

US-British Policy on Cyprus, 1964-1974

ANDREAS CONSTANDINOS

Abstract

Government documents from the British and American National Archives, currently within the public domain, have provided a revealing insight into Whitehall's and Washington's objectives in relation to the geopolitically strategic island of Cyprus. Whilst many continue to argue in favour of a Western conspiracy to overthrow President Makarios and divide the island in the summer of 1974, British and American governments' documents suggest that whilst the American intelligence community's role in the coup against Archbishop Makarios remains nebulous, any possible suggestion of collusion, whether British and/or American, with Turkey in its subsequent invasion, can now be largely dismissed.

This article looks at the history of US and British policy on Cyprus from 1964-1974, by examining the crucial way in which Whitehall allowed its foreign policy vis-à-vis Cyprus to become influenced by decision-makers in Washington, and the role played by the two countries in the infamous and ultimately tragic summer of 1974.

Keywords: Britain, America, Cyprus, Makarios, Callaghan, Kissinger, Turkish Invasion, 1974

When Cyprus gained its independence in 1960, US objectives in relation to the island were focused on (a) Cyprus' strategic importance, i.e. continued unhampered access to the British Sovereign Base Areas as well as the US communication facilities on the island and (b) creating a situation in which Cyprus itself was 'willing and able to resist Communist subversion'.¹ These policy objectives were largely passive, as Washington expected Guarantor Power and former colonial master Britain, and to some extent Greece and Turkey, to take the leading role in terms of Cyprus' need for military and economic aid.²

However, with signs of British disinterest in the developments on the island, and growing concern over Makarios' tendency to play 'East against West', Washington decided it was time for a symbolic gesture. Consequently, in June 1962, despite the CIA's assessment that as long as

1 *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), Eisenhower Administration 1958-1960*, X, Part 1, Eastern Europe, Soviet Union, Cyprus, pp. 819-828, National Security Council (NSC) Report 6003 'Statement of US Policy toward Cyprus', 9 February 1960, pp. 825-826.

2 *FRUS, Eisenhower Administration 1958-1960*, X, Part 1, Eastern Europe, Soviet Union, Cyprus, Section 19 of 19, August – December 1960, tel.313 from US Under Secretary of State C. Douglas Dillon to the US Embassy in Nicosia, 19 December 1960, 'Initial US Relations with the Republic of Cyprus'.

Makarios remained in power he would be able to rally enough support to avoid Communist control of the Cypriot Government, President Kennedy decided to invite Makarios to Washington in order to discuss the 'Communist threat' within Cyprus.³

Following Makarios' visit, the CIA enacted plans 'directed against Communists' in Cyprus, with documents from the British National Archives providing evidence that both Britain and the US supported the anti-Communist Minister of the Interior, Polykarpos Georkadjis, in order to counterbalance the 'Communist' threat on the island.⁴ By and large however, Makarios was able to successfully thwart American efforts at countering the perceived 'Communist threat' on the island. For example, the Archbishop continuously refused to form a non-Communist party, told Washington that they could only establish a Voice of America station on the island for a 'stiff price' and opposed American plans to have the post-1963 intercommunal violence peacekeeping force under Western control.⁵

Throughout 1960-1963, both Britain and the US were reluctant to involve themselves in Cyprus' domestic affairs and supported the *status quo*, namely the strengthening of the island's independence.⁶ Contrary to some accounts, neither Whitehall nor Washington supported Makarios' expressed intention of unilaterally changing the Cyprus Constitution.⁷ However, due to a combination of American unwillingness to involve themselves in a dispute in Cyprus and the perceived British dependence upon the goodwill of the Archbishop to secure the continued unhindered use of their bases, the two countries, led by their respective Ambassadors in Nicosia, Sir Arthur Clarke and Fraser Wilkins, adopted a course of action whereby they encouraged Makarios to present reasonable amendments which could then be taken to Ankara.⁸ Declassified

3 National Archives and Records Administration (NARA): State Department Central Files (SDCF), 1960-1963, Box 2032, doc.780A.00/1-3161, tel.367 from the US Ambassador in Cyprus, Fraser Wilkins to the State Department, 31 January 1961.

4 *FRUS, Kennedy Administration 1961-1963, Volume XVI*, Cyprus, 'Results of the Makarios Visit; Maintaining the Momentum it Generated', memorandum from the Executive Secretary at the State Department, William Brubeck to McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the US President for National Security Affairs, doc.262, 13 June 1962 and The National Archives (TNA): Dominions Office (DO) 204/5 'Communist Threat in Cyprus', tel.898, British High Commissioner in Cyprus, Sir Arthur Clarke to the Commonwealth Relations Office, 'Assessment Communist Threat in Cyprus', 15 November 1963.

