidly committed to both *enosis* and EOKA's ideology, admitted that at various times he had three AKEL members serving in his guerrilla group and that other AKEL members helped the group with food, supplies, and information.<sup>157</sup> Sophocleous insists on separating people who supported AKEL from AKEL as a political party. His distinction is useful in understanding the issues at play. In this way, he explained the results of the plebiscite in 1950, when numerous AKEL members had signed the petition inspired by the Church for the union of Cyprus with Greece. The support of members of AKEL for *enosis* did not necessarily mean a modification in their views towards EOKA or the Church. In spite of contradictory individual acts, the organised party remained an opponent of EOKA's policies and hostile to the Church.

The role of AKEL in opposition to EOKA was important. It belied Grivas's contention that his 'army [in Cyprus]... covered the whole island... every Greek-Cypriot, from the smallest child to the old men and women, belonged to our army,

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Author's interview with Thassos Sophocleous, 5 March 2009.

and fulfilled a mission either as a combatant or in the auxiliary services'.<sup>158</sup> A simple breakdown of the numbers demonstrates the error of Grivas's statement. The entire Turkish-Cypriot community – nearly nineteen percent of the Cypriot population – opposed EOKA. Moreover, a third of the remaining seventy-nine percent of Greek-Cypriots were communist sympathizers. Thus, approximately forty-five percent of the Cypriot population were against Grivas and his methods. While this numerical shortcoming did not prevent EOKA from beginning its military campaign in 1955, it constrained EOKA's scope for action, and eventually marginalised it politically. The tiny number of EOKA fighters serves as a reminder that, even if many Greek-Cypriots would have welcomed *enosis* if it were given, most were reluctant to risk their lives to take it.

### **A Battle in Earnest**

Even with limited numbers, Grivas was determined to pressure the British administration in Cyprus. On 2 April, EOKA attacked three residences housing military personnel and planted a bomb outside the Ledra Palace Hotel, which exploded soon after the governor left the premises. Grivas was hoping to demonstrate that the police were unable to keep control of the situation and to force the Government of Cyprus to bring military forces into play to ensure security. As he recorded in his diary for 2 April:

I have issued an order on the way in which the sabotage groups must act; i.e., the continuation of terrorist attacks in the town so that the police may be unable to cope with the situation. This will oblige the Government to use military forces for its security and I shall be later able to organise the rebel struggle which is already being prepared.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Grivas, *Guerrilla Warfare*, p.10.

<sup>159</sup> The Grivas Diary, 2 April, 1955, from *Terrorism in Cyprus: The Captured Documents*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956), p.22.

The targeted killing of police personnel was a key feature of this stage of EOKA's campaign. In his writings, Grivas explains that the strategy was designed to terrorize the police force in order to allow EOKA greater scope for action while at the same time undermining British authority. The use of terror to undermine the authority of the ruling power was not new, but in Cyprus the personal nature of the violence made it particularly disturbing. Not only was EOKA engaged in acts of intimidation and targeted assassination against fellow Greek-Cypriots – whom they regarded as traitors because of their affiliation with the British security forces – they were also poised to commit acts of violence against Turkish-Cypriots in the security forces. Such acts would threaten relations between the two communities, as well as relations between Greece and Turkey.

The police force arrayed against EOKA was hardly formidable. At the end of 1954, the force numbered slightly less than 1,400 men, divided among 850 Greek-Cypriots (62%), 508 Turkish-Cypriots (36%) and 28 officers (2%) of other ethnicities.<sup>160</sup> Turks had always represented a disproportionate part of the force – a legacy of the days of Ottoman control, when they had been solely responsible for security. Under British administration, the Greek-Cypriots slowly built up their membership in the force; in 1954 they were a clear majority, although still less than their overall majority in the population.

Cypriot policemen were required to pass through training courses and were sent to England for advanced programmes. The new Cypriot police commissioner, G. H. Robins, took command at the end of November 1954, after serving as Deputy Commissioner of Police in Tanganyika. Other senior members of the force consisted

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<sup>160</sup> Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1954, GH Robins Commissioner of Police, Cyprus (Nicosia: The Cyprus Government Printing Office, 1955), p.4.

of both Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots.<sup>161</sup> Although the British administration attempted to maintain recruitment standards, and to educate and train recruits into an effective force, they did face difficulties. A special commission – appointed in 1956 with the task of identifying the challenges facing the Cyprus police force – listed a few of the greatest obstacles in its report. The economic conditions following the Second World War created ‘inflation when more attractive and remunerative work could easily be obtained’. Although some quality recruits did join, the ‘general standard of recruits deteriorated and the Force suffered as a result’.<sup>162</sup> At the same time, the report concluded that: ‘The Cyprus Police Force has never enjoyed the same degree of respect from the public which the police enjoy in the United Kingdom... probably partly due to the low rate of pay offered to constables and the consequent low standard of many of the men recruited, while the police on their side have not developed the same sense of pride in their calling.’<sup>163</sup> This lack of public regard not only undermined recruitment prospects, but, the report concluded was responsible for the lack of intelligence ‘of underground political activity’.<sup>164</sup>

These deficiencies were a major handicap in the battle against EOKA. An expansion of the force’s numbers and capabilities was necessary. More Greeks were needed in the force if the legitimacy of the police as an instrument of public safety was to be maintained. More equipment, weapons, and training were needed so that the police could protect themselves and carry out offensive operations against EOKA. Finally, intelligence, an essential, if not the key, weapon against the insurgents, had to be obtained. All of these concerns would have to be met before the security situation in Cyprus could be restored.

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid., p.3.

<sup>162</sup> CSA, V12/32, Report of the Cyprus Police Commission 1956, (Nicosia: The Cyprus Government Printing Office, 1956), p.6.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p.7.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

Having begun the struggle, Grivas was not about to relax the pressure on the British. After the initial bombings, further attacks were carried out over the next seven days on military installations in Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca, and Famagusta. Again, EOKA tried to sabotage the electricity in Nicosia and also attacked a police station in the capital. High profile targets were hit and tens of thousands of pounds in damage were inflicted. After the accidental electrocution of Modestos Pantelis on 1 April, no fatalities were recorded on either side. During this stage, the evidence suggests that Grivas respected Makarios's preference for sabotage and followed a more measured approach. Grivas needed to test several thresholds: what Britain was capable of absorbing without contemplating a change in the political landscape in Cyprus; the commitment of Greek-Cypriots towards violent attempts to achieve *enosis*; the effectiveness of his own forces; and Makarios's feelings on the loss of human life. On the final point, he was already facing restrictions. Just days into the struggle, the EOKA leader received a letter from the archbishop. In his diary for 4 April, Grivas writes in obvious frustration:

Gen[ikos] sends me a letter and gives his opinion that our activities must stop in the towns so that we may re-organise ourselves!! I must take lessons now from the various faint-hearted fellows who surround Genikos and give advice to him because they are afraid of their skins and are interested in their leisure. Because such are the men who give their opinions to Genikos who, only yesterday wrote me, 'Go ahead, you are doing well.' It is a critical turn of the struggle now.<sup>165</sup>

Even if the beginnings were measured, Grivas had no intention of abandoning the fight.

Perhaps heeding Makarios, EOKA paused to regroup; 9 June saw the final small-scale attacks of the initial phase of operations. The respite was brief. While it is possible that Grivas was sensitive to Makarios's entreaty, it is more likely that he was

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<sup>165</sup> Grivas *Diary*, 4 April, 1955, from *Terrorism in Cyprus*, p.24.

simply reorganising his forces. Around 10 May, a group of eight Greek-Cypriots attending college in Athens returned to the island, committed to the *enosis* cause. While in Greece, they had formed their own anti-British organisation and, with the help of sympathetic Greek army officers, had received arms and explosives training.<sup>166</sup> Some had even travelled to Crete and trained for two weeks in guerrilla tactics, again, under Greek officers.<sup>167</sup> Once in Cyprus, they met with Grivas. After an impassioned speech about freedom and the struggle, the colonel explained that EOKA needed leaders, educated and committed men of intelligence who could serve the organisation as regional commanders.<sup>168</sup> Grivas later wrote in his *Memoirs* that these ‘keen and energetic boys’ would form ‘the nucleus of... [the] first mountain guerrilla groups’.<sup>169</sup> The colonel assigned each man a different command, instructed them to recruit new members and to monitor British and police targets for future attacks.<sup>170</sup> Grivas planned a new series of larger operations to begin later in June.<sup>171</sup>

With their new leadership in place, Grivas’s men resumed operations in earnest on 19 June with several grenade attacks in Nicosia and one in Famagusta. A report by the Cyprus Intelligence Committee noted this new violence as phase ‘B’. 20 June saw a number of bomb attacks, armed raids on police stations and arson. The insurgency heated up through the summer as attacks became a nearly daily feature of life on the island. According to his *Memoirs*, Grivas’s plan was to continue the heightened level of violence at least through to October, at which time the issue of Cyprus would again be raised by Greece at the United Nations.<sup>172</sup> This objective is

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<sup>166</sup> Author’s interviews with Renos Kyriakides (20 November 2008) and Thassos Sophocleous (6 March 2009).

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Author’s interview with Thassos Sophocleous, 6 March 2009.

<sup>169</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.36.

<sup>170</sup> Author’s Interview with Thassos Sophocleous, 6 March 2009.

<sup>171</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.36.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p.34.

supported by a report sent from Grivas to Makarios on 23 May where he writes: ‘The struggle must be organized in such a way that it may last at least until next October, when the Cyprus question will be discussed in the UNO.’<sup>173</sup> From the beginning, Grivas was aware that the international perception of EOKA and its fight would be an important consideration for British policy in Cyprus. He was keenly aware of the effect military operations could have on the political negotiations.

On 21 June, the first fatality inflicted by the insurgency occurred during a bomb attack on the Nicosia central police station. On 22 June, another police sergeant was killed in Limassol. A British policy brief in August clearly identified the shift in strategy:

The April campaign was apparently directed primarily against property and in order to intimidate rather than injure persons. The campaign which started on 20 June, however, while deliberately intending to kill and injure persons, particularly amongst the police and army, was sufficiently indiscriminate to endanger the lives of persons in the vicinity of the explosions.<sup>174</sup>

This escalation represented a clear shift in the organisation’s operations and was the result of a mandate for intensification from Grivas. On 21 June, the colonel recorded in his diary: ‘I have communicated an order to Heron and Thalís, saying that I am not satisfied with the results of the Nicosia groups and demanding the intensification of activity, particularly against the police traitors, no matter if they are Greeks or Turks. My design is to terrorize the police so that we may be given more freedom of action’.<sup>175</sup>

The police were terrorised. On 4 July, Governor Armitage wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies describing the difficult situation that had developed on the island because of EOKA’s operations. ‘Morale in police is

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<sup>173</sup> Report from Grivas to Makarios, 23 May, 1955, from *Terrorism in Cyprus*, p.51.

<sup>174</sup> TNA, CO 926/270 Brief No. 3 ‘Terrorism’ for Tripartite Talks for the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, August 1955.

<sup>175</sup> Grivas *Diary*, 4 April, 1955, from *Terrorism in Cyprus*, p.35.

extremely low as result of campaign of smear and intimidation carried out by EOKA. Police who arrest suspects immediately become liable to assassination. If suspects are released and steps are not pressed on vigorously to eliminate EOKA police will not be prepared to run these risks in future.’ Armitage betrayed the vulnerability of the British position, writing that ‘negotiations cannot be conducted while it is known that EOKA can act whenever it chooses’.<sup>176</sup> The situation was spinning perilously close to chaos.

### **Double Diplomacy**

The emergence of organised violence to achieve the cause of *enosis* left the British with few illusions about the severity of the situation confronting them. Sir Anthony Eden, the former foreign secretary, had replaced Winston Churchill as prime minister on 7 April; on 26 May, the Conservatives had been returned to power with an increased majority. Eden felt sufficiently strong to pursue a new course in relation to Cyprus. Two points were immediately clear to the Eden government: first, without quick and strong action against the insurgents, the British would risk the appearance of having completely lost control of the island’s affairs. Stepping up the struggle against EOKA would require an increase both in the police establishment and in the number of soldiers deployed in Cyprus. It would also require discussions with Archbishop Makarios as the leader of the Greek-Cypriot community. Second, Turkish opinion needed to be recognised as an important factor for British policy.

Whitehall’s response to the first point had several facets, the first was to open a direct dialogue between the British government and Archbishop Makarios. Sir Alan Lennox-Boyd, the secretary of state for the colonies, travelled to Cyprus on 10 July

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<sup>176</sup> TNA, CO 926/395, Telegram No. 419 from Governor Armitage to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 4 July 1955.

and met Makarios and Governor Armitage to discuss the situation. The two-hour meeting was cordial but indecisive. As Governor Armitage recorded in his diary:

The Secretary of State could not get any satisfactory explanation from [Makarios] for why they did not regard a constitutional approach to the problem as reasonable. He hedged as usual on why no condemnation of terrorism... [Makarios] made it clear that if the Greek Government made an arrangement with Her Majesty's Government which he does not accept, he will oppose it.<sup>177</sup>

Several days later, Lennox-Boyd and Armitage agreed to the introduction of a detention law allowing for the governor to detain, by order, anyone suspected of involvement with terrorism.<sup>178</sup>

In his statement to the press following the meeting with Makarios, Lennox-Boyd highlighted the obstacle posed to Cyprus by the divergent wishes of the Greek and Turkish governments. 'In governing Cyprus', the secretary noted, 'one had to bear in mind that there were two mainland countries to be considered... Greek and Turkish cultures on the island were respected and there was no desire by Britain to disturb them.'<sup>179</sup> Although Turkish-Cypriots were not targeted by EOKA at this stage, threats were being made against Turkish-Cypriot leaders. For his part, Grivas made it a point to avoid violence towards Turkish-Cypriots. 'I was strongly opposed to any action which would affect the Turkish-Cypriots,' he writes in his *Memoirs*, afraid that the British might turn such inter-communal strife to their advantage.<sup>180</sup> Renos Kyriakides, the first commander of the active Pitsillia region, supports this statement, recalling in an interview in late 2008 that Grivas ordered his regional commanders not to touch the Turks.<sup>181</sup> Obviously, Turkish-Cypriots would not help the *enosis* cause,

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<sup>177</sup> RHL, Diary of Sir Robert Armitage, 10 July, 1955.

<sup>178</sup> TNA, CO 926/395, Telegram No. 420 from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Governor Armitage, 13 July 1955.

<sup>179</sup> *The Times*, 'Common Problem' of Cyprus, 12 July 1955, p.6.

<sup>180</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.73.

<sup>181</sup> Author interview with Mr. Renos Kyriakides, Nicosia, 20 November 2008.

but Grivas was eager for them not to hinder it either directly or through appeals to Turkey. However, Grivas's aggressive policy towards Greek-Cypriot 'collaborators' within the police had the harmful side effect of forcing the British to rely more and more on Turkish-Cypriot officers to fill the ranks of the force. Thus, Turkish-Cypriots found themselves increasingly in the line of EOKA fire. If he wished to maintain pressure on the police force, Grivas could not avoid action against them forever.

In spite of EOKA's initial operational restraint in relation to the Turks, the organisation's activities raised serious concerns within the Turkish-Cypriot community and, more importantly, with the Turkish government in Ankara. This was an unavoidable consequence of their objective of *enosis*. As early as the end of June, British policymakers were aware of this growing discontent and viewed a fissure between the two communities as counterproductive to negotiations and as a broader threat to the safety of the Western Alliance.<sup>182</sup> Britain's concern to prevent animosity between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots (as well as between Greece and Turkey) contradicted Grivas's illogical cynicism that tensions between the two communities would be stimulated for the purpose of exploitation by British policymakers. Britain was confronted with a genuine threat to the relationship of its allies in the eastern Mediterranean and was at great pains to balance their respective desires in negotiations over the future of Cyprus. In spite of Greek-Cypriot claims dating from the 1950s to the present that Britain cultivated a policy of 'divide-and-rule' in Cyprus, the evidence does not support such an accusation.

A telegram from Governor Armitage to the Secretary of State for the Colonies highlighted the delicate balancing act now facing the British government.

[A]ny attempt to maintain law and order may be criticized in Greece and strengthen the hands of those who would like to wreck the talks, if we do not

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<sup>182</sup> TNA, CO 926/395, Telegram No. 419 from Armitage to Secretary of State, July 4, 1955.

take firm measures it is equally certain that we shall be criticized by the Turks both here and in Turkey. One final warning, Turkish feeling is, as you know, running high, and if a Turk is killed by Greek terrorist action, that will provide just the spark that is needed to set off a conflagration of communal strife. If that happens the atmosphere in which inter-Governmental talks are to be held, if indeed they are held at all, will be, at least, strained.<sup>183</sup>

EOKA's violence raised the stakes in Cyprus to a level that the Turkish government felt unable to ignore. Turkish concern over the situation in Cyprus was seen as so significant that British policy shifted to engage it directly. On 30 June, the British government announced a Tripartite Conference on Cyprus that would include the governments of Britain, Greece and Turkey. This action represented a realistic if radical approach to a problem that Britain had claimed was a purely domestic one. The *volte face* shocked Governor Armitage and represented the first of several fissures between him and London. He recorded in his diary on 29 June: 'So all the toils and moils of weeks and months are brought to an abrupt end in a manner which we have been repeatedly told could never be contemplated.'<sup>184</sup> In calling the conference, the Eden government admitted that the problems in Cyprus represented a challenge that could not be met entirely by negotiations between a colonial power and its colony. It admitted that the concerns of the two 'mainland' countries had to be addressed, and aimed to make progress on the Cyprus problem before Greece could make another appeal at the UN later that year.<sup>185</sup>

Grivas was keenly aware of the United Nations General Assembly meeting scheduled for the autumn of 1955. He had little hope that a solution would be reached in those meetings or in the Security Council debates that would take place around the same time. Thus, he felt that it was important to continue EOKA operations vigorously. This would pressure the international community to force the British to

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<sup>183</sup> TNA, CO 926/395, Telegram No. 419, from Governor Cyprus to Secretary of State, 4 July 1955.

<sup>184</sup> RHL, Armitage Diary, 29 June 1955.

<sup>185</sup> TNA, CAB 129/29, CC (55) 18, 28 June 1955.

some compromise over Cyprus that would allow the Greek-Cypriots to pursue their desire for *enosis*.<sup>186</sup> Although Grivas was disappointed with the lack of material support from Greece,<sup>187</sup> the Greek government had agreed to bring the issue forward on the floor of the UN General Assembly once more.

Contemporary and subsequent opinions on the Tripartite Conference are equally divided. Vilified by many Greeks and Greek-Cypriots as a British stratagem designed to insinuate Turkey into the Cyprus problem, the conference was welcomed by Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots as a chance to voice their concerns about violence in the island and to press their case with an equal voice. Although Turkish-Cypriots represented less than twenty percent of the island's population, they were on sound philosophical ground in arguing that, in the event of an end to British rule, they deserved the same right of self-determination as the Greek community. The Greek-Cypriot position was not as inclusive, regarding Cyprus as a singular entity which they, as a majority of nearly eighty percent, should direct. In taking a hammer to the glass of British authority, EOKA had not realised that they could not control the number of shards created. Neither Turkish-Cypriots nor their Turkish patrons would stand idly by and watch the island become part of Greece.

The Turkish press responded to EOKA's initial acts of violence with a series of articles challenging Britain's willingness to remain in Cyprus in the face of an armed insurrection. Britain, the Turkish press contended, could not be counted on to remain stalwart. While alerting Britain to the very real concerns in Turkish quarters, these articles also had the calculated effect of raising the alarm within the Turkish community. Since Turkish-Cypriots were not invited to the conference, the Turkish voice would loudly oppose *enosis* and seek to protect the Turkish-Cypriots from the

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<sup>186</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.34.

<sup>187</sup> Grivas' Diary, entry 10 April 1955, from *Terrorism in Cyprus*, p.25.

dangers of living under Greek rule. The largest lacuna of the conference, however, was that Greek-Cypriots, who were, after all, responsible for the violence, were not invited to attend.

It is easy to criticise the British policymakers for excluding the Greek-Cypriots from the conference but there are at least two good reasons why this was the chosen course. First, to include the Greeks would necessitate including representatives from the Turkish-Cypriot community. The negotiations would then have involved British, Greek, Turkish, Greek-Cypriot, and Turkish-Cypriot parties – an unwieldy quin-partite arrangement where achieving consensus would have been ever more difficult. In addition, the Greeks would not have accepted Turkish-Cypriot participation, nor would the Turks have accepted Greek-Cypriot participation, as it would put the Cypriots on a par with representatives from three sovereign powers. Britain too, was also reluctant to treat the Cypriots (whether Greek or Turkish) on the same level as sovereign states.<sup>188</sup> In spite of the absence of the Greek-Cypriots, formally inviting both Greeks and Turks to discuss the issue was a major concession on the part of the British government.

On 28 June, the Foreign Office contacted the British ambassador in Washington, Robert Makins. Makins was asked to approach the Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles about using American influence to encourage the Greek government to attend the conference.<sup>189</sup> London recognised that both Greek and Turkish participation in solving the growing problems in Cyprus was essential, but also knew that Greece would be reluctant to see Turkey brought into the discussion, especially on an equal footing. In Washington, Dulles understood this tension and, in a seemingly innocuous way, asked Makins ‘how the Greeks would feel about the

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<sup>188</sup> TNA, CAB 128/29, CM (55) 28<sup>th</sup> Conclusions, 15 August 1955.

<sup>189</sup> TNA, CO 926/268, Telegram No. 3016, 28 June 1955, from Foreign Office to Ambassador Makins in Washington.

inclusion of Turkey'.<sup>190</sup> If Dulles's fairly harmless phraseology masked a truly serious issue, Makins's reply ignored (perhaps intentionally) the realities of the situation. He answered Dulles that 'since they [the Greeks] were allies of Turkey both in NATO and in the Balkan Alliance, they ought to welcome the invitation unless they were completely intoxicated by their own propaganda'.<sup>191</sup> The Cyprus issue, however, was one on which even the ties of NATO and the Balkan Alliance did not bring Greece and Turkey to see eye to eye.

Because of the implications of the conference for the future affairs of the island, Turkey, unsurprisingly, was first off the mark in accepting the British offer. Greece remained reluctant, sceptical of participating in a conference in which Turkey would be treated as an equal, but two days later it accepted and the three sides prepared to meet in London. Although the Turkish government agreed to the conference and expressed a cautious optimism about the talks, it was under no illusions that it would regain Cyprus for Turkey or immediately secure the partition of the island. The Greek-Cypriots were offended that the future of their island was to be discussed without a single representative from their community. Archbishop Makarios, in Athens canvassing for *enosis* support, denounced the forthcoming conference in strong words. A meeting among British, Turkish, and Greek representatives would solve nothing, primarily because

[t]he Cyprus question does not constitute a political issue between Britain on the one hand and Greece and Turkey on the other. The Cyprus issue is purely a question of self-determination and concerns the British Government and the Cypriot people only, and it can be extended so as to concern the Greek Government, whenever the latter, in interpreting the feelings of the Greek and especially the Cypriot people, acts as the people's mandatory for the safe-guarding of the island's right of self-determination... Personally we have no doubts about the failure of the conference [because] the Cypriot people will not accept any decision on the part of the Tripartite Conference, not in

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<sup>190</sup> TNA, CO 926/268, Telegram No. 1508, 29 June 1955, from Makins to Foreign Office.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

agreement with its rights and aspirations, even if the Greek Government were to undersign this decision.<sup>192</sup>

Makarios's accusation that Britain had unnecessarily widened the conflict through the inclusion of Turkey reveals a fundamental inconsistency. Britain's preference throughout its involvement in Cyprus had been to treat the island as a sovereign issue without recourse to other parties. Under this principle, the *enosis* question was something to be settled between the British government and the Cypriot people. It was the persistent, and eventually violent, pursuit of *enosis* that automatically internationalised the problem by calling for Cyprus's union with Greece. *Enosis* forces, spearheaded by the archbishop, had courted Greek involvement openly by applying pressure on the Greek government to bring the Cyprus issue forward at the United Nations. Greece's appeal to the UN, undertaken at the prodding of Makarios, represented the first formal internationalisation of the issue. Clearly, the archbishop was not opposed to the international aspect of the conference as such, but to the involvement of Turkey.

Makarios's bitter tone provided a bleak backdrop for the beginning of the conference. The British government were aware that the negotiations would be difficult, and in internal communications discussed the likelihood that the conference would fail to achieve any firm result. Still, debating the issues at stake, and Britain's admission of the existence of a serious problem with international ramifications represented an important development. In addition, whether or not the Greeks and Greek-Cypriots accepted that Turkey had a right to participate in the Cyprus issue, Turkey was an involved and extremely important party to the unfolding events. As observed by Harold Macmillan, who as foreign secretary would chair the conference:

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<sup>192</sup> TNA, CO 926/268, Translation of Archbishop Makarios's press conference in Athens, July 16, reported in Telegram No. 348 from Athens (Sir C. Peake) to Foreign Office, 18 July 1955.

‘It was common sense to recognize the fact that no new arrangements in Cyprus could work successfully unless it was acceptable to both the Greek and Turkish Governments.’<sup>193</sup>

In preparing for the conference, British policymakers mapped out several key points for their position. These were outlined in a memo from the Colonial Office private secretary to the prime minister. First, in order to avoid partition, they wanted to ‘be careful not to gang up with the Turks or stimulate their resistance to self-determination’. At the same time, it was important for Turkey to move openly beyond the overambitious call for the reversion of the island to Turkey, and the equally unfeasible notion that the status quo could simply be maintained. A central goal of the conference was an open airing of the views of all three sides from which the direction of a solution might be determined.<sup>194</sup> Once voiced, the next task was ‘to define in writing the differences between the three Governments and to make sure that the other two agreed with the definition. When this had been done, probably not without some argument on drafting, we should say that we must now address ourselves to the task of reconciling the differences by a process of compromise.’<sup>195</sup>

The British were aware that the Greek negotiators would push for Cypriot self-determination as soon as possible, in the full knowledge that this would lead to *enosis*. Turkey, on the other hand, opposed a singular self-determination for Cyprus and would seek either a continuation of British sovereignty, or the expression of self-determination by both the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities which would lead to the partition of the island. Britain’s main aim during the negotiations ‘would be to bring the Greeks up against the Turkish refusal to accept Enosis and so condition

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<sup>193</sup> Harold Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune: 1945-1955*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p.665.

<sup>194</sup> TNA, CO 926/268, ‘Cyprus Negotiations: Tactics and Timetable,’ Memo from the Private Secretary (Colonial Office) to the Prime Minister, 13 July 1955, p.2.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.2-3.

them to accept a solution which would leave sovereignty in our hands until at least there was tripartite agreement to make a change'.<sup>196</sup> The British hoped to use the Turks to achieve this goal during the conference, which would 'provide the opportunity for Turkey to demonstrate that if Britain leaves the island, this would create a cause of dissension between Turkey and Greece and that it is therefore better that she should stay'.<sup>197</sup> Any mention by the British government concerning self-determination for the Greek-Cypriots, the central and only significant desire of the Greek negotiators, was to be avoided.<sup>198</sup> The consensus view was that such a move would not be tolerated by Turkey, would be impossible to implement on the island, and would not be in the interests of Britain.

The conference had the support of the United States, and Britain hoped that American influence could be used to make the Greeks more amenable to compromise.<sup>199</sup> As the British ambassador in Washington wrote to the Foreign Office on 20 July: 'The [American] State Department hope that these negotiations will provide for the first time an acceptable rallying point for moderate opinion both in Greece and in Cyprus in opposition to the extreme demands of the ethnarchy.'<sup>200</sup> The British government felt that it needed 'unequivocal support from Washington' for the conference.<sup>201</sup> Further, British representatives in the United States voiced their opinion that America should also 'urge the Greeks... to resist such demands as they do not themselves consider to be in their national interest. In other words to stand up to Makarios.' If this should fail, the British hoped that the Americans would make it

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid., pp.3-4.

<sup>197</sup> TNA, CO 926/268, Telegram No. 488 from Ankara (Bowker) to Governor Cyprus (Armitage), 19 July 1955.

<sup>198</sup> Holland, p.66.

<sup>199</sup> America's position throughout the Cyprus conflict was fairly ecumenical. With no strong feelings for either side, the American government hoped for a quick and fair solution that would avoid further tension in a sensitive, but peripheral, theater.

<sup>200</sup> TNA, CO 926/268, Note from Washington (Makins) to Foreign Office, 20 July 1955.

<sup>201</sup> TNA, CO 926/268, Telegram from Foreign Office to Washington (Makins), 25 July 1955.

clear that they would oppose Greece in the United Nations when Greece brought the Cyprus issue up once more that autumn.<sup>202</sup>

In his opening speech to the conference, Foreign Secretary Macmillan emphasised the friendship existing among the three governments present and the need for them to discuss openly their different points of view on the Cyprus crisis so as to come to an understanding.<sup>203</sup> On the second day, Stephanos Stephanopoulos, Macmillan's opposite number within the Greek government, put forward his arguments, saying that the Greek government was 'acting as interpreter of the will of the Cypriot people'. Britain's position that Cyprus was essential to the defence of the Middle East, and to its diplomatic commitments were subordinate to the political stability of the island. Without self-determination for the Cypriot people, Stephanopoulos argued, Cyprus would remain in disorder. Only a stable Cyprus could provide the foundation on which all three nations could effectively organise the 'common defence in Cyprus and in the Eastern Mediterranean'.<sup>204</sup> Stephanopoulos appealed to the British nation as 'the very ideal of freedom and justice' and requested 'that Cyprus be granted her basic rights after a period of 'free government''.<sup>205</sup>

The statement of Turkish foreign minister Fatin Zorlu during the next day's meetings provided a contrast both in tone and in substance. Gone were Stephanopoulos's flattery and deference. In their place, Zorlu argued forcefully that the Cyprus issue concerned only Britain and Turkey. The island's future had been codified by the Treaty of Lausanne under whose terms 'the parties concerned in Cyprus were only and exclusively Turkey on the one hand and Great Britain on the

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<sup>202</sup> TNA, CO 926/269, Telegram from Athens (Sir C. Peake) to Foreign Office, 27 July, 1955.

<sup>203</sup> TNA, CO 926/269, Draft of the speech of the Secretary of State to open the Tripartite Conference.

<sup>204</sup> Statement of Mr. Stephanopoulos, 31 August 1955, *The Tripartite Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1955), p.15.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, p.18.

other'.<sup>206</sup> In poetic if tautological language, Zorlu argued that Cyprus 'by its geographical structure, is a prolongation of the Anatolian Peninsula, of which the soil is Anatolian soil, of which the climate is Anatolian climate, has, ever since the time it came under Turkish sovereignty, been attached to the Motherland as any other province of Turkey, and has constituted an inseparable part thereof'.<sup>207</sup> If the Greek representatives at the conference were frustrated by Zorlu's references to climate and soil, they must have been furious at his succeeding argument regarding population. On the question of the eighteen percent Turkish minority, Zorlu argued, 'it is not sufficient to say... that 100,000 Turks live there. One should rather say that 100,000 out of 24,000,000 Turks live there and that 300,000 Turkish-Cypriots [individuals of Turkish-Cypriot decent] live in various parts of Turkey'.<sup>208</sup> The argument treated the Turkish-Cypriots not as a minority, but as part of a larger majority that deserved to be treated as such. Zorlu concluded by calling for the Cypriot Church to 'refrain from dabbling in politics'<sup>209</sup> and then launched a thinly veiled threat against Greece. Since it had been put forward previously that Turkey would regard any change in Cypriot sovereignty as a repudiation of the Treaty of Lausanne, the Turkish foreign minister reminded the assembled Greek representatives that the 'Greek-Turkish friendship, cooperation and alliance is based on a political agreement in principle established by the Treaty of Lausanne'.<sup>210</sup> In other words, changing Cypriot sovereignty would void the Greek-Turkish entente and put the two countries into conflict with each other.

This back and forth continued throughout the conference with no progress being made. Macmillan attempted to retrieve something positive from the proceedings

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<sup>206</sup> Statement of Mr. Zorlu, 1 September 1955, *The Tripartite Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1955), p.21.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., p.22.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., p.25.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

during his statement on 6 September. His vague generalities and political manoeuvring do not obscure the reality that the conference was at best futile in and at worst detrimental to bringing peace to Cyprus. The foreign secretary emphasised such similarities between the parties as he could:

I think the first stage of the Conference brought out the fact that, in spite of three important differences of opinion, all three delegations were agreed upon three vital decisions: first, they are absolutely agreed on the over-riding need, transcending every other consideration, of maintaining the friendship and cooperation and the ties which bind these three countries here represented in close alliance... Secondly, they are, I think, agreed in recognizing the key strategic importance of Cyprus and the vital contribution which the British with their allies have to make in the maintenance of peace and security... thirdly... all of us in our different ways have a duty to the population, the people of Cyprus, to see that their progress and happiness is maintained.<sup>211</sup>

The progress of the people of Cyprus would take place in the context of ‘real, genuine advance towards internal self-government’.<sup>212</sup> Of course, this self-government would in no way mean self-determination. Any new constitution would come from the minds of British policymakers and be implemented by a British governor, in a colony that would remain British territory. Stephanopoulos, keenly aware of the absence of the Greek-Cypriots from the negotiations wondered how any ‘constitution for Cyprus could be described as democratic if Cypriots were not associated with the task of working it out’.<sup>213</sup> The strongest and most ominous words, however, came from Zorlu. The Turkish foreign minister laid the blame at the doorstep of the Greeks whose persistent ‘demands in spite of the sincere and friendly warnings made by Turkey during the three years prior to this Conference have brought us to this inextricable position today’. Events had demonstrated that ‘Turkey has always attached more importance to that alliance [with Greece] and to that friendship’.

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<sup>211</sup> Statement of Mr. Macmillan, 6 September 1955, *The Tripartite Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus*, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1955), p.30.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, p.31.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, p.35.

Moreover, ‘the question of Cyprus is of such importance... that it is extremely difficult to maintain and to safeguard the friendship and the alliance with Turkey while seeking at the same time in one way or another to arrive either at the union of Cyprus with Greece or the giving of self-determination to the Island of Cyprus’.<sup>214</sup> Whether Zorlu’s words were pure rhetoric designed to facilitate tough Turkish negotiating or a genuine expression of frustration and anger, Turkey’s commitment to its Greek friends was already being demonstrated by large-scale riots in Istanbul and Izmir directed at the Greek minorities in those cities.

Modern historians have not been kind to the Tripartite Conference. Richard Lamb, in *The Failure of the Eden Government*, described the conference as little more than ‘shadow boxing’ on Eden’s part. Eden, ‘determined not to give an inch to Greek claims’, used the conference to place the onus for the failure to reach a compromise on Turkey, in spite of ‘liberal’ offers on the part of Great Britain.<sup>215</sup> This is unfair. Constitutional offers such as the Winster proposals were rejected out of hand by the Greek-Cypriots who, led by the Church, maintained a position that *enosis* and only *enosis* would suffice. This fundamental unwillingness to compromise on the part of the Greeks must be recognised as a significant factor in the failure of negotiations at this stage. The minimum (and only) Greek demand – *enosis* – could not be reconciled with maximum British or Turkish concessions. Only a complete capitulation by the British would have satisfied the Greeks.

Turkish hostility towards *enosis* was real and did not require any ‘stage-managing’ on the part of the British. The union of Cyprus with Greece was something that the Turkish government would never accept; from the genesis of the insurgency everyone involved except the Greek-Cypriot Church and EOKA seemed to recognise

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<sup>214</sup> Statement of Mr. Zorlu, 7 September 1955, *The Tripartite Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus*, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1955), p.38.

<sup>215</sup> Richard Lamb, *The Failure of the Eden Government*, (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1987), p.133.

that fact. Zorlu's words at the conference confirmed the historical, political, military, and emotional importance of the island for Turkey. Lamb himself comes around to this point, partially contradicting his own argument, acknowledging that '[t]he Tripartite Conference duly revealed the impossibility of Turkish and Greek agreement'.<sup>216</sup> Any analysis of the conference must acknowledge that this chasm was merely revealed by the conference, not created by it.

The failure of the London Conference had a significant impact on the Cyprus insurgency. The gulf among the three involved powers was plain to everyone, including the protagonists themselves. Great Britain, Greece, and Turkey, would not come together again for some time, and then only when the threat of direct armed conflict forced them into compromises that they were not ready to accept in 1955. In the short term, the conference's failure prompted each power to take its own actions. Greece continued to champion the Cyprus issue at the United Nations and to supply EOKA with arms and money. Although the conference had not furthered Greek aims, many in Athens and the *enosis* supporters in Cyprus felt that the compromise represented by the conference itself had been won through the use of arms and that continued violence would force the British into greater concessions.<sup>217</sup> As in the case of the defeated UN motion of 1954, a failure in the political arena led to greater violence on the ground. Putting faith in increased action by EOKA, however, ignored the possibility that further violence might raise the ire of Turkey and, while gaining ground against the British, could harden Turkish attitudes.

For its part, Britain attempted to tighten its control of Cyprus and eliminate EOKA on the ground. Governor Armitage, who had lobbied for Makarios's inclusion at the conference, was at odds with the government's line. Armitage had hoped for the

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Crawshaw, p.136.

inclusion of Greek-Cypriot ministers in the new constitution and for a more conciliatory line towards Makarios's demands.<sup>218</sup> These differences and the escalating disorder in Cyprus created pressure within the British government for Armitage's replacement by someone more qualified to put down the unrest. On 9 September, as Armitage prepared to return from London to Cyprus, Lennox-Boyd asked him if he was happy remaining in Cyprus in light of the fact that 'a more important governorship' was about to become open. 'Armitage replied that he had taken on the job and would like to finish it.'<sup>219</sup> The message, however, was clear – Sir Robert's days in Cyprus were numbered. By mid-September, members of the government had approached Field Marshal Sir John Harding, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, about his interest in the Cyprus job. When Harding accepted the post, Lennox-Boyd informed Armitage of his replacement in a letter of 23 September. 'I hope you will realize that this is in no sense a reflection on your administration as Governor. I am making this change not because of any inadequacy on your part, but solely because the present situation calls, as it did in Malaya a few years ago, for a Governor with military standing and experience.'<sup>220</sup> Armitage informed his parents about the decision the very next day, telling them that they would soon read about his replacement by Harding. 'Events here, present and future', he wrote, 'make this the prime job for a military trained man... now strategic considerations must prevail. It is a bitter blow, but I am getting another appointment, which will be announced later.'<sup>221</sup> Reflecting on the situation, Armitage claimed that the realities of the situation were such that he hardly regretted leaving: 'When one looks onto the rolls of barbed wire in the garden, the bodyguard and armed vehicles which follow me whenever I go out...

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<sup>218</sup> Baker, p.110.

<sup>219</sup> Baker, p.198.

<sup>220</sup> RHL, Letter from Lennox-Boyd to Sir Robert Armitage, 23 September, 1955.

<sup>221</sup> RHL, Mss Afr. S. 2204, Sir Robert P. Armitage Papers, Box 1, Letter to his parents, 24 September 1955.

it is not altogether unwelcome that one should move to another atmosphere.’<sup>222</sup>

British policy in Cyprus was about to undergo significant changes.

In Turkey, however, the lack of progress in London sparked the most immediate and dramatic response. The day before the conference closed, with no progress having been made, there was an explosion in the courtyard of the Turkish consulate in the Greek city of Thessaloniki. No one was injured and later reports claimed that the Turks themselves had thrown the stick of dynamite. Immediately, however, word spread through Turkey that Greek nationalists had destroyed the birth-house of Atatürk which, because it was near the consulate, had been slightly damaged in the explosion.<sup>223</sup> Angry mobs of Turks took to the streets of Istanbul and Izmir seeking revenge. As with the bombing in Thessaloniki, responsibility for the riots is incompletely understood. Greek sources emphasise the complicity of the Turkish government in instigating the riots and allowing them to inflict massive damage. Some British observers agreed. Harold Macmillan, for one, felt that the riots ‘were undoubtedly connived at if not promoted by the Government’.<sup>224</sup>

Over the night of 6-7 September, mobs launched a savage attack against Greeks and Armenians in Istanbul and Izmir. The violence brought back memories of the worst actions of the Turkish forces during the First World War and the Greco-Turkish war of 1919-22.<sup>225</sup> Using rudimentary weapons, incendiaries, and improvised battering rams, angry crowds looted Greek and Armenian shops, burned churches, and assaulted Greek and Armenian citizens. The homes of Greek NATO officers were targeted in Izmir arousing the suspicion of at least one reporter from the *New York*

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Responsibility for the explosion in Thessaloniki is hotly contested. Turkish sources blame Greek radicals while Greek sources point the finger of blame at Turkish groups seeking to create hostility.

<sup>224</sup> Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune*, p.672.

<sup>225</sup> Many historians feel that these actions amounted to a campaign of genocide conducted by successive Turkish Governments of the Young Turks and by Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk).

*Times*, who observed that the ‘Turkish mobs... were led directly to the inconspicuous and widely separated houses’. His conclusion was that ‘at least some aspects of the rioting [were] tolerated by officialdom’.<sup>226</sup>

The scale of the destruction was so great that Prime Minister Adnan Menderes was forced to call out the Turkish army to contain the violence and to place the two cities under martial law. When the rioting died down, the appalling scale of the damage began to emerge. The *New York Times* reported on 17 September that ‘[m]ore than 4,000 shops, mostly Greek or Armenian-owned were totally wrecked by the rioters the night of Sept. 6. Seven hundred homes were damaged... eighty out of eighty-five Greek churches in the country were attacked and seriously damaged. Some were ruined by planted fires.’ In Istanbul, it was ‘as if every third shop on Madison Avenue and half of those on the Avenue of the Americas had been ripped apart and their goods strewn on the streets’.<sup>227</sup> While the *New York Times* estimated the damage at \$300 million, the Athens papers spoke of \$500 million and added that twenty-five had been killed, hundreds injured and over one hundred women raped.<sup>228</sup> In debating Cyprus before, during, and after the conference, Turkey had continually voiced concerns that its minority there would be in peril at the hands of the Greek-Cypriot majority in the event of *enosis*. In this analysis, perhaps Turkey was projecting its own poor treatment of minorities onto its opponents.

Regardless of any debate over the statistics, several facts remain from the riots. Significant damage was inflicted on the property of Greek and Armenian minorities in those two cities. The Greek-Turkish alliance, built up with such care during the 1930s and 1940s suffered a dramatic setback. Finally, Great Britain and the

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<sup>226</sup> *New York Times*, ‘Disastrous Effects of the Turkish Riots,’ C.L. Sulzberger, September 17, 1955, p.14.

<sup>227</sup> *The New York Times*, ‘Rioting in Turkey Called Danger Sign,’ Michael L. Hoffman, September 17, 1955, p.1.

<sup>228</sup> Averoff, p.49.

United States were forced to acknowledge the strength of sentiment in Turkey on the Cyprus issue; real and substantial animosities were present between the Greeks and the Turks and only minimal provocation was necessary to turn this latent dislike into open hostility. The political purpose of the riots, in the words of Robert Holland, was ‘to demonstrate unequivocally the seriousness of the Turkish claims over Cyprus. In this vein the actions were directed principally against Greece, but they were a vivid reminder, as well, to the British (and also to the Americans, presently unpopular in Turkey following a cut in aid payments), whose Embassy was afforded scant protection.’<sup>229</sup>

Even though the political message of the riots was directed towards Britain as much as it was towards the Greeks, the violence in Cyprus and continued Greek action at the United Nations left some in the British government with very little sympathy for the suffering inflicted on Greeks by the riots in Turkey. As an unnamed official from the Foreign Office quipped to the British ambassador in Athens immediately after the riots: ‘The Greeks have sown the wind and are now reaping the whirlwind. It would be as well... to let the medicine work.’<sup>230</sup>

What effect this bitter medicine had is open to debate, but the failure of the Tripartite Conference left the British in need of a local solution to the ever increasing scale of EOKA violence. When Greece again failed to make headway in the United Nations at the end of September 1955, Grivas once more had a diplomatic failure in New York to use as ammunition for his war. With the first round of diplomacy stymied, and a field marshal on his way to Cyprus, a volatile mixture was forming.

In light of the failure of the Tripartite Conference and the riots in Turkey, the Cyprus Intelligence Committee’s report of 18 October 1955 tried to forecast the

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<sup>229</sup> Holland, p.76.

<sup>230</sup> TNA, CO 926/270, Telegram No. 576, 9 September 1955, from Foreign Office to Athens.

direction of the insurgency. It also provided a catalogue of EOKA's activities, and defined the organisation, its structure, leadership and objectives. Among other points, the report correctly identified the complete and personal control of Grivas over the organisation, the supply of arms from Greece, the full and active support from some members of the Orthodox Church (including within Greece), and the ambiguous, but central role of Makarios. It expressed keen awareness that EOKA posed a long-term problem to British interests in Cyprus and supported this point by tracing the rise in the scale and scope of the organisation's violence through the summer and autumn of 1955. 'EOKA activities have progressively become more ambitious consequent on the success attending its terrorist campaign and efficient use of propaganda', wrote the committee; 'In addition to these activities [sabotage, assassination, raids on police stations and military installations] which will probably continue there are indications that EOKA will resort to raids and ambushes on a larger scale by guerrilla bands.'<sup>231</sup>

Although expecting increased violence against the British, the report was less absolute in identifying EOKA's scope for future action against the two Cypriot groups most likely to oppose its campaign for *enosis*. While claiming

to have no party objectives and to be willing to respect the political views of all Cypriots... Threats have been made on the lives of prominent Communists and one attack has been made. EOKA has subsequently denied responsibility for these activities but AKEL has taken them seriously and has consistently opposed the use of violence in the *enosis* struggle.<sup>232</sup>

EOKA's measured attitude towards Turkish-Cypriots is also mentioned. 'Supporters of EOKA were to regard Turkish-Cypriots as Cypriots like themselves and were to assure them of peaceable conditions when liberty had been obtained. Meanwhile the

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<sup>231</sup> TNA, CO 926/455, Cyprus Intelligence Committee Report (55), 'The Nature of EOKA, Its Political Background and Sources of Direction,' 18 October, 1955, p.2.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., p.4.

Turkish-Cypriots should do nothing to hamper the Enosis movement.<sup>233</sup> In conclusion, Grivas's organisation was at first 'careful not to antagonize Turkish-Cypriots'.<sup>234</sup> In the war with the British and with Greek-Cypriot opposition, however, the restraints were coming off.

From the British perspective, the deepening of the conflict in Cyprus was personified by the appointment of Field Marshal Sir John Harding to the position of governor. Although the field marshal's first order of business upon his arrival in Cyprus was to begin discussions with Archbishop Makarios (he did so the very day after his arrival), he was chosen largely because of his military credentials. The destruction of the EOKA and the reestablishment of some degree of security on the island seemed, to many British policymakers, to be the necessary first step to any political solution. For the present, it seemed that the future of the insurgency would hinge on the nearly impossible task facing Field Marshal Harding: to fight Grivas with one hand while reaching out to Makarios with the other.

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<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., p.5.

### **Chapter III – Countermeasures: The British Response**

*'In my view the situation in Cyprus is likely to develop in one of two ways. Either I shall reach some basis of co-operation with the Archbishop, in which case the emphasis will be on constitutional development and improvement in social and economic conditions, or there will be an open conflict involving a full scale emergency campaign in which improvement in social and economic conditions will be equally important as the principal political and psychological weapon. In either case we shall have to break up EOKA and the Communist organisation to achieve a lasting success.'*<sup>235</sup> (Field Marshal Sir John Harding to Alan Lennox-Boyd, 5 October 1955)

#### **A Soldier as Solution**

Upon his arrival in Cyprus, Field Marshal Sir John Harding communicated his opinion to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Alan Lennox-Boyd, that the pending negotiations with Archbishop Makarios would be critical to the course of the insurgency. The Greek-Cypriots had been excluded from the Tripartite Conference and Armitage, in conjunction with Lennox-Boyd, had been unable to reach any understanding with Makarios. Now, with their position apparently strengthened by the demonstration of strong Turkish feeling against *enosis*, the British hoped to pressure Makarios into a compromise. British policymakers hoped that an agreement with Makarios would undercut support for violence and lead to a new constitution providing circumscribed self-government for the Cypriot people under continued British sovereignty. Harding was convinced that if the negotiations failed, pro-*enosis* violence would accelerate. With or without an agreement, the field marshal felt that EOKA would have to be eliminated through new security measures and aggressive

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<sup>235</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Telegram No. 779 from Harding to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 5 October 1955.

operations. In keeping with the two-track approach adopted by British policymakers, this chapter will focus on British negotiations with Makarios, while the next will deal largely with the reorganisation of the security apparatus in Cyprus and the methods employed by Governor Harding to combat EOKA in the field.

In both security and diplomacy, British policymakers attempted to apply lessons to Cyprus that had been learned during periods of unrest in other colonial territories. The central example was Malaya, where British and local forces had largely contained an insurgency movement between 1952 and 1955. Significant differences between the cases of Malaya and Cyprus, however, meant that policies would have to be adapted to local conditions. These differences were one factor that prevented an early agreement between the British government and the *enosis* forces. A second factor was the continued bloodshed throughout the negotiations, which eroded goodwill on both sides. At the same time, Makarios's unwillingness to condemn violence remained a constant irritant to Governor Harding. Most significantly, Makarios and other *enosis* leaders remained obstinate in their refusal to acknowledge a place for Turkey or the Turkish-Cypriots in any political solution. Time and again, British policymakers found themselves caught between the demands of Greece and Greek-Cypriots on the one hand and those of Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots on the other.

Field Marshal Harding came to Cyprus with an impressive military career to his credit. He had commanded major formations during the Second World War both in North Africa and Europe. After the war, he was the commander of British forces in the Mediterranean. Between 1949 and 1951 he served as Commander in Chief of Far

East Land Forces, where he engaged in limited counterinsurgency operations.<sup>236</sup>

These positions provided him with a combination of geographical and tactical experience that made him an excellent candidate to take command in Cyprus. Still, almost all of the field marshal's experience had been in conventional warfare and he remained very much a traditional soldier.

Harding's military career culminated in his appointment as Chief of the Imperial General Staff in 1952. With the failure of the Tripartite Conference at the beginning of September 1955 and the continuation of EOKA attacks throughout the summer, Eden approached Harding about taking control in Cyprus. On 23 September, Harding, already spoken of as the new governor, met with the foreign secretary, Harold Macmillan, to discuss the situation in the colony.<sup>237</sup> The next day, Harding received a letter from the prime minister: 'I want to tell you how sincerely grateful I have been for the spirit in which you met the offer we have been discussing these last two days', Eden wrote. 'I quite understand how little attraction such a post can have for you at this time. After a brilliant military career there is nothing to be gained, and may be something to be lost, in undertaking such responsibilities, but equally I know how little you allow matters of that kind to weigh in the scale when national interest is concerned.'<sup>238</sup> The prime minister was eager for Harding to assume command at the earliest possible time. As he explained: 'I have been profoundly unhappy about Cyprus for some time past. I do not think we could have avoided this situation.'<sup>239</sup> The very day after Eden's letter, on 25 September, Harding was appointed governor of Cyprus and on 3 October he arrived on the island. The day after his arrival, he

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<sup>236</sup> IWMA, AFH 3, Letter from Malcolm MacDonald, Commissioner-General South East Asia to Harding, 12 December, 1949.

<sup>237</sup> TNA, FO 371/117662, Minute by Macmillan, 23 September, 1955 on Telegram No. 683 from Armitage to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 22 September, 1955.

<sup>238</sup> IWMA, AFH 3, Letter from Eden to Harding, 24 September, 1955.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

began the first of a series of face-to-face talks with Makarios aimed at bringing the insurgency to an end.

The choice of a soldier of Harding's stature as governor of a colony in crisis followed the example of his successor as Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir Gerald Templer. Templer had been made high commissioner of Malaya in 1952 in order to combat the communist-inspired insurgency there and earned great praise for his efforts. In spite of his military credentials, Templer's approach in Malaya, in the opinion of at least one analyst, 'was *not* primarily military. Instead, under his guidance, the UK/GOM [Government of Malaya] employed a mixed strategy encompassing civil, police, military and psychological warfare programs, all within the context of a firm rule of law and steady progress toward self-government and independence, which robbed the insurgency of much political appeal.'<sup>240</sup> The now-famous phrase addressing the importance of winning 'hearts and minds' during counterinsurgency operations was said by Templer in connection with Malaya.<sup>241</sup> Winning over the Cypriot population, however, was a difficult and different proposition.

Harding's dual diplomatic and military functions were a legacy of Malaya, where Templer had served as both the civilian and military head of the British administration. In Cyprus, Harding took charge of the political mechanism as governor while also taking 'personal charge of overall planning and direction of security operations... [while also acting as his] own director of operations as Templer did in Malaya'.<sup>242</sup> Harding was aware of the experience in Malaya, telling journalists shortly after his appointment that: 'On the analogy of Kenya and Malaya, the

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<sup>240</sup> R.W. Komer, 'The Malayan Emergency in Retrospect: Organisation of A Successful Counterinsurgency Effort,' (Santa Monica: Rand, February, 1972), p. v.

<sup>241</sup> Lennox A. Mills, *Malaya*, (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1968), p.63.

<sup>242</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Telegram No. 779 from Harding to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 5 October 1955.

restoration of order will be a tripartite operation between the civil authorities, the police, and the military.’<sup>243</sup> This ‘tripartite’ coordination to restore law and order was one of the primary lessons from those experiences that Harding would apply in Cyprus. The field marshal, however, seemed less convinced of the importance of the ‘hearts and minds’. The coordination he put into effect used three different actors, but each wielded their own particular iron rod of ‘hard’ power. Harding left the politicians to worry about the international ramifications of coercive action in Cyprus and to counter Grivas’s awareness that the insurgency would be fought not only in the streets and mountains of Cyprus, but at the negotiating table and in the court of public opinion.

In spite of the importance of the Malayan experience to British counter-insurgency thinking, there were key differences with the situation in Cyprus (particularly in the diplomatic sphere) that complicated the achievement of progress along similar lines. One major reason for British success in Malaya had been that the premise of early self-government for the Malays was not contested. As modern counter-insurgent expert John Nagl has written, Templer’s ‘brief from the government began with the statement that: ‘The policy of Her Majesty's Government in Great Britain is that Malaya should in due course become a fully self-governing nation.’<sup>244</sup>

This stood in stark contrast to Cyprus. The British government was willing to recognize the principle of self-government by mid-1955 (although they argued that present conditions prevented its implementation), but felt unable to concede self-determination.<sup>245</sup> At the same time, any move towards self-determination was vehemently opposed by Turkey because of the strategic importance of the island to

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<sup>243</sup> *The Times*, ‘Sir John Harding’s Aims in Cyprus Restoration of Order Followed by Political Settlement,’ Tuesday, September 27, 1955; p.8; Issue 53339; col D.

<sup>244</sup> John Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002), p.88.

<sup>245</sup> TNA, CAB 128/29, CM (55) 30<sup>th</sup> Conclusions, 5 September 1955.

Turkey and because of the Turkish belief that they could not live under Greek rule.<sup>246</sup> *Enosis* had been consistently opposed by the Turkish minority in Cyprus since the arrival of Britain in the island.

The Turkish and Greek factors represented a second essential difference from the Malayan experience. While ethnic Chinese living in Malaya were responsible for the insurgency, they did not seek to annex Malaya to China as much as they sought the spread of communism. As demonstrated during the Tripartite Conference and the annual manoeuvres in the United Nations, the Cyprus insurgency had an international aspect at its very core. Cyprus, along with maintaining cooperation with Turkey and Greece, was central to Britain's post-war strategic posture and Harding's negotiations with Makarios would have to take account of this.

A third key difference centred on the composition of the insurgency itself. While the insurgency in Malaya was communist inspired, EOKA was a right-wing organisation supported by the Cypriot Church. In the dynamics of the Cold War, there was less difficulty in mobilising public opinion at home and among western allies (particularly the United States) to subdue a movement with ties to communism. Mobilising support against non-communist foes – and even acknowledging that Cypriot communists were not behind the violence – would prove challenging for the British government.

In Malaya, the insurgency was carried out by members of the ethnic Chinese minority living within Malaya. These insurgents were not supported by the country's native Malays and had differences in language and appearance, which security forces used to isolate them. The demographics meant that a Malayanization of government and the civil service increased the legitimacy of the Government of Malaya and

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<sup>246</sup> Statement made by Zorlu, 1 September 1955, The Tripartite Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1955), pp.19-25.

contributed to maintaining order and combating the insurgency. In Cyprus, increasing the participation of Greek-Cypriots in the government would exacerbate the tension between Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots, by making Turkish-Cypriots feel further marginalised. Furthermore, the combination of intimidation by EOKA and sympathy for *enosis* within the Greek-Cypriot population undermined their desire to participate in the British government of Cyprus.

Templer and Harding, in spite of their shared experiences in the hierarchy of the British army, were different commanders. They had both risen through the ranks of conventional forces during World War II, but Templer had also served as director of military intelligence before his time in Malaya.<sup>247</sup> This service convinced Templer of the central role of intelligence in counter-insurgency operations. As he explained to one journalist: ‘The Emergency will be won by our intelligence system – our Special Branch.’<sup>248</sup> During his time in Cyprus, Harding did not display such a focus on intelligence. Major General Kenneth Darling, the Director of Operations to Harding’s successor, Sir Hugh Foot, went so far as to argue in his *Report on the Cyprus Emergency* that a properly organised and fully unified intelligence service did not come into existence until late 1958.<sup>249</sup> While the conclusions of Darling’s report were obviously intended to magnify his own accomplishments while in Cyprus, the intelligence system did indeed undergo major reforms after his arrival to the benefit of British operations.

Finally, in Archbishop Makarios the British faced an astute politician and an individual of rhetorical skill. There was no comparable figure in Malaya confronting General Templer, and no one who could inflict similar damage on the international

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<sup>247</sup> Nagl, p.88.

<sup>248</sup> Templer quoted in Nagl, p.91.

<sup>249</sup> IWM, Harding Papers, AFH6, Major General Kenneth Darling, *Report on the Cyprus Emergency*, 31 July, 1959, pp.4-5.

political scene to British interests. While Templar's approach offered insights into the organisation and operation of the security services, key differences made it difficult for the Malaya experience to make a significant contribution towards a diplomatic solution in Cyprus.

### **A Time to Talk**

The Harding-Makarios discussions defined the early phase of the Cyprus Emergency and established the major points of disagreement between Britain and *enosis* supporters that would endure for much of the conflict. The failure of these talks resulted in the deportation of the archbishop with three other leading Greek-Cypriot figures, and the escalation of violence to its peak levels in November 1956. The negotiations were difficult. One major obstacle was the fact that Harding was playing the two oftentimes conflicting roles of diplomatic negotiator and military enforcer. Harding's measures against the insurgency made Greek-Cypriots identify him with the oppression of British rule. To them, it was difficult to negotiate with someone who was seen as responsible for curfews, mass arrests, and the imprisonment and later judicial executions of EOKA fighters. Harding found it equally challenging having to discuss a peace settlement with Makarios, the leader of the *enosis* movement and the man he felt was directly responsible for the violence that claimed the lives of British soldiers on the island.

As much as the discussions centred on the two protagonists, other parties played a significant role. They were directed on the British side by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Alan Lennox-Boyd – who came to Cyprus during the final phase of negotiations in an attempt to clinch a deal – and the prime minister. For the Greek-Cypriots, Archbishop Makarios had frequent recourse to his councillors within

the Ethnarchy. Some of these leaders, especially Bishop Kyprianos of Kyrenia, were instrumental in shaping a particularly uncompromising approach in the negotiations. Grivas remained in control of the military aspects of the struggle. While the colonel did not hector Makarios into obstinacy, he did encourage the belief that EOKA, and its violent actions, had real power to influence the course of events. While Turkish-Cypriots did not participate directly in the discussions, they were in constant communication with Harding, keeping the governor informed of their attitude towards any potential settlement.

On the day of Harding's arrival in Cyprus, Makarios asked the Ethnarchy Bureau for their views on his upcoming meeting with the new governor. Several key points emerged, all along familiar lines. First, the bureau members emphasised that the British had to recognise the principle of self-determination. Second, a pre-determined time limit (not exceeding five years), pending the implementation of self-determination, would have to be agreed. Third, the 'nonsense about the Cyprus question being a Greco-Turkish dispute, [must] be cleared up'.<sup>250</sup> The Ethnarchy continued to ignore the reality that an insistence on self-determination, the prospect of placing Turkish-Cypriots under Greek rule, and thrusting Turkey out of the picture would be unacceptable to the British, the Turkish-Cypriot minority, and the Turkish government.

From Harding's first meeting with Makarios, it was clear to the field marshal that Turkey's position in any settlement was the major stumbling block. Turkish interests affected both self-determination and a time-table for its implementation. Eden perceived this from Harding's correspondence and wrote to the new governor on 8 October that:

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<sup>250</sup> TNA, CO 926/450, *Minutes of the Ethnarchy Council and Ethnarchy Bureau and Related Documents, October 1955 to February 1956* (Nicosia: Printed by Direction of His Excellency the Governor), Meeting of 3 October, 1955, p.12.

although the Archbishop's position seems somewhat obscure, I take it that his real purpose is to manoeuvre us into excluding consultation with the Turkish Government or the Greek Government or even both... I cannot judge whether the Archbishop's purpose is to probe our thoughts further, or merely to divide us from our allies, particularly the Turks. If the latter, of course we cannot give way to him.<sup>251</sup>

In Harding, Eden had chosen the right man to remain stalwart. On the archbishop's aims and the British response, Harding was in complete agreement with Number 10. The governor was convinced that Makarios's primary aim was to reduce Turkey's influence on decisions in Cyprus and to settle the affair on a bilateral basis between Greek-Cypriots and the British government.<sup>252</sup> For British policymakers, however, Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots needed to be included in the discussion.

*The Times* hit on this important gap in an article on 6 October: 'The Turkish view is that there can be no question of even the acknowledgement of the right of self-determination, and how this can possibly be reconciled with the Greek Cypriots' demand that Britain should at least acknowledge their right to self-determination is a problem which appears to be quite insoluble.'<sup>253</sup> Through the first series of Harding-Makarios talks, the problem remained insoluble and violence in Cyprus continued. On one point, however, the Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots seemed to be in agreement; neither side seemed interested in a constitutional compromise.<sup>254</sup>

On 16 November, Harding announced a new programme of economic and social development to run concurrently with the constitutional overtures. The plan would involve £38 million in expenditures on rural development, irrigation, electricity, inland telecommunications, port development and education, all aimed at

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<sup>251</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Telegram No. 792 from the Prime Minister to Governor Harding, 8 October 1955.

<sup>252</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Telegram No. 807 from Governor Harding to the Prime Minister, 9 October 1955.

<sup>253</sup> *The Times*, Thursday, 6 October 1955; p.6; Issue 53344; col F.

<sup>254</sup> Armitage quoted in Baker, p.108.

bringing new prosperity to the island.<sup>255</sup> The history of the Winster Constitution was repeating itself. Once again, if the British government hoped that advertising a massive investment in Cyprus's future would help turn opinion in its favour, it was seriously mistaken. To Greek-Cypriots, the investment represented less the fact that British policy aimed to help the Cypriot population, and more the reality that Britain envisaged a long-term presence on the island. It was not a welcomed message to the *enosis* movement.

Neither the negotiations nor the governor's investment pledge reduced EOKA activity. The organisation's attacks were a damaging and daily feature of life. On 19 November 1955, no fewer than forty-one bombs exploded across the island. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, two British soldiers were killed in a gun-battle. While 74 acts of violence were recorded in October, there were 217 in November.<sup>256</sup> The rising tide prompted Harding to action. On 26 November, the governor declared a state of emergency, giving him a new series of legal mechanisms to crack down on insurgent activities and public disorder.

In early December 1955, Harding and Makarios were once more at the negotiating table, but Harding was not optimistic about the prospects for a settlement. As he wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on 2 December, if discussions break down 'I shall be forced to take really strong measures over a protracted period, no matter how unpleasant they may be, to keep the situation under control'.<sup>257</sup> Harding's hard-line position was as much a demonstration of his own convictions as an exhortation to Her Majesty's Government to retain their firm stance with regard to Cyprus, or, in the event of concessions, to make them soon and openly. 'I cannot

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<sup>255</sup> *The Times*, Thursday, Nov 17, 1955; pg. 10; Issue 53380; col E.

<sup>256</sup> Written Answers, 22 February 1957, *Hansard*, Volume 564, p.104.

<sup>257</sup> IWMA, Harding Papers, AFH 10, Telegram No. 1153 from Harding to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 2 December, 1955.

conceive of anything more damaging for the future of this island', Harding warned, 'or for our world wide strategic position than to make a stand now and later on to surrender to public opinion and coercion. Again with great respect I would urge that if concessions are to be made let them be made now, otherwise let us stand absolutely firm and see the business through.'<sup>258</sup>

Harding's hard-line was reflected in his attitude towards leading figures in the Cypriot Church. By December, the field marshal was already satisfied that the best way to end the violence was the destruction of EOKA, to be achieved, in part, by the removal of Makarios and Kyprianos from the political arena. Such a course of action had already been discussed at the highest levels of the British government, even before Harding's appointment. In September, the Cabinet had debated the merits of deporting Kyprianos. The conclusions of a meeting on 17 September were that 'the Foreign Secretary should continue to oppose action against the Bishop of Kyrenia' due to the possibility of a backlash in public opinion.<sup>259</sup> Such concerns did not deter Harding, and the field marshal continued to press for a reconsideration of this position. At the beginning of December, he once more laid out his views to the colonial secretary, arguing that the removing 'most extreme element in the Ethnarchy' and restricting the 'movements and freedom of expression of other members' would be necessary if negotiations broke down.<sup>260</sup>

The Bishop of Kyrenia's continued preaching of *enosis* rhetoric infuriated Harding. On 5 December, he wrote to Lennox-Boyd in exasperation, referencing a report he had received from the intelligence services.

Bishop of Kyrenia is reliably reported to have made the following statements in the course of his sermon on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December: 'the day of freedom

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> TNA, FO 371/117661, Memo by RW Selby, 17 September, 1955.

<sup>260</sup> IWMA, Harding Papers, AFH 10, Telegram No. 1165 from Harding to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 3 December, 1955.

approached and that the Cyprus youth would with the help of St. Barbara who is the Guardian of the Greek Artillery continue their struggle in towns, villages and the mountains until Enosis was achieved and King Paul came to Cyprus and hoisted the Greek flag on the Government House Nicosia. He ended with cheers for Greece, the Greek Royal family, the struggling youth of Cyprus and Enosis.

This is more than I can stand', wrote Harding. 'Request your confirmation that I may proceed with deportation.'<sup>261</sup>

Regardless of the substance of Makarios's preaching, the British government remained reluctant to authorise the deportation of a leading cleric. It was a risky political move and one which they felt would upset efforts at reaching a diplomatic solution to the problem. W.H. Young of the Foreign Office minuted on Harding's request:

However justified the Governor's exasperation, the present seems a bad moment tactically to proceed to extremes. We have gone to great lengths to keep the negotiations with the Greek Government alive and the Secretary of State and the Colonial Secretary took great pains in the debate yesterday to leave the way open for the Archbishop and the Greeks. There can be little doubt that the expulsion of a leading Bishop, however justified, would put an end to any hope of a negotiated settlement.<sup>262</sup>

The attempt to reach a negotiated settlement was following its own tortuous course. On 9 December, a revised formula for constitutional progress was given to the Greek government. British policymakers hoped that a formula devised by London and cleared by the Greek and Turkish governments would serve as a foundation for progress in the discussion with Makarios, providing direction and mutual reassurance. The relevant paragraphs read (points of subsequent contention with Makarios are in bold):

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<sup>261</sup> TNA, FO 371/117675, Telegram No. 1185 from Harding to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 5 December, 1955.

<sup>262</sup> Minute by WH Young (Foreign Office), 6 December, 1955, on Telegram No. 1185 from Harding to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 5 December, 1955.

It is not therefore their [HMG's] position that the principle of self-determination can never be applicable to Cyprus. It is their position that it is not now a practical proposition both on account of the present strategic situation and on account of the consequences on **relations between NATO powers in the Eastern Mediterranean**. If the people of Cyprus will participate in the constitutional development, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to work for a **final solution consistent with the treaty obligations [NATO and the Baghdad Pact] and strategic interests of Her Majesty's Government and its allies**, which will satisfy the wishes of the people of Cyprus. Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to discuss the future of the island with representatives of the people of Cyprus when self-government has proved itself a **workable proposition** and capable of safeguarding the interests of all sections of the community.<sup>263</sup>

British policymakers felt that careful wording and soft generalities were required to prevent either the Greek/Greek-Cypriot or Turkish/Turkish-Cypriot side from reacting negatively. Tension over the nature of a possible solution was already rising in Turkey. As the ambassador in Turkey, Sir James Bowker, noted to the Foreign Office: 'The fact is that the Turks are nervous and suspicious that during the last three months Her Majesty's Government may have shifted their stand on the question of self-determination'.<sup>264</sup> According to Bowker, leading Turkish officials impressed upon him their concern that Britain's position on Cyprus might be modified by continued negotiations with Makarios. They had only 'mistrust of any dealings with the Archbishop'.<sup>265</sup> To prevent a rift with Turkey, Bowker advised that British policymakers should be careful to 'keep the Turks as regularly informed as possible about what is going on over the Cyprus issue and continue to give them all possible assurances calculated to tranquilise them about our position and policy'.<sup>266</sup>

British policy, by necessity, was something of a balancing act. In a telegram to the foreign secretary, Harding identified 'five major factors to be considered' as part

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<sup>263</sup> TNA, FO 371/123863, Cyprus – Revised Formula Given to Greek Government on December 9, 1955.

<sup>264</sup> TNA, FO 371/123863, Note from Ambassador James Bowker to JG Ward, 20 December 1955.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

of the Cyprus question. How difficult they were to reconcile can be judged simply by listing them. These were, without ‘any order of priority a) the position of the Archbishop, b) the attitude of the Greek Government, c) the feelings of the people of Cyprus including the Turkish community, d) The security situation and e) the attitude of the Turkish Government’.<sup>267</sup> The difficulty in reconciling these five points was brought home by a letter from Foreign Secretary Macmillan in a personal letter to Lord Home, then the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations. ‘All the indications at present’, wrote Macmillan,

are that this [a clause forbidding *enosis*] would be totally unacceptable both to the Greek Government and to the Greek Cypriots. Conversely, a treaty without such a stipulation would hardly be acceptable to the Turks. I think we must let the present round of negotiations, the aim of which is to get self-government started, take their course. If and when these negotiations break down, we shall have to reappraise the position. Then, I suggest, would be the time to consider some such scheme as you propose, together with others on which some preparatory work is being done.<sup>268</sup>

These were the obstacles facing Makarios and Harding as two leaders prepared for their next round of discussions.

Harding and Makarios began their third, and final, phase of negotiations on 9 January 1956. The situation on Cyprus was precarious; much concerning the direction of events on the island hinged on their discussions. EOKA’s violence during the winter of 1955-56 had continued in spite of Harding’s new emergency powers. Harding cabled Alan Lennox-Boyd in the early hours of 10 January, after his meeting with Makarios. ‘I had a meeting with the Archbishop this evening’, he wrote ‘which lasted about two and a quarter hours. It was inconclusive but at any rate established that he is prepared to continue discussions on the basis of the revised formula. At the

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<sup>267</sup> TNA, FO 371/123863, Telegram No. 5 from Harding to the Foreign Secretary, 2 January 1956.

<sup>268</sup> TNA, FO 371/123863, Personal Letter from Macmillan to Lord Home, 4 January 1956.

end we agreed to meet again shortly.<sup>269</sup> Harding related a minor detail to Lennox-Boyd which reveals something of the character of the negotiations. Makarios, according to Harding, began the discussions by questioning not issues of substance, but some specific use of wording. 'For example, did 'public security' embrace control of the policy [sic]? Surely any administration which aspired to be self-governing must control its executive organ?' Such hair-splitting did not suit the field marshal's objectives or his temperament. As he wrote to Lennox-Boyd, 'I headed him [Makarios] off the pursuit of this hare and we got down to discussion of the revised formula.'<sup>270</sup>

A one page memorandum outlining the British formula had been drafted and given to Makarios. The archbishop raised three points of concern which Harding conveyed to Lennox-Boyd:

(1) The third sentence and particularly the reference to 'consequences on relations between NATO powers in the Eastern Mediterranean.' (2) The statement that a final solution should be 'consistent with the treaty obligations' of HMG and its allies. (3) The qualification that discussion of the future of the island would have to wait until self-government had proven itself 'a workable proposition'.<sup>271</sup>

Although the British formula did not mention Turkey or Turkish interests directly, points one and two clearly referred to Cyprus's northern neighbour, the only NATO power in the Eastern Mediterranean besides Greece and, through that organisation and others, such as the Baghdad Pact, an ally of Her Majesty's Government. To Harding, the reason behind Makarios' objections remained clear. As he wrote to Lennox-Boyd: '[Makarios] left me in no doubt that what is behind his objections on points (1) and (2) is the assumption that Turkey would exercise a deciding influence over the

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<sup>269</sup> TNA, FO 371/123864, Telegram No. 50 from Harding to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 10 January 1956.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

exercise of self-determination and the reaching of a final solution'.<sup>272</sup> Point three related directly to the ability of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots to work together in governing the island.

Just two days into their discussions, a further complication regarding the place of Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriot community in the crisis was added. As noted above, Grivas's initial orders had been for EOKA operations to ignore Turkish-Cypriots in order to avoid affording the British the opportunity of setting the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus against each other. However, in early January 1956 Grivas changed his mind. In spite of his initial opposition to action against Turkish-Cypriots, the EOKA leader was now convinced that 'it was impossible to avoid all actions against them'.<sup>273</sup> Certainly, the ever increasing number of Turkish-Cypriots in the police force meant that EOKA's campaign against the police could not help but involve attacks against Turkish-Cypriots. As Grivas writes, 'certain Turks in the police worked energetically against the Organisation particularly in Paphos, and the area commander there, Yannis Droushiotis, decided one must be executed'.<sup>274</sup>

Droushiotis presented Grivas with the case against a particularly active Turkish-Cypriot police sergeant, Abdullah Ali Riza. The sergeant had been a chief witness against six villagers imprisoned for smuggling explosives into the island and had arrested another EOKA man in possession of a Sten machine gun. His work against the organisation made him a danger that needed to be removed. Grivas approved his area commander's request and authorised the sergeant's assassination. At 07.40 am on 11 January an EOKA gunman caught up with Riza as he was

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<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.73.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

returning to his home in Paphos and shot him in the chest. He died on his way to the local hospital.<sup>275</sup>

Word spread quickly throughout the island and by afternoon, Turkish-Cypriot shops in every town had closed in protest. Greek flags were pulled down and Greek-Cypriot shops were stoned, breaking their windows.<sup>276</sup> Telegrams and letters of protest from Turkish-Cypriot groups flooded in to Governor Harding. In his telegram, Dr. Fazil Kutchuk, the Chairman of the 'Cyprus Is Turkish' party, bluntly laid out his feelings:

The Turkish community is enraged at the unprovoked attack on the Turkish police sergeant who was killed by Greek terrorists this morning. Unless Government take strong measures in bringing the murderers to account and fully compensating the widow and orphans of the murdered sergeant by forcing all those who actively or passively support the terrorists to contribute an adequate sum to them. This act of violence against the Turks is bound to spread and with catastrophic repercussions for the whole Middle East. We are doing out utmost to keep the enraged Turkish community at bay telling them that we have utmost confidence in your government and in the Turkish Government which we know will not stay idle at this cowardly attack on the peaceful Turkish inhabitants of the island. We trust that you will not fail us at this most critical hour.<sup>277</sup>

The Turkish-Cypriot reaction was strong. British reports recorded that Turkish-Cypriot rioting on 11 January damaged 28 houses and shops belonging to Greek-Cypriots.<sup>278</sup> It was just the beginning of inter-communal conflict in Cyprus and the British administration would be hard-pressed to bring it under control. While the Turkish-Cypriot factor gained force, the negotiations between Harding and Makarios were reaching a critical stage and Britain was in no mood for concessions that would upset Turkey.

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<sup>275</sup> *The Times*, Thursday, 12 January 1956; pg. 8; Issue 53426; col D.

<sup>276</sup> TNA, FO 371/123864, Telegram No. 65, Situation report from Cyprus to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 12 January, 1956.

<sup>277</sup> CSA, SA1/1087/1956, Telegram 2747 from Cyprus is Turkish Party Chairman Kutchuk to Governor Harding, 11 January, 1956

<sup>278</sup> TNA, CO 926/416, Telegram No. 110 from MIDEAST Main to War Office, 14 January, 1956.

## Decisions

Two days after the riots, Makarios and Harding met for the sixth time. According to the minutes kept by the Ethnarchy secretary Nicos Kranidiotis, the meeting ‘was carried out in a polite manner compared to that of the previous meeting’.<sup>279</sup> The increased courtesy did not narrow the divide between the two principals. Makarios asked for the deletion of three phrases from the revised British formula of 9 December. First, the caveat from the British government that self-determination could not be applied immediately in Cyprus because ‘it is their position that it is not now a practical proposition both on account of the present strategical situation and on account of the consequences in relations between NATO powers in the Eastern Mediterranean’. Second, Makarios wanted Harding to remove the statement that the government would work towards a final solution of the Cyprus problem ‘consistent with the treaty obligations and strategic interests of Her Majesty's Government and its allies’. And third, he wanted discussions on the future of the island to be reserved until (limited) self-government had proved itself ‘a workable proposition’.<sup>280</sup>

On the first point, Harding was willing to modify the phrase ‘on account of the consequences in relations between NATO powers’, to read ‘on account of the present strategic and political situation in the Eastern Mediterranean’. He hoped that the removal of the reference to NATO would reduce the latent presence of Turkey in the paragraph. Makarios was unsatisfied, however, arguing that the word ‘political’ had to be deleted as redundant since ‘the obligations stemming from it are contained in

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<sup>279</sup> TNA, FO 371/123865, Telegram No. 31 from Peake to Harding, Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of HB Archbishop Makarios and the Governor of Cyprus, Sir John Harding, on January 13, 1956, 16 January 1956.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

‘strategical’’.<sup>281</sup> Harding countered that the concession was sufficient and, when he refused to concede anything further, Makarios suggested moving on to the second point. The archbishop felt that the reference to ‘treaty obligations’ in relation to the nature of a final solution was unnecessary and asked that it be removed. Harding was unwilling to concede this point either because, in his view, the British government would be open to being accused of bad faith, both in Cyprus and by its allies, if it did not mention the significance of treaty obligations.<sup>282</sup> As Harding and Makarios debated the point concerning ‘treaty obligations’, the discussion melted into the third point of contention dealing with the political situation during a period of self-government and its effect on a final solution. The back-and-forth on this subject point provides an illuminating microcosm of the talks and is worth quoting at length:

Gov [Harding]: HMG recognize straight away that no treaty exists which excludes the application of the principle of self determination to Cyprus. In any case, I would not like to prolong the discussion. I would simply like to know whether you regard the retention of treaty obligations and of the condition of the political situation as a cause for the discontinuance of the talks.

H[is] B[eatitude] [Makarios]: I know the views of my people and of my counsellors and I am sure that this reference to the treaties will not make a good impression. On the contrary it will give grounds for England to be accused of bad faith.

Gov On the contrary, Great Britain must put forward these conditions right from the beginning so that she may not be accused by her allies. If you really wish for an agreement, you must accept this point....

HB The application of obligations resulting from a treaty is obvious. Why should therefore special emphasis be attached to them in the particular case of the self-determination of the people of Cyprus?

Gov In order that Great Britain may persuade her allies and make her intentions clear to them... I fear that HMG will not accept the amendment and it would indeed be most regrettable if the formula were to be rejected for these reasons.

HB As I have already said I discussed the subject with my advisors and I say that this phrase is completely unacceptable...

Gov If we fail to find a solution this will be due to the unwillingness of Y[our] B[eatitude] to understand the obligations of Great Britain in this part of the world.

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<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

HB I am sorry to give such an impression...

Gov Would H[is] B[eatitude] [sic] accept the formula if these two points were omitted?

HB Yes. I would accept if there were to be omitted from the first sentence 'the' and 'political' and from the second 'the existing treaty obligations'. The same arguments apply to both these points.

Gov I am afraid this will cause misunderstanding between our allies to whom we must be clear.

HB We and myself are also among those to whom Great Britain must be clear.

Gov Yes, but not only you.<sup>283</sup>

Harding's increasing frustration with Makarios's position is apparent. From the references by Makarios to counsellors and the people, we see how the archbishop (whether sincerely or strategically) chose to portray himself as a spokesman and not as an undisputed leader. Finally, the crux of the issue is clear; Makarios would not accept Turkish interests or Britain's need to account for Turkey's interests in a solution for Cyprus. Harding could not budge on this point because of the importance of the Turkish alliance to Britain's position in the Middle East and to the Cold War. Makarios's final quoted sentence voiced the Greek-Cypriot desire to be the primary, if not the sole, consideration for the British policymakers. Harding's response was equally telling and demonstrated the gap between the two parties.

It is significant that the preceding exchange took place without direct reference to Turkey. Such a reference was made earlier in the discussion, but not as the centrepiece of disagreement. There is no evidence as to whether direct mention of Turkey was avoided intentionally to remove further divisiveness, or because Makarios did not wish to legitimize Turkish claims. Leaders in London realised both the extent of the Turkish factor and how assiduously Makarios was trying to avoid it. A personal note from the deputy under-secretary of state, J.G. Ward, at the Foreign Office encapsulated the situation well:

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<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

In his two latest talks with the Archbishop the Governor now seems to have established pretty definitely that the Ethnarchy will not agree to a formula containing any reservations covering our 'treaty obligations or any reference which implies that Greco-Turkish relations must be taken into account in considering the possibility and timing of self-determination.' Our view in the Foreign Office is that we cannot possibly drop these reservations – quite apart from the inherent unwisdom of doing so, there is no doubt that the Turks will blow up. We therefore feel that a break in the negotiations for a settlement cannot be long avoided, despite the grim implications.<sup>284</sup>

A Foreign Office minute codified Ward's informal letter and highlighted the difficulties posed by Turkey if the British government were to accept Makarios's modifications.

Both amendments proposed by the Archbishop are aimed at excluding any Turkish interest in Cyprus. Despite the fact that we have repeatedly told the Archbishop and the Greek Government that there is no question of a Turkish veto and the decisions about Cyprus rest solely with Her Majesty's Government, the Governor has concluded that the Archbishop will refuse the formula if political considerations affecting Turkey could be taken into account in coming to a solution.

As for the Turks, they 'would resent our accepting either of the Archbishop's amendments. To them the amendments would seem to remove all the safeguards in the formula which we have assured them we would maintain... If we propose further amendments to these passages the Turks will be convinced that we are giving in to the Archbishop.'<sup>285</sup>

The Foreign Office argued that any formula that omitted all reference to the political situation in the Eastern Mediterranean, as Makarios requested, 'would be unrealistic'.<sup>286</sup> Their quite correct conclusion was that since the problems in Cyprus were mainly political, 'all relevant political considerations' needed to be taken into

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<sup>284</sup> TNA, FO 371/123865, Personal Letter from JG Ward to Sir Gladwyn Jebb (British Ambassador, Paris), 18 January, 1956.

<sup>285</sup> TNA, FO 371/123865, Foreign Office Minute, 18 January 1956.

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*

account. This included the ‘genuine and strong’ interest of the Turkish government.<sup>287</sup> The minute closed with a statement that mixed frustration and disbelief, positing that ‘there can be no possible gain to anyone, including the Archbishop, from neglecting a fundamental factor [Turkey] in the situation’.<sup>288</sup> In January 1956, as during the plebiscite in January 1950, the *enosis* forces in Cyprus, spearheaded by the Orthodox Church, were ignoring Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriot minority. Whether blinded by prejudice or by their commitment to *enosis*, they could not come to grips with Turkey’s ‘genuine and strong’ interest in Cyprus. Greek-Cypriot nationalists could not acknowledge the existence of a distinct Turkish-Cypriot community who remained directly opposed to *enosis*.

Makarios’s intransigence caused great frustration in London and prompted attempts to shift him through Greek intervention. A Foreign Office telegram to Sir Roger Allen, the British Ambassador in Athens, made both points quite clearly. ‘If you have not already done so you should see the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs... You should say that the Archbishop’s reactions are most disappointing. His only answer to our attempt to meet his criticisms was to raise further difficulties and to be highly evasive about his attitudes towards terrorism.’<sup>289</sup> Second, Allen was encouraged to ‘invite the Greek Government to consider urgently what they can now do, in their own interest, to make the Archbishop see reason’.<sup>290</sup>

British policymakers felt that a reasonable compromise was being offered along the lines laid out in the newly revised formula put to Makarios on 18 January. Slight adjustments of language attempted to address the Archbishop’s critiques while maintaining good faith with Turkey. The operative paragraphs now read:

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<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> TNA, FO 371/123864, Telegram No. 59 from Foreign Office to Ambassador Allen, Athens. 15 January 1956.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

It is not therefore their position that the principle of self-determination can never be applicable to Cyprus. It is their position that it is not now a practical proposition on account of the present strategic and political situation in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Her Majesty's Government have offered a wide measure of self-government now.

If the people of Cyprus will participate in the constitutional development, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to work for a final solution consistent with the existing treaty obligations and strategic interests of Her Majesty's Government and their allies which will satisfy the wishes of the people of Cyprus. Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to discuss the future of the island with representatives of the people of Cyprus when self-government has proved itself capable of safeguarding the interests of all sections of the community.<sup>291</sup>

The changes accounted for two of Makarios's original three objections. Gone was the reference to NATO along with the words 'a workable proposition'. 'Strategic and political' remained along with the mentions of 'treaty obligations' and 'allies'. For Makarios, it was not enough. Oblivious to the concessions that had been made, the archbishop pressed his previous objections. Reference to 'treaty obligations' and 'allies' had to be removed along with the words 'political situation' in reference to the Eastern Mediterranean. Wary of Turkish attitudes, Harding did not budge.

The two men met again on 27 January. The governor had just returned from a trip to London where he discussed the archbishop's reservations with Britain's political leadership. He reported to Lennox-Boyd that the meeting had lasted two and half hours and that Makarios 'was on the defensive throughout practically the whole discussion and clearly did not like it much.'<sup>292</sup> Harding's conclusion was that Makarios had found 'himself in the difficult position of having to accept an agreement on our latest terms or of taking the blame for refusing a good offer'.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> TNA, FO 371/123865, Revised Cyprus Formula, Foreign Office Minute, 18 January 1956.

<sup>292</sup> TNA, FO 371/123867, Telegram No. 191 from Cyprus (Harding) to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 28 January, 1956.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

This time the disagreement centred on the nature of the constitution that would codify Cyprus's development towards self-government. Makarios argued that the formula under discussion 'could not be considered separately from the constitution. For they might agree on the formula and yet disagree on important terms of the constitution which would stop cooperation'. Harding countered that an agreement on the formula needed to precede discussion of a constitution and that the decisions on the framing of the constitution would have to be taken 'not only with the Archbishop but also with all sections of the community'.<sup>294</sup> Makarios hoped for another meeting, but Harding's patience was running out. The field marshal replied that 'he would only consent to meet the Archbishop again if this latter [sic] wished to have an elucidation of some point in the documents which he would be sending him on the following day'.<sup>295</sup> This final meeting would not come until the end of February.

Makarios seems to have taken Harding's warming temper into consideration and called a meeting of the Ethnarchy Council on 30 January to discuss the governor's new proposals and wording. The Bishop of Kyrenia led the attack on compromise: 'I consider the Governor's proposal unacceptable and we must turn it down. Had the Governor accepted a predetermined time limit of 3 to 5 years [before self-determination], we would accept. But if we accept this it would be tantamount to an affront. I insist on the historical slogan "Enosis and only Enosis"'.<sup>296</sup> Makarios admitted that the differences between his plan and the governor's plan were great. While the Bishop of Kyrenia regarded anything more than a 3-5 year time limit as a colonialist insult, Makarios held a more elaborate view. He disagreed with pressing

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<sup>294</sup> TNA, FO 371/123867, Telegram No. 192 from Cyprus (Harding) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 28 January, 1956.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>296</sup> TNA, CO 926/450, (12) Translation of Minutes of Ethnarchy Council Meeting, 30 January, 1956, p.28. Minutes of the Ethnarchy Council and Ethnarchy Bureau and Related Documents, October, 1955 to February, 1956: Printed by Direction of His Excellency the Governor.

for a predetermined time limit, even one as modest as 3-5 years, because they would not be able to predict the political situation in either Cyprus or Greece. Besides, by avoiding any particular time-frame, 'we would be in a position to put forward our demand for self-determination immediately'.<sup>297</sup> Makarios was confident that the high morale among pro-*enosis* advocates in Cyprus would sustain his rigid stance. Another member of the council, Socrates Tornaritis, a lawyer from Limassol, supported the Archbishop's position. His statement represented the opinion that armed resistance had brought results: 'I also am a follower of the intransigent policy which has given results such as the right to self-determination in Cyprus. I am confident that the moral of the people will remain high.'<sup>298</sup> The new formula would not be accepted. This rejection was communicated to Harding by letter on 2 February.<sup>299</sup> 'The text in question', Makarios wrote,

recognises indirectly the principle of self-determination and states that its application, however, is made dependent on conditions so general and vague, subject to so many interpretations and presenting so many difficulties as to the objective ascertainment of their fulfilment, as to create reasonable doubt about the positive nature of the promise which is given regarding the final solution of the question in accordance with the wish of the people of Cyprus.<sup>300</sup>

Immediately following the meeting with Makarios, Harding took the British formula (newly re-worded in an attempt to address Makarios's concerns) to Cyprus's Turkish consul general. They met on 31 January. Their exchange confirmed the fears of the Foreign Office that Turkey's interest in Cyprus was diametrically opposed to the concessions sought by Makarios. The consul made two points. First, he emphasised to Harding that, in spite of their recent quiet on the issue, the Turkish

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> Although the governor and the archbishop would not meet in person for a month, they continued their negotiations through a series of letters.

<sup>300</sup> Letter of Archbishop Makarios to Sir John Harding, 2nd February 1956, p.6. Correspondence exchanged between the Governor [Harding] and Archbishop Makarios, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956).

people maintained very strong feelings on Cyprus. Second, he argued ‘that any system of self-government for Cyprus based on majority rule by the Greek-Cypriots could never be acceptable to the Turkish minority and would inevitably lead to civil war or something approaching it’.<sup>301</sup>

While Harding tried to soothe the concerns of Turkish-Cypriots, the Foreign Office was encouraging Ambassador Bowker to work on reducing the hostility of the Turkish government in Ankara. ‘You must try to persuade the Turkish Government that we are not presenting them with a fait accompli on the constitution questions. As the rejoinder to the Archbishop makes very clear, the form of the eventual constitution can only be determined after full consultation and discussion with all sections of the population of Cyprus.’<sup>302</sup>

In light of these realities, Harding was reluctant to make specific promises on the constitution to Makarios. He was not a constitutional expert nor was he qualified to put forward the arguments for the Turkish-Cypriot side. As he wrote to Makarios on 14 February: ‘You will understand that Her Majesty's Government could not enter into commitments about the position of separate communities under the constitution before discussions have taken place at which representatives of those communities have expressed their views.’<sup>303</sup> Harding’s letter continued: ‘It must be recognised that persistent violence and disorder have increased the difficulties of introducing constitutional government. Fear of intimidation has stifled free expression of opinion.’

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<sup>301</sup> TNA, FO 371/123867, Telegram No. 235 from Cyrus (Harding) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 31 January, 1956.

<sup>302</sup> TNA, FO/123869, Telegram No. 267 from Foreign Office to Ankara, 13 February 1956.

<sup>303</sup> Letter of Sir John Harding to Archbishop Makarios, 14<sup>th</sup> February 1956, p.8. Correspondence exchanged between the Governor [Harding] and Archbishop Makarios, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1956).

The minorities are more concerned than before about the possible consequences for them of the advent of self-government.<sup>304</sup>

To overcome the constitutional hurdles, British policymakers began discussions of tasking someone with legal qualifications to draft a new Cypriot constitution. This would provide for self-government (under British sovereignty), increased powers for the Greek-Cypriot community, and minority protections for Turkish-Cypriots. While the British government's move towards a new constitution was cautiously optimistic, the headlines of *The Times of Cyprus* were positively hopeful. The cover of the edition for 15 February 1956 ran the headline: 'All the Archbishop's main terms find acceptance. Governor Agrees: Peace is in Sight at Last.' The story promised that 'from the day when agreement on the broad outlines is announced – and that surely is very near – Cyprus can hope for an ending of the violence which it has endured too long and to move into a period of full self-rule'.<sup>305</sup>

Getting the constitutional debate started, however, was proving extremely difficult because the formula had still not been agreed to. Makarios would not accept Harding's vagaries on the nature of the new constitution and was anxious to prevent concessions to Turkish interests. Makarios and his advisors debated these issues again at a meeting of the Ethnarchy Council on 21 February. One representative insisted that the inclusion of Turks in the cabinet would have to 'be avoided at all costs'. Makarios was sympathetic to the principle. 'Perhaps you are right', he said, 'but in practice this would be unattainable'. Even Bishop Kyprianos was cautious but cynical about appearing to be openly anti-Turkish. 'We must not appear to be against the Turks, on the contrary, we must succeed in gaining their confidence so that we may

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<sup>304</sup> Letter of Sir John Harding to Archbishop Makarios, 14<sup>th</sup> February 1956, p.9. Correspondence exchanged between the Governor [Harding] and Archbishop Makarios, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956).

<sup>305</sup> *The Times of Cyprus*, Vol. 1. No. 253, *Wednesday, February 15, 1956*, 'All the Archbishop's main terms find acceptance.'

attain Enosis.’ On the constitution, however, Kyprianos held nothing back: ‘I reject the constitution and insist on immediate self-determination.’<sup>306</sup> In this attitude, even among the pro-*enosis* Ethnarchy Council, he was alone. The other members pressured him to reconsider his position and not to divide the council, but Kyprianos remained adamant: ‘Under no circumstances will I change my opinion. Each of us has his opinion and cannot be deprived of this. If we are fighting for liberty, we must respect the liberty of others.’ Makarios urged him to reconsider, pointing out, perhaps contradictorily, that ‘it is not democratic to create a split’. Kyprianos would not be swayed: ‘I have my opinion’, he replied, ‘and you may proscribe me’. Theodoulos Sophocleous, assistant principal of the Pancyprian Gymnasium, posed a final reaction to the exchange muttering: ‘A grave danger will arise the moment the people are filled with fanaticism’.<sup>307</sup>

Bishop Kyprianos, alone among the 26 councillors, refused to approve of Makarios’s draft reply. *The Times of Cyprus* reported that the ‘portly firebrand’, finding ‘himself in defiant isolation’, stormed out of the meeting in Nicosia and drove back to Kyrenia alone.<sup>308</sup> In spite of Kyprianos’s protest, Makarios would not press for immediate self-determination, but his differences with the formula proposed by Harding meant that no agreement was possible. The two sides were still a long way off on the very concept of a constitution, let alone on its substance.

Makarios conveyed his concerns to Harding in a letter on 25 February. The archbishop’s cooperation ‘in the framing and operation of self-government’ could be achieved if this phrase was openly acknowledged ‘as a transitional stage towards self-determination, which ever remains our sole and final aim’. Moreover, such

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<sup>306</sup> TNA, CO 926/450, (13) Translation of Minutes of Ethnarchy Council Meeting, 21<sup>st</sup> February 1956, p.32. Minutes of the Ethnarchy Council and Ethnarchy Bureau and Related Documents, October, 1955 to February, 1956: Printed by Direction of His Excellency the Governor.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, p.33.

<sup>308</sup> *The Times of Cyprus*, Vol. 1 No. 240, Thursday, February 2, 1956, ‘Bishop of Kyrenia says ‘No!’’

cooperation was only possible ‘in so far as the fundamental democratic principles... described in our previous letter were clearly established now as a basis of the constitution which is offered’.<sup>309</sup> These democratic principles involved an assembly elected to reflect the demographic advantage of the Greek-Cypriot community, the control of that body over the cabinet of ministers (which would exclude Turkish-Cypriots from the cabinet), and guarantees that executive responsibility for public security would revert to (Greek) Cypriots once order was restored.<sup>310</sup> Furthermore, Makarios insisted on an ‘early repeal’ of the emergency laws and ‘the granting of an amnesty for all political offences’ as ‘indispensable’ to any agreement. These terms, wrote Makarios, constituted ‘every possible concession beyond which our national conscience and natural dignity do not permit us to go’.<sup>311</sup>

In London, it seemed that Makarios was moving the goal posts, pushing for new and impossible concessions as agreement approached.

On the main issues which had previously been discussed by the Cabinet, the Governor and the Archbishop had come very near to reaching an agreement. At this final stage, however, the Archbishop had put the agreement in jeopardy by asking for an amnesty for all political offenders in Cyprus... The Governor was most reluctant to make any offer of an amnesty until the Archbishop had abjured the use of violence and had given practical proof of his ability to induce his followers to abandon it.<sup>312</sup>

In addition, by continuing to hammer the line that self-determination (meaning *enosis*) remained the ‘sole and final aim’ of the Greek-Cypriot people, Makarios continued to ignore the reality that such a claim was impossible because of the Turkish factor.

It appears that Makarios’s further demands were merely a negotiating tactic designed to squeeze a few more concessions from the British. In early February, he

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<sup>309</sup> Correspondence exchanged between the Governor [Harding] and Archbishop Makarios, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1956), p.11.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., p.12.

<sup>312</sup> TNA, CAB 128/30, CM (56) 16<sup>th</sup> Conclusions, 22 February 1956.

met secretly with Grivas and explained to the colonel that ‘the people were getting tired’ and that the high financial cost of the struggle meant that they should come to some solution. Makarios was concerned about EOKA’s military capabilities, but Grivas reassured him that they were a match for the British forces on the island. Grivas had his own concerns. The colonel wanted to know when Cypriots would be able ‘to exercise self-determination’ and whether this period would ‘be defined by an international organization or an international committee’. Grivas was also concerned about the composition of a Cypriot parliament. The colonel asked if equal representation could be achieved. Makarios replied ‘that this is what we are asking for, but believed that the government of Great Britain will not accept this’. At the end of their discussion, Makarios told Grivas that they ‘must accept this plan and give a written reply’. Nevertheless, the archbishop still expected disagreements with Harding over the constitution. On 15 February, Grivas received a letter from Makarios telling him ‘to avoid any actions against the British because in all likelihood an agreement would be reached with Harding’.<sup>313</sup>

The archbishop’s new requests were haggling and a true display of brinksmanship. Brinksmanship was a strong characteristic of the Archbishop’s negotiating style. A story he confided to Sir Hugh Foot in 1959 makes this clear. In his memoirs, Foot recalled the tale shared by Makarios at a dinner held at the Monastery of Kykko in Cyprus to celebrate the peace agreement. It is worth quoting in its entirety:

The time came when the Abbot [of Kykko Monastery] told me that as I was going into the Church I must now grow a beard. I decided otherwise, and I told the Abbot that I did not propose to grow a beard until later. He was astonished at such insubordination. ‘Then I must beat you,’ he said. I replied that it would make no difference. He beat me, and I remember that every time

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<sup>313</sup> SIMAE, P 405/7/11, Description by Grivas of discussion with Makarios about Harding Negotiations, February 1956.

he raised his arm I would turn and say ‘No.’ The next day he pleaded with me. I must obey him. What would my father, the shepherd, and my poor mother say if I were sent home with all hopes of a career in the Church lost? It would break their hearts. I insisted that such a matter I must be allowed to decide for myself. The Abbot became beside himself with frustration and grief. If I would not obey him I must go home in disgrace. The next day I was sent to fetch a few belongings from a relative in Nicosia. The Abbot ordered the local taxi from Strovolos. The time came for me to go. He pleaded with me once more to change my mind. I made no reply. Sadly he led me out of his study down those steps over there, out through those great gates. And I remember that I actually put my foot on the step of the taxi before he broke down and threw his arms about me and said, ‘My boy, come back, I cannot let you go.’<sup>314</sup>

To Foot, the story clearly demonstrated a central aspect of the Archbishop’s personality. Makarios was a man of ‘political skill... [with] confidence in his own opinion. But’, qualified Sir Hugh, ‘I sometimes think that he enjoys to gamble, to go right up to the edge, to pit his wits against everyone else.’<sup>315</sup> While the Abbot of Kykko backed down, Harding did not. The gambling style that cost Makarios little as a novice in the monastery had disastrous effects for Cyprus in 1956. The British offer came off the table, snatching war from the jaws of peace. Both the archbishop and Cyprus would pay a very high price for the miscalculation.

On 28 February, Lennox-Boyd arrived in Cyprus with hopes of clinching a deal. The next day he met with representatives of the Turkish-Cypriot community and with Makarios. Before their meeting, some ten explosions were reported in various parts of Nicosia. *The Times of Cyprus* accused the communists of planting the bombs in order to prevent an agreement.<sup>316</sup> A power-play by Grivas cannot be discounted. Regardless, the bombs did not prove the decisive factor in scuttling a solution. Like Harding, the colonial secretary was unable to bridge the final gap. Lennox-Boyd described his meeting in a lengthy statement to the House of Commons a week later. He informed Makarios that the British government would take a number of actions in

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<sup>314</sup> Sir Hugh Foot, *A Start in Freedom*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1964), p.184.

<sup>315</sup> Foot, p.185.

<sup>316</sup> *The Times of Cyprus*, Vol. 1. No. 268, 1 March 1956.

return for the archbishop's condemnation of violence and his aid in restoring peace on Cyprus. These undertakings on the part of the British government would consist of an amnesty for all detainees 'except those involving violence against the person or the illegal possession of arms, ammunition or explosives', the repeal of the Emergency Regulations 'at a pace commensurate with that of the reestablishment of law and order', and the drafting of 'a liberal and democratic constitution in consultation with representatives of all sections of opinion in the Island'.<sup>317</sup> Lennox-Boyd's statement demonstrated the British government's willingness to compromise even on Makarios's new demands. The two sides were still unable to reach an agreement. Makarios was not prepared to accept Lennox-Boyd's statement 'as a basis for cooperation', and 'could not accept the exclusion of those carrying arms, ammunition and explosives from the amnesty or the reservation of public security to the Governor "for as long as he thought necessary".' In addition, Makarios insisted that 'the composition of the elected majority... be defined to this satisfaction in advance of the recommendations of the Constitutional Commissioner.'<sup>318</sup> Reconciling the last demand with Makarios's earlier statement to Grivas, that he was working for *equal* representation and that the British would not agree to this, clearly shows the archbishop's capacity for double dealing and pushing negotiations to their limits. It was a ruinous miscalculation.

London took Makarios's rejection as the final straw. Lennox-Boyd returned to England the next day and plans were put into motion to remove Makarios from the scene if he did not perform a *volte face* and agree to the offer. In Harding's opinion, after five months of talks, '[t]he time for negotiation was now past and the time for

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<sup>317</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 549, pp.1717-1718.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, p.1718.

decision had arrived'.<sup>319</sup> Concessions had been made by both sides. Harding regarded the British offer as positive and felt that the proposals should be made public, 'confident that they [the proposals] would be recognised everywhere as generous and constructive'.<sup>320</sup> The governor followed up Lennox-Boyd's arguments and 'emphasised to the Archbishop the generosity of the offer of amnesty in its present form and urged that relatively unimportant doubts and uncertainties about its operation should not be allowed to obstruct an agreement'. Harding argued that the issue of an elected majority in the future Cypriot assembly was

for the Constitutional Commissioner who would clearly have to take into account not only, as we had said liberal constitutional doctrine, but also such practical matters as the numerical proportions and separate interests of the different communities. But my interest was to see the constitutional talks started. It was not for me to do the Commissioner's work for him... I earnestly asked the Archbishop, therefore, not to make an issue of this point such as to obstruct our getting the talks started and to disappoint our hopes of bringing the Emergency to an end.<sup>321</sup>

The day after Lennox-Boyd's departure, Harding confronted Makarios with the reality of the situation. Separated as they were on issues both serious and numerous, the archbishop faced agreeing to the British proposals or a continuation of violence. As Harding records:

the Archbishop's response was illuminating. He said that in all sincerity he very much wished we could have reached an agreement. He was very well aware of how many hopes people in Cyprus had placed on our doing so. But he was sorry that my statement did not provide the basis on which he would like to see an agreement concluded. He would ask me to remember that it did not rest with him alone and that he had to take into account public opinion. If he failed to do so, or failed to gauge correctly public feeling, it might well happen that his own personal acceptance of any settlement would not have the desired results. There was already a large section of the people who did not wish to follow his lead in reaching an agreement. If he accepted, without

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<sup>319</sup> TNA, FO 371/123873, Telegram No. 470 from Cyprus (Harding) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1 March, 1956.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid.

having a wide measure of popular support, he would become an object of severe attack and criticism.<sup>322</sup>

Makarios's prevarication was open to criticism on two counts. First, he portrayed himself as a prisoner of the will of the Cypriot people. This argument diminishes his agency as a leader capable of taking important decisions and shaping public opinion rather than simply relying on public opinion. One reason why Makarios was reluctant to appear too much in control of the *enosis* movement was his desire to distance himself from EOKA. He wanted to conceal his deep connections with the organisation. This was clear from his exchange of letters with Grivas in mid-February, Grivas requested that a ceasefire be arranged on a mutual basis. Makarios replied that this was impossible 'because such a request would reveal his connections with the organization [EOKA]'.<sup>323</sup>

The archbishop had also been at the forefront of shaping and radicalising that opinion which he now claimed prevented him from agreeing to Harding's terms. Makarios had preached the gospel of '*enosis* and only *enosis*' since 1950 and had done so as loudly as anyone. He had organised the plebiscite of 1950 and, upon his elevation to the archepiscopal throne, had undertaken to canvass support for *enosis* across the globe. It was disingenuous for him now to claim that public opinion prevented him from agreeing to measures of compromise when he had been instrumental in shaping public opinion. Confronted with disagreements on major points and with Makarios still unwilling to condemn terrorism, the field marshal finally secured agreement from the government in London for his deportation. Bishop Kyprianos of Kyrenia would be deported as well.

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<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

<sup>323</sup> SIMAE, P 405/7/11, Description by Grivas of discussion with Makarios about Harding Negotiations, February 1956.

On 9 March, Makarios was taken into custody as he attempted to board a plane to Athens from Nicosia Airport. Kyprianos was arrested at his home in Kyrenia. Polykarpos Ioannides, Kyprianos's diocesan secretary, was arrested on the street in Kyrenia and Stavros Papagathangelou, the priest of Phaneromeni Church and a leading recruiter for EOKA youth groups, was also taken at his home in Nicosia. The four would be taken to exile in the Seychelles. The move was greeted by riots and violence in Cyprus, by attacks from the opposition in parliament, and by international condemnation. It was a calculated risk reflecting Harding's frustration at the failure to contain violence in Cyprus and at the failure of the talks.

These sentiments were apparent in a letter written on 4 March by Harding to his son. The talks with Makarios had just broken down and the details of the deportation were being arranged. '[I]t was very disappointing that after such long and tedious negotiations we were unable to get an agreement', wrote the governor. 'At the beginning of the meeting we had on Monday night – the Colonial Secretary and myself with the Archbishop – I thought it might take a different form from all my previous meetings with him, but it was soon apparent that he was determined to shield the terrorists and to [illegible] our bargaining. Looking back I cannot think of anything more we could have done to secure an agreement.' The negotiations, 'of the past five months', he confided, 'have done a good deal to clarify the problem and to put it into perspective. Apart from that it was an essential political exercise to exhaust all possibilities of reaching a basis for cooperation by negotiation before resorting to other methods – rather like the amnesty proposition in Malaya – and it might have come off – it probably would have if it had been tried a year or two earlier.' What remained clear to the field marshal was that: 'By his persistent refusal to denounce violence the Archbishop forces us to the conclusion that he believes in violence as a

political weapon and would not hesitate to use it again – a curious attitude for a so-called Christian leader.’<sup>324</sup>

With Makarios and Kyprianos removed from the picture, Harding hoped to enjoy greater freedom of action in the fight against EOKA and to undercut some of the organisation’s strength. In exile, Makarios would not be able to rally support for *enosis* in Athens, the United States, or the United Nations, nor would he be in an effective position to denounce British policy in Cyprus and stir up the population against British rule. But there were risks in the choice. Makarios’s enforced departure meant the struggle for *enosis* was unequivocally in the hands of Grivas. As the colonel records in his *Memoirs*: ‘The exile of Archbishop Makarios meant that I had now to take on the political as well as the military leadership of the resistance. I did not shrink from this double burden: indeed, the additional responsibility gave me greater freedom of action and added strength, just as the Archbishop’s deportation, far from quenching the fires of revolt, fanned them into flames. I launched a new offensive designed to transform the whole island into a battlefield.’<sup>325</sup> In Grivas, Harding would find an opponent as uncompromising as he was. Moreover, with Makarios outside Cyprus, there was no prospect for a negotiated solution.

The decision to deport Makarios was a heavy one, heavy in responsibility, risk, and potential reward. Harding, for his part, had urged such an action for months and seemed relieved that it would finally come to pass. The field marshal was eager to make the most of the opportunity he saw to crush EOKA militarily without having to work simultaneously along the tortuous path of negotiation with the pedantic and uncompromising clerical champion of the *enosis* cause. As he wrote to his son:

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<sup>324</sup> IWMA, Harding Papers, AFH 2, Letter from Sir John Harding to John Charles Harding, 4 March, 1956.

<sup>325</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.66.

Up to date I have had to pursue two divergent policies – appeasement by negotiation and restoration of law and order – which has compelled me to refrain from some security measures while negotiations were still in progress. Now I can give the restoration of law and order, and the elimination of the terrorists overriding priority – so in that result my task will be simplified but it may involve doing some pretty unpleasant things, and the next phase may be a bit grim – we shall see.<sup>326</sup>

A new phase in the struggle was about to begin: one which not only saw the escalation of violence between EOKA and the British, but also witnessed a campaign by the British government against Makarios *in absentia* and against the Cypriot Church. In many ways, the last of these was retaliation for years of violent abuse hurled down on the British from pulpits across Cyprus. Politically, the war against the Church would prove every bit as grim as that against Grivas and his insurgents. The gloves were coming off, giving Harding – and the new security apparatus in Cyprus – the chance to destroy EOKA, but also providing an opening for attacks by the British government’s opponents against what they characterised as unacceptably draconian methods.

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<sup>326</sup> IWMA, Harding Papers, AFH 2, Letter from Sir John Harding to John Charles Harding, 4 March, 1956.

## **Chapter IV – Escalation and Crisis: The New Battle for Security**

*'I cannot understand how law and order can fail in Cyprus to have top priority.'*<sup>327</sup>

(Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 23 April 1955)

### **The New Battle for Security**

Although Field Marshal Sir John Harding attempted to reach a negotiated understanding with Archbishop Makarios between October 1955 and March 1956, he was appointed Governor of Cyprus primarily for his military qualifications. Under Harding, Cyprus became the fourth territory in a little more than a decade – following Palestine, Malaya, and Kenya – where an emergency was declared. With these experiences in mind, British policymakers attempted to apply lessons from other colonies, particularly Malaya, to Cyprus. This chapter focuses on the security reforms undertaken by Harding, his efforts to smash EOKA militarily, and the challenges to that objective.

Under Harding's command, a new security apparatus was organised on the island around emergency regulations, which gave the administration sweeping new powers, a redesigned police force, and a massively reinforced army. The dead-ending of negotiations and the deportation of Makarios allowed Harding to escalate operations against the *enosis* movement. During the twelve months that followed Makarios's exile, security forces overcame local and international obstacles and struck a series of significant blows against EOKA, killing or capturing much of its senior leadership. Harding's operations in Cyprus proved that force could be an effective tool in combating an insurgency through frustrating the insurgents and

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<sup>327</sup> TNA, CAB 21/2925, 'Report on Colonial Security by Sir Gerald Templer,' 23 April 1955, p.52.

reducing their capabilities. Success in the field also created political opportunities as the failure of insurgents to deal major blows to government forces encouraged them to compromise.

Harding's war to restore order was fought on a number of fronts. He outlined these to Alan Lennox-Boyd in a telegram on 3 December 1955. According to Harding, there were 'five main elements of disorder and subversion which must be brought under control'. They were 'the secondary schools, the Church, the Communists and the organs of hostile propaganda'. Countering EOKA was Harding's first priority. The organisation's activities, he wrote, 'extend into two fields, the planning and execution of acts of terrorism and the organisation of public disorders and lawlessness. Both will have to be suppressed.' Some degree of cooperation from the population was essential, not only in opposing public disorder but in gaining intelligence about EOKA itself. If the population failed to help the security services, or aided EOKA, Harding felt that he should strike back at the people directly, through the use of collective punishments such as fines and curfews. EOKA would also be targeted specifically through vigorous military offensives. Such operations took time and required both an expansion of the available military forces and the isolation of EOKA from weapons and supplies from abroad.<sup>328</sup> The focus on these coercive measures meant that there was little in the way of 'hearts and minds' in the Cyprus campaign. Nevertheless, Harding's strategy delivered results.

There were also setbacks. In November 1956 – emboldened by the transfer of elite British units to operations in Suez – EOKA's activities reached their fevered peak. The insurgents' advantage, however, was short-lived. By the start of 1957, British forces, back from operations in Egypt, were once more pressing EOKA to its

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<sup>328</sup> IWMA, Harding Papers, AFH 10, Telegram No. 1165 from Harding to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 3 December, 1955.

limits. At the same time, proposals for a new constitution, which will be dealt with in detail in the next chapter, were almost ready. A political solution, either through direct negotiations or under the auspices of NATO, seemed at hand. The Colonial Office went so far as to begin preparing a report on the successful conduct of the counter-insurgency campaign. Security operations were scaled back. With the collapse of the new peace initiatives, however, EOKA survived to fight another day.

### **Malayan Model**

Just as Harding's appointment echoed the choice of General Templer in Malaya, his approach as governor attempted to put the lessons learned during that campaign to use in Cyprus. Of particular importance to this learning process was a report produced by Templer himself in late April 1955 on colonial security. Harding read this report before his arrival in Cyprus and supported its recommendations.<sup>329</sup> The Templer Report specifically, and the experience in Malaya (as well as that in Kenya) more generally, were learning opportunities for British counter-insurgency operations. The lessons included an emphasis on intelligence (particularly the need for effective counter-intelligence and a powerful special branch), the importance of political as well as military progress in defeating an insurgency, and the vital significance of having a large and capable local police force. Similar reforms could have been drawn from the emergency in Palestine, which, because of the ethnic element in the conflict and the untrustworthiness of the local police force, was possibly the best parallel. But Palestine was not exploited to its fullest potential as an example, perhaps because it was seen as a failure.

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<sup>329</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Telegram No. 810 from Harding to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 10 October 1955.

The Templer Report was released on 23 April 1955, only three weeks after the outbreak of EOKA violence in Cyprus. Its purpose was ‘to suggest ways and means for preventing trouble from breaking out in the Colonies during the longish period of cold war... and to ensure that, in the event of a hot war, the Colonial armed forces are well adapted to the role they would probably have to play’.<sup>330</sup> In framing his report, Templer applied his experiences in Southeast Asia. He also visited Cyprus and Uganda to gather additional information. During his brief stay in Cyprus between 14 and 16 April 1955, Templer met with Governor Armitage and took stock of the situation. The two men, coming as they did from opposite sides of colonial affairs, demonstrated little appreciation for each other. As Armitage wrote to his parents: ‘Templer was here for 3 days... we had to give him several meals and I had many discussions with him over security matters. He is a nervous, highly strung type, not the sort of person one could imagine getting as high in military circles as he has.’<sup>331</sup> Templer was equally unimpressed by the governor.

Templer described Cyprus as undeniably a ‘trouble spot’ with a ‘burning problem of *Enosis*... diligently fed by both the national priesthood and by a foreign government [Greece]’. Templer’s greatest concern, however, was the fact that Cyprus possessed ‘the largest and best organised Communist Party in any Colonial territory outside the Far East’. This was of significance not only because of the Cold War, but because Cyprus was ‘the key to the Eastern Mediterranean... on which the defence policy not only of the United Kingdom but of the West hinges’.<sup>332</sup> In Templer’s view, Armitage did not understand the magnitude of the situation or the methods best suited to handling it. ‘It might be thought’, Templer concluded

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<sup>330</sup> TNA, CAB 21/2925, ‘Report on Colonial Security by Sir Gerald Templer,’ 23 April 1955, p.9.

<sup>331</sup> RHL, Mss. Afr. S. 2204, Papers of Sir Robert P. Armitage, Box 1. Letter to his parents, 16 April 1955.

<sup>332</sup> TNA, CAB 21/2925, ‘Report on Colonial Security by Sir Gerald Templer,’ 23 April 1955, p.52.

that in these circumstances, the internal security of the base would have the first call on the Government's money, man-power, and general interest. But the Governor himself has told me that in his view the top priorities in Cyprus today are the Information Service, agricultural reform, water, intelligence and police, in that order. I can appreciate, as well as anyone, the importance of matters such as agricultural reform in the long term fight against Communism, and the particular needs in respect of the fight against Enosis. But, with respect, I cannot understand how law and order can fail in Cyprus to have top priority.<sup>333</sup>

Harding's appointment reorganised the priorities of the Government of Cyprus according to Templer's way of thinking and provided a soldier's determination in implementing them.

In spite of Templer's criticisms, Armitage tried to improve the security situation on Cyprus. At the end of September, faced with a massive increase in EOKA violence, he requested authorisation to declare a state of emergency, only to be bluntly denied at the highest level and informed that such matters would be decided by his successor.<sup>334</sup> The flurry of attacks during the summer of 1955, 53 in June, 25 in July and 30 in August, reached 64 in September. October, the month of Harding's arrival on the island, witnessed 74 attacks and this already substantial number jumped to 217 in November.<sup>335</sup> In the face of such a dramatic escalation, Harding declared a state of emergency at the end of November.

Emergency powers gave Harding a series of legal mechanisms with which to crack down on EOKA. The most significant of these included: the power to arrest without warrant and to stop, detain and search persons and vehicles; to restrict movement through house arrest, and the prohibition of movement in certain areas; the power of security forces to enter, close or search premises; the power to impose

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<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

<sup>334</sup> TNA, FO 371/117662, Personal Minute from the Prime Minister to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 24 September 1955 on Telegram No. 683 from Armitage to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 22 September 1955.

<sup>335</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 565, Written Answers, p.104.

curfews; a mandatory death sentence for carrying arms; and restrictions on the press. Collective fines, curfews, and the expansion of the death penalty were all carry-overs from the experience in Malaya.<sup>336</sup> They would also be among the most contentious of the new powers employed by Harding's administration. As a result of the new regulations, curfews and cordon searches – with their resultant stresses in relations between the British and the Greek-Cypriot community – became daily features of life on the island.

Cordon and search operations frequently resulted in the detention of suspects. Since the prison facilities in Cyprus were limited, most of these individuals were held in specially constructed detention camps. During 1956, the camps swelled. Under the Detained Persons Law, 132 detainees (the communists arrested in December 1955) were held in January 1956. By mid-October, this number rose to 508 and continued increasing, reaching 688 by mid-December and 735 by the end of December.<sup>337</sup> Detained persons were held in communal barracks, which were locked at night and ringed by barbed wire. In spite of the security, the prisoners were allowed visitors and care packages. Limited measures were also taken for the welfare of their families. From 1 March 1956, payments were made to the dependents of detainees at the maximum rates of '£10 per month for a wife, £4 per month for the first child and £3 per month for every other child'. Payments were determined by a full investigation carried out by the welfare department 'into the circumstances of the detainee's family'. Most EOKA men were young, many were unmarried and few had children. Nevertheless, the government spent £25,423 on assistance to their families between March and July 1956 – about £5,000 per month.<sup>338</sup> In contrast, in June 1956, the

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<sup>336</sup> Holland, p.92.

<sup>337</sup> TNA, CO 926/397, Report on the Number of Detained Persons, 29 December 1956.

<sup>338</sup> TNA, CO 926/397, Telegram No. 1579 from Governor Harding to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 5 September 1956.

government estimated that it was spending £43,000 per *week* on the maintenance of the army alone.<sup>339</sup> The widespread use of detaining Greek-Cypriots without warrant betrayed the lack of substantial evidence being gathered against them. At the same time, the mass detentions did surprisingly little to impede EOKA operations, which continued to grow in number and effectiveness throughout late 1955 and into early 1956.

The legal mechanisms of the emergency regulations were supported by a new structure for the security and administration of the island, also designed on Templer's Malayan model. Authority was centralised in Harding who, as governor/commander-in-chief, had a complete view of operations and governance in Cyprus. In theory, he had oversight for all military, civilian, and intelligence decisions and information. In his own words, the field marshal would work 'in double harness' with the civilian deputy governor, George Sinclair, who would, as Harding described in a telegram to the colonial secretary:

deal directly with the five District Commissioners, the Commissioner of Police and the Commander of the troops. The Directors of Intelligence and Information Services [would be]... under our general direction and... [would] serve the whole Governmental organisation. The Commander Cyprus district and his forces would be [Harding's]... commander for security operations, but the commander would continue to be directly responsible to C-in-C MELF [Middle East Land Forces] for the organisation, equipment, training and administration of all troops under his command.<sup>340</sup>

The arrangement, as Harding made clear, 'would be an exact parallel to the system in Malaya when Templer was High Commissioner'.<sup>341</sup> Centralising authority, responsibility, and information with Harding allowed the field marshal to get a comprehensive understanding of the situation. As a result, he could develop coordinated strategies to bring the insurgency under control.

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<sup>339</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Brief for the Secretary of State, Foreign Office Paper CA (56) 23.

<sup>340</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Telegram No. 779 from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 5 October 1955.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*

The establishment of an effective intelligence service along the Templar model was another high priority. A report prepared by Brigadier George Baker, Harding's Chief of Staff, in early 1958 identified some of the major shortcomings of the intelligence service at the start of the insurgency. First, conditioned by the experience of the 1931 disturbances, the army failed 'to appreciate the seriousness of the threat'. Security forces suffered from having 'no proper command structure, no close liaison or cooperation with the administration and police, inferior communication and lack of training in internal security duties. Above all', argued Baker, 'the army was handicapped by a lack of direction. Greater demands were made upon it than it had the resources to meet.'<sup>342</sup> These misperceptions and miscalculations within the military were rooted in intelligence failures.

Soon after Harding's arrival, intelligence in Cyprus tried to get a grip on the situation. The Cyprus Intelligence Committee provided the governor with a report entitled 'The Nature of EOKA, Its Political Background and Sources of Direction'. The paper traced the emergence of PEON (the Pancyprian National Youth Organisation) and the role of Grivas and Makarios in cultivating *enosis* forces on the island. About Grivas, the report correctly concluded that he was in Cyprus and 'the leader of EOKA styled Dighenis'.<sup>343</sup> The CIC was also correct in identifying that EOKA's campaign was 'solely in the hands of Grivas' and that its core (60% of those convicted or detained under the emergency regulations) were young (24 years old or below) and either students or clerical employees.<sup>344</sup> The report informed Harding of several crucial points that would shape his battle plan. It emphasised EOKA as a

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<sup>342</sup> Brigadier GH Baker, *The Cyprus Emergency*, 1958, p.11.

<sup>343</sup> TNA, CO 926/455, CIC (55), Cyprus Intelligence Committee Report, 18 October 1955, p.3.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*

nationalist movement focused on *enosis*, which recruited its strength from middle- and working-class young people, the Church and its youth organisations.<sup>345</sup>

EOKA's organisation, and the fact that so many of its members were young, made counterintelligence and infiltration a particular challenge. SIS (MI6) could not introduce 'agents from outside, as these would be speedily detected in the small island'. Greeks and Greek-Cypriots serving in the Special Operations Executive in Egypt were also deemed unusable. It was suggested that MI5 might 'investigate the possibility of using Cypriot students studying in the United Kingdom'.<sup>346</sup> While EOKA members did give information to British forces through both interrogation and collaboration, no evidence has yet emerged suggesting that either MI5 or the SIS was able to introduce agents into EOKA. Intelligence gathering was further hampered by the lack of Greek speakers within British forces, particularly those with 'military or intelligence knowledge' in all branches of the security services.<sup>347</sup>

One clandestine success came through the establishment of a top-secret 'Q (or Irregular) unit' on the island in early 1956. This unit consisted 'of a British leader, a second leader who [was] an ex-terrorist, and local men who [were] either ex-terrorists, or... trained in terrorist methods'.<sup>348</sup> The structure was a refinement from the experience in Palestine where 'Q Patrols' had been established within the police force. These units had, at first, been designed to combat the Arab Revolt in the 1930s, 'to force the Arab rebels into the open where they would be more easily engaged in battle and killed or arrested'.<sup>349</sup> When combating Zionism during the emergency in Palestine, the Q Patrols had 'full power to operate as [they] pleased within... specific

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<sup>345</sup> Ibid., p.5.

<sup>346</sup> TNA, CO 926/520, Security and Intelligence in Cyprus, 2 September 1955.

<sup>347</sup> Author's interview with Geoffrey Jukes, 18 December 2009.

<sup>348</sup> Baker, 'The Cyprus Emergency', p.117.

<sup>349</sup> Bruce Hoffman, 'The Palestine Police Force and the Challenges of Gathering Counter-terrorism Intelligence,' (2008), p.26.

areas. [They] were to advise on defence against the terrorists and to take an active part in hunting the dissidents... It was to all intents and purposes a *carte blanche*.<sup>350</sup> The Q unit in Cyprus also had similarities to the pseudo-gangs in Kenya.<sup>351</sup> Over six months of operation during 1956<sup>352</sup> the unit, 'never more than ten strong, killed, captured or obtained information leading directly to the identification and capture of: - 35 hard core EOKA members, 47 village groups (average strength 5), 5 policemen, 20 priests who were actively helping EOKA, 68 weapons and quantities of bombs, explosives, etc'.<sup>353</sup>

Baker's report does not elaborate on the exact tactics of the Q unit, but we know that it often posed as an EOKA mountain group. As such, it would go 'into villages claiming to need shelter from pursuing security forces' in the hopes of 'unmasking local group leaders and supporters'. Its string of success came to an end late in 1956. As explained by a British intelligence officer assigned to the Cyprus Police Force Special Branch, there was

a limit to the number of times the same tactic could be repeated successfully in a small island with tight-knit communities, quite good communications, and no long distances. Word got around, and local group leaders or supporters simply ceased to surface in response to the group's demands. There was no other tactic it could use without giving its real purpose away, so no point in continuing, whether with same or different members, and it was disbanded.<sup>354</sup>

In spite of the unit's success, no subsequent groups were created along similar lines. Gathering intelligence remained a challenge. As the activities of the Q unit demonstrated, one key problem was finding EOKA members and uncovering its

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<sup>350</sup> Roy Farran, *Winged Dagger: Adventures on Special Service*, (London, 1948), p.139.

<sup>351</sup> John Newsinger, *British Counter-insurgency: From Palestine to Northern Ireland*, (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2002), p.101.

<sup>352</sup> The exact operational dates and further information on the 'Q unit' remain classified. It began operations in early 1956 and ceased operations before Baker's report was due to be distributed in early 1957.

<sup>353</sup> Baker, 'The Cyprus Emergency', p.117.

<sup>354</sup> Author's interview with Geoffrey Jukes, 18 December 2009.

support network. Harding was convinced, correctly, that the Church was the linchpin of EOKA's support within the community. The deportation of Makarios and the Bishop of Kyrenia were the first major blow in Harding's campaign against the Church. It would not be the last. The field marshal intended to use all means in his power to prove the connection between the Church and the violence in Cyprus, and to gather as much intelligence as he could from religious sites throughout the country.

### **War with the Church**

In the minds of British policymakers the war against EOKA was irrevocably linked to the Cypriot Orthodox Church. There were a number of reasons for this belief. The Church had been the driving force behind the *enosis* movement since the beginning of British rule. Earlier, it had supported the Greek Revolution in 1821. Archbishop Makarios was its loudest spokesman, carrying the rallying cry of '*enosis* and only *enosis*' throughout the world. He had continually refused to condemn violence and with other Cypriot clerics, notably the Bishop of Kyrenia, had preached in support of the armed struggle. EOKA drew recruits from church organisations like PEON. Monks and priests had been caught transporting and storing arms.

The Church in Cyprus occupied a unique and powerful position during the 1950s. For centuries under Turkish occupation it had served as the fount of the island's Greek identity through language, religion, and tradition. Since EOKA's creation, it provided the organisation with funding, logistical support and legitimacy. Church leaders presented a public face extolling the organisation's courage and the injustice of British counter-measures. Because it was a religious institution, curtailing the Church's influence and combating it as part of the broader campaign against *enosis* made for a difficult balancing act for Governor Harding.

In December 1955, while London continued to frustrate Harding over his desire to deport leading clerics, he attempted to make full use of the new emergency powers to strike at the Church directly and to prove its connections with EOKA. In the early morning of 8 December, 24 monasteries were raided throughout the island as troops searched for weapons caches, EOKA propaganda, and correspondence. Finds were meagre. At the wealthy Kykkos monastery, security forces found only a few sticks of dynamite and some EOKA leaflets. Two pistols were found at Agia Varvara and a monk was detained.<sup>355</sup>

This was merely the first phase in what would be a long and ugly war between Harding's administration and the Orthodox Church. While the rhetoric and actions of leading clerics supported Harding's hostility, the failure of security forces to find more than a handful of weapons in their raids on churches and monasteries bring their utility into question. From the perspective of 'hearts and minds', raids on ancient holy sites in the early morning hours and the forced search of monks and priests were politically damaging and militarily insignificant. At the same time, they exposed the British administration to vociferous attacks by EOKA propaganda. During operations, claimed one leaflet, British forces 'do not hesitate to use methods much worse and more abominable, under the circumstances, than those used by Hitler during the war... in due course we shall demand that the criminals of the British S.S. like Hitler's S.S., be judged by the International public opinion'.<sup>356</sup> Another leaflet several weeks later made even more outrageous claims: 'the vandalisms of the British soldiers have surpassed medieval barbarities and orders in the Nazi Concentration Camps. Without any word of excuse they murder unarmed citizens and arrest others whom

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<sup>355</sup> TNA, CO 926/416, Telegram No. 1212 from Harding to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 9 December, 1955.

<sup>356</sup> TNA, FO 371/136401, Translated EOKA Leaflet from 26 January, 1956.

they subject to unbearable ordeals which only criminals by nature and most degraded men of the lowest social rank could devise.<sup>357</sup>

The issue of mistreatment by the British forces was a major bone of contention throughout the insurgency, particularly the methods used to extract information from captured suspects. Accusations did cause headaches for British political leaders in Cyprus and in London, but usually did not result in convictions or significant penalties for those involved. An intelligence officer assigned to the Special Branch explained that although the Gestapo and KGB proved that people would confess to anything under torture, British intelligence in Cyprus ‘wanted reliable information, not confessions’. In addition, prisoners had to be produced ‘in court within about a week of arrest’ and ‘all new arrivals were examined and notes made of bruises, etc, in case they blamed us [British authorities] for them in court’.<sup>358</sup> Nevertheless, there were undoubtedly excesses on the part of British interrogators. One member of the 45<sup>th</sup> Commando, Royal Marines recalled that, while his unit behaved appropriately, he was ‘uncomfortable’ with the interrogation methods of an unnamed captain from the Special Branch.<sup>359</sup>

Corporal Ian Martin, who worked as a translator in Cyprus in 1958, noted several incidents unflattering to the security forces. In a letter to his parents on 8 July 1958 he described how ‘everyone in authority has perjured themselves again and again’ in order ‘[t]o keep up the farcical pretence of no ill-treatment’. Cypriot civilians were ‘bashed around with batons’, for refusing to remove seditious slogans. Later that month during a search and cordon operation, ‘an old man who dared to stand up from his place in the cage and motion that he wanted to be sick was forcibly

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<sup>357</sup> TNA, FO 371/136401, Translated EOKA Leaflet from 15 February, 1956.

<sup>358</sup> Author’s interview with Geoffrey Jukes, 18 December 2009.

<sup>359</sup> Charles Hart, *Cyprus Crisis – 1955-56: ‘B’ Troop 45 Commando Royal Marines v. Dighenis*, (Portsmouth, Holbrook Printers, 2003), p.47.

pushed back into position and punched in the stomach and beaten on the head with a baton while actually being sick'.<sup>360</sup> Captured EOKA described a number of tortures ranging from being forced to wear heavy metal boots in the hot Cypriot sun, to having cigarettes extinguished on their skin, and having their genitals beaten.<sup>361</sup>

Tensions regarding the behaviour of security forces extended from the impersonal EOKA proclamations to direct exchanges between Makarios and Harding. On 15 December 1955, the archbishop's cousin, Charalambos Mouskos, was killed in an action against security forces. He had been part of a team that ambushed a patrol and killed a British soldier. His funeral became a public relations disaster. A crowd assembled, flouting the existing ban on assemblies, to follow the coffin from the church. Tear gas was used to disperse the funeral procession and relatives had to proceed to the cemetery via a side street.<sup>362</sup>

Harding received a strongly worded protest from the archbishop which he forwarded to Lennox-Boyd:

[That] even enemies of the dead should respect them, taking care for their burial has always been custom and universal written law. We regret sincerely and protest strongly against foul act which was committed yesterday against dead man by British military authorities in Cyprus and by uncivilized Turks who have recently been recruited as policemen. Entirely unprovoked they attacked with tear gas and clubs funeral procession which was following in reverence coffin of Charalambos Mouskos. They did not respect the holy cross and religious symbols which accompanied dead. This sacrilege is black stigma in history of British occupation of Cyprus.<sup>363</sup>

Harding's reply matched the churchman's acerbic tone: 'It is repugnant to me that any disturbance should take place at a funeral,' he wrote the archbishop, 'but I cannot accept allegations contained in your telegram. Muskos [sic] was an outlaw who two

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<sup>360</sup> IWM, Papers of Ian W. G. Martin, Letters of 8 and 24 July 1958.

<sup>361</sup> Author's interviews with Thassos Sophocleous, Renos Kyriakides, Andreas Chartas, and Constantinos Loizou.

<sup>362</sup> TNA, CO 926/416, Telegram No. 1281 from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 18 December, 1955.

<sup>363</sup> TNA, CO 926/416, Telegram No 1283 from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 18 December, 1955.

days before had taken part in ambushing and murdering a British soldier... Responsibility for any disturbance to funeral must rest squarely on shoulders of those who deliberately disregarded instruction issued by authorities.<sup>364</sup>

Harding demonstrated a similar attitude on the issue of responsibility with regard to Makarios's deportation. Shortly after Makarios and Kyrenia were sent to the Seychelles, British forces raided the archbishop's palace and carried off a great quantity of papers. This was done partially to gather intelligence against EOKA and partially to justify the deportations. Included in this stash were the minutes of the Ethnarchy Council and Ethnarchy Bureau meetings during the winter of 1955-56 describing deliberations relating to the Harding-Makarios negotiations. Evidence gathering against the Church continued during the summer of 1956 with expanded operations in the Troodos Mountains. This time, searches 'in and around Kykko Monastery confirmed the authorities' view that the monastery has been a centre of terrorist activity'. Weapons, ammunition, EOKA leaflets and explosives were all discovered in the monastery or in nearby 'hideout' caves constructed as terrorist safe-havens. In response to the discoveries, the monastery was closed to the general public.<sup>365</sup> The revelations in Grivas's captured diary from this period added more substance to the official view that EOKA was in close contact with the Church.

On 1 September, Harding wrote to Lennox-Boyd that security forces had acquired evidence 'that the Church has not only been exploiting its position for seditious ends but has been actively engaged in a conspiracy to overthrow the Government by force... practically the whole leadership of Cyprus has been deeply and directly implicated in launching the campaign of violence on Cyprus'. The evidence was strong enough for Harding to feel that it presented the British with 'a

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<sup>364</sup> TNA, CO 926/416, Telegram No 1284 from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 18 December, 1955.

<sup>365</sup> TNA, FO 371/123897, Telegram No. 1177 from Sinclair to Lennox-Boyd, 17 June 1956.

unique opportunity to take such actions with the least offence to religious opinion throughout the world'.<sup>366</sup> It was eventually published in Nicosia in late October 1956 in a report entitled *The Church and Terrorism in Cyprus: A Record of the Complicity of the Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus in Political Violence*. Designed to put forward the British position to the world and to justify the security measures taken against the Church, including the deportations, it set out to demonstrate the complicity of churchmen of every position in the violence on the island.

The document is remarkable both for its unabashed agenda and for its overt hostility – an indication of the government's frustration both with the Church's policies and with the continued violence in Cyprus. Plenty of evidence was found in the correspondence between Makarios and Grivas. 'Above all', the report argued, 'it was he [Makarios] who brought to Cyprus a brutalized and disappointed soldier [Grivas] to organise the campaign of violence and to terrorise his compatriots into acquiescence in the pursuit of Makarios' political ambitions.'<sup>367</sup> The authors of the report argued that: 'It is abundantly clear that Archbishop Makarios took the leading part in the formation of Grivas' secret terrorist organisation, later to become known as EOKA, and it was he who controlled its preparations and determined when it should go into action.'<sup>368</sup> These claims were based largely on Grivas's captured diaries and the captured correspondence between Grivas and Makarios. In his memoirs, Grivas corroborates much of this, admitting that authorisation to begin the struggle as well as funding came from Makarios himself. The British document went on to defend the deportations in stunningly blunt language:

Is it not then a question whether the removal from the Cyprus scene of ecclesiastics, who thus prostitute their religion in support of political violence,

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<sup>366</sup> TNA, CO 926/490, Telegram No. 1777 from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 1 September 1956.

<sup>367</sup> TNA, CO 926/489, *The Church and Terrorism in Cyprus: A Record of the Complicity of the Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus in Political Violence*, (Nicosia: 1956), p.6.

<sup>368</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7.

may be as necessary for the revival of true religion in their Church as it is for the pacification of their country. [...] It is clear that the Ethnarchy never considered self-government on its merits at all and regarded it as 'a short truce' which should be exploited 'for the purpose of immediately pushing on to self-determination', and at the same time, as the only way by which 'we can neutralize the Turkish factor.' ... the real reason for his [Makarios'] deportation was that he had so far forsaken the path of true religion as to procure the use of violence in support of his political ambitions, and, having done so, had become so deeply committed to it that he either could not, or would not, abandon it.<sup>369</sup>

Makarios's deportation had a strategic as well as political motivation. Harding hoped that with the archbishop removed from the picture, he would be free to pursue the destruction of EOKA without being slowed or constrained by negotiations. To achieve this goal, the field marshal needed to strengthen his capabilities on the ground. This meant increasing the military means at his disposal and an almost complete reform of the local police force.

### **The Police**

As Harding wrote to Lennox-Boyd soon after his arrival, 'my most urgent task in restoring and maintaining respect for law and order [is]... the strengthening of the Cyprus police force'.<sup>370</sup> This was an important goal in itself, but it would also allow the police 'at the earliest possible moment [to] assume full responsibility for internal security and relieve the army of this commitment which at present absorbs a large number of troops and diverts them from their proper tasks'.<sup>371</sup> As a post-mortem on the insurgency written in 1959 by Major General Sir Kenneth Darling, Director of Operations in Cyprus from October 1958 to August 1960, concluded: 'It is a cardinal principle of internal security that military forces act in support of the civil power, and

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<sup>369</sup> Ibid., pp.39-41.

<sup>370</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Telegram No. 810 from Harding to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 10 October 1955.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid.

are called upon only when the police can no longer contend with a situation – and then with the arms in which they are trained to use.<sup>372</sup> In Cyprus, the degree of the threat and the shortcomings of the police force were so pronounced that the army bore the brunt of the campaign from beginning to end.

In theory, the use of soldiers to do police work was neither a viable nor desirable long-term solution. As Darling's report argues, for the soldier, 'police patrolling and crowd control,' were tasks 'for which he was neither intended nor trained' and which forced him 'constantly to 'rub shoulders' with the population'. From these interactions 'respect for military forces is inevitably prejudiced because their use becomes commonplace'.<sup>373</sup> The recognition that military resources were meant for what modern armies call 'warfighting' rather than local security – the province of the police – was an important counter-insurgency lesson, and one which the British had acquired before operations in Cyprus. According to counter-terrorism expert Bruce Hoffman, an authority on the emergency in Palestine, it was '[t]he basic tenet of British doctrine on internal security... that the police, and not the military, should play the predominant role in upholding the law and maintaining civil order'.<sup>374</sup>

In Cyprus, as in Palestine, however, the size and reliability of the police force was such that it simply could not fulfil the primary role in counter-terrorist operations. A complete overhaul of the force was necessary before policemen could replace soldiers in the field. Under Harding's plan, the permanent force would be doubled from 1,800 in 1955 to between 3,000 and 3,500 all ranks; there would be reinforcement of the officer cadre, and major reforms to the Special Branch and

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<sup>372</sup> IWM, AFH 6, General Sir Kenneth Darling, 'Report on the Cyprus Emergency,' (Nicosia: 31 July 1959), p.3.

<sup>373</sup> Darling, 'Report on the Cyprus Emergency', pp.3-4.

<sup>374</sup> Bruce Hoffman, 'The Palestine Police Force and the Challenges of Gathering Counter-terrorism Intelligence,' (2008)

intelligence services.<sup>375</sup> In spite of these changes, replacing soldiers with policemen in Cyprus was slow work. It was not until August 1956 that the police were able to assume responsibility for security in the towns.<sup>376</sup> The wholesale replacement of the military with the police force was a goal that the British never achieved. In fact, as inter-communal relations deteriorated through 1958, the military deepened its commitment, marginalising the police even further.

As a small, colonial police force responsible for security on an island with only half a million inhabitants, the Cyprus Police Force was in no way prepared to deal with the scale of EOKA's activities when the insurgency began. The force itself was keenly aware of this fact and tried to remedy it. 'The Police Force was neither staffed, organised, equipped nor trained to cope with these conditions [of terrorism]. A high priority had to be given to Police requirements and in April [1955] approval was given for major increases in all ranks, for supply of radio and transport, for arms and equipment'.<sup>377</sup> In addition to combating EOKA's mountain guerrillas and preventing smuggling, security forces were also faced with stopping EOKA assassinations of individual police and military personnel in urban areas.<sup>378</sup> Combating this 'very difficult problem' and cause of 'much worry' was something Harding identified as 'rightfully a task for [the] regular police'. In the governor's opinion, however, the forces were 'quite incapable of taking it on at present'. To achieve their goal, Harding suggested an increase of ninety additional police to the

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<sup>375</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Telegram No. 810 from Harding to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 10 October 1955.

<sup>376</sup> Baker, *The Cyprus Emergency*, p.20.

<sup>377</sup> CSA, V40/503, Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1955, GH Robins, Commissioner of Police, Cyprus (Nicosia: Chr. Nicolaou and Sons Ltd. 1956), p.3.

<sup>378</sup> TNA, CO 926/547, Telegram No. 39 from Harding to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 7 January, 1956.

permanent force and ‘fifteen jeeps fitted with wireless’ in order to increase patrols in the major towns.<sup>379</sup>

The police force’s greatest shortage was not jeeps or wireless sets, but reliable recruits, particularly Greek-Cypriots. To EOKA, Greek-Cypriot policemen were defined by their affiliation with the Cyprus government and not by their ethnicity. As part of the British security apparatus, they were valid targets for assassination and intimidation. Greek-Cypriots were threatened by EOKA orally and in leaflets. They were excoriated as traitors and collaborators and promised a bullet in the back. All too often the promise was kept. During the course of the insurgency, 15 of the 51 policemen killed by EOKA were Greek-Cypriots as were 43 of the total 185 wounded – approximately a quarter of the police force’s casualties.<sup>380</sup>

EOKA pressure on Greek-Cypriot officers reduced their numbers, dramatically hampering the effectiveness of the force. At the end of 1954, the last year before the outbreak of the insurgency, Greek Orthodox members of the force numbered 850 out of a total of 1,386 – slightly more than 61%. In comparison there were 508 Muslims (Turkish-Cypriots) – almost 37%.<sup>381</sup> During the first year of the insurgency these numbers began to move in opposite directions as large numbers of Greek-Cypriots resigned from the force – some out of fear of EOKA, others out of sympathy for it. Recruitment drives aimed at increasing the force’s strength, netted Turkish-Cypriots almost entirely. By the end of 1955, 1,003 out of the 1,838 members of the force were Greek-Orthodox compared with 734 Turkish-Cypriot Muslims.<sup>382</sup> A special police commission report during the first half of 1956 described a ‘virtual

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<sup>379</sup> Ibid.

<sup>380</sup> Darling, ‘Report on the Cyprus Emergency’, p.68.

<sup>381</sup> CSA, V40/502, Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1954, GH Robins Commissioner of Police, Cyprus (Nicosia: The Cyprus Government Printing Office, 1955), p.4.

<sup>382</sup> CSA, V40/503, Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1955, GH Robins, Commissioner of Police, Cyprus (Nicosia: Chr. Nicolaou and Sons Ltd. 1956), p.8.

cessation of recruitment' among the Greek-Cypriot population due to: '1) Fear of EOKA, 2) Antipathy to the Government, heightened by the curriculum in Greek schools, preaching Greek Nationalism, and 3) Poor pay and conditions of service'.<sup>383</sup>

The year-end report for 1956 provided a clear reflection of this state of affairs. By 31 December 1956, the number of Greek-Cypriot policemen had plummeted to only 697 of the total. The remaining 1,135 members of the regular police force were now Turkish-Cypriots. As the table below shows, the proportion within the force had been almost reversed in less than two years.<sup>384</sup>

Comparison of the Composition of the Cyprus Police Force by Religion, 1954-1956:

Religion	1954 All Ranks (Percentage)	1955 All Ranks (Percentage)	1956 All Ranks (Percentage)	Increase/Decrease (1955-1956)
Greek Orthodox	850 (61.3%)	1,003 (54.5%)	697 (37.5%)	-30.5%
Muslim	508 (36.7%)	734 (40.0%)	1,135 (60.0%)	+54.6%
Other	28 (2.0%)	101 (5.5%)	47 (2.5%)	-53.5%
Total	1,386 (100%)	1,838 (100%)	1,879 (100%)	+2.2%

The haemorrhaging of Greek-Cypriot officers meant that a large increase in the regular police force – a key policy designed to bring the insurgency under control – did not take place during 1955-56. The actual increase of only 2.2% was negligible. This was not the result of a failure to recruit Turkish-Cypriot officers – who increased by 54.6% - but because of the loss of Greek-Cypriots, whose numbers decreased by 30.5%. In addition, some of those Greek-Cypriots who remained were of dubious

<sup>383</sup> CSA, V12/32, Report of the Cyprus Police Commission of 1956, (Nicosia: The Cyprus Government Printing Office, 1956), pp.25-6.

<sup>384</sup> CSA, V40/504, Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1956, Lt. Col. GC White (Chief Constable of Cyprus) p.3.

loyalty, collaborating with EOKA by giving the organisation vital information and even helping prisoners escape.<sup>385</sup>

The newly recruited Turkish-Cypriot officers were not well trained and were mistrusted by the Greek-Cypriot civilian population. By the end of 1956, the ethnic composition of the regular police force no longer represented the demographics of the population, undermining its legitimacy. In addition, the police force as a whole remained significantly below the new authorised establishment. Even though 498 new recruits were brought in to the various branches of the force during 1956, only 2,417 were serving on 31 December 1956 against an establishment strength of 3,643.<sup>386</sup> This force, still small and ineffective, confronted a massive increase in violence. Over the course of 1956, cases of ‘serious crime’ (almost entirely due to EOKA operations) shot up by more than 36% from 6,335 to 8,655.<sup>387</sup>

The ‘lull in overt terrorist activity’ which followed the EOKA truce of March 1957 created a new situation for the police force. The British took advantage of the ceasefire to press forward with the process of ‘reorganising and strengthening the force and of consolidating improvements already begun’. Large numbers of officers from outside Cyprus were brought to augment the force. Most importantly during this period, Greek-Cypriot applications for enlistment resumed.<sup>388</sup> In fact, during 1957, 472 of the 767 applications for positions in the regular police force (61.5%) came from Greek-Cypriots. Nonetheless, by the end of the year, 51% of policemen serving in the island’s regular force of 2,692, remained Turkish-Cypriot, compared with 30% Greek-Cypriots. Of the remainder, 17% were ‘expatriates’ including personnel

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<sup>385</sup> For example the officer, ‘Fat Costas’, mentioned by Elenitsa Seraphim, *The Cyprus Liberation Struggle 1955-1959*, p.156.

<sup>386</sup> CSA, V40/504, Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1956, Lt. Col. GC White (Chief Constable of Cyprus), p.2.

<sup>387</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>388</sup> CSA, V40/505, Lt. Col. G.C. White (Chief Constable of Cyprus), Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1957, p.3.

seconded from police forces within the United Kingdom, 2% were Armenians and Maronites.<sup>389</sup> Expatriates were an increasingly important feature of law enforcement in Cyprus, bringing their experience as officers in Great Britain or, more significantly, as policemen in other colonies under emergency conditions such as Palestine, Malaya, or Kenya.

From the very beginning of the insurgency, British policymakers decided that the presence of officers with experience from other colonial emergencies would be useful in Cyprus. On 23 August 1955, Governor Armitage asked the colonial office for 'seven police officers... with experience of emergency conditions in Malaya or Kenya'.<sup>390</sup> Ten days later, the Deputy Governor of Kenya was in contact with the colonial office offering a list of qualified police inspectors 'willing to volunteer for three year contract service in Cyprus'.<sup>391</sup> Further expert advice was also offered. Anthony Head, the secretary of state for war, directly suggested to the prime minister that the administration might benefit from having 'a Lieutenant-Colonel who had had experience of the working of joint headquarters in similar circumstances in Kenya or Malaya'.<sup>392</sup> As a result of these initiatives, the number of British nationals serving the Cyprus police force grew dramatically. The increased use and recruitment of expatriate forces represented an effort by the British government to provide effective law enforcement in Cyprus and to avoid deepening the divide between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots. It was also hoped that such transfers could leverage the expertise acquired by these officers in other trouble spots. At the end of 1958, expatriate officers rose to 21% of the total regular police force compared with 31% Greek-

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<sup>389</sup> Ibid., p.8.

<sup>390</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Report from GHQ Middle East Land Forces British Defence Coordinating Committee to Chiefs of Staff, 25 August 1955.

<sup>391</sup> TNA, FO 371/117690, Telegram From Deputy Governor Baring (Kenya) to the Colonial Office, 2 September 1955.

<sup>392</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Note from Anthony Head to Prime Minister Eden, 22 September 1955.

Cypriots, 47% Turkish-Cypriots, and 1% Armenians and Maronites.<sup>393</sup> In addition to its growing size, the expatriate corps occupied a disproportionately high number of senior positions. In 1958, 99 of the 237 inspectors (42%) and 423 of the 714 sergeants (59%) were expatriates; there were no expatriate police constables.<sup>394</sup> The expatriate officers helped contain the worst of the inter-communal violence during 1958. However, they were not numerous enough to take full control of the security situation.

These numbers, representing the regular police force, were only part of the picture. An auxiliary police force had been created in August 1955, with lower educational and medical standards for its recruits than for the regular force. ‘The original establishment of 400 was increased to 900 by August 12<sup>th</sup>, and in late October a further increase to the present figure of 1,400 was authorised.’ Because of the difficulty in recruiting Greek-Cypriots, the force was almost exclusively Turkish-Cypriot.<sup>395</sup> In addition, a mobile reserve of approximately 500 men, formed in 1956, was completely Turkish-Cypriot.<sup>396</sup> This latter force personified one of the most contentious aspects of the insurgency – the Greek-Cypriot claim that Britain’s recruitment of Turkish-Cypriot constables and auxiliaries represented a policy of divide and rule designed to heighten hostility between the two communities and provide reasons for perpetuating British rule. It would be a mischaracterisation, however, to view the mobile reserve as a punitive force designed to strike at the Greek-Cypriot community or to maintain or establish a minority rule of the Turkish-Cypriots over the Greek-Cypriots. As described by General Darling in a top-secret report on the course of the insurgency, members of the mobile reserve ‘were used as

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<sup>393</sup> CSA, V40/506, John E.S. Browne Esq., Chief Constable of Cyprus, Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1958, (Nicosia: Police Headquarters, February, 1959), p.8.

<sup>394</sup> Ibid.

<sup>395</sup> CSA, V40/503, Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1955, GH Robins Commissioner of Police, Cyprus (Nicosia: Chr. Nicolaou and Sons Ltd. 1956), p.32.

<sup>396</sup> TNA, WO 106/6020, General Kenneth Darling, ‘Report on the Cyprus Emergency,’ 1959, p.20.

static guards over magazines and some vulnerable points'.<sup>397</sup> According to Darling, this formation 'did excellent work until the inter-communal disturbances when it was considered impolitic to use them. They were used in mixed Police/Army confidence patrols with success after their last anti-riot operations which were in January 1958.'<sup>398</sup>

The British government was cautious about the uses of the Turkish-Cypriot mobile reserve because it hoped to avoid further exacerbating inter-communal hostility, which it saw as undermining rather than supporting Britain's position on the island. A Cabinet note by Selwyn Lloyd (during his brief tenure as defence secretary) as early as July 1955 argued that 'communal strife would seriously impair the efficiency of Cyprus as a base'.<sup>399</sup> Since the base in Cyprus represented the entire reason for Britain's attempt to retain control of the island, the British had no interest in creating conditions of communal strife which they recognized would endanger the very base they were trying so hard to protect. At the same time, the primary international concern for the British government was maintaining NATO and its posture in the Eastern Mediterranean against the Soviet Union. Civil war in Cyprus threatened war between Greece and Turkey – a move which would damage NATO and open the entire Middle East to Russian expansion. In addition, the British government continued to be active in its desire to recruit reliable Greek-Cypriots into the force throughout the insurgency. Records show that authorities were pleased when Greek-Cypriot applications rose in 1957 and made no attempt to limit or reduce the number of Greek-Cypriot applicants.<sup>400</sup> By 1957, the British government brought

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<sup>397</sup> Ibid.

<sup>398</sup> Ibid.

<sup>399</sup> TNA, CAB 129/76, CP (55) 82, 'Strategic Review of the Cyprus Problem,' Note by Selwyn Lloyd, 18 July 1955.

<sup>400</sup> CSA, V40/505, Lt. Col. G.C. White (Chief Constable of Cyprus), Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1957, p.3.

officers from Britain and other colonies in larger numbers in order to make up the shortfall rather than rely totally on the Turkish-Cypriot element, which was progressively kept away from front-line service to reduce ethnic tensions.

In spite of the cautious use of the mobile reserve, the inter-communal fighting that characterised 1958 strained police resources and legitimacy to their limits. The increased scale of violence in 1958, after the lull of 1957, forced a redoubling of efforts to expand the police force. As a result, the number of police jumped from 2,692 at the end of 1957 to 3,014 at the end of 1958, only 185 below establishment, largely due to the influx of expatriate officers and the continued high number of Turkish-Cypriot recruits.<sup>401</sup> In addition, upwards of 1,800 Turkish-Cypriots served either in the auxiliary police force, along with a handful of Greek-Cypriots, or in the completely Turkish-Cypriot mobile reserve. This meant that, in 1958, of the approximately 4,900 men in police uniform, less than a fifth were Greek-Cypriots, although they represented almost four-fifths of the island population.

In spite of the expanded expatriate presence, the force confronted a major spike in violence during 1958. That year, EOKA murdered 165 people, including 123 civilians, the highest for any year of the insurgency.<sup>402</sup> The annual police report commented that ‘political passions reached a high peak and many of the murders committed will be remembered because of their particular brutality’.<sup>403</sup> The personal nature of the violence and the intimidation of groups like EOKA and its mirror, the Turkish Resistance Organisation – TMT<sup>404</sup> (formed in November 1957), ‘made it

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<sup>401</sup> CSA, V40/506, John E.S. Browne Esq., Chief Constable of Cyprus, Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1958, (Nicosia: Police Headquarters, February, 1959), pp.2-5.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid., p.14.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid.

<sup>404</sup> Türk Mukavemet Teşkilati.

almost impossible for detective officers to obtain the necessary evidence to bring to trial the perpetrators of some very savage and brutal murders'.<sup>405</sup>

With the police force largely prevented from carrying out effective counter-insurgency operations, the British administration in Cyprus was forced to rely on soldiers for the day-to-day conduct of security tasks. Military formations were responsible for protecting targets from EOKA attack, carrying out crowd control, patrolling both city streets and mountain tracks, guarding detention centres, and also for offensive operations against enemy targets. Harding's desire to go on the offensive, beginning in late 1955 and continuing through the summer of 1956, required more troops. With these additional soldiers, Harding was determined to carry the war to EOKA and end the campaign for *enosis* by military means.

### **War with EOKA**

Less than two weeks after his arrival, Harding's security review convinced him that while 'an effective command system' was being built up, he needed one more infantry battalion and one more infantry brigade headquarters for operations.<sup>406</sup> The field marshal wrote to Prime Minister Eden with a modest request for approximately 700 additional combat soldiers plus logistical and command support. The 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Norfolks were duly flown out to Cyprus on 17 October, followed by the headquarters of the 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade on 19 October with the addition of extra support for the HQ's radar unit.<sup>407</sup> Harding was convinced that the forces now at his disposal – some seven combat battalions comprising 5,000 fighting men supported by approximately 8,000 more in other units (support staff, headquarters personnel,

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<sup>405</sup> CSA, V40/506, John E.S. Browne Esq., Chief Constable of Cyprus, Annual Report on the Cyprus Police Force for the Year 1958, (Nicosia: Police Headquarters, February, 1959), p.19.

<sup>406</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Telegram No. 836 from Harding to Eden, 14 October 1955.

<sup>407</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Minute from CIGS, 17 October 1955.

and several units of Royal Marine commandos) – would be sufficient to deal with ‘any situation short of a complete breakdown in morale and discipline in the police force’.<sup>408</sup>

Progress remained slow. As 1955 wound down, the security services were still feeling their way in the fight against EOKA. Intelligence was limited and the forces at Harding’s disposal had yet to familiarize themselves with conditions on the island. After 217 attacks in November, EOKA carried out another 187 in December and 134 in January, slowed only by increasingly difficult operating conditions because of winter weather in the mountains and supply shortages. The prospect of clinching a deal with Makarios in February caused EOKA to temper its actions further, resulting in only 99 attacks during the entire month. With Makarios’s deportation in March (coinciding with the end of winter) EOKA redoubled its efforts. The number of attacks spiked, 246 in March, 234 in April and a staggering 395 in May – the most for any single month to date.<sup>409</sup>

Successes for the security forces during this period were limited. Harding’s tactics consisted mostly of search and cordon operations, usually carried out in villages surrounding an area where an ambush had occurred.<sup>410</sup> Such reactive raids provided few results. Kenneth (KJ) Neale, seconded by the Colonial Office to Cyprus, noted to John Martin, the deputy under-secretary of state for the colonies, on 2 January 1956 that: ‘Until recently there was a depressing lack of tangible success against the terrorists’. Late December, however had witnessed some reversing of that trend but successes were few and small.<sup>411</sup> On the night of 10/11 December, Operation Foxhunter, spearheaded by the seventy men of the 45<sup>th</sup> Commando Royal

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<sup>408</sup> TNA, WO 32/16260, Telegram No. 836 from Harding to Eden, 14 October 1955.

<sup>409</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 565, Written Answers, p.104.

<sup>410</sup> Charles Hart, *Cyprus Crisis – 1955-56: ‘B’ Troop 45 Commando Royal Marines v. Dighenis*, (Portsmouth, Holbrook Printers, 2003), p.25.

<sup>411</sup> TNA, CO 926/416, Minute from KJ Neale to John Martin, 2 January 1956.

Marines, shot one terrorist armed with a revolver and captured another in possession of a rifle. An EOKA team exchanged fire with a patrol but escaped into a thick mist. Five caves filled with food and supplies for approximately twenty fighters were discovered.<sup>412</sup>

In Operation Foxhunter II the very next day, two more villages were cordoned and searched by the 1<sup>st</sup> Gordons. The battalion found only ‘one RAOC sergeant’s battle-dress blouse’. In the neighbouring village of Kyperounda, a priest with detonators and four time pencils was arrested with his two sons. No major EOKA targets were killed or captured, but nineteen people were detained for interrogation.<sup>413</sup> The search and cordon operations continued on a nearly daily basis in the mountain towns with similarly disappointing results. The mechanism was simple, as described by a member of the 45<sup>th</sup> Commando Royal Marines:

Once the troops carrying out the search arrived at a village, a Land Rover with an officer manning a loudhailer would drive through, well before anyone was awake, giving instructions “*Attention – Attention, women and children remain in your homes, all males make your way to the Cage.*” The ‘Cage’ was usually constructed of barbed wire and erected on a suitable open space in the village. Once all males were in the cage and under guard, each one was interrogated whilst being watched most of the time by an ‘informer’, who would be masked and in a vehicle out of sight. The informer then pointed out any suspect terrorist, who was then taken away for further interrogation by the Security Forces and MI5. The remaining troops would be systematically searching through every house and outbuilding for arms and explosives.<sup>414</sup>

The search and cordon operations in the mountains were the focus of Harding’s campaign against EOKA’s mountain guerrilla groups. By pressing the fight against these groups during the winter, Harding hoped to take advantage of the cold weather, which, along with supply difficulties, was hampering EOKA’s operations. To this end, Harding wrote to Lennox-Boyd in early January requesting another

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<sup>412</sup> TNA, CO 926/416, Telegram No. 1233 from Harding to S. of S. Colonies, 11 December 1955.

<sup>413</sup> TNA, CO 924/416, Telegram No. 1242 from Harding to the S. of S. Colonies, 13 December, 1955.

<sup>414</sup> Hart, p.33.

combat battalion.<sup>415</sup> By mid-January, the war office announced that Harding would get more than he had initially requested. Two battalions of paratroops and a second independent brigade headquarters arrived in Cyprus later that month.<sup>416</sup> By February, British forces on the island had grown to nearly 20,000 men and included 14 major combat units. The number of British forces on the island had nearly doubled between October 1955 and February 1956. Still, Harding had remarkably little to show for his efforts.

While struggling to gather high-grade intelligence, deter EOKA attacks, and capture high-value targets, security forces suffered surprisingly high casualties. At the end of February 1956, Harding informed Lennox-Boyd of the losses. Since 1 April 1955, EOKA killed seventeen members of the British security forces and twenty-one Cypriots, including six policemen and fifteen civilians. 100 British military personnel were wounded along with twenty-three policemen and fifty-three civilians. Against this, Harding reported that British security forces had killed only eight EOKA fighters and wounded fifteen. In addition, twenty-eight captured EOKA fighters were under arrest, facing charges that could result in the application of the death penalty. Another twelve captured members of EOKA faced a maximum sentence of life in prison if convicted.<sup>417</sup>

The statistics reflected not only the intensity of violence on the island but also the ability of EOKA to inflict damage without significant loss to itself. This was largely a function of EOKA's tactics which focused on attacks with explosives and the targeted assassination of security personnel. Laying mines along mountain roads to destroy army trucks, or throwing grenades and explosives at police stations and

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<sup>415</sup> TNA, CO 926/547, Telegram No. 39 from Harding to S. of S. Colonies, 7 January 1956.

<sup>416</sup> *The Times*, Wednesday, Jan 11, 1956; pg. 8; Issue 53425; col A

<sup>417</sup> TNA, CO 926/417, Telegram No. 405 from Cyprus (Harding) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 24 February, 1956.

army barracks provided opportunities to inflict casualties on British forces while exposing EOKA men to little danger. The second major aspect of EOKA operations – attacks on security personnel engaged in routine patrols – were carried out in largely urban settings. Their targets were conspicuous due to their duties and were usually fired on from behind. After the attack, the civilian-clothed EOKA gunman was frequently able to melt back into the populace, using the disorder that followed the attack as cover. Such operations had more to do with organised crime ‘hits’ than military operations and were subject to particular vilification both during and after the conflict. Grivas was quick to defend them in his book on guerrilla warfare and EOKA, published in 1964:

Of course, our use of execution groups came in for criticism on the part of our opponents who called us ‘murderers’ because we struck from behind. Such a charge is, to say the least, naïve, because to kill your opponent by assailing him at his weakest point, from the side or rear, is a tactic as old as Alexander the Great, Epaminondas and Marathon, and in more modern times was adopted during the wars of Frederick the Great and Napoleon. What would the critics say if a general were to make a frontal attack against a much stronger opponent, thereby leading his soldiers to a useless death? They would of course demand that he be court-martialled or at least cashiered.<sup>418</sup>

A conventionally trained soldier and something of a military historian, Grivas was aware of the traditional use of deception by great commanders. In spite of his historical awareness, Grivas’s defence glossed over the fairly obvious point that a flank attack on a battlefield by one uniformed army against another was palpably different from an un-uniformed gunman firing into the back of an officer on a routine patrol along city streets and then disappearing into the crowd. By evoking Alexander, Frederick, and Napoleon, Grivas was clearly attempting to justify his actions. At the same time, with no little arrogance, he placed himself among them, even if tangentially.

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<sup>418</sup> Grivas, *Guerrilla Warfare*, p.68.

In spite of the disparity in casualties and EOKA's unconventional tactics, Harding's new security apparatus started to make headway. Particularly after the exile of Makarios, the security forces, spearheaded by the army, took off the gloves and pursued EOKA with all possible ferocity. With an ever-improving intelligence service and plenty of boots on the ground carrying out operations in both towns and rural areas all over Cyprus, EOKA's leadership began to suffer major setbacks. At the end of May 1956, British forces commenced a major security operation, codenamed 'Pepperpot', which inflicted serious damage on a number of mountain groups. It was followed in June by Operation Lucky Alphonse which achieved even greater successes, capturing a 'complete mountain gang of seven terrorists including two men with a price of £5,000 on their head', along with significant quantities of equipment and weapons.<sup>419</sup> Security forces almost nabbed Grivas himself. Contact was made with the EOKA commander's 'headquarters' team in the Troodos Mountains, but he escaped. The security forces, however, did succeed in recovering the EOKA leader's diary covering 10 May to 9 June, along with numerous other documents, including correspondence between Grivas and Makarios.<sup>420</sup>

Grivas's narrow escape was a disappointment for the security forces, but other successes followed; soon they began to snowball. Intelligence gleaned from Grivas's diaries, from the interrogation of captured EOKA suspects, and from increasingly efficient military operations began to shift the tide in the favour of the security forces. From their May highs, EOKA attacks dropped to 276 in June. Grivas was disappointed with the progress, writing in an order to an area commander on 24 June: 'The results of our continued struggle, when we think of what we intended to do, are

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<sup>419</sup> TNA, FO 371/123897, Telegram No. 1177 from Sinclair to Lennox-Boyd, 17 June 1956.

<sup>420</sup> TNA, FO 371/123897, Telegram No. 1144 from Sinclair to Lennox-Boyd, 12 June 1956.

very poor.<sup>421</sup> In spite of Grivas's frustration, EOKA was in no position to turn the tables. Their capabilities continued to deteriorate and only 66 attacks were launched in July.

In conjunction with the changing military dynamics, the diplomatic situation was changing as well. On 12 July, Eden announced his government's acceptance of the principle of self-determination for Cyprus. The concession was made in conjunction with the desire to establish a working constitution on the island while keeping it under British sovereignty. On 16 August, Grivas declared a temporary ceasefire. The ceasefire held for two weeks. On 22 August, Harding issued surrender terms to Grivas. Insulted by the offer, Grivas demanded its revocation and the re-launching of negotiations with Makarios. When these demands were not met, EOKA resumed action.<sup>422</sup> By the end of the month, 123 attacks had been carried out. Larger events, however, with implications far beyond the insurgency in Cyprus, were about to take centre stage, pushing the discussion of a new constitution into the background, while providing Grivas with an opportunity to strike back at the British in stunning fashion.

### **Suez and Black November**

In spite of the ceasefire breakdown at the end of August 1956, the Cyprus insurgency was becoming a sideshow in eastern Mediterranean international affairs. On 26 July, President Nasser of Egypt announced the nationalisation of the Suez Canal and of the Suez Canal Company that operated it. Because of the dependence of Britain on oil supplies passing through the Canal, this move confronted British policymakers with a grave crisis. Conferences were held in London among the

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<sup>421</sup> *Terrorism in Cyprus: The Captured Documents*, p.53.

<sup>422</sup> CO 926/521, Telegram No. 1702 from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 23 August 1956.

interested powers over 16-23 August and again over 19-21 September, in an attempt to solve the problem and to re-establish a canal users' association that would be acceptable to Egypt, Britain, and France. Without satisfactory progress or guarantees from Egypt, Britain and France began secret discussions in mid-October about a possible Anglo-French military intervention. Soon their planning involved cooperating with the Israeli government in an invasion of Egypt that would allow Britain and France to intervene between the two warring factions, occupy the Canal Zone and topple Nasser's government. On 29 October, Israeli forces – with British and French collusion – invaded Egypt. The next day Nasser rejected an Anglo-French ultimatum to end hostilities. On the night of 5-6 November, in keeping with their pre-arranged plan, British and French troops occupied Port Said and the Canal Zone. On 7 November, the USSR, the UN and, surprisingly, the United States condemned the Anglo-French invasion. The threat of sanctions, particularly from the United States, combined with very real economic fears in Britain to force Eden into calling a ceasefire that very day.

Eden's premiership was fatally wounded by Suez. The prime minister's health deteriorated rapidly from the stress caused by the operation's failure, and he left Britain for Jamaica in November. The government fell into the hands of his chancellor, and former foreign secretary, Harold Macmillan. When Eden resigned on 9 January 1957, Macmillan formally assumed control of the government. The new prime minister would push for a new policy direction on the question of Cyprus. His position was more flexible than Eden's, and would eventually lead to a compromise solution for the island.

In Cyprus, the British move into Egypt caused frantic activity on the part of EOKA. Several elite paratroop battalions had been withdrawn from operations in the

run-up to the crisis and were now in Egypt. With insufficient troops, there was no follow-up to the successful summer operations. EOKA got a second wind, and Grivas was determined to use it. As one of EOKA's district commanders noted in her memoirs: 'the day after the British attack on Suez, we received urgent orders from Dighenis to step up action and intensify our ambushes. We wished to harass the British as a diversion from their activities in Suez.'<sup>423</sup> While 285 recorded acts of violence were committed in September and 129 in October, November 1956 witnessed no fewer than 416, the highest number in any single month of the entire insurgency.<sup>424</sup>

With British troops remaining in the Canal Zone while negotiations continued to establish a timetable for withdrawal, EOKA continued its attacks, targeting the security forces. Although casualties in the security forces spiked, civilian losses showed no change. During November, sixteen members of the armed forces and four police were killed, along with nine Greek-Cypriot civilians, British civilians, and one Turkish-Cypriot civilian.<sup>425</sup>

**Civilian Casualties (August 1956-20 February, 1957)<sup>426</sup>**

Month	Greek Cypriot	Turkish Cypriot	British
August 1956	12	1	Nil
September 1956	8	2	1
October 1956	14	Nil	Nil
November 1956	9	1	4
December 1956	12	Nil	1
January 1957	7	Nil	4
February 1957 (to the 20 <sup>th</sup> )	2	Nil	Nil

<sup>423</sup> Seraphim, p.144.

<sup>424</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 565, Written Answers, p.104.

<sup>425</sup> *Ibid.*, p.101-2.

<sup>426</sup> *Ibid.*

In spite of the high losses in November, casualties among British security forces decreased almost to nothing in December. It seemed as if EOKA had shot its bolt.

**Security Forces Casualties (August 1956-20 February 1957)<sup>427</sup>**

Month	Service	Police
August 1956	None	1
September 1956	7	3
October 1956	6	None
November 1956	16	4
December 1956	1	1
January 1957	1	2
February 1957	4	1

During November, in spite of EOKA's best efforts, British security forces were able to hold their own. Although the number of attacks increased massively, no major successes were achieved against British forces; the fundamental dynamics of the situation remained unchanged. Once the Suez situation settled, the British forces on Cyprus struck back against EOKA. In mid-December, a joint police and military operation in Limassol and Larnaca arrested fifty-two terrorists of importance, including the Larnaca district commander.<sup>428</sup> The security services considered the arrests 'to be undoubtedly the most important single haul since the beginning of their campaign against EOKA'.<sup>429</sup> As troops returned to the island, the successes continued to mount. On 19 January 1957, the security forces killed mountain group leader Markos Drakos in a gun-battle. On 1 February, area commanders Evangelos Evangelakis and Andreas Chartas were captured. In March, Yiannis Droushiotis, the Paphos commander, was taken by security forces.

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<sup>427</sup> Ibid., p.102.

<sup>428</sup> TNA, CO 926/454, Telegram No. 2493 from Sinclair to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 13 December 1956.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid.

By mid-February 1957, the Special Branch described EOKA as ‘trying to maintain pressure’ in spite of their leadership losses. These losses forced the organisation ‘to employ less experienced personnel’, leading ‘to a marked rise in the number of casualties inflicted on terrorists in the actual commission of their crimes’. Security was also strengthened by the arrest ‘of a number of Greek Cypriot police officers for complicity in EOKA activity’.<sup>430</sup> The Cyprus Intelligence Committee echoed the Special Branch, reporting on 21 February 1957 that: ‘For the first time since EOKA terrorism started in April, 1955, there are genuine signs that the movement is on the wane, and for the first time it has been possible to frustrate terrorist plans by reason of precise advance knowledge of what was being planned. This is a most satisfactory state of affairs, and is the result of the cumulative effect of much painstaking intelligence effort.’<sup>431</sup> By this time, twenty of the thirty individuals (including one woman) who had served as district leaders throughout the island had been killed or arrested.<sup>432</sup> Under interrogation, many of those in custody gave information leading to the capture of additional EOKA members. Success spiralled.

On 4 March, the security forces scored their greatest success in the mountains near Macheras Monastery. After an intelligence tip-off, a detachment of the Duke of Wellington’s Regiment was led to a wooded area containing the hideout of EOKA’s most experienced regional commander, Grigoris Afxentiou. Afxentiou, a former officer in the Greek army, refused demands to surrender. After a gun battle that raged for several hours, the EOKA commander was killed when his hiding place was saturated with petrol and set alight. His charred body was recovered from the cave

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<sup>430</sup> TNA, CO 926/670, Special Branch Fortnightly Intelligence Report Vol. V, No. 3/57 (Chief Superintendent of Police, G. Meikle), 19 February 1957.

<sup>431</sup> TNA, CO 926/670, ‘Intelligence Review for the First Half of February 1957’, Cyprus Intelligence Committee (CIC) 57, 21 February 1957

<sup>432</sup> Απομνημονεύματα Αγώνα ΕΟΚΑ 1955–59, Γεωργιος Γριβα–Διγνεις (Αθηνά, 1961), pp.xix-xx.

several hours later. EOKA was staggered. After its record-setting performance in November, EOKA carried out only 96 attacks in December. Nevertheless, attacks rose to 161 in January, and ticked up to 259 in February. Although EOKA had suffered major losses, the increased number of attacks in January and February demonstrated that the organisation was still operational. Nevertheless, Afxentiou's death suggested that EOKA's days as a fighting force were numbered. As the Cyprus Intelligence Committee noted in its bi-weekly review: 'The terrorists have never before suffered such a succession of severe reverses as they have during the past two months'. While mindful of the organisation's resilience, the CIC was optimistic that with continued pressure EOKA would be smashed, particularly since it appeared 'unlikely that external distractions, such as the Suez crisis, will cause a division of the counter-terrorist effort, as happened the last time the terrorists showed signs of cracking'.<sup>433</sup> This view seemed to be confirmed on 14 March when Grivas announced a suspension of operations and offered a truce if the British would release Makarios.

The intelligence services were convinced that EOKA had been defeated. In January 1957, the Colonial Office suggested that Brigadier Baker write a review of 'the more important aspects of the Emergency in Cyprus with a view to assisting Colonial Governors of other Territories in considering what steps they would have to take should they find themselves faced with an Emergency situation, and in considering the measures required to forestall or prevent it'.<sup>434</sup> With Afxentiou's death and the subsequent ceasefire, the drafting of the report moved forward. It seemed the emergency was winding down.

The closing of 1956 and the beginning of 1957 were significant not only for the military successes of the security forces, but for political developments that

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<sup>433</sup> TNA, CO 926/671, Cyprus Intelligence Committee (57) Eight, 'Intelligence Review for the Second Half of February 1957', 7 March 1957.

<sup>434</sup> Baker, *The Cyprus Emergency*, p.3.

suggested that Harding's successes in the field had created an opportunity for a negotiated solution. Through new constitutional proposals, the British approached both the Greek and Turkish governments in conjunction with the people of Cyprus in an attempt to end the violence. These proposals opened a new phase of discussion and diplomacy, culminating in renewed attempts to solve the problem at the United Nations and within NATO. The failure of these attempts would lead not only to the most violent and dangerous phase of the insurgency, but also to its end.

## **Chapter V – False Dawn: The Failed Road to Peace**

*'H.M.G. consider that the situation in Cyprus has considerably improved and is sufficiently under control for them to take a liberal view of the conditional appeal which the Archbishop has now made. I have accordingly instructed the Governor of Seychelles, with the full agreement of Sir John Harding, to cancel the orders for the detention of the Archbishop and his three compatriots, and to arrange passages from Seychelles by the first available vessel.'*<sup>435</sup> (Prime Minister Macmillan, 24 March 1957)

### **New Hopes**

New diplomatic manoeuvres and the successes of the security forces against EOKA during late 1956 and early 1957 gave the British government hope that a solution in Cyprus could finally be found. Reeling from a series of major blows, EOKA declared a truce on 14 March 1957 conditional upon the release of Archbishop Makarios. The ensuing moratorium on attacks on British security forces seemed to

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<sup>435</sup> TNA, CO 926/949, Telegram No. 89 from Macmillan to the Foreign Office, 24 March 1957.

confirm the hope that the situation in Cyprus was moving toward a permanent end to violence. On 24 March, the new prime minister, Harold Macmillan authorized the release of Archbishop Makarios from detention. Makarios made his way to Athens but was not allowed to return to Cyprus.

Although real advances had been made on the ground in Cyprus, British policy in the eastern Mediterranean more broadly had suffered dramatically over the same period, largely as a result of the Suez debacle. By the start of 1957, the new Macmillan administration hoped to take advantage of the progress in Cyprus to achieve a lasting solution on the island that could recoup some of Britain's damaged prestige in the region. Macmillan's succession fuelled the notion of compromise. He was not considered to be as rigidly imperialist as Eden, and had been an early advocate of the idea of British bases in Cyprus rather than Cyprus as a British base.<sup>436</sup> This attitude left room for compromise on the issue of Cypriot sovereignty. It was hoped that Britain, Greece, Turkey, and the two communities on the island could reach an understanding within that space.

This chapter focuses on the diplomatic negotiations during this period which centred on new constitutional proposals drafted by the noted British jurist, Cyril, Lord Radcliffe. Radcliffe, an Eldon Law Scholar (1924) and Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, (1932-37), was already famous for his work in the creation of India and Pakistan in 1947, where he had drawn up the partition line that separated the two countries. His role in Cyprus would be just as difficult, even if it was not on such a grand scale. His constitutional proposals would have to satisfy not only the nationalistic aspirations of Greek-Cypriots, but the security concerns of Turkish-Cypriots, and the strategic needs of Great Britain and Turkey. It was a formidable

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<sup>436</sup> Macmillan, Harold, *Riding the Storm: 1956-1959*, (London: Macmillan, 1971), p.226.

task. Although Radcliffe had been approached first in the context of an agreement between Harding and Makarios, his constitutional mission continued even after negotiations broke down and the archbishop was exiled. Even then his proposals encountered numerous objections.

By the summer of 1957 the situation on Cyprus began to simmer again with no solution having been reached. Reinvigorated by the long truce, EOKA returned to operations. Security forces, having taken their foot off the enemy's throat, were forced back into a reactive role. The *enosis* movement, along with the governments of both Greece and Turkey, refused to come to an understanding on Radcliffe's proposals or on any of the broader issues. Turkey, emboldened by the talk of partition, pressed for it as the only solution to Cyprus's problems. As in previous years, the failure to reach a negotiated settlement led to an increase in hostility. 1957 proved to be a year of false dawn and lost opportunities.

### **A New Constitution and Familiar Obstacles**

The Radcliffe constitutional proposals of December 1956 represented a slightly different approach toward a familiar goal. Instead of encouraging the Cypriot people to discuss a framework for a constitution under British auspices, constitutional proposals would be drafted by a British legal expert, circulated for approval to the Greek and Turkish governments, and then, with their consent, applied to Cyprus. Just as the Radcliffe report proceeded along familiar lines, its proposals were rejected along familiar lines. The Greek government and Greek-Cypriots would not agree to it because it did not provide for self-determination and a clear path to *enosis*. It gave too much power to a non-elected governor and kept Cyprus firmly under British sovereignty.

Radcliffe's odyssey began in February 1956 when he was approached by leading government figures about drafting constitutional proposals for Cyprus. As argued in chapter three, by early 1956 an agreement with Makarios seemed likely and the British government was planning the implementation of a possible solution. The position of the British policymakers was that an understanding between Harding and Makarios – along the lines of the proposed British formula – would be followed by constitutional negotiations involving Britain and the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities. At the start of February 1956, Harding wrote to the colonial secretary, Alan Lennox-Boyd, in support of appointing a constitutional commissioner. While Harding did not know Radcliffe personally, he assured Lennox-Boyd of his cooperation with whomever was chosen.<sup>437</sup> Less than a week later, Lennox-Boyd responded to the governor, informing him that Radcliffe would accept the role of constitutional commissioner and addressing details for the formation of a constitutional commission on Radcliffe's authority.<sup>438</sup>

Although he was willing to assume the responsibility for leading the constitutional commission, Radcliffe was not entirely comfortable with the scope of his new task. As he confided to the Deputy Undersecretary of State for the Colonies, Sir John Martin:

I do not regard myself as a constitutional expert in any sense: and I have the strongest belief that no Constitution is likely to have validity or strength unless it is produced from genuine discussion by those who are to be responsible for working it... To produce a Constitution 'in the air' would, I think, put me in a false position, and would prejudice any further contribution one could make to the evolution of one.<sup>439</sup>

Choosing to lay the foundation for his proposals on the ground rather than 'in the air', Radcliffe planned a trip of several weeks to Cyprus. During this time, he hoped to

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<sup>437</sup> TNA, FO 371/123869, Telegram No. 292 from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 8 February 1956.

<sup>438</sup> TNA, FO 371/123869, Telegram No. 248 from Lennox-Boyd to Harding, 14 February 1956.

<sup>439</sup> TNA, FO 371/123888, Letter from Radcliffe to Martin, 29 April 1956.

meet representatives from both the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities and take stock of the situation himself. Meetings on the details of his visit and of the broader approach to the drafting were held in early June with Harding and Lennox-Boyd. On 8 June, it was decided that Radcliffe would be appointed the sole constitutional commissioner and that he would fulfil this role with the help ‘a panel of advisers upon whom he could draw for assistance as necessary’.<sup>440</sup>

Radcliffe arrived in Cyprus on 14 July. In a statement shortly after his arrival he admitted that the task facing him was a difficult one. ‘I do not want anyone inside or outside this island to think it will be easy. There are a great many interests to be taken into account and reconciled before any recommendations can be made. I am here now to listen.’<sup>441</sup> For the next three weeks Radcliffe did just that and worked to get a better understanding of the situation firsthand. Initially, Greek-Cypriot leaders refused to speak with him through official channels. To circumvent this, Radcliffe personally approached Nicosia’s Mayor, Dr. Themistokles Dervis, meeting with him on 18 July.<sup>442</sup> On 20 July, Radcliffe, continuing his travels around the island, met with the acting mayor of Famagusta, who complained that too many Greek-Cypriot leaders were in detention or in exile for him ‘to obtain a true picture of the island’s opinion’.<sup>443</sup> On 25 July, Radcliffe met with the Turkish Mufti and three days later he sat down with Dr. Kutchuk. By 3 August, having done his best to get a sense of the situation on the ground, he was on his way back to London. In London, Radcliffe discussed the drafting of his proposals with the most senior officials in the British government. The terms of reference laid down by policymakers in London would take

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<sup>440</sup> TNA, FO 371/123899, Note of Meeting in the Secretary of State for the Colonies’ room – Cyprus Constitutional Development. 8 June 1956.

<sup>441</sup> *The Times*, Monday, 16 July 1956; p.8.

<sup>442</sup> *The Times*, Thursday, 19 July 1956; p.9.

<sup>443</sup> *The Times*, Saturday, 21 July 1956; p.6.

into account the government's views on Cypriot sovereignty, the scope of self-government, minority relations, security concerns, and diplomatic obligations.

At the end of September, Radcliffe went to Cyprus for another 10 days. He returned to London on 5 October. Over the next month and a half he drafted his proposals. They were presented to the British Cabinet on 16 November 1956 by Lennox-Boyd. The terms of reference Radcliffe had received from London made four points clear: Cyprus was to remain under British sovereignty; the island's primary function as a base to fulfil British 'international obligations' and 'defence... interests' had to be assured; the Governor of Cyprus (British or not) and/or the Government of Britain would retain control of external affairs, defence, and internal security; and the constitution was 'to be based on the principles of liberal democracy and... [was] to confer a wide measure of responsible self-government on elected representatives of the people of Cyprus', while protecting the rights of minority communities.<sup>444</sup> The terms of reference made it clear that the constitution would safeguard the primary British interests in Cyprus while attempting to replace the Greek-Cypriot goal of *enosis* with the palliative of self-government. Turkish-Cypriot opposition would be mitigated by providing minority protections. Partition was not mentioned. It would not play into Radcliffe's recommendations since his mandate was to create a constitutional framework under continued British sovereignty; it was not 'to consider or envisage the possibility of an eventual change of status [for Cyprus]'.<sup>445</sup>

The constitutional commissioner was in no doubt as to the obstacles standing between his proposals and the creation of a functioning new constitution for Cyprus. In his report to the Cabinet, Radcliffe made it clear that, while he had worked swiftly to bring his proposals forward at the soonest possible date, the conditions in Cyprus

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<sup>444</sup> TNA, CAB 129/84, CP (56) 264, The Radcliffe Constitutional Proposals, 16 November 1956, p.6.

<sup>445</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 562, p.1267.

made their implementation impossible. Radcliffe's reason behind this conclusion was simple. As he wrote:

It is a Constitution appropriate to a state of affairs in which men may express their will by voting and their views by speaking without fear of terrorism or intimidation: in which, on the other hand, Government does not have to impose or maintain those emergency measures, distorting ordinary life, which are the unavoidable counterpart of terrorism itself. In other words, my proposals contemplate a Cyprus in which it has been possible to declare that the present emergency has come to an end.<sup>446</sup>

The combination of terrorism and emergency regulations made Cypriots unwilling, if not unable, to implement Radcliffe's proposals, but he remained hopeful that once adopted, they could bring real and positive change to the island. At the same time, Radcliffe hoped that the proposal for constitutional development, in itself, would help bring the emergency to a close.<sup>447</sup>

In the eyes of the more conservative elements within the government, the purpose of the Radcliffe proposal was clear. Julian Amery articulated this position during the House of Commons debate of 19 July. Greek claims were incompatible with Turkish concerns and British needs. The constitution would help create a 'climate of compromise'. Its nature would 'bring the Greeks to understand that there cannot be self-determination for Cyprus in the foreseeable future'. British resolve on the issue would 'convince... friends and... foes alike in the island and in the Eastern Mediterranean' of Britain's determination 'to stay in Cyprus'. Anyone trying to put Britain out of Cyprus was 'biting granite' and would 'break their teeth'. The Greek desires for immediate self-determination and *enosis* would only be stopped once they were 'convinced that they cannot hope to enforce them'.<sup>448</sup>

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<sup>446</sup> Radcliffe Proposals, p.5.

<sup>447</sup> Ibid.

<sup>448</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 556, p.1450.

In substance, the suggested constitution was balanced. It was also not written in stone. As the author freely admitted, the proposals were ‘to be read as instructions for a draftsman, not as a draft itself’.<sup>449</sup> Still it carried weight. The proposals fulfilled the mandate of the terms of reference and outlined a continuation of British sovereignty. The governor would retain significant executive power. In addition to appointing six members of the legislative assembly, he would serve as the chief executive of Cyprus. He would be ‘the final judge’ in matters pertaining to ‘his reserved subjects’, such as foreign policy and internal security. He would also determine whether any bill from the assembly stepped into his reserved subjects. Providing for a Supreme Court or other outside referee to fulfil this role, Radcliffe wrote, was ‘not possible’.<sup>450</sup>

Finally, ‘[a]ll legislative acts of the Assembly and all executive administration actions or decision on the self-governing side... [would] be subject to the condition that they must not conflict with certain guaranteed rights relating to religion, education, charitable, religious and cultural institutions and use of languages’.<sup>451</sup> Radcliffe felt that his purpose was to create ‘a fair balance between the different and often conflicting interests which are involved’.<sup>452</sup> The conflicting interests, however, were hardly reconciled by the proposals in front of them. The powers of the governor were particularly contentious for the Greek-Cypriots. Nevertheless, Radcliffe had made three major concessions to the Greek/Greek-Cypriot side. First, Greek-Cypriots would have an elected majority in the legislative assembly. Twenty-four of the thirty-six representatives would be elected from the general roll. Another six would be

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<sup>449</sup> CSA, V11/151. Constitutional Proposals for Cyprus, Report Submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the Right. Hon. Lord Radcliffe, GBE, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, December 1956), p.6.

<sup>450</sup> Ibid., p.10.

<sup>451</sup> Ibid., p.14.

<sup>452</sup> House of Commons Debate, 19 December 1956, Hansard, Vol. 562, p.1267.

elected by Turkish-Cypriot voters exclusively. Six more would be appointed by the governor. This assembly would be the sole legislative body, unchecked by any 'upper house' where Turkish-Cypriots or officials appointed by the governor would have a disproportionate voice. Finally, any mention of partition was excluded. It remained to be seen whether these concessions would be sufficient.

For their part, Turkish-Cypriots would have their rights protected by several special features. A two-thirds majority of Turkish-Cypriot members of the legislative assembly would be necessary to implement 'any law which alters the existing laws of Cyprus regulating Turkish Cypriot domestic affairs'.<sup>453</sup> In addition, an Office of Turkish Cypriot Affairs would be created and the relevant minister (a Turkish-Cypriot) would be part of the Cabinet. Although Radcliffe was sympathetic to Turkish-Cypriot misgivings regarding life under Greek-Cypriot majority-rule, he did not accept that the Turkish-Cypriots 'should be accorded political representation equal to that of the Greek-Cypriot community'. In Radcliffe's opinion, organising Cyprus as a federation was not logical. There was 'no pattern of territorial separation between the two communities and, apart from other objections, federation of communities which does not involve also federation of territories seems to me a very difficult constitutional form'.<sup>454</sup>

The crucial point for Turkey remained the possibility of partition. Although any mention of formally dividing the island was not included in Radcliffe's proposals, it was part of the ongoing diplomatic dialogue between British policymakers and leaders in Athens and Ankara as they discussed Cyprus in late 1956. At the time when Radcliffe's proposals were brought forward, British policymakers had more to concern themselves with than the situation in Cyprus. Through the autumn of 1956,

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<sup>453</sup> CSA, V11/151. Radcliffe Proposals, p.14.

<sup>454</sup> Ibid., p.13.

the crisis over Suez had become an international issue of enormous proportions. After the failure in Egypt at the start of November, British prestige, particularly in the Middle East, was at an all-time low. The Eden government had neither the time nor the political will to force through Radcliffe's proposals. When they were brought to the Greek and Turkish governments in mid-December, Eden's government was crumbling. The prime minister himself was ill and soon to resign.

In spite of the inauspicious backdrop, Lennox-Boyd met with Prime Minister Karamanlis in Athens on 14 December. The Greeks had received the proposals the day before. Lennox-Boyd explained that, after the establishment of a working constitution along the lines proposed by Lord Radcliffe, Her Majesty's Government 'would review the question of the application of self-determination'. After this vaguely hopeful message, Lennox-Boyd hit Karamanlis with the critical threat of partition. 'Because of the difficulty of the problem of the interests of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus, when the time came for this review, HMG would be guided by the principle that the Turkish-Cypriots as well as the Greek-Cypriots should be allowed to exercise self-determination. Therefore HMG would not rule out the eventual partition of the island.'<sup>455</sup> The threat failed to move the Greek prime minister. Karamanlis attacked Radcliffe's proposals, claiming that they were neither liberal nor democratic. The scope for self-government was 'of a very limited nature'. Karamanlis felt that 'on the question of the position of Archbishop Makarios [still intimately linked to terrorism in the British view] and of self-determination the views of HMG were far from those both of the Greek Government and of Archbishop Makarios himself'.<sup>456</sup> The non-elected governor retained too much power and no firm

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<sup>455</sup> TNA, FO 371/123942, Record of Conversation between Karamanlis and Lennox-Boyd in Athens, 14 December 1956.

<sup>456</sup> Ibid.

date for self-determination was mentioned. Karamanlis could not endorse Radcliffe's report. Greek-Cypriots were simply not being given enough.

The Greek reaction came as a great disappointment to many within the British government. Within the pro-Turkish Foreign Office the reaction was particularly bitter. 'The visit to Athens went badly', wrote D'Arcy Patrick Reilly of the Southern Department:

The Greeks were ungracious and ungenerous, and very stupid. They hardly bothered about self-determination, and concentrated on the constitution... They complained that they had had not time to study it [Radcliffe's proposal], and yet within a few hours of Mr. Lennox-Boyd's very clear exposition they made up their minds to reject it, giving reasons that were nearly all trivial. They obviously wanted to pick holes and put the worst interpretation on everything... My impression is that they were thoroughly frightened by the prospect of a constitution that worked, and were determined to prevent it if they could. They may be afraid that with self-government, enthusiasm for Enosis may wane.<sup>457</sup>

In spite of the anti-Greek rhetoric, the Foreign Office was still worried by the deteriorating relations with Athens. Members of the staff of the American embassy in Athens were fearful that the hostility of the Greek government could shift it away from the Atlantic alliance altogether, and even tilt towards Moscow. As a result, both American and British policymakers hoped that the United States could use its influence to prevent the Greeks from rejecting the proposals outright so soon after they had been shared.<sup>458</sup> Instructions came in from the State Department to the American ambassador in Athens that he was to communicate to the Greek government 'that it would be unwise of them to react prematurely in an adverse sense to the Radcliffe proposals', and that Greece's attitude toward the proposals would determine America's reaction to Greece in the upcoming UN debate over Cyprus.<sup>459</sup>

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<sup>457</sup> TNA, FO 371/123941, Report from DP Reilly to Selwyn Lloyd, 17 December 1956.

<sup>458</sup> Ibid.

<sup>459</sup> TNA, FO 371/123941, Telegram No. 2499 from Washington to Foreign Office, 18 December 1956.

The British ambassador in Athens, Sir Charles Peake, similarly tried to prevent an outright rejection. Peake suggested to Foreign Minister Averoff that the Greek government's public statement might admit that 'though the proposals at first sight did not seem to offer as much as had been hoped, the document was long and intricate and the Greek government would need further time for close study before any view could be pronounced'. Averoff responded with despondency, saying that no such course was possible as he was "a prisoner of his government".<sup>460</sup> On 19 December, the Foreign Office asked the American State Department for a positive statement about the plan and to apply direct pressure on the Greeks not to reject it so soon. Washington was receptive, but disagreed over the optimum timing; the Americans suggested issuing a statement 'in the very near future'.<sup>461</sup> A partial explanation for the slight difference in American and British strategy comes from the relative importance of Greece to both countries. Both American and British policymakers regarded Greece as an important ally, but two camps within the British government would choose Turkey over Greece if a black and white decision was required. The first group, from within the Foreign Office, considered Turkey to be Britain's most important asset in the Middle East, largely because of its dual role in NATO and the Baghdad Pact. The second group, in Cyprus itself, felt that Turkish-Cypriot support and participation were essential to the day to day operations against EOKA, and knew that Turkey could provoke civil unrest on the island at will, which would dramatically complicate the security situation. The Americans took the different view that Greece and Turkey functioned like 'two blades of scissors' in

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<sup>460</sup> TNA, FO 371/123941, Telegram No. 877 from Peake to Foreign Office, 18 December 1956.

<sup>461</sup> TNA, FO 371/123941, Telegram No. 2511 from Washington to Foreign Office, 19 December 1956.

relation to NATO. Each was 'presumed to be as important as [the] other'.<sup>462</sup> As a result, the Americans were reluctant to back the Greeks into a corner.

In spite of the State Department's hesitation, the showdown was quickly coming. On 19 December, as the Foreign Office appealed to the State Department, Lennox-Boyd presented Radcliffe's report to the House of Commons. The colonial secretary supported it as a 'statesmanlike document,' which represented 'a fair balance between the different and often conflicting interests which are involved'.<sup>463</sup> Crucially, he then clarified the British position on the issue of Cypriot self-determination and its bearing on partition:

As the House knows, the terms of reference given to Lord Radcliffe envisaged a Constitution for a self-governing Cyprus under British sovereignty. As regards the eventual status of the island, Her Majesty's Government have already affirmed their recognition of the principle of self-determination. When the international and strategic situation permits, and provided that self-government is working satisfactorily, Her Majesty's Government will be ready to review the question of the application of self-determination. When the time comes for this review, that is, when these conditions have been fulfilled, it will be the purpose of Her Majesty's Government to ensure that any exercise of self-determination should be effected in such a manner that the Turkish Cypriot community, no less than the Greek Cypriot community, shall, in the special circumstances of Cyprus, be given freedom to decide for themselves their future status. In other words, Her Majesty's Government recognise that the exercise of self-determination in such a mixed population must include partition among the eventual options.<sup>464</sup>

The premise that partition could not be ruled out, broached with the Greeks in private on 14 December, had now been repeated in Parliament for the whole world to hear. For the Greeks, it was the death-knell for Radcliffe's proposals. As Foreign Minister Averoff recorded years later in his memoirs: 'this statement, made by the Colonial Secretary in Parliament and recorded in *Hansard*, constituted an official declaration of intent, and as such it was binding. Thereafter the Greek government could not

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<sup>462</sup> USNA, Embassy Records, RG 84 Box 3, Telegram No. 124 from Ambassador Warren (Ankara) to the American Embassy, Athens, 19 October 1956.

<sup>463</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 562, p.1267.

<sup>464</sup> *Ibid.*, p.1268.

possibly agree even to discuss the Radcliffe proposals, although strong pressure was put upon it to do so.<sup>465</sup>

The reaction from Athens was swift. That same night, at 9.30 pm, an official statement was issued. The Greek government claimed that the proposals did not ‘provide for the exercise of self-determination by the people of Cyprus’ and did not ‘comply with fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter’. The proposals were ‘neither democratic nor liberal’ and, while they granted ‘the principle of majority in form – and that only in limited measure –they nevertheless suppress it in substance, by vesting the Governor with practically unlimited powers... [T]he [Greek] Cabinet have unanimously decided that the proposals could not be considered as providing a basis for a solution of the Cyprus question.’<sup>466</sup>

Many British policymakers now expressed an open hostility to the Greek attitude. In their view, the Greeks had not examined the proposals in good faith. The precipitate rejection was evidence to them of how little attention had actually been given to Radcliffe’s document. As Ambassador Peake wrote to London, the statements confirmed ‘that the Greek Government took their negative decision on December 14, scarcely 24 hours after they had received the Radcliffe report and directly following the Colonial Secretary’s conversation with Mr. Karamanlis’. This evidence suggested that:

the Greek Government must have decided it was easier from their own point of view not to accept Her Majesty's Government's proposals. They accordingly cannot have given detailed consideration but simply made it appear that they had been presented with a fait accompli, and not given any time to formulate views... The only conclusion I can draw is that, as soon as the Greek Government realized that Her Majesty's Government's proposals did not provide for self-determination within a fixed period, they determined from weakness to have nothing to do with them.<sup>467</sup>

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<sup>465</sup> Averoff, p.103.

<sup>466</sup> TNA, FO 371/123941, Telegram No. 882 from Peake to Foreign Office, 20 December 1956, Text of Official Statement of Greek Government, 19 December 1956.

<sup>467</sup> TNA, FO 371/123941, Telegram No. 884 from Peake to Foreign Office, 20 December 1956.

In all likelihood, Peake had misread the situation. The Greek rejection did not come after the closed door meetings between Lennox-Boyd and Karamanlis; it followed immediately after the announcement of the possibility of partition in the House of Commons. Frustration on the Greek side was understandable. Although substantial concessions towards self-government were being given, the same obstacle that had doomed all constitutional proposals from Winster onward remained. Because of strategic considerations and its alliance with Turkey, Britain was unwilling simply to give Cyprus to the Greek-Cypriots and pave the way for *enosis*. This was the only solution Greek-Cypriots seemed willing to accept. In spite of the nuanced changes, Radcliffe's proposals represented, in too many ways, more of the same from London. In Greek eyes, moreover, including partition as a possible denouement damaged the proposals beyond repair.

The official tone of the Greek rejection paled in comparison with the visceral condemnations from the Cypriot *enosis* movement. A leaflet from EOKA's political wing on 10 February denounced the Radcliffe exercise with unrestrained anger:

The 'sold to the Colonialists' mind of Lord Radcliffe was for seven months pregnant with his legendary constitution for Cyprus. A year later he gave birth to his spiritual son, but alas! It was a monster with arms of Democracy and the mind of a British dictator... The worn-out colonialists seek with violence to impose on us this political monster, whilst they keep our Ethnarch imprisoned thousands of miles away from his people.<sup>468</sup>

An EOKA publication on 22 February spoke out in even stronger terms: 'No Radcliffe! Your constitution is not even applicable to negroes. It is a shame to try to convince a people with a better civilization than yours, your stubbornness to enforce it

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<sup>468</sup> TNA, CO 926/932, PEKA Leaflet 68/57, 10 February 1957.

as being the proper one shows your audacity and impudence.’<sup>469</sup> It was only a foretaste of the chauvinism that was to define the violence to come.

For its part, the Turkish government hoped to use the Radcliffe proposals as a springboard towards its own goal of partition. DP Reilly conveyed to the foreign secretary after meeting Prime Minister Menderes, that it was clear ‘that the Turks have decided that, since HMG are committed to self-determination, the only solution is partition, and the sooner the better... [T]hey [the Turks] do not like it [the Radcliffe proposals] and regard it as academic.’<sup>470</sup> They saw no future in a constitutional arrangement and wanted partition pursued immediately. Lennox-Boyd’s presentation in the House of Commons had reinforced the view in the Turkish government that continued pressure on the British could make their goal of partitioning Cyprus become a reality.

### **Turkish Opinion and the Widening Gap**

By December 1956, a great deal of Turkish diplomatic effort had already gone into making sure that Radcliffe’s proposals would be supported by a statement confirming the right of the Turkish-Cypriots to their own self-determination. Just as Greek-Cypriot self-determination was a veil for *enosis*, Turkish-Cypriot self-determination was a thin screen for partition. Both Turks and Turkish-Cypriots were adamantly opposed to the idea of Turks living under Greek rule. They were also concerned to maintain elements of Turkish culture on Cyprus. Their rhetoric, that Cyprus was geographically and historically part of Turkey, had not dimmed. The strongest argument on the Turkish side, however, was the contention that, if the principle of self-determination was to be applied on Cyprus, it would have to be

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<sup>469</sup> TNA, CO 926/932, EOKA Leaflet, ‘The Pseudo-Constitution,’ 22 February 1957.

<sup>470</sup> TNA, FO 371/123941, Report from DP Reilly to Selwyn Lloyd, 17 December 1956

applied to Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots equally.<sup>471</sup> British policymakers were sympathetic to this view.<sup>472</sup> Sympathy and implementation, however, were entirely different.

In Ankara, Prime Minister Menderes hammered away that partition was the only solution Turkey could accept and the ultimate sacrifice that it was willing to make.<sup>473</sup> Partition was the bogeyman of the *enosis* movement, its acceptance implying a clear defeat of the goal to establish a unified, Greek Cyprus. The concept of partition, like the British use of Turkish-Cypriots in the island's police force, is seen by many Greek-Cypriots as another manifestation of the empire's policy of divide and rule. Britain had partitioned India in 1947 (with Radcliffe himself drawing the partition line). In 1948-9, a bloody series of wars confirmed the division of Palestine into the Jewish state of Israel and Palestinian territories that were soon swallowed up by Egypt and Jordan. According to this reasoning, the instability inherent in dividing the Greeks and Turks of Cyprus into two autonomous (or quasi-autonomous) units would necessitate a British presence and allow them to maintain control of the island. The issue, however, was more complex than this line of argument suggests. It involved a number of aspects: strategic needs, internal debate, diplomatic considerations, and negotiating tactics.

Different parties within the British government professed different opinions on the subject. The damaging experiences in India and Palestine made many British policymakers wary of applying partition in Cyprus. It would be difficult to implement as there was no geographical separation of the two communities. On a practical level, a divided Cyprus was not viewed as easier to control. Most British policymakers were convinced that partition would lead to a civil war within the island and possibly a

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<sup>471</sup> *Halkin Sesi*, 18 March 1957 Vol. 1 No. 37, 'Partition, Is it Harmful?'

<sup>472</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 562, p.1273.

<sup>473</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Telegram No. 1041 from the Foreign Office to Ankara, 2 November 1956.

regional war between Greece and Turkey. Such events would threaten rather than strengthen Britain's position in the region. British policymakers had been clear as early as 1955 that intercommunal strife in Cyprus 'would seriously impair the efficiency of Cyprus as a base'.<sup>474</sup> On the cynical side, some within the British government hoped that partition could be manipulated and used as a threat directed against the Greeks, in order to sustain British control of the island and delay concessions to the *enosis* movement. As the Radcliffe mission picked up steam, the British began to consider the issue of partition in depth and how it could be turned to their advantage.

In June 1956, Sir John Martin sent a secret report to Governor Harding on partition. It laid out some of the key points and also explained the divisions within the government on the issue. Martin told Harding that most senior officials in the Foreign Office, including the Permanent Secretary, Ivone Kirkpatrick, favoured the idea of partition largely due to their inclinations towards Turkey.<sup>475</sup> Martin and the Colonial Office were opposed to the idea, wishing instead 'to maintain undisputed British control'.<sup>476</sup> As a negotiating point, however, the concept had its uses. Martin believed that:

nothing can be better calculated than the threat of partition to cause the Greek Cypriots to think twice before exercising their right of self-determination in order to secede from British sovereignty.... It also seems to me that possibly the threat of partition provides a more manageable stick to beat the Greeks over the head with than the 'ostensible alternative' of a tripartite administration which was proposed in Your Excellency's Appreciation.<sup>477</sup>

The gambit was seized by Harding. The governor communicated his support for the tactical discussion of partition, not its implementation, to the colonial secretary in a

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<sup>474</sup> TNA, CAB 129/76, CP (55) 82, 'Strategic Review of the Cyprus Problem: Note by the Minister of Defence (Selwyn Lloyd), 18 July 1955.

<sup>475</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Report by Martin for Harding, 7 June 1956.

<sup>476</sup> Ibid.

<sup>477</sup> Ibid.

telegram from October 1956: 'By all means let us use the threat of partition as a bargaining counter in the exchanges that take place between the parties concerned in the search for a solution, but I earnestly hope that we ourselves shall never come to regard it as anything other than a counsel of despair'.<sup>478</sup> Partition was not seen as a viable policy option for British interests; its threat, however, could be used to bully the Greeks and Greek-Cypriots into accepting the continuation of British rule, or at least the abandonment of *enosis*. It was a highly risky negotiating strategy. Britain's choice to invite Turkey to the Tripartite Conference in 1955 had fuelled Greek and Greek-Cypriot fears that Britain was actively seeking to involve Turkey in an issue that concerned only Greece, Great Britain, and the people of Cyprus. The latest strategy of bluffing the Greeks with the threat of partition reinforced this view of Turkish-British collaboration. In Greek eyes, it also undermined Britain as an honest negotiator genuinely seeking a compromise settlement with Greek/Greek-Cypriot ambitions.

One of the strongest arguments against implementing partition was what carrying it out would mean in practice. In spite of the pressure of Foreign Office officials for partition, the foreign secretary, Selwyn Lloyd remained opposed. Lloyd wrote to Lennox-Boyd on this issue on 8 August, arguing that 'partition can only be regarded as the last expedient when everything else has failed. We only resorted to it in Ireland, in India and in Trieste when it became clear that there was no means of reconciling the divergent views of the interested parties; and I do not think we should put it forward for Cyprus until the same situation arises... We have never fully worked out a partition plan [for Cyprus].' He went on to advise Lennox-Boyd that Radcliffe should see the ethnic map of Cyprus (which would demonstrate the near

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<sup>478</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Telegram No. 2094 from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 16 October 1956.

insurmountable obstacles to a partition in Cyprus due to the geographical mixing of the two communities) ‘and give him an account of the various ideas which have occurred to us’.<sup>479</sup> Lloyd was quite correct in his assessment. Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot villages were spread throughout the island. Only the mountainous region around Troodos at the island’s centre was composed entirely of Greek-Cypriot villages. Everywhere else the two communities were interlaced. All the major cities had Turkish minorities. Ironically, the largest urban concentration of Turkish-Cypriots was in Paphos in the west, furthest from Turkey; the smallest was in Kyrenia, closest to Turkey on the island’s north coast.

Governor Harding agreed with Lloyd in seeing partition as nothing less than ‘a confession of failure and only to be contemplated as a lesser evil than Enosis’.<sup>480</sup> Macmillan felt the same way, quoting his diary in his memoirs, *Riding the Storm*: ‘If we give it [Cyprus] to Greece, there will be a war between Greece and Turkey. If we ‘partition’, it is a confession of failure – means (perhaps) civil war in the island followed by full war between Greece and Turkey. We really want only air-bases for ourselves, for Baghdad pact and general ME and Persian Gulf Defence.’<sup>481</sup>

With so much pressure from senior policymakers against partition, it is understandable that it was not implemented as a British policy solution to the EOKA insurgency. Past experiences, combined with the particular difficulties on the ground, made it appear a poor choice. The Chiefs of Staff supported this view, although they did not rule out partition permanently. The military’s position was as clear as it was cynical. Partition was ‘preferable to either: - (a) unconditional Enosis, or (b) a continuing deterioration of relations between Greece, Turkey and the United

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<sup>479</sup> TNA, FO 371/123897, Letter from Lloyd to Lennox-Boyd, 8 August 1956.

<sup>480</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Telegram No. 2094 from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 16 October 1956.

<sup>481</sup> Harold Macmillan, *Riding the Storm: 1956-1959*, (London: Macmillan 1971), p.660, quoting diary entry for 7 July 1957.

Kingdom, and a continuing decline in our international prestige as an enlightened and liberal power'. In practice, any partition scheme would have to ensure 'the retention of certain areas as British territory in perpetuity in order to meet our continuing military requirements here after partition had taken effect'. Finally, the Chiefs of Staff 'agreed that after a period of probably some ten or fifteen years our military requirements here are likely to be much reduced, and it is then and then only that we could contemplate putting partition into effect'.<sup>482</sup> Whether by design or accident, a de-facto partition of Cyprus did come into effect through the Turkish invasion of July and August 1974. These events took place almost seventeen years to the day after Melville's note and fourteen years after the 1960 agreements were signed. During the Turkish invasion, the British government made no attempt to halt the partition of the island. As envisaged by the Chiefs of Staff, the strategic exigencies had changed.

The different sides of the partition debate also reflected the different priorities of the actors within Britain. While the Colonial Office and Government of Cyprus wished to maintain strong British control and avoid another Palestine, the Foreign Office seemed more willing to bow to partition as a means of ending the dispute and putting relations with Turkey back on the right foot. However, it is important to remember that, even among its advocates, partition was not seen as a positive solution, but merely as the least bad option. It would be costly, and 'would undoubtedly entail great hardship and suffering'. At the same time, the problems in Cyprus were based 'on the traditional and very longstanding conflict between Greeks and Turks' and could only be solved by 'an agreement between the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey'. In these circumstances, partition was not a solution but 'a means

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<sup>482</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Note on Mr. Melville's letter to Harding 16 July 1956.

of bringing both parties to their senses'.<sup>483</sup> The Colonial Office remained convinced that, instead of helping to soothe the intercommunal tensions, partition would exacerbate the divide. Separate education and separate control of communal affairs would assure that 'the rift between the two communities will grow still wider and deeper'.<sup>484</sup> A deepened rift would multiply the difficulties of maintaining British control and diminish the utility of the island for Britain's strategic needs.

The partition debate highlighted the significant degree of disagreement between the Greek and Turkish governments on an acceptable final solution. Harding made this fact clear in a telegram to Lennox-Boyd:

I must repeat what I have said so many times in recent months: that no matter how successful we may be against EOKA; no matter what happens to Radcliffe's proposals; there can be no real or lasting solution to the Cyprus problem without agreement between the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey on the question of self-determination and the future international status of the island... The gap between them [the governments of Greece and Turkey] is clearly very wide and it is perhaps the recognition of that fact that has recently led both governments and some of our own people to toy with the idea of partition as a possible solution.<sup>485</sup>

As Harding hinted, both the Greek and Turkish governments took the idea of partition seriously – the Greeks fearfully, the Turks eagerly. In early November, the Foreign Office informed the British ambassador in Ankara that the Turks were lobbying heavily for partition as the only chance for a solution. Menderes was convinced that the Greeks would possibly accept the idea as well.<sup>486</sup> In all likelihood, the Turkish Prime Minister was either exaggerating or bluffing. In public, and in negotiations with both British and American diplomats, partition remained a non-starter for the Greeks.

By the end of November 1956, it looked as if the internal government battle within Britain had been won by the parties that unequivocally opposed such a drastic

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<sup>483</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Letter from Harding to Melville, 10 October 1956.

<sup>484</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Note on Mr. Melville's letter to Harding 16 July 1956.

<sup>485</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Telegram No. 2094 from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 16 October 1956.

<sup>486</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Telegram No. 1041 from Foreign Office to Bowker, 2 November 1956.

step. A committee of the Chiefs of Staff presented a memorandum on the 'Military Implications of the Partition of Cyprus', which hammered the point home. The report continued to emphasize the importance of British military bases on the island for NATO, the Baghdad Pact, and Middle East policy. It concluded that '[i]f Cyprus is to be of any significant value to HMG, NATO or the Baghdad Pact there is an overwhelming military argument against partition'.<sup>487</sup> This report provides further evidence that in the cynical diplomacy over Cyprus, Britain hoped to maintain a unified island (at least during this period). It was thought that any physical separation would undermine, not support, Britain's strategic needs and desires in the region.

In spite of the recommendations against partition, its threat was manifest in the presentation of the Radcliffe proposals to the Greeks and later to parliament. This was the compromise chosen by British policymakers. Radcliffe would not recommend partition, but it could not be ruled out. If self-determination was to be applied in Cyprus it would be applied to the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities separately. It was hoped that, given time and careful study of Radcliffe's plan, the Turks would 'understand the many and great safeguards for Turkey which it contains'.<sup>488</sup> This hope was slim. As the British ambassador in Ankara admitted, 'I fear, however, that the Turks are pathological on the subject of self-determination and will adamantly refuse to see merits in any plan which fixes a date for it however hedged around by conditions and safeguards'.<sup>489</sup>

British policymakers were in an impossible position. The Turks would not tolerate the essential condition for satisfying Greek demands. The inclusion of partition in Lennox-Boyd's presentation of Radcliffe's proposals had doomed them to

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<sup>487</sup> TNA, CO 926/277, Memorandum by the British Defence Co-ordination Committee Middle East, COS (56) 426, 'Military Implications of the Partition of Cyprus,' 30 November 1956.

<sup>488</sup> TNA, FO 371/123899, Telegram No. 480 from Ambassador Bowker (Ankara) to the Foreign Office, 18 June 1956.

<sup>489</sup> Ibid.

failure. With their rejection of the proposals, the Greeks called this bluff and Britain backed away on the issue of partition. In spite of moving away from partition, Britain could not back away from its commitments to Turkey.

In framing the constitutional proposals, the British government was always more likely to tilt towards the Turkish position. The Greek-Cypriots were leading the campaign of violence on the island, and Turkey was viewed, in many quarters, as Britain's more important ally. The foreign secretary captured this reality in a letter to the American secretary of state on 19 June 1956: 'Turkey is by far our most solid asset in the Middle East; and I am most anxious that in pursuing the shadow of Greek compliances we should not lose the substance of Turkish friendship'.<sup>490</sup> Subsequent events in the region: the Suez crisis, the collapse of the Anglo-Jordanian pact, and the coup in Iraq all added to the importance of Turkey to British policymakers. In March 1957, concurrent with successes in Cyprus, the ceasefire, and the Jordanian troubles, Macmillan wrote to Selwyn Lloyd: 'it is absolutely vital not to prejudice our relations with the Turks especially now that the Baghdad Pact is looming large in the world.'<sup>491</sup>

As Turkey's stock increased in London, the propaganda war in favour of partition continued in Cyprus. Turkish-Cypriots had begun publishing an English version of the weekly newspaper, *Halkin Sesi*, in April 1956. Article after article attacked the idea of Turks living under Greek rule. 'We have lived in Cyprus with Greeks for centuries. We know what to expect from them', began one article ominously. 'We know what they feel about us and how they think of us. The *megalo-idea* in them is too much inculcated to be easily forgotten; their Church has preached to them to push the Turk down and root him out of Cyprus eventually.'<sup>492</sup> In December, just two days before Radcliffe's report was to be published, the paper ran a

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<sup>490</sup> TNA, FO 371/123899, Telegram No. 2959 from Selwyn Lloyd to John Foster Dulles, 19 June 1956.

<sup>491</sup> TNA, CO 926/949, Telegram No. 88 from Macmillan to Lloyd, 24 March 1957.

<sup>492</sup> TRNC State Archives, Kyrenia, *Halkin Sesi*, 17 September 1956, Vol. 1, No. 11.

story about Greek atrocities (entirely unsubstantiated) committed against Turks living in Thrace. It was certainly no coincidence.

When the Radcliffe proposals came out, they did receive a better reception in Ankara than in Athens, even though they fell short of Turkish wishes. London had continually assured Ankara of its commitment to fighting terrorism in Cyprus and of its desire to protect Turkish interests on the island and the Turkish-Cypriot minority. The official policy statement from the Commonwealth Relations Office on 18 December 1956, largely through its stance on partition, satisfied most of Turkey's demands. The statement announced that the British government had accepted Lord Radcliffe's proposals as 'a fair balance between the difference and conflicting interests' involved in Cyprus. Britain's purpose going forward would be:

to ensure that any exercise of self-determination should be effected in such a manner that the Turkish Cypriot community no less than the Greek Cypriot community shall, in the special circumstances of Cyprus, be given freedom to decide for themselves their future status. In other words, Her Majesty's Government recognize that the exercise of self-determination in such a mixed community must include partition among the eventual options.<sup>493</sup>

It was what the Turks had wanted to hear. On 19 December, as the Greek rejection was being prepared, the British Ambassador in Ankara telegraphed the Foreign Office that 'the Turkish Government were prepared to acquiesce generally in Her Majesty's Government's proposals owing to their inclusion of partition as putting an end to the possibility of self-determination leading to Enosis'.<sup>494</sup> Lennox-Boyd's presentation in the House of Commons pleased Ankara while infuriating Athens. The Turkish Prime Minister had also approached the American government about pressuring the Greeks to accept partition 'as being the only means of reaching a

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<sup>493</sup> TNA, FO 371/123941, Telegram No. 741 from Commonwealth Relations Office, 18 December 1956.

<sup>494</sup> TNA, FO 371/123941, Telegram No. 1134 from Ambassador Bowker (Ankara) to the Foreign Office, 19 December 1956.

settlement'.<sup>495</sup> Menderes continued to play this angle two weeks later in a speech before the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Fixating on the promise of partition, Menderes 'said that the Turkish government consider this statement of Mr. Lennox-Boyd's [promising the application of self-determination equally to Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots] a definite undertaking by the British Government, which Turkey accepted as a safeguard for the rights of the Turkish minority and the vital strategic interests of Turkey'.<sup>496</sup>

It appeared that the British gambit on partition had gone spectacularly wrong. Instead of mollifying Turkish fears and leveraging support for Radcliffe's compromise, the mention of partition had galvanized Turkish hopes. In Ankara, Radcliffe's proposals had been seized on not as a substitute for partition, but as a stepping-stone toward it. As Ambassador Bowker wrote to Selwyn Lloyd: '[b]y thus barring the road to Enosis, Her Majesty's Government have removed Turkey's main objection to a Constitution as being likely to be exploited by the Greek Cypriots and the Greek Government as a means of achieving union of the Island with Greece'. Turkish interest in a constitution had been 'scant' in early December; now partition was the only solution. The present proposals were seen as 'a bargain whereby they have accepted the idea of a Constitution in return for Her Majesty's Government's acceptance of the principle of partition'.<sup>497</sup> It was not the compromise Britain was looking for.

### **Self-delusion and Self-determination**

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<sup>495</sup> Ibid.

<sup>496</sup> *The Times*, Friday, 4 January 1957, p.7.

<sup>497</sup> TNA, FO 371/123942, Telegram No. 234 from Ambassador Bowker (Ankara) to Selwyn Lloyd, 28 December 1956.

The drumbeat for partition among Turkish policymakers had fallen on deaf ears in British circles. It had killed the Radcliffe proposals and, by illustrating the major gap between Greek and Turkish interests in Cyprus, had dead-ended negotiations for a solution. The Turkish government must have slowly come to the realization that London had no real desire to implement partition under the current circumstances. So they set about trying to change the circumstances. Through leaflets, radio addresses, and newspaper editorials, Turkish nationalists led the charge in favour of partition.

The first organisation acting along this line called itself Volkan (Volcano) and published its first leaflet on 15 April 1956. The communiqué was addressed ‘To the Turkish people of Cyprus’. It announced prohibitions against using ‘the word Volkan in public places’ and promised that ‘communal clashes will soon start’. In its rhetoric, Volkan seemed eager to outdo EOKA in violence and terror: ‘those who either deliberately or through vain display dare to give the slightest information regarding the Organisation will be penalised by being shot like dogs. The colonial lackeys who are in love with the British will be treated not as Turks but as traitors... policemen who carry their duties to the extent of treachery shall be punished.’ It finished menacingly, reminding Turks in Cyprus of the threat EOKA posed to them: ‘Do not forget that every fired shot is a step towards Enosis, and every dying Englishman drags us a little closer to the abyss of Enosis... [E]very bomb thrown by EOKA is thrown at us.’<sup>498</sup> Volkan did not act on its most violent threats. No killings or armed attacks were credited to the group and it is doubtful that it was ever supplied with the arms or training necessary to carry out its threats. However, the organisation was able to organise protest marches and riots to make its feelings known. If EOKA’s initial

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<sup>498</sup> USNA, CIA, Information from Foreign Documents or Radio Broadcasts, D455107, 15 April 1956.

wave of violence had worked to divide the Greeks and the Turks on Cyprus, the propaganda of Volkan, coupled with its own acts of violence, were moving the two sides irrevocably apart.

On 20 January 1957, with the Radcliffe proposals already fatally wounded, a Turkish mob set fire to Greek-owned homes and businesses in Nicosia's old town. Two days later *The Times* reported that 'no fewer than 70 fires were started in Nicosia... and five of them developed into major outbreaks'.<sup>499</sup> The next day the body of a Greek-Cypriot was found beaten to death after clashes between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot youths. It was a similar reaction to the riots in Istanbul and Izmir in the final days of the Tripartite Conference in 1955. Turkish extremists, speaking with fire and fists, were making their own push for partition.

EOKA seemed unable to respond to the Turkish-Cypriot provocation. Their leadership had suffered significant losses. Markos Drakos, a senior EOKA member thought to be number four within the organisation, was killed in a gun battle in Troodos on the night of 18-19 January. On 21 January, a Greek national, referred to as Karademas, was captured along with the mountain gang leader Kyriacos Matsis. Elsewhere on the island, security forces recaptured a Grivas intimate, Polycarpus Georghiades. All together, sixteen 'known hardcore terrorists', comprising 'just under half the known leading personalities in EOKA', were killed or captured during operation 'Black Mak' in the Troodos mountains.<sup>500</sup>

The organisation struck back against the British as best they could. On 25 January, a Greek-Cypriot general strike shut down Nicosia in protest against the Turkish violence. In Famagusta, a British civilian working for the War Department was shot and killed. A few days later a Greek-Cypriot policeman was also killed in a

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<sup>499</sup> *The Times*, Tuesday, 22 January 1957, p.6.

<sup>500</sup> TNA, PREM 11/1757, Telegram from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 22 January 1957.

gun attack. The retaliation, however, was sporadic and ineffective. The correspondent for *The Times* in Nicosia speculated that Grivas had lost control of the organisation.<sup>501</sup> The successes of the security forces offset the failure of the Radcliffe proposals, but no new movement towards a political solution in Cyprus came out of the British victories. British attempts to organise a new Tripartite Conference were shot down.<sup>502</sup> Greece also rejected the idea of NATO mediation. Averoff explained this in a conversation with John Foster Dulles on 13 February: 'I told him that most if not all the NATO allies would support Britain, which would mean, in effect, that they were voting against us. If the United States took the same line, the people of Greece would see no reason for remaining in NATO.'<sup>503</sup>

At the end of February, the Cyprus issue reappeared at the United Nations. This time, Greece was looking for a resolution condemning British atrocities in Cyprus. Such a resolution was not possible, but a modified Indian resolution was adopted in the General Assembly by a vote of 76 to 2.<sup>504</sup> It was brief but potentially significant:

The General Assembly, having considered the question of Cyprus, believing that the solution of this problem requires an atmosphere of peace and freedom of expression, expresses the earnest desire that a peaceful, democratic and just solution will be found in accord with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and the hope that negotiations will be resumed and continued to this end.<sup>505</sup>

The wording of the resolution gave each party some degree of hope. On the Greek side, the phrase concerning the resumption of negotiations was thought to mean that talks would soon begin again 'between Harding and Makarios or more generally

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<sup>501</sup> *The Times*, Wednesday, 23 January 1957, p.8.

<sup>502</sup> RHL, Mss. Medit. S. 25, AF John Reddaway, 'Reflections on an unnecessary conflict: Cyprus, 1955-1958 [sic] c. 1981, p.32.

<sup>503</sup> Averoff, p.106.

<sup>504</sup> *Ibid.*, p.115.

<sup>505</sup> United Nations Resolution, 1013 (XI), 660<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, 26 February 1957.

between the Cypriots and the British Government'.<sup>506</sup> EOKA took advantage of the resolution to put forward its conditional ceasefire. After conferring with Athens, EOKA published a declaration on 14 March:

Our Organisation in compliance with the spirit of the United Nations resolution expressing the wish for a peaceful and just settlement of the Cyprus question in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, and in order to facilitate the resumption of negotiations between the British government and the real spokesman for the Cypriot people, Archbishop Makarios, declares that it is willing to order the suspension of operations as soon as Ethnarch Makarios is released.<sup>507</sup>

A week later, at the Bermuda Conference, Cyprus was front and centre for Anglo-American relations. British policymakers clung to the position that, if terrorism stopped, 'discussions could take place with Greek and Turkish Cypriots on Lord Radcliffe's proposals'.<sup>508</sup> EOKA, reeling from the attentions of the security forces, was eager for the truce but had also made it conditional on the release of Makarios. President Eisenhower, aware that international opinion was strongly in favour of this concession, encouraged the British to allow Makarios to leave the Seychelles.<sup>509</sup> On 24 March, Macmillan conveyed to the Foreign Office his willingness to release the archbishop. The wheels were set in motion and on 17 April the ethnarch arrived in Athens where he was greeted by cheering crowds. New proposals from London, however, were not forthcoming.

In Cyprus, the ceasefire held through the summer, even as the nationalist rhetoric heated up. The directionless and eerie calm on the island did little to improve Governor Harding's opinion of the situation. The field marshal, who had soldiered through months of pedantic negotiations with Makarios, had doggedly combated EOKA, had endured abuse from Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots alike, and had faithfully

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<sup>506</sup> Averoff, p.116.

<sup>507</sup> EOKA declaration quoted in Averoff, p.126.

<sup>508</sup> TNA, PREM 11/1838, Bermuda Conference 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting, 21 March 1957, p.10.

<sup>509</sup> Ibid.

attempted to fit the round peg of London's policies into the square-holed realities of the island, had finally reached the end of his will. On 19 September 1957, to the apparent surprise of the government in London, Harding sent a letter to Lennox-Boyd asking to be replaced. The field marshal pleaded a number of reasons: his wife's ill health, the maintenance of their home and several properties back in England, along with an 'accumulation of private business and personal matters'.<sup>510</sup> The major reason, however, was that events in Cyprus were deadlocked with no prospect of a resolution; Harding had no desire to continue.

As Harding explained to Lennox-Boyd: '[i]t seems more than likely that discussions in Cyprus will drag on inconclusively for some months and possibly into the New Year'. The field marshal had had enough of Cyprus. He had recently suffered from a serious bout of influenza and was eager to end his time as governor. In his letter he proposed to leave Cyprus no later than the end of October 'with no idea of returning'. He suggested that his appointment could officially end some time around the end of the year.<sup>511</sup> Harding's frustration became more obvious as the note continued. There had been talk in July about ending the job 'in a blaze of glory', but he was convinced otherwise: 'frankly, I don't think there is ever going to be much glory to be got out of this business... I am afraid I cannot see my way to wait for it indefinitely.' He closed in much the same vein: 'forgive me for bothering you with this so soon after your return, but I cannot go on much longer in the present state of complete uncertainty about the future'.<sup>512</sup>

Lennox-Boyd, although surprised by the turn of events, seemed to accept without much protestation. 'I have now been able to discuss your letter of the 19<sup>th</sup> September with the Prime Minister,' he replied on 3 October. 'Needless to say, it will

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<sup>510</sup> TNA, CO 967/320, Letter from Harding to Lennox-Boyd, 19 September 1957.

<sup>511</sup> Ibid.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid.

be a very great blow to us all to feel that you are no longer to be at the helm in Cyprus, but both the Prime Minister and I are convinced that it would be very wrong to ask you to reconsider your decision and we agree that you should come home.’<sup>513</sup> The Cabinet turned its attention to finding a suitable successor. By the time of Lennox-Boyd’s response, this question was already being ‘actively’ pursued.<sup>514</sup> Lennox-Boyd persuaded Harding to keep on until the end of October and concluded his brief reply: ‘This is not the time to tell you of the intense gratitude we all feel for your superlative work – but I hope you really know it in your heart.’<sup>515</sup> The colonial secretary’s note was followed two weeks later by a letter of gratitude from the prime minister. ‘I cannot allow the announcement of your impending departure from Cyprus to pass without letting you know personally my feelings. Your tenure of office as Governor of Cyprus has been an extraordinary example of public service and devotion,’ wrote Macmillan. ‘I cannot think of a tougher assignment being given to any man nor can I think of any man who could have discharged it with greater distinction.’<sup>516</sup>

Harding was to be replaced by a career diplomat with a liberal pedigree, Sir Hugh Mackintosh Foot. The challenges of what British policymakers considered post-insurgency Cyprus would be better addressed by a man of words than a man of war. In a telegram to Lennox-Boyd on 3 October, Foot expressed his interest in replacing Harding. ‘I confirm that I should very much like to be considered for Cyprus appointment and believe I could do a good job if there were a sporting chance of working representative institutions.’<sup>517</sup> Foot proceeded to a little bit of lobbying,

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<sup>513</sup> TNA, CO 967/320, Letter from Lennox-Boyd to Harding, 3 October 1957.

<sup>514</sup> Ibid.

<sup>515</sup> Ibid.

<sup>516</sup> IWM, AFH 3, Letter from Macmillan to Harding, 17 October 1957.

<sup>517</sup> RHL, Mss. Medit. S. 35, Foot Box 3 Folder 3 181/8, Telegram from Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 3 October 1957.

assuring the colonial secretary that he would ‘loyally carry out all decisions of HMG [and] would certainly work wholeheartedly for a settlement that would not be unacceptable to HMG, the Turks and the Greeks’.<sup>518</sup> On the key issue of partition, Foot made his stance clear: ‘I believe partition would be a disaster and am bound to say that if all efforts to reach agreed solution failed I should wish to feel free to ask to be replaced rather than have to put into effect a policy which I felt to be wrong’.<sup>519</sup> The new governor would bring a new approach to familiar problems, but, like his predecessor, he would not accept the compromise of partition.

Partitioning Cyprus, however, had become the preoccupation of Turkish policymakers. Through 1957, Turkish newspapers and politicians continued their propaganda blitz for partition. Turks living under Greek rule would be discriminated against or annihilated. The Turkish-Cypriot press attacked Greece as an unreliable ally. Cyprus could not be handed over because 60 percent of the island’s Greek speakers were ‘Communist sympathizers’ who would work to hand the island, and Greece, over to the Soviets. In all likelihood, Turkish policymakers recognized the British preoccupation with communism and intentionally struck this point with particular vigour. At the same time, most Turks had no sympathy for communism and were concerned about the movement on its own merits, but they were clearly exaggerating the threat.

Britain’s release of Makarios in March prompted a particularly violent reaction. In an April editorial for *Halkin Sesi*, Dr. Kutchuk wrote that partition was ‘the only lasting solution’ in Cyprus. ‘Constitutional offers’, like that of Radcliffe, ‘can never be a remedy for the Cyprus ills. EOKA did not take up arms for the sake of a Constitution – its warcry has been enosis and coincided with the Greek policy in

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<sup>518</sup> Ibid.

<sup>519</sup> Ibid.

Greece.<sup>520</sup> In May, another Kutchuk article called into question Turkey's relationship with Britain. 'The release of Makarios', he wrote, 'and the regrettable events which ensued in Greece have set the Turkish intellectuals thinking on the value of Turkey's friendship and alliance to Britain and conversely on the value of British Friendship and alliance to Turkey.'<sup>521</sup>

The deterioration in Greco-Turkish relations in Cyprus during the summer of 1957 was apparent to Harding. A paper was prepared by the Nicosia Secretariat for Ambassador Bowker in Ankara. While it recognized that relations between Greeks in Turks had been positive in the past, the communal tensions from the two years since the start of the EOKA insurgency could not be denied. This was pinpointed as the key turning point: 'The first signs that a minority of fanatical Greeks were prepared to use violence to overthrow the Government made the Turkish Cypriots uneasy regarding their future, and the fact that the future for Turkish Cypriots was now one which might be changed under certain circumstances by Greek Cypriots, meant that the Turkish Cypriot population began to take an increasing interest in Greek political activities'.<sup>522</sup> The report emphasised that the actions of Dr. Kutchuk had 'done nothing to improve relations between the communities'. In fact, the British reported, Kutchuk had 'been particularly careful to exaggerate every instance of communal ill-feeling which may have become apparent'.<sup>523</sup>

The ethnic tensions meant that, in spite of the lack of EOKA activity, all was not well in Cyprus. The cauldron was boiling again. Worse still for security forces, EOKA was ready to return to the field. George Sinclair, acting governor between Harding's departure on 4 November and Foot's arrival on 3 December, wrote to Alan

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<sup>520</sup> *Halkin Sesi*, 15 April 1957, Vol. 1, No. 40, 'Partition: The Only Lasting Solution'.

<sup>521</sup> *Halkin Sesi*, 13 May 1957, Vol. 1, No. 45, 'Britain's Friendship'.

<sup>522</sup> TNA, FO 286/1441, Paper on Greek/Turkish Relations in Cyprus, Nicosia Secretariat, 26 August 1957.

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*

Lennox-Boyd ‘that having saved their nucleus of leadership last spring, EOKA are now as powerful and well organised as they ever were. Their grip on the Greek Cypriot population, which had shown signs of weakening during the summer, has been entirely restored by their recent activities’.<sup>524</sup> If nothing else, Sinclair’s report demonstrated that Harding’s intelligence services were effective enough to identify accurately EOKA’s capabilities even if they were not in a position to destroy them. In a flat admission of failure, Sinclair confided: ‘EOKA has seized the initiative from us. This has been made the easier for them by our own reluctance to take full scale and effective counter measures, and thus to bring about a clash which might reduce the prospects of success for the international initiatives now being launched.’<sup>525</sup>

Sinclair’s message also hinted at even darker times ahead. While EOKA’s power renewed itself, ‘a Volkan leaflet has appeared which promises that Makarios will be assassinated if he is allowed to return; and the leading Turkish newspaper has proclaimed that the Cyprus Government is “losing its authority” and that the Turkish community is being driven to take up arms in its own defence’.<sup>526</sup> This last development was particularly serious. If Turkish-Cypriots chose to take security into their own hands, British control of the island would degenerate into chaos similar to that of Palestine a decade earlier. For the British, it was a nightmare scenario.

The deputy governor’s words would prove prophetic. On 27 November, EOKA launched its first attack on security forces since March, shooting a British soldier in the face.<sup>527</sup> On 29 November, leaflets distributed around Cyprus’s main towns announced the formation of the Turkish Resistance Organisation (TMT). In theory, its mandate was to protect Turks from Greek aggression and to work towards

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<sup>524</sup> IWM Archives, AFH 10, Telegram No. 1782 from Deputy Governor [George Sinclair] to Secretary of State for the Colonies Alan Lennox-Boyd, 25 November, 1957.

<sup>525</sup> Ibid.

<sup>526</sup> Ibid.

<sup>527</sup> *The Times*, Thursday, 28 November 1957; pg. 9; Issue 54010; col E.

partition. It was no accident that it announced itself after EOKA renewed its attacks. TMT's leaflets surpassed EOKA and even Volkan in brutality and jingoism. 'How much longer will you wait to throw off your chains of slavery?', it demanded of the island's Turkish minority. 'You are born Turks. You are heroes and cannot become slaves.' Through the campaign for *enosis* Greek-Cypriots were attempting 'to destroy the very roots of Turkdom as they have done in Crete'. The example of Crete stood out as a central rallying cry in the minds of TMT and its supporters. The forced exchange of populations, the end of a Turkish presence on the island, and its unification with Greece were precisely what Ankara sought to prevent in Cyprus. Greece had 'annihilated the Turks in Crete, Dodecanese and Western Thrace, and has been nourishing the same desire for Cypriot Turks'.<sup>528</sup> Instead, the Turks looked to other recent history for inspiration, harshly reminding those fighting for *enosis*: '[t]hese disgusting creatures [the Greeks] got a good licking on 30<sup>th</sup> August (1922).<sup>529</sup> Their 'Megali Idea' was drowned in the waters of SMYRNA. These creatures memory is poor, for they have forgotten the past all too soon. Only a Turkish 'smack-in-the-face' can bring them to their senses.'<sup>530</sup>

Cyprus was indeed on the threshold of a new phase, but it was not the constitutional compromise and extension of the *status quo ante* that the British had hoped for. The propaganda from EOKA, Volkan, and TMT had stirred up a renewed sense of nationalism and intolerance on the island. Britain was now caught in the middle of a struggle for the future of Cyprus – a future which both communities were intent on claiming for their own. The change doomed British sovereignty once and for

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<sup>528</sup> Foot Papers, Mss. Medit. S. 35. Box 2 Folder 2 181/5. Proclamation of the Turkish Resistance Organisation, translated in Telegram No. 181 from Governor Cyprus to Colonial Office, February 2, 1958

<sup>529</sup> When Mustafa Kemal defeated the Greek army in Asia Minor at the battle of Sakarya River.

<sup>530</sup> TNA, CO 926/938, Turkish Resistance Organisation Leaflet, 25 December 1957.

all. Instead of progress towards peace, 1958 would be characterised by an EOKA resurgence and by ethnic violence on a scale that approached civil war.

## **Chapter VI – On All Fronts: AKEL, TMT and the threat of Civil War**

*‘The road to Enosis is not through Athens, but through the cemetery.’*<sup>531</sup> – Leaflet from the Turkish-Cypriot organisation Volkan.

### **A New Governor and a New War**

The arrival of Sir Hugh Foot in Cyprus in December 1957 represented another new hope for peace in Cyprus. By replacing a soldier, Field Marshal Harding, with a ‘liberal’ career civil servant, London conveyed the message that its goal was a peaceful solution in Cyprus and a possible relaxation of the emergency measures in force on the island. While some Greek-Cypriots reacted positively, the change in leadership reinforced the fears of many Turks and Turkish-Cypriots that London was no longer willing to stand firm against terrorism. Foot’s aversion to partition further inflamed Turkish attitudes. To Cyprus itself, Foot brought not only new qualifications, but a concrete peace proposal. Foot’s ideas represented another fresh attempt to solve the Cyprus problem and he was determined to see them through.

In spite of Foot’s commitment to finding a negotiated solution, old diplomatic obstacles and new challenges on the ground undermined the move towards peace for most of 1958. EOKA renewed violence not only against the British, but against the Greek-Cypriot left. In 1958, Turkish-Cypriots took up arms for the first time and conflict between the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities exploded in a brief but

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<sup>531</sup> TNA, CO 926/670, Volkan Leaflet, 22 December 1956.

bloody cycle of violence that approached civil war. There was, however, a light at the end of this tortured tunnel. The threat of war between Turkey and Greece, the near fracturing of NATO, and the suffering of the people of Cyprus finally brought the various sides to the peace table. By the start of 1959, the framework of an agreement had been reached. Although the agreement would not prove a lasting solution of the island's problems, it provided an end to the violence and opened a new chapter of Cypriot history. For most of 1958, however, pessimism reigned and a wider conflict seeming menacingly imminent.

This chapter will address the failure of peace proposals during the first half of 1958 and the descent of security conditions on the island. The struggle between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots was preceded by conflict within each of the two communities along political lines. Within both groups, the forces of the nationalist right carried out a campaign of violence and intimidation designed to secure their paramouncy and undermine any left-wing opposition to their respective nationalist goals of *enosis* and partition. While Greek-Cypriots, led by EOKA, were responsible for bringing an armed struggle to Cyprus, the new and pernicious phase of intercommunal violence was directly provoked by the Turkish-Cypriots in order to further their goal of partition by proving that the two communities could not coexist.

### **Peace Overtures and Popular Agitation**

The appointment of Sir Hugh Mackintosh Foot as Governor of Cyprus was a clear indication of a new direction for British policy. Field Marshal Sir John Harding, the lifetime soldier, left the scene in favour of Foot, the lifetime diplomat and civil servant. When he came to Cyprus, Foot already enjoyed the reputation of serving as a senior official in a number of former colonies as they made their transition to

independence. Some years later, Michael Foot, Sir Hugh's brother, described his sibling's career in less than flattering terms for the *Evening Standard*:

He became... Assistant British Resident in Trans-Jordan, Chief Secretary in Nigeria, Captain-General of Jamaica, and Governor and Commander-in-Chief in Cyprus. One common feature may be discerned in the modern history of all these territories. All of them, after a suitable period of unrest, riot and rebellion, have been removed from the aegis, direct or otherwise, of the British Parliament. Working himself out of one job after another and hauling down the flag a ceremonial occasions, Sir Hugh has moved on elsewhere to apply the same infallible touch.<sup>532</sup>

Independence for Cyprus, however, was not Foot's mandate. While destroying EOKA had been Harding's primary concern, the most pressing issue for the Foot administration was achieving Greco-Turkish cooperation over Cyprus and bringing together a solution that maintained some degree of British control on the island. Foot's ideas for a solution in Cyprus reflected the current thinking in Downing Street, codified several months before his appointment. On 9 July 1957, the Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, informed the Cabinet that the government once again needed to 'take a fresh initiative to break the present deadlock'.<sup>533</sup> Macmillan's memorandum hit a few key points that evidenced both the evolutions within British policy and its consistencies. Cyprus was now recognised as 'not a Colonial problem but an international one'. As a result, '[n]o solution will be acceptable which does not satisfy the interests of the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey'. As from the very beginning of the conflict, the interest of the British government was 'to secure... essential military needs,' although it was now acknowledged that the government needed 'to reduce... [its] Colonial commitment'. As in the past, Turkey, favouring partition, was 'mainly concerned to ensure that the island... never pass wholly under the control of

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<sup>532</sup> Michael Foot in the *Evening Standard*, quoted in Foot, pp.22-3.

<sup>533</sup> TNA, CAB 129/99, C (57) 161, 9 July 1957.

Greece'. Greece continued to demand *enosis*, but had to 'be convinced that it cannot be attained'.<sup>534</sup>

The solution Macmillan advocated was a tridominium plan. Britain would retain certain sovereign base areas, but surrender the rest of the island 'to a condominium of the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey, who would jointly share the sovereignty between them'.<sup>535</sup> The rest of the island would be ruled by a governor chosen by the three powers, or, if they could not agree, by the other members of NATO. The administration of the island would basically be along the lines proposed by Lord Radcliffe.<sup>536</sup> This proposal would not be easy to implement, but would avoid further commitments of 'a disproportionate amount' of Britain's military strength. It would also avoid the unacceptable alternative of partition, which would not only 'be a confession of failure', but would 'involve a grave risk of open conflict between Greece and Turkey'.<sup>537</sup> In the end, by trying to placate both Greece and Turkey, tridominium pleased neither.

The tridominium idea was debated among British policymakers as 1957 wore on, but without a conclusion. By the time Foot arrived in Cyprus, at the end of 1957, he had worked out a modified version of this idea. The plan proposed by Foot in January 1958 centred on four essential points designed to give something to all parties involved. For the British, a seven year period would pass 'before any final decision' about the island's status. This would allow British policymakers to shape their strategic posture in the Eastern Mediterranean without having to deal with a radical change in Cyprus.<sup>538</sup> Britain would retain its base areas on Cyprus in full

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<sup>534</sup> Ibid.

<sup>535</sup> TNA, CAB 128/31, C (57) 51, 11 July 1957.

<sup>536</sup> Ibid.

<sup>537</sup> TNA, CAB 129/99, C (57) 161, 9 July 1957.

<sup>538</sup> Foot, p.161.

sovereignty.<sup>539</sup> To please the Greek-Cypriots, Makarios would be returned to the island, and the state of emergency, ended. On Christmas Eve 1957, the new governor announced three further good-will gestures directed toward the Greek-Cypriot community: the reopening of a Greek school in Larnaca ‘which had been closed as a punitive measure’; the release of one hundred detainees, including all eleven women in custody; and ‘the removal of restriction on 600 people who had been required under the Emergency Regulations to stay in their villages and report once a week to the police’.<sup>540</sup>

Establishing ‘negotiations in the island with leaders of the two communities to evolve a system of self-government’ was a sop to Turkish-Cypriot aspirations to equal treatment as a special minority. Finally, to please both the Greek and Turkish Governments, there would be ‘an assurance that no final decision would be taken at the end of the five- or seven-year period which was not acceptable to Greeks *and* Turks alike’.<sup>541</sup> The release of the detainees, in particular, confirmed the worst fears in Turkish quarters – that Foot’s appointment represented a weakening of British resolve against EOKA. In spite of Turkish fears, the peace plan retained several features that the Turks should have found appealing. Self-determination would take place seven years after the end of the emergency and ‘the Turkish Cypriots no less than the Greek Cypriots should be given the right of self-determination as a community’. Moreover, the British government acknowledged that it would accept any solution ‘approved by the Greek and Turkish Governments and by both communities in Cyprus’ provided that it allowed for the retention of the sovereign bases.<sup>542</sup>

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<sup>539</sup> TNA, CAB 129/91, C (58) 4, Memorandum by Lennox-Boyd, 4 January 1958.

<sup>540</sup> Foot, p.161.

<sup>541</sup> Foot, p.159.

<sup>542</sup> TNA, CAB 129/91, C (58) 4, Memorandum by Lennox-Boyd, 4 January 1958.

In internal discussions, Foot proposed that a Turkish base could be established on the island to further allay Turkish fears. The new governor did not see a problem with this course and thought that both Greece and Britain would have no reason to object.<sup>543</sup> His assessment, however, was wrong and it was his own military rather than the government in Athens which protested. Major-General Douglas Kendrew, the Chief of Operations in Cyprus, launched a scathing attack on this proposal. He wrote to the Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Lieutenant General Sir William Stratton: ‘On my return here I was absolutely horrified to discover how far the idea of granting a Turkish base in Cyprus had gone’.<sup>544</sup> Kendrew had come to Cyprus in early 1956 as part of Harding’s security reforms. During World War II, he had commanded a brigade in North Africa and Italy. He later served as the commander of the British brigade of the Commonwealth Division in the Korean War. A four-time recipient of the Distinguished Service Order, and former England rugby international, the tough career soldier had concerns with the military understanding of his new superior, Foot.

Kendrew listed four major arguments against the proposed Turkish base. First, any such announcement would ‘almost certainly lead to an explosion from EOKA’. Second, ‘a Turkish base in the island... [would] provide complete and uncontrollable cover for the introduction of arms for the Turkish Cypriots’, in a manner that the Government of Cyprus would be unable to control. Third, the Turks would regard it as ‘a minor form of partition [and] a springboard for seizure of a part (or indeed of the whole) of the island’. Finally, ‘a rallying point of this nature for the Turkish Cypriots... [would] ensure continual clashes with the Greek Cypriot population and that no form of Government in the island will be able to function unless it acquiesce supinely in Turkish demands’. In other words, a Turkish base on Cyprus would

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<sup>543</sup> Foot Papers, Box 3 Folder 3 181/8, Note from Foot to Earl of Perth, 22 October 1957.

<sup>544</sup> TNA, WO 216/915, Letter from Kendrew to Stratton, 7 February 1958.

represent a major threat to the internal security of the island and to the British position there. The whole idea, concluded Kendrew, was an ‘absolutely scandalous peace of political opportunism... entered upon with criminal frivolity’. Urgent action by the Chiefs of Staff was necessary to eliminate it as a possibility.<sup>545</sup>

Kendrew’s attitude was symptomatic of the attitude many in the military and security forces had towards their new commander-in-chief. Lacking Harding’s military background, Foot was exposed to the accusations that he failed to understand the severity of the security situation and the intricacies of intelligence and tactical operations, and that he lacked the resolve to implement effective countermeasures against terrorism.

Even before raising the issue of the base, Kendrew had already been highly sceptical of the structure of Foot’s peace initiative in his assessment of its security implications from December 1957. Kendrew admitted to Foot that the assessment was ‘inevitably a depressing document since, as you are well aware, the risks are indeed very great and I should be failing in my duty if I left you in any doubt as to their magnitude’.<sup>546</sup> Kendrew enumerated a number of concerns, each of which betrayed his belief that Foot, because of his background, was incapable of understanding the situation fully. If EOKA wished to resume the offensive after the implementation of a peace plan, either immediately or at a latter date, the organisation would ‘be far more effective than now and will have the complete initiative’.<sup>547</sup> By suspending operations against EOKA during ceasefires, British intelligence would be behind the game if violence were renewed. Deferring violence would be extremely dangerous and, in Kendrew’s opinion, the longer the deferment, the greater the danger. The peace plan

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<sup>545</sup> Ibid.

<sup>546</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2, Folder 1, 181/4, Memorandum by Director of Operations, General Joe Kendrew to Foot, December 31, 1957.

<sup>547</sup> Ibid.

threatened to alienate Turks, ‘both locally and in Turkey’. This had to ‘be avoided at all costs’ because of the security implications on the island. With regard to the Turks there was ‘no use assessing what is done in terms of real damage... it must be assessed in terms of how they choose to see it’. Kendrew saw two keys that had to be secured before the military, security, and intelligence forces in Cyprus would ‘take the gamble’ of supporting Foot’s proposals. First, obtaining the support of the Labour party would help convince the Turks that a new government in London ‘would not let them down on self-determination’. Second, Grivas had to be removed from the island. Kendrew saw this as ‘a sticking point in relation to the ‘peace’ plan’ and urged Foot to accept it.<sup>548</sup>

Kendrew’s preoccupation with Turkish attitudes was shared by others in the Cyprus government. The deputy governor, George Sinclair, minuted on the memorandum that ‘[t]he complete and permanent alienation of the Turks, both locally and in Turkey, must be avoided’. In order to do this, Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots had to be convinced that self-determination would be applied equally in Cyprus after the seven years stipulated in the plan. As had Kendrew, Sinclair realised that this meant assurances from the British Labour party. ‘If we fail to persuade the Turks of this,’ he concluded, ‘and if we also fail to come to terms with the Greek Cypriots, our position then in the island without the support of either community may well become untenable’.<sup>549</sup> The Foreign Office, worried about its policy goals in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, focused on the relationship with Turkey as its priority. As negotiations for a solution to the Cyprus problem proceeded, the British routinely brought their proposals to Turkey first.<sup>550</sup> The Government of Cyprus had a

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<sup>548</sup> Ibid.

<sup>549</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2, Folder 1, 181/4, Memorandum by Director of Operations, Minute by Sinclair, 1 January 1958.

<sup>550</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2, Folder 1, 181/4, Telegram No. 38, Ankara to Foreign Office, 10 January 1958.

similar concern for Turkish-Cypriot opinion, knowing that maintaining security on the island would be a nightmare in the face of Turkish-Cypriot opposition or in the event of conflict between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots. In a letter to Foot – written when the governor was in London for consultations – Sinclair reiterated that the government’s main worry was ‘the reaction of the Turks which overshadows everything else’.<sup>551</sup>

Foot recognized the concerns of Kendrew and Sinclair, and understood that the Turkish reaction to the proposals would be strong and potentially hostile. After receiving Kendrew’s assessment, he admitted to Sinclair that: ‘we must be prepared for an explosion from the Turks and everything will depend on how big the explosion is and how frightened people here are by it’.<sup>552</sup> The situation was delicate. In the past, Greek refusals had disrupted compromise attempts. Now, by providing concessions to the Greek side, Foot risked the alienation of the Turks. The impasse represented, in microcosm, the obstacles facing the British in Cyprus. Foot returned to Cyprus from London on 18 January with the agreement of the Cabinet for his plan. He was aware of the difficulties, saying on his return that ‘he thought a start could be made towards a Cyprus solution – if peace were maintained’.<sup>553</sup> At the same time, Selwyn Lloyd, the foreign secretary, was in Ankara lobbying the Turkish government for its support for the latest proposals.

The Turks, both on the mainland and in Cyprus, would have none of it. To emphasize their opposition, hundreds of Turkish-Cypriot youths and students took to the streets of Nicosia and Famagusta in protest on 21 January 1958. They carried banners calling for partition, denouncing the new governor and his peace plan and accusing him of having a pro-Greek bias. Foot understood that the ‘demonstrations

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<sup>551</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2, Folder 1, 181/4, Telegram No. 32, Sinclair to Foot, January 8, 1958.

<sup>552</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2 Folder 1 181/4, Note from Foot to Sinclair, 7 January 1958.

<sup>553</sup> *The Times*, Monday, 20 January 1958, p.8.

were planned' and were 'part of the campaign recently organized to increase feeling amongst the Turkish [Cypriot] community. Though the processions were not hostile and were easily dispersed', he confided to the colonial secretary that 'they represent a new and serious development'.<sup>554</sup> As *The Times* noted: '[t]he traditional role and behaviour of Greeks and Turks seems temporarily reversed. It is the Turks who are doing the demonstrating while the Greeks are hesitant, watchful, and suspicious.'<sup>555</sup> The Greek side had previously increased demonstrations and violence to influence diplomatic meetings such as debates at the United Nations; the Turkish side was now doing the same.

While Cyprus simmered, negotiations in Turkey were not going well. As Lloyd wrote to Foot on 26 January: '[t]alks with Zorlu yesterday were very uphill. Atmosphere improved at dinner with Menderes. It was he who agreed to your coming [to Turkey].' There were four key issues from the Turkish side:

(1) The 'Federal nature' of political developments in Cyprus i.e. they hate idea of Greeks ruling Turks. (2) The possibility of a Turkish base. They said they would like one at once. I gave no indication that that would be feasible but said that we would consider possibility at some stage. (3) The incorporating of partition pledge in some formal agreement. (4) (But nothing like so important as other three) The possibility (weaving) into the new statement idea of a tripartite conference.<sup>556</sup>

With Menderes's agreement, Foot left for Istanbul on 26 January to try and help the discussions between Lloyd and Zorlu. The points transmitted by Lloyd to Foot were an indication of the serious obstacles to a solution. British military leaders were adamantly opposed to a Turkish base on Cyprus. Almost all senior members of the British government were against the idea of partition. Only the first point, concerning a federal Cyprus, left apparent room for compromise.

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<sup>554</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2 Folder 2 181/5, Telegram No. 89, Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 21 January 1958.

<sup>555</sup> *The Times*, Wednesday, 22 January 1958, p.8.

<sup>556</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2 Folder 2 181/5, Telegram No. 28, Note from Lloyd to Foot, 26 January 1958.

The day after Foot's departure, Nicosia exploded in violence. As Foot had predicted, the rioting increased in an attempt to influence the discussions in Turkey.<sup>557</sup> *The Times* ran a gruesome headline: 'Grave Riots in Cyprus. Pitched Battle with Turks, Troops Besieged by Nicosia Mob, City Simmering Still'.<sup>558</sup> Large groups of Turkish-Cypriot youths attacked police with stones and bottles. Tear gas was deployed as police and soldiers battled the crowd. The next day the rioting spread to Famagusta. Again there was open violence between Turkish-Cypriots and British security forces. The casualties began to mount. In the first day alone, Turkish-Cypriot rioters injured twenty-eight policemen, fourteen members of the fire service, and twelve soldiers. Dozens of Turkish-Cypriots were injured and ten were killed, including a woman who was knocked over by an army car.<sup>559</sup>

Although the security situation was brought back under control, the Turks had made their point. They would not accept Foot's proposals and were violently opposed to any solution other than partition. Their rioting was directed against both Greek-Cypriots and the British authorities, countering contemporary and subsequent Greek-Cypriot claims that the Turks were once again acting in conjunction with British wishes. TMT propaganda made the opposite position abundantly clear. Leaflets published in the days after the rioting accused the British of 'cruel and blood-thirsty conduct', declaring that because of the actions of security forces against demonstrators 'there remains no possibility not only for the Turks and Greek of Cyprus to live together, but also for the Turks to live under British rule'.<sup>560</sup> The actions of their security forces demonstrated that 'the English have moved farther from their previous partisan actions against the Turks, and have shown whom they are

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<sup>557</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2 Folder 2 181/5, Telegram No. 89 Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 21 January 1958.

<sup>558</sup> *The Times*, 28 January 1958, p.8.

<sup>559</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>560</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2 Folder 2 181/5. Proclamation of the Turkish Resistance Organisation, translated in Telegram No. 181 from Governor Cyprus to Colonial Office, February 2, 1958

serving and whose friends they are'.<sup>561</sup> It was hardly the statement of an ally. As the American National Security Council Briefing of 28 January stated:

Repeated outbreaks of violence (10 [Turkish-Cypriot] deaths) during late January may be forerunners more trouble in near future. Clashes involving Turkish Cypriots could also lead to further deterioration in Greek-Turkish relations and even British-Turkish relations... Turkish Cypriots' recent large scale rioting against authorities for first time apparently due: A. Fear that new Governor has been 'too soft' to Greek Cypriots. B. Hope of emphasizing that Greeks and Turks can no longer live together – thus forcing partition.<sup>562</sup>

According to the Americans, the British were facing an 'almost impossible task in finding [a] new plan for Cyprus acceptable to all parties'.<sup>563</sup> It was a position with which the British were all too familiar. When Foot returned to Cyprus at the end of January, he 'almost immediately went into conference with his senior advisers on the situation in the island'.<sup>564</sup>

In spite of their hostile attitudes towards the British administration, the Turkish-Cypriot organisations remained focused first-and-foremost on the perceived Greek-Cypriot threat to their liberty and safety. In a leaflet of 31 January 1958, TMT urged Turks that 'we must never forget our principal enemy [the Greeks]'.<sup>565</sup> Although the British treated Makarios as practically the sole legitimate interlocutor for Cypriot demands, Turkish-Cypriot propaganda denounced the archbishop as 'black-gowned and dark-souled'.<sup>566</sup> The Turkish-Cypriots' primary fear was that of living under Greek rule, the mere thought of which was an insult to Turkish dignity. The British would have to rethink their policy, and conditions on the island were changing rapidly.

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<sup>561</sup> Ibid.

<sup>562</sup> USNA, CIA Records, NSC Briefing, 28 January 1958.

<sup>563</sup> Ibid.

<sup>564</sup> *The Times*, 31 January 1958, p.8.

<sup>565</sup> TNA, CO 926/938, Turkish Resistance Organisation Leaflet, 31 January 1958.

<sup>566</sup> TNA, CO 926/938, Turkish Resistance Organisation Leaflet, 23 January 1958.

## Political Manoeuvre and Political Murders

The failure of the Foot initiative and the violent Turkish reaction in Cyprus created new operating conditions on the island not only for the British, but also for Grivas and EOKA. Among other things, it seemed to deliver the *coup de grace* to plans for a Turkish base on the island before a final solution had been reached. Writing to the colonial secretary, Foot confided his desire 'to make it finally clear to the Turkish Government that we cannot consider ceding them a military base in Cyprus except as a part of a plan for a lasting political settlement'.<sup>567</sup> The riots had demonstrated just how precarious the ethnic balance on the island was. Makarios was also keenly aware of this reality.

Since his release from detention in the Seychelles, the archbishop had continued to try and regain control of the struggle and avoid further violence. Evidence suggests that he felt EOKA's bomb and bullet methods had served their purpose as early as the truce of March 1957.<sup>568</sup> The continuation of violence threatened not only Makarios's position as the leader of the Greek-Cypriot nationalist movement, but also the stability of the Greek government, relations between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots, and the paramountcy of the right within the Greek-Cypriot community. The archbishop also continued to be uneasy about the human toll of the struggle. He had been particularly shaken by the death of Grigoris Afxentiou in March 1957, which he felt could have been avoided by agreeing to a ceasefire earlier.<sup>569</sup> Makarios believed that continuing along Grivas's path was dangerous. The British agreed.

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<sup>567</sup> Foot Papers, Box 4, Folder 2 181/11, Telegram No. 443, Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 27 March 1958.

<sup>568</sup> Demetris Assos, *Makarios: A Study of Anti-Colonial Nationalist Leadership, 1950-1959*, 2009, p.172.

<sup>569</sup> Assos, p.159.

In Athens, Foot explained the perils of a renewal of violence to the archbishop during a meeting on 13 February. The governor emphasised that a particular danger now existed because of the 'changed attitude of the Turkish minority', which had manifested itself during the January riots.<sup>570</sup> Makarios made the point to Grivas, and EOKA violence did decline on the island. By the start of March, American intelligence was able to report that Grivas had 'apparently decided to emphasize a campaign of passive resistance following a request from Archbishop Makarios that violence not be renewed'. Such a campaign, the CIA concluded, was 'in accord with the recommendations of many influential Greeks and Greek-Cypriots who believe that only the Turks would benefit from renewed terrorist attacks by EOKA at this time'.<sup>571</sup> On Cyprus, the British had come to a similar conclusion: 'the political leaders of EOKA had accepted that renewed violence would play into the hands of the Turks'.<sup>572</sup> Grivas, in fact, had issued orders on 31 March allowing area commanders to act on their own initiative in organising attacks, 'always bearing the strict order in mind that there be no human casualties'.<sup>573</sup> The prohibition against attacking Turks remained in force. As one area commander ordered during this period: 'I wish the Turkish provocations to be treated with calmness and contempt. Both the youths and the combatant groups must show self restraint towards any Turkish vandalism or armed attacks by the Turks'.<sup>574</sup>

While EOKA remained measured in its actions against the British and the Turkish-Cypriots, no such prohibitions were in force to protect the Greek-Cypriot left-wing. This struggle within the struggle remains controversial. Former EOKA members and their supporters admit to the killing of only seven of the twenty-three

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<sup>570</sup> TNA, FO 371/130132, Record of Conversation between Foot and Makarios, 13 February 1958.

<sup>571</sup> USNA, CIA Records, Current Intelligence Weekly Summary, 6 March 1958.

<sup>572</sup> Foot Papers, Box 4 Folder 2 181/11, Note from Reddaway to Sinclair, 17 April 1958.

<sup>573</sup> Seraphim-Loizou, p.247.

<sup>574</sup> TNA, CO 926/935, VA/3, Order from EOKA area commander, 1957.

left-wing Greek-Cypriots who died during this period. AKEL claims that all were murdered by EOKA and use the killings to argue that right-wing extremists were responsible for the island's ills both during this period and later. One reason for the open hostility between left and right during this time was that the left, largely separate from EOKA but nevertheless persecuted by the British during its struggle, seemed more receptive to Foot and a new approach to peace.

At a meeting of Cypriot communists on 3 December 1957, the General Secretary of the Pancyprrian Labour Federation, Andreas Ziartides, read a warning from EOKA 'that if he co-operated with the new Governor in any way, or entered into any independence negotiations with him, he would have to accept the consequences'. Ziartides was reminded 'that there was one leader, both in the political and military field, and that was Archbishop Makarios'.<sup>575</sup> The truce had encouraged AKEL to pursue its own policy-line on the Cyprus issue. Grivas, inactive for months, was worried about being outflanked and isolated by action on the part of the Greek-Cypriot left. Even Makarios had become worried that left-wing Greek-Cypriots might 'withhold their support when EOKA resumes terrorism'.<sup>576</sup> EOKA's pamphlets stepped up the rhetoric against the left, accusing it of selling out to Governor Foot.<sup>577</sup>

Grivas would not allow *enosis* to be sacrificed, by either Makarios or the left. The EOKA commander attacked Foot as 'The Wooden Horse of Troy', denouncing the new governor's peace overtures as nothing more than a cunning new policy 'prepared with a view to deceiving us'. Foot's conciliatory gestures were rebuffed: 'the Cyprus people do not demand material benefits (roads, loans, release of political detainees etc) but only one thing – its freedom'.<sup>578</sup> Grivas also encouraged the Greek-

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<sup>575</sup> TNA, CO 187/1/07, Telegram No. 2407, Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 11 December 1957.

<sup>576</sup> TNA, CO 926/938, Telegram No. 191, Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 3 February 1958.

<sup>577</sup> Ibid..

<sup>578</sup> TNA, CO 926/938, EOKA Order from Grivas, 3 February 1958.

Cypriot people to continue the struggle, although he fell short of calling for more violence against the British. Instead, he outlined a path to victory based on a new ‘total war’, which relied on galvanizing public opinion rather than on assassination and ambush. He called for ‘continuous systematic and persistent *preparation* [author’s italics] both for armed struggle, and for the passive resistance of the population... continuous and good propaganda amongst the people... raising high the morale and fighting spirit of the people’.<sup>579</sup>

While Grivas attacked compromise and the new governor with words, EOKA attacked the left with guns. In order to bring the Greek-Cypriot population in line with the new strategies of opposition to Foot’s peace initiative, Grivas felt it necessary to assert his dominance over Cyprus’s internal political landscape, and push the left away from peace through intimidation and murder. Clashes began between the Greek-Cypriots on opposing wings. These were prompted by the murder of two members of the Pancyprian Labour Federation, a left-wing trade union, by masked gunmen in villages near Famagusta in late January. A forty-eight hour strike was declared by the union as violence erupted in the streets.<sup>580</sup> Ziartides appealed to the people and the Ethnarchy ‘to condemn these acts against our organisation’.<sup>581</sup> The struggle also recommenced against British forces standing in the way of EOKA’s campaign against the left. On 4 May, two British soldiers were shot dead in Famagusta and Foot felt forced to re-impose mandatory death sentences for persons found carrying firearms and throwing bombs. The *Cyprus Mail* commented sadly that many people felt ‘that the clock had been turned back – almost two and a half years’.<sup>582</sup>

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<sup>579</sup> Ibid.

<sup>580</sup> *The Times*, 23 January 1958, p.10.

<sup>581</sup> *The Times*, 24 January 1958, p.6.

<sup>582</sup> *Cyprus Mail*, Vol. 42, No. 4254, 5 May 1958.

Still, it was the left who felt the heaviest of EOKA's blows. The new campaign had a clear message. Grivas claimed that the left were traitors to Cypriot Hellenism because they were willing to talk with Foot. If they continued to act against EOKA, they had to be neutralized. 'We shall strike the traitors no matter to which party they belong', thundered Grivas. The left wing party has officially taken all traitors under its guardianship because this party is also betraying the struggle... The ideas of AKEL and Foot are in complete accord.<sup>583</sup> Punishments were brutal and violence escalated, especially after elections in Greece in May showed that the communist party had doubled its strength since the vote of 1952 making it the main opposition to the Karamanlis government. Grivas was determined to prevent a similar turn of events in Cyprus.

Famagusta seemed to be the hotbed of violence against the left. There, two women had their heads shaved by EOKA men 'as part of the intimidation campaign'. KJ Neale, seconded by the Colonial Office to Cyprus, sent a report describing what had happened to a colleague in the Mediterranean Department in London.

Three young men, aged about 24, together with a woman... called on Mrs. \*\*\*\*\* and asked where her husband was... Mrs. \*\*\*\*\* was tied to a chair, her mouth gagged, and the shaving operation began. They told her that they were doing this because she was against EOKA and against the Archbishop. They alleged that she had called him a Rasputin.<sup>584</sup>

On 23 May, two Greek-Cypriot leftists were killed in the Famagusta district. One, a twenty-two year old bus driver, who had previously been beaten by EOKA, was shot to death outside his home. Most gruesome was the murder of fifty-year old Savvas Menacas. A married man with six children, Menacas was 'seized by a gang of about 50 youths and tied to a tree in a courtyard. The churchbells were rung and he was

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<sup>583</sup> TNA, CO 926/940, EOKA Leaflet, 29 May 1958.

<sup>584</sup> TNA, FO 371/136404, Note from Neale to Aldridge, 29 May 1958.

beaten to death. Police who arrived after the crowd dispersed found a poster nearby saying that Menacas' punishment was inflicted on EOKA's orders because of his anti-EOKA activities.<sup>585</sup> The killings continued. On 26 May, a third Greek-Cypriot left-winger was found beaten to death on a street in Famagusta.<sup>586</sup> On 29 May another left-wing sympathizer was beaten by masked men outside the town. He died the next day in the city hospital.<sup>587</sup> The labour unions called strikes and marches in protest.

This was a new kind of violence for Cyprus, and in late May it extended into the Turkish-Cypriot community as well. Growing in number and capability, TMT led the charge against the tiny Turkish-Cypriot left-wing. On 11 May, TMT had distributed a leaflet threatening that: 'Drastic measures will be mercilessly taken against anyone whoever he may be, who acts or speaks against the organization or mentions names or persons at random, or behaves in a treacherous or thoughtless manner prejudicial to the national interests.'<sup>588</sup> In the second half of May, the organisation made good on its threats. In Nicosia, on 23 May, two young TMT gunmen fired shots at a 'prominent Turkish Communist, Ahmed Saadi Erkurt, and his wife'. Erkurt was slightly wounded and his wife more seriously injured.<sup>589</sup> In Nicosia, the violence continued. On 25 May, Fail Onder, the former editor and owner of a left-wing newspaper *Reformist*, was murdered.<sup>590</sup> On 30 May, a young left-winger was also shot to death.<sup>591</sup> Both EOKA and TMT were vying for control within their communities while demonstrating their operational capabilities to the British. They would not be denied a voice in the solutions that were being discussed in London. At

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<sup>585</sup> TNA, CO 926/675, *Special Branch Half-Monthly Intelligence Report Vol. VI, No. 10/58*, 4 June 1958.

<sup>586</sup> *The Times*, 26 May 1958, p.10.

<sup>587</sup> *The Times*, 31 May 1958, p.4.

<sup>588</sup> TNA, CO 926/952, TMT Leaflet, 11 May 1958.

<sup>589</sup> *The Times*, 23 May 1958, p.8.

<sup>590</sup> *The Times*, 26 May 1958, p.10.

<sup>591</sup> *The Times*, 31 May 1958, p.4.

the same time, as one historian writes: 'By intimidating the leftist element in their respective communities the two paramilitary organizations [EOKA and TMT] were steeling themselves and closing ranks in anticipation of a major intercommunal face-off.'<sup>592</sup>

The power of Turkish-Cypriots nationalists demonstrated through TMT dramatically affected the Cypriot political landscape. TMT represented the Turkish-Cypriot equivalent of EOKA, a right-wing, nationalist force as vehemently committed to partition as Grivas's organisation was to *enosis*. Its bulletins proclaimed that Cyprus was Turkish and emphasized the greatness of the Turkish race, its commitment to living in freedom and its refusal to accept becoming 'slaves' at the hands of the Greeks.<sup>593</sup> 'Partition and only partition' was the organization's rallying cry, mirroring the time-worn EOKA motto of '*enosis* and only *enosis*'. Like EOKA, TMT was willing to use political assassination, terrorism, and a campaign of intimidation to further its goals. Like Grivas's organisation, it was also willing to eliminate fellow Turkish-Cypriots, generally from the left, whom it regarded as traitors.<sup>594</sup>

Confronted now with these two opponents, British forces, to their displeasure, found themselves with the dual role of combating the insurgency while attempting to keep the peace between the two communities as intercommunal violence simmered just below the surface. In spite of its ability to attack leftist Turkish-Cypriots, TMT was not well enough equipped or organized to carry out operations on a scale comparable to EOKA. In mid-1958, TMT remained without military trainers or equipment from Turkey and could undertake only small scale operations. Unlike

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<sup>592</sup> Assos, p.196.

<sup>593</sup> PRO, CO 926/938, 86394, Bulletin of the Turkish Resistance Organization, December 25, 1957.

<sup>594</sup> Foot Papers, Box 5, Folder 3 181/14, Colonial Office Brief for the Prime Minister for his visit to America, 4 June, 1958.

EOKA, it had no desire to strike British military or police targets. It was, however more than up to the task of murdering left-wing Turks and putting pressure on EOKA. In this capacity it was still a threat to security and to British rule.

In managing the new problems posed by an armed organisation of Turkish nationalists, Britain was constrained to strike a delicate balance between attempting to incorporate Turkish demands into peace negotiations while resisting demands it felt to be out of line with its own requirements for peace in Cyprus. Turkish propaganda still pushed for the idea that the island should be partitioned, using the violence between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots as evidence that the two sides could not live in peaceful coexistence.<sup>595</sup>

Open battle between the two communities on the island was rapidly approaching. During 1958, EOKA confirmed its readiness to use lethality towards the Greek-Cypriot opposition. Between the resumption of operations in October 1957 and the middle of December 1958, EOKA murdered 80 Greek-Cypriots.<sup>596</sup> As in the early years of the struggle, some were policemen and informers. Many of these later casualties, however, were ‘traitors’ to the cause through their affiliation with leftist organisations. Their murders represented another side of the EOKA struggle, a battle not against British imperialism in Cyprus but a fight for the political future of the island.

By June 1958, British policymakers in Cyprus felt that this internecine violence, coming within from both communities, had made conditions in Cyprus ‘undeniably worse than at any previous period of the Emergency’. Only the latest proposals for a solution represented hope for a swift end to the violence. ‘If these prove unacceptable to either or both sides’, concluded a report by the Cyprus

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<sup>595</sup> TNA, CO 926/938, Turkish Defence Organisation Leaflet, 31 January, 1958.

<sup>596</sup> TNA, CO 926/898, Telegram No. 2262 from Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 16 December 1958.

Intelligence Committee, 'a serious and rapid deterioration in the situation is inevitable'. The words were sadly prophetic.<sup>597</sup>

### **Divided and Unruled**

In spite of the failure of the Foot plan, the British government continued to push for a diplomatic solution. By mid-May, proposals sketched out with the help of the prime minister for a modified tridominium were floating between London, Athens, and Ankara.<sup>598</sup> The Cabinet had already concluded that reconciling the diverse views of *enosis* and partition were 'the core of the Cyprus problem'. Achieving a solution acceptable to all three concerned governments would require 'each party to make some sacrifice of its present position'. To achieve this, 'Her Majesty's Government [were] ready to set an example by renouncing their sole sovereignty over Cyprus, if the other parties will match this by renouncing their demands for unitary self-determination and for the partition of the island'.<sup>599</sup>

The air of compromise generated a mix of optimism and pessimism among British policymakers. Foot's deputy governor, George Sinclair, read the reports coming to him in Cyprus with a great deal of hope. 'I cannot tell you how delighted we are to think that these proposals now hold the field and that they are being heavily backed by Ministers', he wrote his boss, still in London for Cabinet-level discussions. 'We are full of admiration for the way in which you have been able to present this case and get it accepted.' Sinclair must have been pleased. Uncharacteristically, the

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<sup>597</sup> TNA, CO 926/675, Cyprus Intelligence Committee, (58) Fourteen, 'Intelligence Review for the Second Half of May 1958', 7 June 1958.

<sup>598</sup> RHL, Foot Papers, Box 5, Folder 2 181/13, Minutes of Meeting of Foot and Lloyd, 15 May 1958.

<sup>599</sup> TNA, CAB 129/93, C (58) 102, 9 May 1958.

deputy governor, who usually signed his messages ‘Geo. Sinclair’ or simply ‘Sinclair’, closed ‘[w]ith my warmest good wishes, yours, very sincerely, George’.<sup>600</sup>

Foot was less optimistic than his deputy. ‘The declaration of the new policy’, he wrote to Lennox-Boyd, ‘is likely to lead to an outbreak of violence in the island from one side or the other or from both... My main fear is that the developments of the past will bring about something like another Palestine in Cyprus. Civil war is an immediate possibility, and this might well lead to a war between Greece and Turkey.’<sup>601</sup> Foot’s caution proved closer to the mark than Sinclair’s optimism. Tensions continued to rise through the month of May, but war between the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities remained an unrealised fear.

That situation threatened to change on the night of 7 June. At 10.30 pm a small bomb went off at the Turkish Ministry of Information, a part of the Turkish Consulate in Nicosia. No one was injured and the damage to the building was minimal. Nevertheless, mobs of angry young Turkish-Cypriots flooded the streets. During four hours of rioting and burning, two Greek-Cypriots were killed and tens of thousands of pounds of property damaged and destroyed.<sup>602</sup> The next day, the rioting spread to Larnaca, killing another two Greek-Cypriots and setting a number of Greek-Cypriot owned properties on fire.<sup>603</sup> In support of the Nicosia rioting, 200,000 demonstrators also took to the streets of Istanbul and burned an effigy of Archbishop Makarios.<sup>604</sup> Turkish tanks, police in riot gear, and soldiers with fixed bayonets prevented attacks against Istanbul’s Greek community along with the Greek and British consulates. Dr. Kutchuk called out to the Istanbul mob that events in Cyprus were proof ‘that there was no possibility now for the Turkish and Greek communities

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<sup>600</sup> Foot Papers, Box 5, Folder 1 181/12, Letter from Sinclair to Foot, 16 May 1958.

<sup>601</sup> Foot Papers, Box 5, Folder 1 181/12, Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 16 May 1958.

<sup>602</sup> *The Times*, Monday, 9 June 1958, p.10.

<sup>603</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>604</sup> *Ibid.*

to live together'. The Istanbul crowd denounced Britain and Greece as deceitful; *The Times* reported that one voice called for mobilisation.<sup>605</sup> The Istanbul pogrom of September 1955 appeared ready to be repeated.

The sad truth was that the Cyprus bomb was not thrown by a Greek-Cypriot hand. Both British and American intelligence were clear that the Turks in Cyprus had faked the bomb attack themselves.<sup>606</sup> Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash has subsequently admitted the fact, although he refused to identify the two TMT men responsible; he did insist that they were low-level members of the organisation and carried out the attack on their own initiative.<sup>607</sup> In light of the Turkish rhetoric before the attack and the profound ramifications on the island, it is hard to imagine that such action could have been a rogue operation. British intelligence noted that furniture in the office had been moved away from the street to prevent damage from the bomb. The Turkish staff at the ministry of information knew the bomb was coming. If the staff at the consulate knew, it is logical to assume that senior people within TMT and the Turkish-Cypriot community did so as well. A day or two before the explosion, the British Ambassador in Ankara had also had word from Cyprus that something was about to happen, but was told by senior Turkish officials that there was 'no reason to suppose that the reports were true'.<sup>608</sup>

The motivation for this staged attack was obvious. Turkish-Cypriots were out to prove that they could not live with Greek-Cypriots and that any compromise short of partition was unworkable. This had been the substance of Turkish rhetoric since 1956. The rioting at the end of January had killed the Foot plan, and now the intercommunal strife doomed the latest tridominium proposals from the prime

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<sup>605</sup> Ibid.

<sup>606</sup> TNA, WO 216/915, Memorandum by General DA Kendrew, 'Assessment of the Situation 16 July 1958,' 19 July 1958.

<sup>607</sup> Author's Interview with Rauf Denktash, Nicosia, 10 April 2009.

<sup>608</sup> TNA, FO 371/136337, Telegram No. 833 from Bowker to Foreign Office, 6 June 1958.

minister. The Turks had struck while the British government was in recess, before an official policy announcement, in order to take control of events.<sup>609</sup> As the Cabinet conclusions noted on 18 June:

the internal security situation in Cyprus had deteriorated in the last few days and the Turkish Cypriots appeared to be deliberately attempting to create the impression that it was impossible for the two communities in Cyprus to live together harmoniously. Urgent representations had been made to the Turkish Government about the importance of avoiding any fresh outbreaks of violence at this stage.<sup>610</sup>

As the Turks had hoped, intercommunal violence began a physical separation of the two communities as Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots moved to areas where their people were in the majority. The political leadership in Turkey was quick to use this as evidence ‘that partition [was] already taking place’.<sup>611</sup> Turkish propaganda exaggerated reality and claimed that by 16 June, over one thousand Turkish-Cypriots were refugees, fleeing their homes after being attacked or surrounded by Greek-Cypriots bent on massacre and destruction.<sup>612</sup>

A resolution from the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 16 June fuelled the propaganda of partition with distortions and blatant untruths. The British Ambassador, James Bowker, sent it along to the Foreign Office, explaining that ‘the resolution refers to a number of incidents which have recently taken place in Cyprus in terms which are either untrue or grossly distorted’.<sup>613</sup> The Turkish resolution read:

[t]he Turkish community which, following the announcement by the British Government of their intention to make public on June 17 a plan defining the future of the island without giving any explanation of it, had serious anxieties over the questions of their existence and future, became even more anxious following the report of an intended massacre by the Greek community on June 1. While the Turkish community in the island was in this state of mind, attacks

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<sup>609</sup> TNA, WO 216/915, Memorandum by General DA Kendrew, ‘Assessment of the Situation 16 July 1958,’ 19 July 1958.

<sup>610</sup> TNA, CAB 128/32 CC (58) 47<sup>th</sup> Conclusions, 10 June 1958.

<sup>611</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 1 181/16, Telegram No. 942, Ankara to Foreign Office, 18 June 1958.

<sup>612</sup> TNA, FO 371/136337, Telegram No. 925, Bowker to Foreign Office, 17 June 1958.

<sup>613</sup> TNA, FO 371/136337, Telegram No. 923, Bowker to Lennox-Boyd, 17 June 1958.

were carried out on Turkish schools. Photographs of Ataturk, the greatest symbol of union and faith, were destroyed; bombs were thrown at Turkish institution [sic]; mosques and houses were attacked; defenceless women were assassinated; fields were burnt [sic]; and people were forced to leave their ancestral homes. All these incidents confirm and justify the conviction and resolution expressed many times by the Cypriot Turks of their being unable to live together and under the same administration with those elements which were committing such acts, and above all of their being unable to accept Greek domination in any form. In order to re-establish peace and order in Cyprus the two communities must be separated de jure and de facto one from the other. Above all, an assurance must be given to the Turkish community, which is in a state of great anxiety as regards its future and its destiny, that it will never be left in any way under the domination of the Greek community which intends to suppress its right to life and its freedom.<sup>614</sup>

Even Bowker, influenced by his tenure in Ankara to see and understand the Turkish position, bluntly exposed the proclamation's lack of truth and encouraged Lennox-Boyd and Foot to avail themselves of 'the true facts of these incidents insofar as they have been established in order to refute the Turkish allegations'.<sup>615</sup>

As Bowker had suggested, the Turkish allegations were almost complete fabrications. Not only did they have the better, by far, of the early phase of the intercommunal strife, but Greek provocations were exaggerated or simply invented. A report from Foot to Lennox-Boyd countered each of the false claims with the genuine facts:

I have the following comments on the Turkish official communiqué of the 16<sup>th</sup> June. The Turkish communiqué stated that, on 1<sup>st</sup> June, EOKA threatened to massacre Turkish Cypriots. There is no evidence or information whatsoever in the possession of the Cyprus Government to substantiate this suggestion... The communiqué [of the Turkish National Assembly] says that four days later there was an attack on a Turkish school. The facts are that, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June, two Greek Cypriot boys, aged 11 and 12, broke a pane of glass in one of the windows of a Turkish elementary school in Kyrenia and wrote EOKA in chalk on the door. The total damage was six shillings. The boys were taken before a court, bound over for one year and ordered to pay for the broken pane. The school was not entered, and no photo of Ataturk was damaged. There is, as you know, strong circumstantial evidence to show that the disturbances which broke out on the night of the 7<sup>th</sup> June had been pre-arranged by Turks. In the

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<sup>614</sup> Ibid.

<sup>615</sup> Ibid.

disturbances, which continued for the next few days, two Turkish and twelve Greek Cypriots lost their lives. It is true that some Turkish Cypriots have left their homes for fear of attack by Greek Cypriots, but it must not be overlooked that the reverse is also the case and that the total number of both communities involved is very small in proportion to the total population. It is estimated that total number of households affected does not exceed 650.<sup>616</sup>

The British were in a vulnerable situation and the Turkish government could exploit it. Order could only be maintained in Cyprus through the cooperation of Turkish-Cypriots within the police force. Foot made that fact clear to the Colonial Office in March, informing them that in the event of ‘some form of civil war... our Security Forces which are so dependent on Turkish[-Cypriot] support and participation would be put at a grave disadvantage to say the least’.<sup>617</sup> At the same time, Ankara realized its importance to NATO and to the British position in the Middle East as well as its power in relation to a Greek government under threat from communists at home. Governor Foot expressed this reality as early as January 1958 in a letter to the British Ambassador in Athens, Roger Allen. ‘The Turks hold all the cards, it seems, and they are quite determined to press their advantage to the utmost’, he wrote. ‘[T]hey have started a campaign of violence amongst the Turkish community here in Cyprus which they can and no doubt will turn on again whenever it suits them to do so. This can in effect give them the complete veto (on everything) for which they seek.’<sup>618</sup> As Allen reasoned, Turkish violence, both on the mainland and in Cyprus, could act as a veto against policies which did not give enough concessions to Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot interests. Greek-Cypriots had used EOKA violence to increase their chances of *enosis*; Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot rioting would now attempt to do the same for partition.

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<sup>616</sup> TNA, FO 371/136337, Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 22 June 1958.

<sup>617</sup> Foot Papers, Box 4, Folder 2 181/11, Telegram No. 458, Foot to Higham, 30 March 1958.

<sup>618</sup> RHL, Foot Papers, Foot to Allen, 31 January 1958.

As Foot feared, the Turks were not in a mood for compromises. With the manufactured violence raging, the June plan was rejected as ‘impracticable’. As before, the position of the Turkish government was ‘that the situation calls for a radical and not provisional solution’. In the Turkish government’s view, ‘the only radical solution [was] partition’.<sup>619</sup> Menderes hammered the point home in a letter of 14 June to Macmillan. ‘[T]he only point of agreement between the United Kingdom and Turkey is based on this concession [partition] by Turkey... despite all our good will we have not been able to accept your proposals.’ The June proposal was fatally flawed because ‘it brings no final solution to the Cyprus question, that is, it contains no reference to the idea of partition which has been put forth as a compromise formula and accepted by Turkey as a concession and at great sacrifice’. With the situation on the ground ‘becoming increasingly grave’, Menderes was ‘convinced that it is now time to find a solution to this problem by generally adopting the idea of partition which is the most equitable, just, moderate and practical solution’.<sup>620</sup>

Menderes’ rhetoric did not reflect reality. British policymakers remained opposed to partition as did the British public.<sup>621</sup> The British were more convinced than ever that partition was not a viable solution in Cyprus. The ‘Turks had made no proper attempt to think out implications of partition’, wrote the British delegation to NATO in Paris. ‘The time was surely past in the West when populations could be uprooted and economy of a country upset as they certainly would be if partition was imposed. In this connection Turks had apparently not progressed beyond a Balkan war mentality’.<sup>622</sup> In London, it was understood that partition, in all likelihood, would

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<sup>619</sup> TNA, FO 371/136337, Telegram No. 891, Bowker to Lennox-Boyd, 14 June 1958.

<sup>620</sup> USNA, Records of the American Embassy, Turkey, RG 84 Box 157, Letter from Menderes to Macmillan, 14 June 1958.

<sup>621</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2, Folder 2 181/5, Telegram No. 104, Foreign Office to POMEF. Undated, c. January 1958.

<sup>622</sup> Foot Papers, Box 2, Folder 2 181/5, Telegram No. 137, Colonial Office to Foot, 18 January 1958.

mean war between Greece and Turkey.<sup>623</sup> It was thus to be avoided at all costs. In Cyprus, the deputy governor was adamant that partition meant ‘widespread strife’ and would ‘gravely prejudice the working of our base’. If the British government started using the partition ‘card’ again, it would ‘divert the attention of our own people in Ankara, Athens and London from our positive plan’. The Turks would understand that it was merely a negotiating ploy and would ‘resume their flat-out attempt to get partition’.<sup>624</sup> Foot himself was decidedly against partition and even before taking the appointment in Cyprus had informed Lennox-Boyd that he would resign rather than implement such a policy.<sup>625</sup>

If Greek-Cypriot provocations on the island were imagined, their losses were real enough. The bloodiest single incident occurred outside the Turkish-Cypriot village of Geunyeli on 12 June. British security forces encountered a party of Greek-Cypriots on a bus from the nearby village of Kontemenos. Thinking that they were preparing for an attack on neighbouring Turkish-Cypriots, British forces stopped and disarmed the Greek-Cypriots, then drove them some miles away from Kontemenos before releasing them. This snatch and drop policy was a standard British counter-insurgency tactic during this period. It had been used in Palestine and Kenya to disorient and disorganize potential violent threats. For the people of Kontemenos, the experience would prove bitter and deadly. Noticed by the Turkish-Cypriot villagers of Geunyeli, they were attacked as they marched the miles back to Kontemenos with iron bars, axes, knives, and possibly firearms.<sup>626</sup> Seven were killed outright (another would die of his wounds) and more than a dozen were injured. No Turkish-Cypriots were killed. Greek-Cypriots cried in outrage that the attack was evidence of

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<sup>623</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 1 181/6, Letter from Caccia to Foot, 20 June 1958.

<sup>624</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 1 181/16, Note from Sinclair to Foot, 23 June 1958.

<sup>625</sup> Foot Papers, Box 3, Folder 3 181/8, Telegram from Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 3 October 1957.

<sup>626</sup> *Cyprus Mail*, Vol. 42, No. 4294, 14 June 1958.

collaboration between the Turkish-Cypriots and the British authorities, but a subsequent inquiry exonerated the British commander of any complicity in the attack.<sup>627</sup>

Even before the massacre, Makarios reversed his stance on moving away from violence and encouraged Grivas to strike back against the Turkish-Cypriots with all means in his power. Speaking in Athens on 10 June, he called on Greek-Cypriots to organise in self-defence to combat ‘Turkish barbarism’. They would strike back to ‘show the Turks that Greeks are not college girls’.<sup>628</sup> Grivas obliged. In his *Memoirs*, he described the shift in EOKA’s operations:

I turned our attention on the Turks and for the first time they felt the full weight of our blows. I had already ordered raids on police stations, with Turkish policemen as chief targets, and waived all restrictions in killing Turks: we found that Turkish enthusiasm for blood-shed soon showed a sharp decline – they had not expected such ruthlessness on our part, knowing that we had always held our hand in the past.<sup>629</sup>

In spite of Grivas’s bravado, the intercommunal struggle presented EOKA with difficulties. Grivas admitted as much, recording, with unconscious irony that

[EOKA] could not, of course, stop murders and isolated raids in the no-man’s land between the two quarters, where night after night the marauders sought their prey, slaughtering unarmed men and women, pillaging their homes, setting fires to their churches. Nor was it easy to save our people in the countryside.<sup>630</sup>

The self-proclaimed guerrilla master, it appeared, found it difficult to counter the classic guerrilla tactics of his adversaries. It is one of the Cyprus Emergency’s most fundamental intricacies and greatest ironies that during the summer of 1958, EOKA faced a guerrilla war of its own against a parallel Turkish organisation. In some ways, the successes of TMT against EOKA were based on similar operations to that of

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<sup>627</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 597, p.345.

<sup>628</sup> Makarios quoted in *Cyprus Mail*, Vol. 42, No. 4290, 10 June 1958.

<sup>629</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.149.

<sup>630</sup> *Ibid.*, p.145.

Britain's Q unit and demonstrated how successful guerrilla-style tactics could be against the guerrillas themselves.

Turkish-Cypriot tactics were not the only obstacle to EOKA achieving full freedom of action. As the violence wore on during June, it became clear that neither of the two communities on Cyprus was in the mood for compromise. Kendrew's situation assessment on 16 July painted an ugly picture. Any sort of political impetus towards peace had been lost, 'tempers on both sides [were] inflamed', and EOKA probably had orders to attack 'both the Turks and ourselves [the British] (but not necessarily everywhere)'.<sup>631</sup> The police force, still dependent on large numbers of Turkish-Cypriots, was completely ineffectual. In such a state, Kendrew saw only three courses:

(a) to deal with the extremists on both sides, ie crush EOKA and arrest the Turk rabble raisers [sic]. This is clearly desirable, but in order to crush EOKA, within a reasonable time the active assistance of the Turks is necessary, ie the latter must not be finally antagonised. There will be violent reactions from EOKA if these have not already occurred. We would find it difficult to fight on two fronts. (b) To deal with one set of extremists only. As the Turks (whatever their long term intentions) may be disposed to cooperate, and as EOKA has intimidated the Greek population and are set on an anti-British course, EOKA are the primary target. As in course (a) we can expect a violent reaction, but we might expect Turkish help. (c) To continue a holding (and defensive) operation. We have the ability to retain the main towns and communication routes, ie to keep the base functioning.<sup>632</sup>

Although Kendrew admitted that striking against both Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot extremists was desirable, it was not seen as a feasible course of action. On a purely military level, Kendrew saw option (b) as the correct course. Anything else would postpone the inevitable. And tackling EOKA at some point in the future would be more difficult. In spite of suggesting an offensive against EOKA as the soundest military course, Kendrew acknowledged that: '[t]he only way an ultimate solution can

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<sup>631</sup> TNA, WO 216/915, Kendrew Memorandum, 19 July 1958.

<sup>632</sup> Ibid.

be achieved is by political action. Political action will be impractical if, as seems likely, the situation deteriorates to the point of open and continued civil war, although in this latter case we should be able to retain control sufficiently to keep the island running as a base'.<sup>633</sup>

Through the middle of July, British forces had been relatively even-handed in their security operations. Since the violence began, 524 Greek-Cypriots and 164 Turkish-Cypriots had been detained. The numbers skewed the actual proportions of the population, but were not wildly out of line considering the superior nature of British intelligence relating to EOKA. Moreover, by 15 July, forty-three Greek-Cypriots and forty-eight Turkish-Cypriots remained in custody.<sup>634</sup> British forces were not discriminating against individuals whom they felt represented a genuine threat.

Foot was reluctant to accept Kendrew's recommended course, but eventually bowed to the pressure from the military and launched a large-scale operation directed almost entirely against EOKA. Just two days after Kendrew's report, Foot took action. 'Operation Matchbox' kicked off at 1 am on 22 July and ran for forty-eight hours over the entire island. The British security forces had still not acknowledged the reality that TMT was an equal or greater threat than EOKA to the peace in Cyprus. As Robert Holland writes: 'by the end of the third day, 1,992 Greeks were in custody, plus 58 Turks. To assuage what [Charles] Foley's newspaper [*Times of Cyprus*] lambasted as this "laughable contrast", TMT was proscribed by the Government, but none of its known leaders was touched'.<sup>635</sup> The proportion of arrests indicated that Foot had come round to the view expressed by Kendrew that Turkish help was important enough that Britain's military efforts should be directed primarily at EOKA.

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<sup>633</sup> Ibid.

<sup>634</sup> *Hansard*, Vol. 591, Written Answers, p.79.

<sup>635</sup> Holland, p.267.

Events outside Cyprus were once again conspiring to help Turkey. On 14 July 1958, a group of Iraqi officers staged a coup against King Feisal II who was overthrown and killed. The British government had supported Feisal, whose country was central to the Baghdad Pact. With the new military regime recognized by Nasser's Egypt, Britain found its crumbling Middle East position more reliant on Turkey than ever. The end of the Baghdad Pact was perhaps the last direct aftershock of Suez and left Turkey as the only viable ally for Britain in the Middle East. It was not the time to confront Ankara over Cyprus.

While it was true that considerations both in and out of Cyprus made the British softer on the Turks, it was not true that Britain manufactured anti-Greek feeling within the Turkish-Cypriot community through a design to retain their control on the island. TMT, supported by Ankara and spurred by Turkish-Cypriot radicals, had provoked confrontations both with the British and with the Greek-Cypriots in the hopes of creating conditions for partition. Ironically, both the British and the Greek-Cypriots found themselves united, in theory, if not in practice, in preventing this. If British policymakers were reluctant to take the field against the Turkish-Cypriots, EOKA was not. Turkish-Cypriot nationalists had sown a conflict with the Greek-Cypriots, now they would reap a bitter harvest.

### **A Question of Blood**

During the initial phase of the intercommunal violence, EOKA found itself unprepared for a struggle against the Turkish-Cypriots and TMT. Their attention had been focused on eliminating left-wing elements in their own community and on the new, largely non-violent methods of resistance to British rule. As a result, the Turkish-Cypriots were able to inflict far more casualties in June than the Greek-

Cypriots. On 3 July, the *Cyprus Mail* reported that twenty had been killed in the intercommunal fighting, seventeen Greeks and three Turks.<sup>636</sup> The massacre at Geunyeli was only one factor. There was also the attitude of the British security forces which still focused on Greek- rather than Turkish-Cypriots as a source of instability and violence. After years of fighting against EOKA and the Greek-Cypriot community, the British had difficulty shifting their focus onto the Turkish-Cypriot community. While the British, hamstrung by the unreliability of the Turkish-Cypriot police contingent, struggled to keep the peace between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots, EOKA struggled with shifting its focus from the British and Greek-Cypriot communists to Turkish-Cypriots.

In the middle of June, Grivas sent an order to the execution squads ‘to kill a Turk in revenge for every death of a Greek’.<sup>637</sup> According to the Larnaca area commander:

a few days later one of the groups killed a Turk. Immediately a new curfew was imposed. The Greeks took fresh courage, and the Turks now knew that when they murdered a Greek they could expect retaliatory action at once. EOKA would not allow them to kill Greek citizens. Tolerance had its limits.<sup>638</sup>

If tolerance had limits, the rhetoric of the two sides did not. Another EOKA order went out to the village defence groups. The order denounced ‘the uncivilized wolflike,<sup>639</sup> vandal Turk’, who had only recently ‘left their wild and nomadic life in the wild [sic] and remote tracts of Mongolia... If they attack you, you must strike them pitilessly.’<sup>640</sup>

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<sup>636</sup> *Cyprus Mail*, Vol. 42, No. 4312, 3 July 1958.

<sup>637</sup> Seraphim-Loizou, p.279.

<sup>638</sup> Ibid.

<sup>639</sup> Wolflike was not an imagined insult, but played on the imagery of TMT’s seal which pictured a wolf, howling at a crescent moon.

<sup>640</sup> TNA, CO 926/932, EOKA General Order, Mid-June 1958.

From their propaganda, TMT too seemed ready for a fight. A leaflet on 28 May 1958 threatened the Greek ‘criminals’ and the ‘mentally unbalanced people’ of EOKA, saying that they could ‘only be brought to their senses when they are treated as they were treated in Smyrna where they hit the dust, were thrown out into the sea and were buried in the waters of the Mediterranean’.<sup>641</sup> On 11 June the organisation promised that the ‘life-and-death bloody war for our INDEPENDENCE’, would be waged ‘in Cyprus very soon’, and would end with ‘the perfidious English and deceitful Greek bastards being thrown out by us and buried in the deep waters of the Mediterranean sea. The cries of ALLAH, ALLAH of the Cyprus Turks, will be heard under the umbrella of the steel wings which will be coming to Cyprus from the Taurus mountains in the near future.’ Cyprus would be converted ‘into a cemetery and the Mediterranean into a coffin for you [Greeks] and for your shameless cringing English masters’.<sup>642</sup>

TMT’s bark remained worse than its bite. By late June, EOKA, better armed, organised, and trained, began to exact a heavy toll on the Turkish-Cypriots. As the fighting turned against them, Turkish-Cypriot leaders, Kutchuk and Denktash, went to Ankara to ask for direct military assistance from the Turkish government. They met with Zorlu, who remained cautious about deepening Ankara’s commitment in such an overt way. According to Denktash, Zorlu asked if they could assure him that arms shipments would be safe from British capture. Kutchuk demurred, but Denktash vouched that they would be.<sup>643</sup> The arms began coming in to Cyprus by mid-July along with a Turkish army officer, Colonel Ali Vurushkan. According to Denktash, Vurushkan became the commander of TMT and was responsible for providing its

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<sup>641</sup> TNA, CO 926/940, TMT Leaflet, 28 May 1958.

<sup>642</sup> TNA, CO 926/952, TMT Leaflet, 11 June 1958.

<sup>643</sup> Author’s Interview with Rauf Denktash, 10 April 2009.

members with military-style training.<sup>644</sup> The recruitment and professionalism of TMT increased, and it appeared that Cyprus was heading for a full-blown civil war.

During July and August 1958, the fighting itself was bitter and personal. Isolated individuals from both communities were picked off and killed: shot, stabbed, or beaten to death by EOKA or TMT execution squads. The British offensive during Operation Matchbox took many EOKA men off the street by the end of July and proscribed TMT, but the damage had been done. For Cypriots, the cost had been surprisingly high. In approximately two months of fighting, sixty Greek-Cypriots had been killed and another ninety-eight wounded. The Turkish-Cypriots had got off slightly more lightly, with fifty-five killed and eighty-four wounded.<sup>645</sup> Turkish-Cypriot losses were far higher in terms of percentages of the population, but TMT had demonstrated its lethality. It had been a bitter experience.

The scale of the violence sent policymakers in London, Athens, and Ankara scrambling for a solution. In spite of their strong feelings over Cyprus, none of the governments in question was eager to engage in a war in the eastern Mediterranean. With Britain's position weakened by Suez and the collapse of the Baghdad Pact, Greece under pressure from a communist resurgence, and Turkey confronted with hostile and progressively unstable Arab neighbours, each government had good reason to try and bring the violence in Cyprus under control. Appeals for an end to the violence were made by all three prime ministers: Macmillan, Menderes, and Karamanlis. After the appeals, Macmillan reached out to Karamanlis: 'I was extremely grateful to read the appeal which you made for the ending of violence and bloodshed in Cyprus', he wrote in a note delivered through the Foreign Office to Athens. 'As this appeal, coupled with appeals made by the Turkish PM and myself,

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<sup>644</sup> Ibid.

<sup>645</sup> TNA, WO 106/6020, Darling Report on the Cyprus Emergency, 1959, p.68.

has produced a certain effect in the island itself, I feel that the moment is ripe for the personal meeting between us which I suggested earlier in our correspondence on this matter.<sup>646</sup>

On the island, the response to the calls for peace was swift. An EOKA leaflet from 4 August, signed by Grivas (as Dighenis) stated: 'I have informed Mr. Macmillan that the Cyprus people accepts his appeal... I have ordered to cease [sic] any action against the Englishmen and Turks but I declare that if by any means the provocations on behalf of Englishmen and Turks continue then as from the 10<sup>th</sup> of this month I shall be free to order action on both.'<sup>647</sup> TMT followed suit the next day: 'All armed groups must stop their activities until further orders... Greek owned property will not be damaged unless the [sic] Turkish owned property is damaged. No pressure will be done [sic] to the Greek minority in villages unless the Turkish minority is pressed down.'<sup>648</sup> Achieving a compromise would require overcoming daunting odds and hitherto insoluble contradictions. Cyprus had been shaken to its foundations. Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot relations were at their nadir. At long last, however, there was a dim light of hope flickering on the horizon.

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<sup>646</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 1 181/16, Telegram No. 1109, Foreign Office to Athens, 6 August 1958.

<sup>647</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 1 181/16, EOKA Leaflet in Telegram No. 1297, Foot to Colonial Office, 4 August 1958.

<sup>648</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 1 181/16, TMT Leaflet in Telegram No. 1755, Foot to Colonial Office, 5 August 1958.

## Chapter VII – An End in Sight

*'As I recall the many innocent, peaceful people who were killed, the goodwill and tolerance that were destroyed, the friends and friendships lost and the many brave young men – Greek, Turkish and British – who laid down their lives in what was after all, an unnecessary conflict, my mind is filled with a sadness which is tinged with outrage at the folly of it all. There was not even a "famous victory". Nobody won. Everybody lost by reason of this futile conflict.'*<sup>649</sup> (John Reddaway, Administrative Secretary of Cyprus)

### The Move toward Peace

With the ink on EOKA's latest ceasefire still damp, Prime Minister Macmillan flew to Athens in the hope of making further progress toward re-establishing peace and stability in Cyprus. While the ceasefire, and the appeals for peace from three prime ministers that had preceded it, ended the most damaging phase of intercommunal violence on the ground, the international political situation seemed as resistant to a resolution as ever. However, changing landscapes at the United Nations, in the broader Middle East and even within Greece and Cyprus were beginning to provide traction for a solution. The Macmillan administration was determined not to miss the opportunity of ending the mess in Cyprus and establishing some *modus vivendi* among the contending parties.

Turkey, concerned with the course of events in the Middle East and more or less satisfied with the nature of British proposals from June, appeared ready to negotiate. Greece, however, remained intransigent. In Cyprus, the rhetoric of EOKA was still fixated on *enosis*. Moreover, the fragile truce was almost immediately under

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<sup>649</sup> John Reddaway, *Burdened with Cyprus: The British Connection*, (London: K. Rustem & Bro. and Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd., 1986), p.ii.

threat. EOKA's ceasefire was applied only to British security forces. The organisation continued the targeted killing of Greek-Cypriot 'traitors' and Turkish-Cypriots. These activities demonstrated that EOKA remained operational and the British were still not yet in complete control of the security situation.

By late summer, both the Greek government and Archbishop Makarios had denounced attempts at a compromise based on the August revisions of Macmillan's June plan. The Greeks complained that the plan gave too many concessions to the Turks and involved them too directly in the affairs of Cyprus. In response, Greece once again prepared to attack Britain and its Cyprus policy at the United Nations during the autumn session. In spite of all Macmillan's efforts, bringing the various sides to an agreement seemed unlikely. Nevertheless, the British government decided to press on with their plan and invited Greece and Turkey to send representatives to the island to participate in its implementation. To complicate matters further, violence in Cyprus resumed between EOKA and British forces.

Just when the situation seemed once more headed towards a complete descent into the chaotic cycle that had plagued Cyprus for years, two important changes took place. First, confronted with the reality that Britain was moving forward with its plan and that Turkey would soon have a formal representative on the island, Archbishop Makarios publicly acknowledged that he was willing to abandon the cause of *enosis* and accept independence for Cyprus in its place.<sup>650</sup> Second, a Greek appeal for Cypriot self-determination was once again defeated at the United Nations. With the shift in Makarios's position explicitly stated, the Greek government was approached by the Turkish government on a bilateral basis to solve the problem. British policymakers, as previous policy statements had made clear, had no objection to

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<sup>650</sup> Makarios interview with Barbara Castle, MP, on 22 September. *The Times*, 23 September 1958, p. 10.

signing off on a solution agreed to in both Athens and Ankara, as long as British interests in Cyprus were respected. At last diplomacy was gaining traction. Greek and Turkish representatives met in New York, Paris, and finally in Zurich to hammer out the details of the compromise. By February 1959, they had reached an agreement. The dogged Greek-Cypriot insistence on *enosis* had been removed and progress towards a solution followed.

The British government kept its word and the agreement reached between the Greeks and the Turks served as a foundation for a general solution to the Cyprus problem. A new, independent state was created. Its independence was guaranteed by Britain, Turkey, and Greece. *Enosis* and partition were renounced. Britain was provided with two areas to maintain as sovereign bases. Greek-Cypriots would choose the country's president, but the vice president, with full veto power, would be a Turkish-Cypriot. A cabinet and single parliament of Cypriots, Greek and Turkish, would direct the new nation's affairs. In both the cabinet and the parliament, a certain number of seats were reserved for the minority. One of the world's smallest countries was given the world's largest constitution. The final agreements represented compromises all round, but also a new hope for the future of the island. By 1960, that future was firmly, if reluctantly, in Cypriot hands. Britain's tangle in Cyprus was all but over; sadly, the island's troubles were only beginning.

### **Shuttle Diplomacy**

Macmillan's trip to Athens was followed shortly by a journey to Ankara. In both capitals, the prime minister's mission was to build on the calls for peace that had been made by him and his colleagues at the start of August. It was hoped that the chaos of intercommunal violence might provide the necessary impetus for

compromise. If there was a chance to reach a solution about Cyprus, Macmillan was determined to grab it with both hands. The trip to Athens almost strangled Macmillan's hopes in their infancy. Meeting with Prime Minister Karamanlis and Foreign Minister Averoff on 8 August, Macmillan was confronted with familiar protests. The Greeks had four central objections to the British Prime Minister's June plan. First, the proposal that separate Houses of Representatives for each of the two communities would have 'final legislative authority in communal affairs' was denounced as 'divisive'. As always, the Greeks preferred a single legislative assembly, which could be controlled by the Greek-Cypriot majority.<sup>651</sup> Second and third, the Greeks disliked both the idea of dual nationality for Cypriots and the proposal to have representatives on the island from both Greece and Turkey.<sup>652</sup> All three points hit the familiar problem of Greek and Greek-Cypriot opposition to Turkey having equal standing with Greece in any agreement over Cyprus. The proposal for a Turkish representative on the island was particularly jarring. To many Greeks, it smacked of a return to the days of the Ottoman Empire when the administration of the island lay in the hands of a representative from Istanbul. Finally, the Greeks protested that the 'number of elected ministers was unfairly weighted in favour of the Turkish minority'.<sup>653</sup> Although the new plan brought new objections, they were all firmly rooted in traditional Greek prejudices about how any final agreement should be structured.

Macmillan was disappointed with the Greek position. In his diary, he noted that, by rejecting the Radcliffe proposals from 1956, the Greeks had actually put themselves in a more difficult position in 1958. The Turks had not balked at Radcliffe's proposal for a single legislative assembly. Now they were opposing it. If

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<sup>651</sup> Foot Papers Box 6, Folder 2, Telegram No. 329, Macmillan to Foot, 10 August 1958.

<sup>652</sup> Ibid.

<sup>653</sup> Ibid.

the Greeks rejected the new plan, concluded Macmillan, 'or made it unworkable by violence and terrorism, the end would certainly be partition in its worst form – territorial partition, with Turkish bases, etc.'<sup>654</sup> While British policymakers still resisted this solution strongly, each Greek rejection made it seem more plausible.

Part of the Greek position, Macmillan noted in his diary, was based on sentiment. According to Macmillan, Karamanlis had become 'very emotional' in the discussions. In his diary, Macmillan interpreted the Greek prime minister's state of mind along the following lines: the Greeks 'hated the Turks; they had fought them for 500 years, they would fight them for Greek liberty wherever and whenever they could. They could not be humiliated by the Turks. A Turkish veto on Greek aspirations was humiliating.'<sup>655</sup> Macmillan's prose may have inflated the problem, but his central point, that achieving Greco-Turkish cooperation over Cyprus was a challenge for practical and historical reasons, was entirely valid. Moreover, the position of the Greek government in 1958 was weak. It was 'frightened of Makarios, frightened of Parliament, and frightened of the rise in the Communist vote at the last (May) elections.' Because of these issues, 'the Government clearly cannot "accept" the plan.'<sup>656</sup> Ironically, it appeared that Greek intransigence had its roots in weakness.

A day after the meeting with Macmillan, Karamanlis, Averoff, and the Greek Foreign Office's head of its Cyprus desk, Dimitris Bitsios, met with American Deputy Under-Secretary Robert Murphy and Ambassador James Riddleberger. The Greeks presented the Americans with an explanation of their position over Cyprus. In no uncertain terms, they raised concerns that the Cyprus issue was a threat to the stability of their government and therefore a threat to the future of Greece's participation in NATO. The Greeks argued, in terms that echoed numerous previous statements from

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<sup>654</sup> Macmillan Diary, 9 August 1958, quoted in *Riding the Storm*, p.676.

<sup>655</sup> *Ibid.*, p.677.

<sup>656</sup> *Ibid.*, p.678.

Ankara, that they ‘had made the ultimate concession,’ by agreeing ‘to shelve self-determination, and now wanted only a greater measure of self-government, within or outside the Commonwealth’. There was pressure against the government, with the possibility of the defection of deputies over the Cyprus issue and hostility towards NATO.<sup>657</sup> The Karamanlis government was committed to NATO and enjoyed the benefits of British and American aid because of that relationship. NATO’s Secretary General, Paul Henri Spaak, however, recognized that in spite of these links, Greece’s threat could not be discounted as a bluff. He told the American ambassador to NATO, Warren Burgess, that, if Macmillan’s plan was implemented over Greek objections, Greece would ‘probably take it out on NATO, at least by discontinuing cooperation in the military field and adopting a neutralist line of policy’.<sup>658</sup>

Macmillan followed his trip to Athens with one to Ankara. He sounded out the Turkish government about a solution for Cyprus. He explained to Selwyn Lloyd that the meetings were not an unqualified success. ‘I am just leaving Ankara,’ he wrote to the foreign secretary on 12 August. ‘We finished our business with the Turks last night after three meetings, all of them short and only one of them pleasant, the last.’ The prime minister reported that on 10 August ‘we ran into rough weather. The Turks were at their most suspicious. Zorlu was rude and truculent. Before I could enumerate the Greek points he interrupted to say that he wanted the same number of Turks on the Governor’s Council as Greeks; and partition to be added to partnership as the final solution. He said that any modification would upset the “economy” of the plan.’<sup>659</sup> Macmillan was not encouraged by the Turkish attitude. ‘It was depressing,’ he continued, ‘to find that Zorlu, and even Menderes, were unwilling to discuss the

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<sup>657</sup> FRUS, *US Department of State, Vol. X, Part 1, FRUS, 1958-60: E. Europe Region; Soviet Union, Cyprus*, 254. Memorandum of Conversation, Athens, August 9, 1958.

<sup>658</sup> FRUS, 265. Memorandum of Conversation, MC 16 Boston, September 27, 1958.

<sup>659</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 2, Telegram No. 1272, Macmillan to Lloyd, 12 August 1958.

Greek points objectively and without commitment, let alone respond to a friendly suggestion that in the world situation now facing us it would be in Turkey's interest if, by means of a slight adjustment of the plan which we said all along was no more than an outline, we could obtain, if the not the whole hearted cooperation, at least a tolerable degree of practical cooperation from the Greeks.<sup>660</sup> Like the Greeks, the Turks remained immovable in their demands – equal treatment and recourse to partition. Worse still, the Americans and British remained fearful that Turkish hostility to a solution could manifest itself not in a simple withdrawal from NATO, but through open violence towards Greeks both in Turkey and on Cyprus.<sup>661</sup> Turkish policymakers had already chosen this course in 1955 during the Tripartite Conference (through the Istanbul riots) and earlier in 1958 (with the auto-bombing of the Turkish Consulate in Nicosia) before the announcement of the Macmillan plan. The British and Americans had every reason to believe that this could happen again.

In spite of the hostile atmosphere, a Cabinet meeting on 12 August set the new course of British policy over Cyprus. Macmillan had several impressions from his trips. First, he was convinced 'that the Greek government lacked the political strength to give active support to any plan which would solve the Cyprus problem'. The Turks 'were strongly opposed to any modifications designed to meet the Greek point of view'. The Cabinet concluded that only three courses of action remained: to abandon the June plan, to implement the June plan without making changes to it, or to proceed with implementing the June policy 'while modifying it in certain particulars'.<sup>662</sup> The first course was seen, in familiar language, as 'a confession of failure'. It was feared that the second course 'would arouse bitter opposition from Greece,' and 'would also involve disregarding the views expressed in the North Atlantic Council and in the

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<sup>660</sup> Ibid.

<sup>661</sup> FRUS, 265. Memorandum of Conversation, MC 16 Boston, September 27, 1958.

<sup>662</sup> TNA, CAB 128/32, CC (58) 67<sup>th</sup> Conclusions, 12 August 1958.

United Nations'.<sup>663</sup> Faced with the apparently unpalatable alternatives, the Cabinet chose the third option, to announce that the plan, with modifications, would be implemented with or without the agreement of the various parties.<sup>664</sup> The dice had been rolled.

In the policy announcement that followed on 15 August, Macmillan attempted to reconcile Greek concerns while still keeping the Turks onside. British policymakers had decided on three modifications to Macmillan's original plan, each designed to improve its chance of success with the Greeks. First, the proposal promising Cypriots the option for dual nationality would be 'deferred'. As a policy memo noted: 'This proposal which was originally made to please the Greeks, has not in fact appealed to them.'<sup>665</sup> The plan for separate representative houses was scrapped in favour of a proposal for a single representative institution. Finally, the status of the Greek and Turkish representatives was 'to be changed so that, while their functions are not affected, they will not sit as members of the Governor's Council'.<sup>666</sup> Prime Minister Karamanlis, on holiday in Rhodes, returned to Athens immediately on the news of the modifications, but reaction with the Greek government was reported as 'absolutely negative'.<sup>667</sup>

Makarios's reaction was also immediate and even more negative. The new plan struck the archbishop as being nothing more than 'a restatement of the plan announced on June 19<sup>th</sup> 1958 which has already been rejected'. The choice to proceed regardless drew special criticism: 'I am also painfully astonished,' wrote Makarios, 'to notice that it is proposed to proceed with the imposition of a plan unacceptable to the Cypriot people in their large majority. It should be made abundantly clear that the

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<sup>663</sup> Ibid.

<sup>664</sup> Ibid.

<sup>665</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 2, Telegram No. 271, Foreign Office to POMEF, 15 August 1958.

<sup>666</sup> Ibid.

<sup>667</sup> *The Times*, Saturday, Aug 16, 1958; pg. 6; Issue 54231; col A.

Greek people of Cyprus can never accept a plan which disregards their basic democratic rights and denies to them both freedom and peace.’<sup>668</sup> How the archbishop hoped to reconcile the pursuit of *enosis* with the pursuit of peace was not addressed.

EOKA violence, and the polar opposite demands of the island’s Greek and Turkish populations, remained the largest obstacles to peace. Makarios was stretching truth when he expressed his ‘profound disappointment that the moderation we have shown in a spirit of good will and compromise in order to reach agreement upon a transitory period of self government has met with no understanding and no response whatsoever from the British government whose policy has proved to be devoid of all sincerity of purpose’.<sup>669</sup> British policy, in spite of its cynicism, was sincere in its desire to avoid an open conflict between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus. By undermining NATO and the security of the Eastern Mediterranean, such conflict harmed rather than served British interests in the region. For their part, Makarios and the *enosis* movement’s offers of compromise through ‘a transitory period of self government’ were hollow to say the least. In theory, the goal remained *enosis* and the only transition desired was one that would make Cyprus part of the Greek state. From the beginning, Greeks and Greek-Cypriots alike should have understood the impossibility of such a cause. Insisting on it now was to invite partition and the war that would surely accompany it.

After making the decision to proceed along the lines of the modified June plan, British policymakers looked for other options that might soften the blow for the Greeks and Greek-Cypriots. At the end of August, the Cabinet acknowledged that the ‘less favourable’ reaction of the Greek government meant that ‘there was a serious

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<sup>668</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 2, Message from Makarios to Foot, 16 August 1958.

<sup>669</sup> Ibid.

risk of an early revival of terrorism on the island'.<sup>670</sup> The reaction in both London and Cyprus to such a result would be more balanced than in the past. The Cabinet argued that, 'we should adopt as unprovocative a policy as possible towards Greece by giving effect to the plan unobtrusively and laying the maximum emphasis on measures to restore order in Cyprus and to bring violence to an end'. Beyond this, Governor Foot suggested 'that, for this purpose, we should announce forthwith that, subject to the maintenance of peace in the Island, Archbishop Makarios would be permitted to return within the next six weeks and that, if violence completely ceased thereafter, the state of emergency would be terminated by the end of the year'.<sup>671</sup>

To terminate the state of emergency, however, the British would have to continue hounding EOKA and prevent the organisation from undermining the security situation. The August truce had reduced the scope of action enjoyed by the security forces and meant that previously gathered intelligence was becoming less relevant with each passing day. A renewal of violence threatened both the British peace initiative and the hope that Greece and Turkey – along with Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots – could possibly get along.

### **The War of Murders**

British optimism about ending the emergency by the end of 1958 was challenged immediately. After the August announcement that the peace plan would move forward, violence in Cyprus reignited. This occurred in spite of British attempts to apply in Cyprus the same moderate stance it was adopting toward Greece. To foster support on the island for the plan, Foot's administration ratcheted down security measures and cut back on large-scale operations. As he explained to the Colonial

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<sup>670</sup> TNA, CAB 128/32, CC (58) 68<sup>th</sup> Conclusions, 27 August 1958.

<sup>671</sup> Ibid.

Secretary on 23 August, 'activity is limited to successful operations acting on information to seize arms and make individual arrests of terrorists'.<sup>672</sup> Limited operations, as might have been expected, brought in limited results. A security report from late August outlined the situation:

As a result of Op[eration] Matchbox and the follow-up operation, which showed Government's determination to check violence: - (a) we have acquired a great deal of low grade information which has led to recovery of some arms and further arrests of wanted persons. (b) A climate of opinion has developed in which information is slowly building up – more so than at any time since March 1957. (c) We hold a limited advantage. As against this: - (a) We have not yet penetrated EOKA high grade elements, or arms traffic. (b) We have not yet been able to establish a large scale network of agents. (c) Makarios and Grivas still retain their strongarm squads so as to exercise a hold over the population and embark on full scale action.<sup>673</sup>

In spite of occasional successes, the security forces had not succeeded on the three important points enumerated in the report. The three problems were as true in August 1958 as they had been in April 1955. Security forces had never been able to penetrate EOKA's high grade elements, although they had been able to kill and capture them. Grivas had successfully kept EOKA units in the field throughout the insurgency. Most consistent of all was the British failure to assemble 'a large scale network of agents,' especially reliable informants. Acquiring information that could lead to the capture of members of EOKA's upper echelons was challenging largely because of 'the ruthless intimidation methods practised by EOKA, resulting in almost no information being given voluntarily to the Security Forces'.<sup>674</sup>

As difficult as it was, the British did succeed in getting some information. On 23 August, security forces, acting on an intelligence tip-off, killed three 'hard-core' targets in a gun-battle in the village of Lysi. These were the first casualties since

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<sup>672</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 2, Telegram No. 1436, Foot to Lennox-Boyd, 23 August 1958.

<sup>673</sup> Foot Papers, Box 6, Folder 2, Minute by the Chief of Staff (Cyprus), August 1958.

<sup>674</sup> TNA, WO 106/6020, 'Report on the Cyprus Emergency,' Major General Kenneth Darling, 31 July 1959, p.13.

EOKA declared a ceasefire on 4 August and Grivas immediately called off the ceasefire. Two days previously, on 21 August, the EOKA chief had released his first leaflet since the truce. It announced that EOKA would ‘not succumb to the Anglo-Turkish conspiracy. Our island is Greek. We accept no compromise. We demand clear self-determination... No power is capable of subjugating us and imposing the abortive British plan for our enslavement to the British and the Turks... No one should cooperate in any effort for the imposition of the plan, and all must carry out the orders of leadership.’<sup>675</sup> The subsequent fire-fight with British forces seemed to confirm this stance.

The security situation in Cyprus continued to deteriorate along with the hope of a peaceful run-up to the implementation of the peace plan. On 27 August, a report from *The Times* described ‘a pitched battle... between [Greek-Cypriot] right-wing and left-wing factions... about 15 miles from Famagusta’. The intra-Greek fighting killed two, a girl of thirteen and a woman of thirty-two. Another twenty were injured.<sup>676</sup> Later that day, another EOKA gunman was killed by security forces. August ended as only a slightly less bloody month than July. Excluding those persons killed in intercommunal fighting, EOKA had murdered two Britons, eleven Greeks, and four Turks in July. The Greek-Cypriot victims included women. Iphigenia Fanti, her husband, Michael Fantis, and her daughter Cristallou Pettimeridou, were all killed by EOKA on 28 July in a village in the Troodos mountains. An EOKA leaflet from 8 August confirmed the fact, stating that the three had been executed ‘due to their dishonest and treacherous attitude against our national struggle’.<sup>677</sup>

During most of August, the ceasefire had been in effect, but another two Britons, ten Greeks, and, three Turks were still killed by the organisation. September

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<sup>675</sup> EOKA Leaflet, 21 August 1958, quoted in *The Times*, 22 August 1958, p.6.

<sup>676</sup> *The Times*, 27 August 1958, p.8

<sup>677</sup> TNA, CO 926/941, EOKA Leaflet, 8 August 1958.

started off even worse. A member of the security forces was killed on the first, and on the second, a member of the RAF was murdered. EOKA tried to blow up a Meteor aircraft at Akrotiri airfield and ambushed a military truck outside Nicosia. The British struck back too, surrounding four EOKA fighters at a barn in the village of Liopetri, near Famagusta. After a hard-fought gun-battle, in which one British soldier was killed and five wounded, all four EOKA men were killed.

On 7 September, Grivas retaliated, announcing that a Briton would be murdered for every Greek-Cypriot killed by security forces. In spite of the pronouncement, EOKA continued to strike hard against its Greek-Cypriot compatriots. A Greek-Cypriot was shot to death by masked gunmen on 10 September. On 15 September, two more Greek-Cypriots were murdered in the western village of Mesoyi. Notes were pinned on the corpses saying that they had been killed by EOKA.<sup>678</sup> Murders of Greek-Cypriots, ambushes, and attacks against British forces (including a new tactic using electronically detonated land-mines) were once more a daily feature of life on the island. As before, EOKA was attempting to push away or influence an approaching agreement.

Even the escalation against British forces during the second half of September could not disguise the fact that EOKA's focus remained its own people who could betray the struggle as communists and/or as British informants. This is reflected in the casualty figures. In each of these three months – even while engaged in intercommunal fighting – more Greek-Cypriots had been killed than Britons. In fact, over those three months, EOKA killed only nine Britons, compared with thirty-five Greek-Cypriots – a ratio of almost four to one.

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<sup>678</sup> *The Times*, 16 September 1958, p.7.

The course of violence during the late summer and autumn of 1958 reflected the deep connection between political action and the military operations conducted by both EOKA and the British. Macmillan's August announcement was appreciated by the security forces on the ground because it gave them the clear direction that they had been lacking. The uncertainty about British policy in Cyprus, which, among other things, had contributed to Harding's resignation in 1957, was dealt with. The importance of political direction in fighting an insurgency was explicitly stated by Major-General Kenneth Darling, who replaced Major-General Douglas Kendrew as Director of Operations in Cyprus in October of 1958. In his 'Report on the Cyprus Emergency,' in July 1959, Darling wrote:

Unless and until there is an agreed and firm long term political policy, the activities of the Security Forces are obviously hampered and it becomes more difficult for them to take the initiative. In Cyprus, once the Macmillan Plan was made known in the latter half of 1958, and once it was made plain that the Government was determined not to be deflected by violence from carrying out that policy, the task of the Security Forces was made easier. The maintenance of the political initiative made it far easier to win and keep the military initiative.<sup>679</sup>

Darling continued on this point later in his report, writing that: 'The fight against terrorism in Cyprus was not purely a military campaign. The services were acting at all times in support of the civil power and their actions naturally had to be subordinated to political needs.'<sup>680</sup> As the fighting wore on in Cyprus, the two paramount political needs were to avoid upsetting the Turks who had been brought so close to an agreement, and to hold off EOKA so that the majority of Greek-Cypriots would agree to a compromise short of *enosis*. Turkish cooperation was important not only for securing an agreement, but for preventing the rioting and violence that Ankara seemed able to turn on and off at will. The first goal was achieved largely by

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<sup>679</sup> Darling, *Report on the Cyprus Emergency*.

<sup>680</sup> Ibid.

soft-peddalling security operations against Turkish-Cypriots as much as possible. The statistics of detainees from Operation Matchbox – where Greek-Cypriot arrests outnumbered Turkish-Cypriot arrests more than 34:1 – demonstrated this principle clearly. To achieve the second goal, British action continued against EOKA throughout 1958. Targets of opportunity were attacked in spite of EOKA's ceasefire announcement. This was due not only to the security services' receipt of actionable intelligence, but to the fact that EOKA operations continued during the ceasefire, not against British targets, at first, but against communists, Greek-Cypriot 'traitors,' and Turkish-Cypriots. The Government of Cyprus felt unable to allow such disorder to proceed unchecked. To support this policy, troop levels remained high. An additional 5,000 troops and support staff had come to the island by the end of June 1958 to deal with the intercommunal clashes. British forces continued to operate at their peak strength of 30,000 men through the rest of 1958.

Political concerns were also clearly present in EOKA's thinking. Already sidelined from the political process by the August ceasefire and not consulted during the negotiations raging in London, Athens, and Ankara, Grivas was looking for a way to remain relevant. Continued attacks on the left and against Turkish-Cypriots demonstrated EOKA's strength and its commitment to achieving the *enosis* for which so many Greek-Cypriots longed. Still, to remain in the game, Grivas needed to continue the open battle with British forces. The colonel's unwillingness to be marginalised in a new move towards peace was clearly demonstrated by the course of violence following Makarios's statement at the end of September. EOKA continued its operations unabated, murdering a total of five Britons and fourteen Greeks by the end of the month.<sup>681</sup> Outside of the intercommunal violence, it was the single highest

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<sup>681</sup> Vanezis, *Pragmatism v. Idealism*, p.83.

monthly total inflicted by EOKA since ‘Black November’ 1956. October proved even more deadly. With Britain now the focus because of political developments, EOKA bullets and bombs claimed the lives of sixteen Britons, twelve Greek-Cypriots and three Turkish-Cypriots. In fact, it was the first time since November 1956 that EOKA killed more Britons than Greek-Cypriots during any single month.

Although EOKA was suffering losses of its own, its ability to inflict casualties on the British remained intact. At the same time, EOKA had not demonstrated the capacity to push the British security forces to anything close to their limits. British casualties did spike during the second half of 1958, but not to unmanageable levels. As the prime minister noted in Cabinet on 12 August 1958, ‘horrible as the atrocities committed by EOKA were, they should be seen in their correct perspective: the British forces in Cyprus had incurred only 90 fatal casualties over the previous five years’.<sup>682</sup> The final total from March 1959 would list 105 British military as killed in action during the Cyprus Emergency.<sup>683</sup> More important even than the casualty figures was the fact that British forces had never lost control of the security situation. By late 1958, with a reworked intelligence system and more boots on the ground than at any previous time, they were pushing EOKA to the limit, killing ‘hard-core’ targets, and closing in on Grivas himself.

During this time, the rhetoric of the *enosis* movement displayed a similar resolve to that demonstrated by its gunmen. The ‘Valiant Youth of EOKA’ – ANE<sup>684</sup> – declared on 15 October that ‘[o]ur Ethnarchy has duly warned the British Government not to proceed with the implementation of the Monstrous ‘Plan’. He [Makarios] has also warned Foot and company of the consequences of the

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<sup>682</sup> TNA, CAB 128/32, CC (58) 67<sup>th</sup> Conclusions, 12 August 1958.

<sup>683</sup> TNA, WO 106/6020, ‘Report on the Cyprus Emergency,’ Major General Kenneth Darling, 31 July 1959, p.68

<sup>684</sup> Αλκιμος Νεολαία της ΕΟΚΑ

introduction of such a monster by force. But no one has heeded this warning.' ANE issued a clear warning:

There will no longer be any mercy. There will be no hesitation or sentimentalism. Our blows will be terrible wherever they may fall. No one will have the right to accuse us of any act of cruelty to which the powerful forces of Justice and morality, which encompasses our struggle, may push us. The great moment has come. Nothing can hold us back. This is the supreme struggle. We shall all become free or die.<sup>685</sup>

Freedom or death would have to wait. As EOKA's war pushed on, the political goal on which it based its struggle was melting beneath its feet. Their own spiritual leader, Archbishop Makarios, had supplied some of the fire's fuel; Greece would supply the rest. Surprisingly, it was Turkey that would provide the spark.

### **The War of Words**

The announcement that the Macmillan plan would go forward shifted the landscape of the Cyprus problem dramatically. An old nautical maxim proposes that if a captain does not know where he is going, no wind on earth can carry him there. Macmillan's plan gave political direction to the Cyprus problem and allowed the interested parties to see where they were headed. Most significantly in the short term, the plan called for the representatives from Greece and Turkey to take up their duties on the island by 1 October. For Greeks and Greek-Cypriots it was a sobering prospect. They were not about to accept the plan without a fight, nor were they willing to continue Grivas's killing only to have it lead to a forced partition. The battle was renewed both on the ground in Cyprus and at the United Nations. Failure to achieve success in both areas would finally bring Greece to the negotiating table.

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<sup>685</sup> TNA, CO 926/941, ANE Leaflet, 15 October 1958.

Just as significant as the decision to proceed with the Macmillan plan was Archbishop Makarios's public statement, made in a September interview with Barbara Castle, the Labour MP from Blackburn in Lancashire. In a meeting on 22 September, Makarios told Castle that he would accept independence in place of *enosis*, as part of a solution for Cyprus. Tensions were running high. Selwyn Lloyd had informed Foot that Averoff had come to see him on the subject of the Turkish representative in Cyprus. Averoff 'said that if we went ahead with the appointment of a Turkish representative on Oct 1 revolution in Cyprus was inevitable. It was also inevitable that the Greek Government would have to react in some spectacular manner or they would be overthrown. He did not exactly say what form their reaction would take but indicated that it might be Greek withdrawal from NATO and the severance of diplomatic relations with us.'<sup>686</sup> Such a threat seemed less serious to the Foreign Secretary than failing to follow through on the stated policy: 'I do not think we could at this stage postpone or go back on the plan as the Greeks were asking us to do. The only result would be to encourage an outbreak of violence on the part of the Turkish Cypriots which could lead to civil war in the island and a reaction in Turkey which would further embitter Greco-Turkish relations with all possible consequences for the community in Turkey.'<sup>687</sup>

Makarios made similar statements to Castle on the subject. When she asked what the objection of Greek-Cypriots was to this appointment, Makarios replied: '[w]e know that the British Government are [sic] planning to give the Turkish government sovereign rights in Cyprus either through partition or by some other means. This will make a solution of the Cyprus question impossible.'<sup>688</sup> Castle, a journalist with the *Daily Mirror* before her election to Parliament, probed the

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<sup>686</sup> Foot Papers, Box 7, Folder 1, Telegram from Lennox-Boyd to Foot, 20 September 1958.

<sup>687</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>688</sup> *The Times*, 23 September 1958, p.10.

archbishop expertly about whether he thought ‘the right way to solve this problem... [was] to take both the Greek and Turkish Governments out of the dispute?’ The archbishop replied in the affirmative. When pressed for details, he added, ‘I am anxious to find a way in which peace can be restored in Cyprus and bloodshed on all sides be stopped. I therefore suggest that after a fixed period of self-government Cyprus should become an independent state which is linked neither to Turkey nor to Greece.’ Makarios went further, saying that he would ‘accept the status of independence for Cyprus on the condition that this status shall not be changed, either by union with Greece, by partition, or by any other way, unless the United Nations approves such a change’.<sup>689</sup>

The man who had preached the gospel of ‘*enosis* and only *enosis*’ for more than a decade was now proposing independence free from both Greece and Turkey. There was some confusion over the significance of the archbishop’s statement. For the moment, no dramatic changes took place on the island. EOKA’s violence continued as did British attempts to suppress it. The archbishop’s proposal was met with scepticism in Turkey, which still did not trust him. The idea of independence, however, was not new. Lord Home had proposed it in 1955;<sup>690</sup> President Eisenhower was reported as favouring it in 1957;<sup>691</sup> Foreign Minister Averoff had discussed the idea with American diplomats as recently as July 1958.<sup>692</sup> Hearing it from Makarios, and publicly, however, was different. As Robert Holland explains, even though Macmillan did not mention the interview ‘in his otherwise voluminous memoirs... the interview was seen as a landmark in announcing, albeit in a tart and grudging manner, Makarios’ conversion to something other than union with Greece through the just and

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<sup>689</sup> Ibid.

<sup>690</sup> TNA, FO 371/123863, Personal Letter from Lennox-Boyd to Lord Home, 6 January 1956.

<sup>691</sup> Foot Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, Brief for Sir Hugh Foot, No. 5, 19 November 1957.

<sup>692</sup> FRUS, 250. Telegram from Ambassador Houghton, (Paris) to the Department of State Paris, July 28, 1958.

proper exercise of self-determination'.<sup>693</sup> While the timing of the statement can be easily understood, there is no evidence from Makarios as to why he chose to make this statement to Castle. Nevertheless, the idea of independence had started to gain momentum.

In Cyprus, Hugh Foot began giving serious attention to how independence could 'be made to stick'.<sup>694</sup> Foot's conclusion, conveyed to John Martin at the Colonial Office in a note on 11 November, was that there should be a tripartite partnership among Great Britain, Greece and Turkey in which the three powers signed a treaty guaranteeing the independence of the island and codifying formal protections for the Turkish-Cypriot minority. Foot was convinced that the right settlement was one 'whereby the island is undivided, self-governing and independent'.<sup>695</sup> Such an agreement would be naturally complex and would require a degree of Greco-Turkish cooperation that seemed unlikely under the prevailing conditions. It seemed only logical that Greece's appeal at the United Nations later that month would hardly improve the situation.

The debate on Cyprus opened again on 24 November with a speech by Greece's foreign minister, who described the British plan as 'a knife which had been prepared for the purpose of partition in Cyprus'. The future of Cyprus, he argued, 'should be decided by Cypriots alone, without regard to "the interests of London or the ambitions of Ankara"'.<sup>696</sup> The British case was made by Commander Allan Noble, minister of state for foreign affairs. He described the complicated and unusual nature of the problem in Cyprus and lamented the trouble it was causing to relations among

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<sup>693</sup> Holland, p.284.

<sup>694</sup> Foot Papers, Box 7, Folder 1, Note from Foot to Martin, 11 November 1958.

<sup>695</sup> Ibid.

<sup>696</sup> Averoff speech at the United Nations, 24 November 1958, quoted in Cmnd 735, 'Report on the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations,' (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, May 1959), p.30.

Britain, Greece, and Turkey. The policy of proceeding with the Macmillan proposals was 'based on two principles: that violence must cease and peace be restored in Cyprus; and that agreement on the ultimate status of the Island cannot be reached at the present time'.<sup>697</sup> Noble explained the framework of Macmillan's plan and the August modifications. He gave credit to Turkey for participating in the plan by appointing a representative and especially appreciated that: 'To avoid provocation to Greece... [they] had arranged for the first holder of this office to be their then Consul-General in Nicosia.'<sup>698</sup> Noble continued the line that his government did not favour partition and said that: 'The Turkish Cypriot community's preoccupation with partition is caused by distrust and enmity, which exists between the two communities. That distrust and enmity has been produced by the terrorist gangsters of EOKA.'<sup>699</sup> The minister concluded by condemning EOKA violence and withholding support for independence. While 'a noble principle,' he argued that the: 'Endorsement of any one final solution now would upset the delicate balance which our efforts have sought to achieve.'<sup>700</sup> Presenting for the Turkish side, Foreign Minister Zorlu unsurprisingly dwelled on Cyprus's historical and geographical connections with Turkey and emphasized that the principle of self-determination 'must apply equally to Turks and Greeks'.<sup>701</sup>

A resolution on the Cyprus issue was proposed by the representative of Iran on 1 December. It was reintroduced on the 4<sup>th</sup> after two revisions. The Iranian draft urged that a conference be convened so 'that all concerned should cooperate to ensure a

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<sup>697</sup> 'Speech by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs on Cyprus in the First Committee on November 25, 1958,' in Cmnd 735, 'Report on the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations,' (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, May 1959), p.134.

<sup>698</sup> Ibid., p.137.

<sup>699</sup> Ibid., p.138.

<sup>700</sup> Ibid., p.141.

<sup>701</sup> Zorlu speech on 25 November 1958, quoted in 'Report on the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations,' (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, May 1959), p.31.

successful outcome'.<sup>702</sup> Both the Britain and the United States signalled their support of the Iranian draft. Proposed amendments by Averoff were rejected or neutralised by sub-amendments from Zorlu and the Iranian draft was adopted by the committee with 31 in favour, 22 opposed and 28 abstentions.<sup>703</sup> It would not, however, be subject to a vote in the plenary session. Greek overtures at the UN had failed to deliver once again. Greece's defeat did not spark a new debate on Cyprus; instead, it resulted in a new diplomatic initiative which would finally bring the conflict to a close.

### **A Wretched Conclusion to a Wretched Affair**

Greece's defeat at the United Nations seemed par for the course. The international body had never given the cause of Cypriot *enosis* the unqualified support sought by Greek policymakers. Previously, failure at the United Nations had served as a spark for pro-*enosis* violence in Cyprus. This time, however, the diplomatic manoeuvring at the United Nations produced a meeting of minds between the foreign ministers of Greece and Turkey, putting Cyprus finally and firmly on a path towards an agreement. In a surprise move, Zorlu approached Averoff in New York during the debate over the Iranian resolution. According to Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash, who had come to New York as an observer, Zorlu went over to Averoff, and told him that the UN was not the place to settle the dispute over Cyprus and that the issue should be decided directly between representatives of Greece and Turkey.<sup>704</sup> Turkey was looking for a solution to the problem in Cyprus. The Turks hoped that Greece's failure in New York would create the proper conditions for an agreement.

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<sup>702</sup> Cmnd 735, p.32.

<sup>703</sup> Ibid., p.33.

<sup>704</sup> Author's Interview with Rauf Denktash, 10 April 2009, Nicosia.

While Denktash remained concerned about what such an agreement would mean for Turkish-Cypriots, Zorlu reassured him that guarantees would protect their interests.<sup>705</sup>

Dimitris Bitsios gave a brief account of the encounter between the two foreign ministers in his book, *Cyprus: The Vulnerable Republic*. After the approval of the Iranian draft, Bitsios writes, ‘Zorlu approached Averoff in the lobby. He said that he regretted what had happened. He would rather have a resolution acceptable to both sides. They exchanged a few words and then Zorlu asked: “Would you like us to meet?”’<sup>706</sup> This got the ball rolling. In their book, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, Brendan O’Malley and Ian Craig paint a similar picture. Relying on Averoff’s recollections of the events, they record that: ‘the moment of Greece’s humiliation [in the UN debate] became the opportunity for securing a workable compromise. Averoff recalled that at the end of the debate Greek morale was at its lowest ebb when Turkish Foreign Minister Zorlu suddenly approached him, accompanied by Ambassadors Sarper and Keural... He [Zorlu] then offered to hold private talks to iron out their differences. Averoff, startled, would only agree if the Iranian motion was dropped without being put to the full General Assembly.’<sup>707</sup> Passed by the First Committee, the Iranian resolution ‘was dropped at the Plenary session that afternoon,’ after what the official British report on the UN session described as ‘private consultations’.<sup>708</sup>

This gambit was followed by meetings between Averoff and Zorlu in Paris during a conference of the foreign ministers of NATO countries between 16 and 18 December. Both London and Washington were well aware of the talks and eager for them to move forward. At dinner with Lennox-Boyd on 16 December, Zorlu informed

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<sup>705</sup> Ibid.

<sup>706</sup> Dimitris Bitsios, *Cyprus: The Vulnerable Republic*, (Thessaloniki: The Institute for Balkan Studies, 1975), p.96.

<sup>707</sup> Brendan O’Malley and Ian Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy: America, Espionage and the Turkish Invasion*, (London: IB Tauris Publishers, 1999), p.71.

<sup>708</sup> Cmnd 735, p.33.

the Colonial Secretary that talks with the Greeks were proceeding well. At their first meeting, Zorlu had told Averoff 'that EOKA violence and the conduct of the Greek Govt were forcing the Turks towards partition. If these things were changed it would be possible for the Turks and Greeks to cooperate. The Turks did not want to defeat the Greeks but wanted a success for all three Govts. Averoff responded by agreeing to have a further talk.'<sup>709</sup>

Zorlu was clear to both Averoff and Lennox-Boyd 'that the status for Cyprus he had been discussing with Averoff was not really independence.' Its international status, as defined by its constitution, would be based on 'alliances and the right of veto on either side in regard to the minorities. The island,' argued Zorlu, 'must be Turkish-Greek not Greek or Cypriot. Outside the sovereign Brit bases sovereignty would be shared between Turkey and Greece.'<sup>710</sup> Assuring the British on the issue of the bases, both the Greeks and Turks were in agreement, the bases 'must remain under Brit sovereignty.'<sup>711</sup> This, the key concession desired by British policymakers, all but assured their consent to whatever details the Greeks and Turks would arrange between them. Neither Greece nor Turkey had ever opposed the idea of continued British bases on Cyprus. Both governments, in fact, had supported a continued British presence. Makarios and the Greek-Cypriot nationalists remained the only obstacle. Makarios had admitted that he would accept independence, and Zorlu claimed that Averoff had confided to him 'that the Greek Govt would not be deterred by Makarios'.<sup>712</sup> Without Greek support, it would be nearly impossible for the archbishop to press the *enosis* cause alone.

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<sup>709</sup> Foot Papers, Box 8, Folder 1, 181/126, Note from Lennox-Boyd to Foot, 18 December 1958.

<sup>710</sup> Ibid.

<sup>711</sup> Ibid.

<sup>712</sup> Ibid.

The Americans were getting a similar story from the Greeks. Washington's ambassador in Paris wrote to the State Department on 19 December. 'Averoff said that in discussions with Turks... attempt being made to arrive at mutually acceptable formula for an independent Cyprus.'<sup>713</sup> Ambassador Houghton reported that Averoff believed Turkey's motivation to be '(1) the widespread sentiment expressed in the UNGA for independence as best solution, (2) genuine concern over ME developments, and (3) desire to reach relatively favourable settlement before possible advent Labor government in UK.' Turkish diplomats sounded a similarly positive, if still cautious, note to the Americans as well, 'commenting on improved atmosphere between two countries'.<sup>714</sup>

The Greeks also had their reasons for wanting a solution. Developments in the Middle East affected them as well as the Turks. More importantly, the strong showing by the communists in the May 1958 elections weakened the position of the Greek government. A solution on Cyprus and the renewal of the partnership with Turkey leading to a strengthening of Greece's NATO ties would remove the Greek government's largest outstanding foreign policy crises. As Bitsios wrote years later, solving the Cyprus problem had become a priority for the Greek government. There were real questions 'about how much longer the country could go through a crisis of such magnitude; a crisis which upset its normal progress, and jeopardized our security by putting us at loggerheads with some of our closest allies. In Cyprus, the situation was steadily deteriorating. We had information that the British forces were on the tracks of Dighenis. Many Cypriots were in prison or behind the barbed wires of the concentration camps.'<sup>715</sup> It was time to make a deal.

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<sup>713</sup> FRUS, 297. Telegram from Ambassador Amory Houghton to the Department of State, 19 December 1958.

<sup>714</sup> Ibid.

<sup>715</sup> Bitsios, p.101.

The diplomatic progress had a real effect on Cyprus itself. On Christmas Eve 1958, an EOKA leaflet announced another ceasefire. Signed, as always, by Dighenis, the paper announced that EOKA would ‘stop all... activities as long as the other side will do the same. And we will wait to see how the British Government intends to implement United Nations decisions. We are ready for either a long armed struggle if Britain continues her intransigence or for a cessation of the struggle if a solution which will satisfy the claims of the Cypriot people is given to them.’<sup>716</sup> While Grivas seemed to hedge about the newly conciliatory attitude from Athens, the Bishop of Kyrenia led the attack of the most radical *enosis* hardliners and denounced the Greek government for abandoning their cause. An official response from Foreign Minister Averoff was published in the Greek press on Christmas day. Averoff denounced the Bishop of Kyrenia’s attack and wrote that by his statement he had ‘put himself in opposition first to the will of the great majority of the Cypriots’.<sup>717</sup> The unity of purpose between the Greek government and the Greek-Cypriot nationalists was unraveling.

Averoff had a busy Christmas. Not only did he respond to criticism from the Bishop of Kyrenia, but on Christmas morning he was immediately on the telephone to the British ambassador in Athens. Averoff argued to Allen that the ceasefire was of great significance. ‘In his view it was the first step on the road to our getting Grivas out of the island. He [Grivas] could of course never offer to go, but this seemed to have been inspired by the improved atmosphere generally and particularly in Cyprus, and might lead to a real end of violence.’<sup>718</sup> The position of Grivas was critical. Ambassador Allen wrote to the Foreign Office that ‘the crux of the matter was the

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<sup>716</sup> EOKA Leaflet, 24 December 1958 quoted in *The Times*, 27 December 1958, p.6.

<sup>717</sup> Foot Papers, Box 8, Folder 1, 181/126, Telegram No. 911 from Allen to Foreign Office, 27 December 1958.

<sup>718</sup> Foot Papers, Box 8, Folder 1, 181/126, Telegram No. 906, Allen to Foot, 25 December 1958.

attitude of Grivas... if Grivas could be won round then of course, there was nothing to be feared from Kyrenia.<sup>719</sup> Just as the impending Greek agreement with Turkey limited Makarios's scope for action so it reduced Grivas's options. Peace was within reach; it remained only for the Greeks and Turks to grab it together.

A Greco-Turkish summit meeting was arranged for the start of February and would take place in Zurich at the Dolder Hotel. As Bitsios describes, the meeting between Karamanlis and Menderes was highly significant. 'A summit Greco-Turkish conference on Cyprus [involving prime ministers] implied something more than an exchange of views. It meant that substantial negotiations had already taken place, and that they had sufficiently progressed to justify the expectation that an agreement was imminent.'<sup>720</sup> For the British too, the conference was significant as described in a brief note from Macmillan to Foot. 'You and I are naturally watching Zurich with crossed fingers', wrote the prime minister: 'Much will depend on these talks.'<sup>721</sup> The discussions began on 6 February. With many of the details already agreed on during the previous negotiations among the foreign ministers, progress was swift. By 11 February it was all settled. As Bitsios wrote, 'a champagne toast... sealed the agreement between the two Prime Ministers. The foreign correspondents cabled that night the unbelievable news that Greece and Turkey had settled their conflict.'<sup>722</sup> The agreement was as swift as it had been unexpected.

The agreement as communicated to the British the next day had eleven points. Greece, Turkey and the newly created Republic of Cyprus would be allies, cooperating in matters of defence. Greece and Turkey would protect the independence 'and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus'. There would be a tripartite

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<sup>719</sup> Foot Papers, Box 8, Folder 1, 181/126, Telegram No. 913, Allen to Foreign Office, 28 December 1958.

<sup>720</sup> Bitsios, p.97.

<sup>721</sup> Foot Papers, Box 8, Folder 1, 181/126, Telegram No. 248, Macmillan to Foot, 6 February 1959.

<sup>722</sup> Bitsios, p.102.

military headquarters with a rotating command on Cyprus, along with 950 Greek soldiers and 650 Turkish soldiers who would undertake to train the Cypriot army.<sup>723</sup> The presence of Turkish troops in Cyprus had been the sticking point for Turkish-Cypriots. Kutchuk and Denktash had insisted that guarantees needed to be upheld by Turkish troops. According to Denktash, they had forced Zorlu to include this point.<sup>724</sup> The remaining five points were listed separately as a ‘Gentleman’s Agreement’ between Menderes and Karamanlis. Two minor points dealt with the command of the headquarters and the framing of a constitution by committee. The other three points touched on more substantive issues. First, Greece and Turkey would support the entry of Cyprus into NATO. Second, the two prime ministers would encourage the new president and vice-president of Cyprus to continue the prohibition of the communist party. And last, ‘immediately after the signature of the treaties all the emergency measures now imposed in Cyprus will be lifted and a general amnesty shall be proclaimed’. Both Zorlu and Averoff insisted that the provisions of the ‘Gentleman’s Agreement’ had to ‘be given top security classification [by the British government] since they do not intend it ever to become public’.<sup>725</sup>

To put the final agreement into place, both prime ministers flew to London to add Britain to the settlement. Karamanlis arrived, but Menderes’s plane crashed outside London on the afternoon of 17 February due to bad weather. The London Conference, however, would proceed without him. That night, Macmillan invited the Greek delegation to dinner. Karamanlis, Averoff, and Bitsios all attended. Perhaps taking the opportunity of having the Greeks alone, Macmillan suddenly, and nonchalantly, asked Averoff what he thought would happen if Grivas’s hideout was

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<sup>723</sup> Foot Papers, Box 8, Folder 3, 181/28, Telegram from Lloyd to Foot, 12 February 1959.

<sup>724</sup> Author’s Interview with Rauf Denktash, 10 April 2009, Nicosia.

<sup>725</sup> Foot Papers, Box 8, Folder 3, 181/28, Telegram No. 279, Lennox-Boyd to Foot, 12 February 1959

discovered and the colonel arrested that very night. Bitsios records what happened next:

Averoff, after expressing strong doubts on the possibilities of such a measure, added that he did not personally know Dighenis, but from what he had heard of him, he believed that he could not be captured alive. Macmillan beckoned Sir Hugh Foot, the Governor of Cyprus, to approach and after telling him of Averoff's reaction, he said that the Foreign Minister doubted that the British had discovered Grivas' hideout. Foot, in a way of confirming, asked Averoff: 'What would you say about a farm outside Limassol, with a hideout under a trap-door?' Averoff addressing himself to the British Prime Minister said: 'If you arrest Grivas, we shall interrupt the negotiations and return immediately to Athens.' After dinner, he went straight to our Embassy and cabled Nicosia that Dighenis should be alerted at once.<sup>726</sup>

Averoff's swift cable to Cyprus suggests that Macmillan was not making idle threats. Darling's Chief of Intelligence, John Prendergast, had finally succeeded in tracking Grivas down. As Darling records:

Shortly before the start of the London Conference, to which Hugh Foot had gone, John Prendergast came to my house one evening and told me that we had run Grivas and some of his closest associates to ground in a house in Nicosia. The house was under very tight surveillance; he asked for instructions as to what action should be taken. I was thrilled to have this news which did not surprise me. It meant that we had achieved exactly what we said we would and we had George Grivas at our mercy... It has been said to me that I should have at once used our snatch teams, which had been trained just for this contingency and were readily available, to flush Grivas from his hide. As I was quite clear in my mind that I was not prepared to risk a single British life in the process, it was unlikely that Grivas would be taken alive. May be this would be rough justice, but Grivas had a very heavy debt of murder, torture and sabotage to discharge. However this may be, to have acted in this way at this critical time would have been irresponsible to a degree. At a meeting held by Mr. George Sinclair, the Deputy Governor, later Sir George Sinclair, it was agreed that the only practical course of action was to instruct John Prendergast to fly home that very night to London, to give the information we had to Hugh Foot and to seek instructions as to whether Grivas's head was required on a charger or whether he should be allowed to stew in his own juice. John Prendergast returned after a very short absence to say that we were to adopt the latter course.<sup>727</sup>

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<sup>726</sup> Bitsios, p.108.

<sup>727</sup> IWM, Darling Papers, GB62, General Kenneth Darling, 'Cyprus: The Final Round,' pp.26-7.

Once again, political factors played a major role in influencing the course of the insurgency. With Grivas apparently at their mercy, the British security forces did not seize EOKA's commander for fear that such an act would undermine the precarious peace agreement that was to be clinched in London. The delicate nature of the situation was reinforced once the conference began, as it soon became apparent that Makarios had ambitions to adjust the terms that had been reached between Greece and Turkey. The archbishop, however, was disabused of his idea by the firmness of the Greek government. The agreements from Zurich represented a commitment on the part of Athens and they would not break it to suit the archbishop. In his account, Bitsios adds that other members of the Greek-Cypriot delegation also pressured Makarios. '[P]ressure came from his own people. The Metropolitan of Kition and the Abbot of the Kykkou monastery were again present in our conversation. When Makarios said that, if need be, he would resign, the Abbot of Kykkou retorted: "Do resign, and let somebody else pull us out of this deadlock and give us our independence"'.<sup>728</sup>

After sleeping on his dilemma for a night, Makarios made his decision. As Foot, present in London for the conference, wrote to Sinclair back in Cyprus:

Things have been moving very fast. Last night [the 18<sup>th</sup>] at another meeting of the conference the Archbishop was pressed to make a definite statement that he accepted the agreements and the British declaration as the agreed foundation for the final settlement of the Cyprus problem. He waived and said that, if he had to give an answer at once, it would be no. After a short adjournment he agreed he would give a definite answer yes or no by 9.45 this morning [the 19<sup>th</sup>]. We have just heard that the answer is yes and consequently the full conference with Prime Ministers is to be reconvened this afternoon at 3 pm.<sup>729</sup>

Makarios then handed a statement to Foot. It read:

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<sup>728</sup> Bitsios, p.109.

<sup>729</sup> Foot Papers, Box 8, Folder 3, 181/28, Telegram (unnumbered), Foot to Sinclair, 19 February 1959.

The agreement reached at Zurich by the Greek and Turkish Governments with the declaration of the British Government constitute a good basis for the solution of the problem of Cyprus. We are prepared in full consultation and cooperation with all the people of Cyprus to work for *the preparation of a detailed constitution and* [hand addition] the establishment of a free and independent Cyprus.<sup>730</sup>

Preparing the constitution would take more months of tortuous negotiations; it was not ratified until 16 August 1960 when the Republic of Cyprus officially came into existence. Archbishop Makarios became the island's first president. Dr. Kutchuk was installed as his vice-president with full veto power. *Enosis* and partition were formally renounced, even if the hearts of leaders on both sides had not changed. For all that, the path to the 1960 agreement had been laid in Zurich in February 1959. The politicians celebrated the compromise. In his closing statement, Macmillan admitted that, to reach an agreement, 'each of us, all of us in this room, have had to make concessions, and I am sure that it was right to make these mutual concessions.'<sup>731</sup> The final agreement recognised 'the right of the people of Cyprus to an independent status in the world,' and recognised 'the Hellenic character of the majority of the Cypriot people. But it... also... [protected] the character and culture of the Cypriot Turkish community.' Britain's 'defence facilities... essential not only for... narrow national purposes but for... greater alliances,' were preserved.<sup>732</sup> Karamanlis and Zorlu evoked the image of Greco-Turkish cooperation fostered by Venizelos and Ataturk. All sides expressed hope for the future and the importance of goodwill and trust in making the settlement a success.<sup>733</sup>

There were reasons for hope. For all the years of anguish, political manoeuvring, and human loss, Greece and Turkey had avoided war. Britain had

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<sup>730</sup> Foot Papers, Box 8, Folder 3, 181/28, Note from Makarios to Foot [undated].

<sup>731</sup> TNA, Cmnd. 680, 'Conference on Cyprus: Final Statements at the Closing Plenary Session at Lancaster House on February 19, 1959,' Miscellaneous No. 5 (1959).

<sup>732</sup> Ibid.

<sup>733</sup> Ibid.

ended the insurgency and kept two sovereign bases while retreating from the rest of the island. NATO, and the interests of the west in the Middle East, had been secured. The denouement represented a compromise. Much had been given up by all sides, but not everyone was pleased with the final result.

### **Defeat of a Cause**

Among the *enosis* hardliners, the independence compromise was met with a combination of anger and frustration. In his *Memoirs*, Grivas described

bitterness... at leaving the Cypriots before they could be given the full freedom of union with Mother Greece... I did my duty, as I saw it, to the end. But the Cypriot people, who fought so bravely and for so long, deserved a better fate than the shackles which were forged for them in Zurich; and those who bound the people's hands behind their backs in London carry the full responsibility for what they did.<sup>734</sup>

It is an irony with deep roots in the problems of Cyprus that Greece, the object of so much affection among Greek-Cypriots, the motherland in whose name the sacrifices of the struggle had been made, was behind the forging of the 'shackles' described by Grivas. *Enosis* supporters had longed to put their island under the political control of Athens. For a few key moments during the Zurich negotiations, it was. From the start, Greece had been wary of the cause of Cypriot *enosis*. In Zurich, finding a way out, they took it.

The uneasiness in the relationship between Grivas and Makarios, which had been present to varying degrees throughout the struggle, also escalated. Now, it took on a more public character. Even as the agreements were signed, Grivas debated the merits of openly opposing the archbishop and continuing the insurgency. The colonel knew that Makarios, having signed the agreements:

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<sup>734</sup> Grivas, *Memoirs*, p.203.

would turn against us if we renewed the struggle, taking with him part of the population, large or small... The prospect of civil war among the Greek Cypriots was a night-mare; yet if Cyprus had offered more space for manoeuvre and easier communication with the outside world for arms supplies I would have seriously considered turning Greeks against Greeks in confidence that I should quickly master the situation. Unhappily I had to decide that as things were the odds against carrying on the war in Cyprus was overwhelming. There would be endlessly prolonged bloodshed, but no final victory for either side. In the end I decided with a heavy heart that I must call a cease-fire, leaving the Archbishop and his friends to implement the agreement as best they could in the absence of my approval.<sup>735</sup>

Grivas had other reasons as well for not continuing the fight. In an order issued to EOKA leaders, he explained that he had ‘reached the conclusion that to continue to fight would... divide Cyprus and perhaps the whole of the Greek people with disastrous results’. Grivas’s personal experiences had a strong influence on his thinking as the subsequent example in his order proved:

I shudder to think of the results of national division, such as the conflict between King Constantine and Eleftherios Venizelos, through which I lived and which not only destroyed the dreams of a greater Greece but was a burden on the whole nation for decades after 1916 with tragic consequences culminating in the Asia Minor Catastrophe. Greece today has still not entirely recovered from this. It is preferable to accept a solution, even one that is not entirely good, than to have civil discord since with the latter nothing remains standing. Because of the likelihood of such terrible consequences and the doubtful results which a continuation of the struggle without the people’s full support would bring about, I have been obliged to accept the agreement which has been drawn up.<sup>736</sup>

For the time being, Grivas appeared to be putting the greater good of Cyprus ahead of his political agenda or ambition. The power and influence of Makarios coupled with the deteriorating political situation and the changing attitude of Greece were making his position increasingly untenable. They were good arguments against continuing the fight, but we cannot discard Grivas’s argument. It remained a decision over which he was deeply conflicted. As subsequent events proved, the EOKA leader never

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<sup>735</sup> Ibid., pp.198-9.

<sup>736</sup> Grivas’s order quoted in Seraphim-Loizou, p.335.

abandoned the cause of *enosis* and was willing to oppose Makarios and eventually divide the Greeks of Cyprus in order to achieve it. But that was for the future.

Immediately after the compromise, a feeling of sorrow and failure settled over the hard-core supporters of *enosis*. Elenitsa Seraphim, the Larnaca area commander, recorded her reaction upon hearing Makarios pretentiously pronounce the victory of their struggle. The archbishop's 'words ["We have won!"] echoed like a bitter irony in the ears of many of us there,' she wrote. 'It was true that we had all accepted the decisions of our political leadership which, with unexplained haste, had now closed the Cyprus question.'<sup>737</sup> For many EOKA hardliners, Makarios's change of heart was nothing less than a betrayal of their life's cause. The archbishop's *volte face* split the Greek-Cypriot right in a break that remains to this day. While Grivas obeyed his leader and agreed to lay down arms in 1959, the hopes of many EOKA men that Cyprus would one day achieve union with Greece did not die. Their commitment to *enosis* and opposition to Makarios led to the creation of EOKA-B in 1971. In 1974, after the death of Grivas, this group would spearhead a coup against Archbishop Makarios, declaring *enosis* and paving the way for Turkey's invasion of the island. The unquenchable thirst for *enosis* once more plunged Cyprus into war and destruction. Unfortunately for the island, while the memories of EOKA's campaign are bitter, the wounds of the coup and Turkish invasion are raw. And, while monuments, tombstones, and museums chronicle the struggle from the 1950s, barbed-wire and concrete machine-gun nests separate the two halves of Cyprus in a divide that lives to this day.

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<sup>737</sup> Seraphim-Loizou, p.332.

## Conclusion

EOKA's cause of *enosis* was defeated between 1955 and 1959. The organisation faced opposition not only from Britain, but also from Turkey, Turkish-Cypriots, and the left among its Greek-Cypriot countrymen. On one level, it is surprising not that the movement failed, but that it had ever been able to function as an armed resistance to British rule. That EOKA was able to survive in the field can be attributed to the deep commitment of its members and the reality that a few armed and ideologically committed individuals with some basic organisation can be extremely difficult to eradicate. Although British forces killed and captured many EOKA leaders, enough fighters and senior members, especially Grivas, remained to perpetuate violence. The 'small-fry' were particularly easy to replace.

In the end, EOKA's failure to achieve *enosis* was achieved through a combination of political and military means. Clausewitz's view of war as an extension of politics could be applied even more to insurgency-war than to conventional war. There is wisdom in not trying to divide the military and the political spheres too much when discussing insurgency war. By 1959, EOKA could not continue its struggle because the political support for that struggle, both from Makarios and from the Greek government, was withdrawn. In a narrow sense, however, this was not simply a political defeat. There were military reasons why Greece withdrew its support: the government feared a confrontation with Turkey and did not wish to lose British and American aid in the battle against communism. Makarios felt that violence had accomplished as much as it could and that to continue would inflict pointless suffering on the Cypriot people. The military failure of EOKA was a part of this calculation. EOKA's shortcomings in the field prompted its political supporters (at home and abroad) to rethink the situation and to come to a negotiated solution. If

EOKA had been able to combat the Turkish-Cypriots more effectively, or to compel the British to withdraw (as the insurgents did in Palestine), or if Greece had been stronger relative to Turkey, the political imperatives would have shifted.

The *enosis* movement was no stranger to politics. The battle for union with Greece had been fought out through plebiscites and petitions, United Nations appeals and diplomatic backchannels long before the recourse to arms. Makarios authorized the beginning of the struggle in the aftermath of Greece's failed appeal at the United Nations in late 1954. The struggle ended after secret agreements between Greece and Turkey to settle the future of Cyprus, set in motion after the UN session in late 1958.

Although EOKA's members were not fuelled by any particular political ideology, they identified themselves in opposition to communism. Eventually, their anti-communism sentiments translated into open violence against Greek-Cypriot leftists. Both Grivas and Makarios hoped that an armed struggle for *enosis* could alter the political landscape on the island and compel Britain to a compromise leading to unification with Greece. This hope ignored both political and military realities. Turkey had a genuine interest in Cyprus and would not agree to it being handed over to Greece. This political miscalculation and the *enosis* movement's disregard for Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot interests throughout the struggle reaped a bitter harvest.

EOKA violence permeated every facet of Cypriot life between April 1955 and February 1959. No one was immune from the organisation's threats or attacks. Given the limited scope of EOKA operations, the struggle had been surprisingly costly. In the course of the fighting, 105 British servicemen lost their lives, the great majority of which, eighty-one, came from the army. Another 603 were wounded. EOKA killed fifty-one members of the Cyprus police force: twelve British, twenty-two Turkish-Cypriots, fifteen Greek-Cypriots, and two Cypriots of other heritage. In addition, 185

policemen were wounded. Sadly, civilians suffered most. Some 238 Cypriot civilians lost their lives to EOKA during the course of struggle, another 288 were wounded.<sup>738</sup> Ironically, 203 of the dead were Greek-Cypriots, killed by EOKA for being traitors, informants, or communists. All together, EOKA murdered twice as many Greek-Cypriots as Englishmen – a disturbing statistic when one considers the premise of EOKA’s struggle. Turkish-Cypriots also suffered greatly. Approximately fifty-five percent of police casualties and fifty-eight percent of police fatalities were Turkish-Cypriots, clear evidence both of their prevalence in the force and EOKA’s deliberate targeting of them. In Darling’s final report on the Cyprus Emergency, security forces claimed that they had killed ninety EOKA men in operations.<sup>739</sup> At least another four blew themselves up making explosives while nine were hanged by the authorities. Cyprus, like Palestine, was a rare case where insurgents suffered fewer casualties than security forces.

In spite of the casualty differential, British forces were able to ‘hold the ring’ effectively against EOKA. In doing so, they employed lessons (and indeed personnel) from emergencies in Palestine, Malaya, and Kenya. In spite of Cyprus’s particular problems, the insurgency there had echoes in other examples. British policymakers invariably chose to draw lessons from either Malaya or Kenya – where emergency operations had met with some degree of success –although the closest parallel to Cyprus was Mandate Palestine. In both areas Britain confronted a determined nationalist insurgency. Both EOKA and the Zionists drew strength from a fiercely nationalist ideology. Their tactics of targeted assassinations, bombings, and ambushes were quite similar. Both insurgencies took place in bi-ethnic societies where the ‘other’ group – the Arabs in Palestine and the Turks in Cyprus – were (over)employed

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<sup>738</sup> Darling ‘Report on the Cyprus Emergency,’ 1959, p.68.

<sup>739</sup> Ibid.

as members of the police force to contain violence. Both insurgencies took place in sensitive political regions and had ramifications beyond their borders, regionally and internationally.

Through the emergencies of the 1940s and 1950s, the British learned the importance of a strong police force in combating an insurgency, the need for a centralised command structure, and the critical role of intelligence. Drawing on experiences from Palestine and Kenya, the British were also able to use covert operations – like the Q unit – to beat the insurgents at their own game. Still, except for brief periods when the politicians stopped talking, as in March 1956 with the exile of Makarios or in the months between Suez and March 1957, operations were always dependent on the political situation. Even the arrest of Grivas himself was called off due to political considerations.

In the final analysis, the settlement in Cyprus was at most an incomplete victory for all sides involved. Britain had blocked *enosis* but British sovereignty was reduced to ninety-nine square miles to serve as base areas. Greek-Cypriots gained independence but renounced *enosis*; Turkish-Cypriots abandoned partition and accepted independence under a Greek-Cypriot majority with minority protections. Each party was forced into sacrifices and compromises, but each also received critical concessions. Given the dynamics of an insurgency-war this should not come as a surprise. Conventional warfare usually involves victory through conventional means: the elimination of the enemy's main force, the capture of his capital, the destruction of his industrial centres. Insurgent forces do not have a main body; they do not have a capital to capture nor do they possess industrial centres. As ideological warriors, it is almost impossible to break the will of hardcore fighters. They cannot be lured away from violence through a 'hearts and minds' campaign. Their dispersal means that any

decisive engagement is impossible. In such circumstances, a total victory that could lead to the imposition of a total peace is all but unattainable. Compromise becomes the best possibility for a short-term peace. A settlement with less ideologically committed elements can isolate the extremists. If the island is substantial enough, it can force them to agree to a settlement as well, or face annihilation. This was the result in Cyprus.

For Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots, peace short of victory had its pitfalls. By not inflicting a decisive defeat on EOKA, aspirations for *enosis* did not simply disappear with the Zurich-London agreements. The old allegiances, ambitions, and fears remained. The saddest parallel of all between Cyprus and Palestine is that both regions suffered more after independence than before it. Within a few years of the agreements, Cyprus was once again on the brink of disaster. This time, conflict would not be with the British occupier, but, as in the summer of 1958, among the Cypriot people. Once again Greek-Cypriots in favour of *enosis* engaged in violence not only against Turkish-Cypriots, but against Makarios and other supporters of an independent Cyprus. The archbishop played a dangerous double-game, at times opposing, at times encouraging these groups.

In September 1961, Dr. Kutchuk, now Vice President of the Republic of Cyprus, sent Makarios a letter asking for the archbishop's 'assistance in order to avoid the recurrence' of incidents of 'humiliation and insubordination' suffered by Turkish-Cypriot lawmakers.<sup>740</sup> Kutchuk complained about a number of persons within the government 'openly condemning the Zurich and London Agreements', of statements made in support of the EOKA struggle and of using the current situation as a stepping stone towards *enosis*, and of 'discrimination against Turks and anything that is

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<sup>740</sup> Turkish Cypriot Archives, Nicosia, Letter from Kutchuk to Makarios, 12 September 1961.

Turkish' displayed by the Greek-Cypriot minister of foreign affairs.<sup>741</sup> It seemed that despite renouncing *enosis*, many Greek-Cypriots still hoped to achieve union with Greece.

By 1963, the island's complex but fragile constitution had broken down. On his arrival on the island on 7 April 1964, the second British High Commissioner discovered a divided island torn by civil strife:

The state of tension prevailing in the vicinity of the 'Green Line' [dividing the two communities] in Nicosia extended to a greater or lesser degree through the island... Roadblocks, fortified posts and emplacements were much in evidence, manned by well armed men... The situation was worsened by the fact that some of these armed guerrillas, both Greek and Turkish, were at this time operating as 'private armies' outside the control of the Greek and Turkish Governmental authorities, who were unable to call them to account for the abductions, murders and other crimes which they committed... The Turkish Cypriot community was, in the view of the Greek Cypriot administration, in a state of active rebellion, which they claimed justified the most rigorous measures against them, including the arbitrary arrest and cutting off of supplies of food, fuel, water, petrol, medicines, building materials; anything which it was held the community might use to defend themselves.<sup>742</sup>

Hostility between the two communities continued throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, increasing tensions with Turkey. Relations with Greece also soured, particularly after the military coup in 1967. In 1974, Turkey achieved the partition it had desired for so many years. On Cyprus, a Greek-backed coup led by former EOKA gunman Nicos Sampson toppled Makarios. Sampson, the new president, declared *enosis*. Within days, Turkish troops descended from Anatolia and occupied Kyrenia in the north. Three weeks later they pushed out from their bridgehead and overran more than a third of the island. Approximately 2,000 Greek-Cypriots were killed in the fighting; another 1,600 were missing. Over 200,000 became refugees in the wake of the invasion. Northern Cyprus remains occupied and Nicosia is the world's last

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<sup>741</sup> Ibid.

<sup>742</sup> Memoirs of Sir Alec Bishop, *Look Back with Pleasure*, p.265. Unpublished, from the private collection of Mrs. Juliet Campbell, Oxford.

divided capital. The scope of the devastation far outstripped anything inflicted during the violence of the 1950s.

For British policymakers in 1974, the island's problems were no longer directly their concern. With their bases secure and the ability to project power in the Middle East assured, Britain maintained what it had come to want from Cyprus. In this, the British government – which had been forced out of Palestine, Egypt, and Jordan – could claim something of a success. For all that, British policymakers during the 1950s had failed miserably in meeting one of the major criteria that they had always touted: the final settlement did not provide a stable or beneficial future for the people of Cyprus. This failure, like most, had many authors: Makarios's ambition, the inflexibility of Grivas and other *enosis* hardliners, the slothfulness and cynicism of British policymakers, and Turkey's covetousness of the island. With the invasion of 1974, the *enosis* cause claimed its final victim, the island of Cyprus itself.

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