5 NARA: SDCF, 1960-1963, doc.611.80a5/9-1062, tel.176, from the US Ambassador in Cyprus, Fraser Wilkins to the State Department, 10 September 1962.

6 Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ) Library, Austin, Texas, Papers of LBJ, National Security Files (NSF), National Security Council (NSC) Histories, Cyprus Crisis, December 1963 – December 1967, Box 16, doc. 2i, letter from the Staff Assistant to the Special Assistant to the US President for National Security Affairs, Robert Komer to the US Ambassador in Nicosia, Fraser Wilkins, 7 June 1963.

7 For example: F. Argyrou (2000) *Conspiracy or Blunder? The Evolution of a Bizonal Bicomunal Federation in Cyprus*, Nicosia: Adouloti Kyrenia.

8 NARA: State Department Subject Numeric Files, 1963, POL 15-5 CYP, Box 3881, tel.384, from US Secretary of State George Ball to the US Embassy in Ankara, 24 October 1963.

documents from the British and American National Archives reveal that the roles played by Clarke and Wilkins in supporting Makarios' decision to put forward his infamous 'Thirteen Proposals to Amend the Cyprus Constitution' on 30 November 1963, were not conspiratorial in nature, but were instead clouded by Britain and America's focus on the perceived 'Communist threat' in Cyprus and based on a gross miscalculation of the likely Turkish reaction to the Archbishop's attempt at amending the Cyprus Constitution.⁹

Following the communication of Makarios' 'Thirteen Proposals', the Cyprus constitution broke down and intercommunal violence erupted across the island. This led to a dramatic change in Washington's approach to the island, as the United States became, for the first time officially, involved in the Cyprus Problem.

Fearing for the stability of NATO, the US abandoned its 'We favour a solution on which all parties can agree' policy and became involved, for the first time, in an official capacity.¹⁰ Discussions between the British Embassy in Washington and the State Department in October 1964 revealed that the US attached importance to Cyprus for two reasons: (1) the continued operation of their facilities on Cyprus and (2) the relationship of their two strategic allies, Greece and Turkey.¹¹ Following the initial outbreak of violence, policymakers in Washington still expected Whitehall to take charge of the situation.¹²

However, just a few weeks later, the British gave their first indication that they would disengage both militarily and politically from Cyprus.¹³ It was at this point that US Under-Secretary of State, George Ball decided to take charge of the crisis.¹⁴ Astonishingly, Ball was not only authorised to handle the crisis by Washington, but British Prime Minister, Sir Alec Douglas-

9 LBJ Library, Papers of LBJ, NSF, NSC Histories, Cyprus Crisis, December 1963-December 1967, Box 16, doc. 2J, memorandum from member of the NSC, Harold Saunders to the Staff Assistant to the Special Assistant to the US President for National Security Affairs, Robert Komer, 2 July 1963 and TNA: Foreign Office (FO) 371/168975, 'Cyprus: Municipalities Dispute, Constitutional Situation', C 1015/233, 'Copy of Proposals handed to Dr. Fazil Küçük by Archbishop Makarios on 30 November 1963' and C 1015/229, tel.926 from the British High Commission in Cyprus to the Western and Middle East Department at the Commonwealth Relations Office, 'Cyprus Constitutional Questions', 29 November 1963.

10 NARA: SDCE, Box 3278, doc.747C.00/1-1657, Memorandum, 'Situation Regarding Cyprus', addressed to US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, C. Elbrick, 16 January 1957.

11 TNA: Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) 9/72, 'British policy on Cyprus', Report from the British Embassy in Washington following talks with the US State Department, 11 October 1964.

12 TNA: Prime Minister's Office (PREM) 11/4139, 'Situation in Cyprus, pt.27', tel.4032, David Ormsby-Gore, British Ambassador in Washington, 24 December 1963.

13 NARA: State Department Subject Numeric Files, 1964-1966, POL 23-8, CYP, Box 2078, tel.3146, David Bruce, US Ambassador in London to the State Department, 10 January 1964.

14 From *Frontline Diplomacy: The US Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection*, eds. Marilyn Bentley and Marie Warner, CD-Rom, Arlington, VA: Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training 2000: George Ball interviewed by Paige Mulholland, 8 July 1971.

Home also gave permission for Ball to speak on behalf of the British Government.¹⁵ This proved to be a watershed moment in Whitehall's approach to its former colony, as it wilfully delegated political responsibility over the future of Cyprus to its Atlantic ally. Staff Assistant to the Special Assistant to the US President for National Security Affairs, Robert Komer summarised the situation as follows:

'First, we let this crisis creep up on us, even though fully warned. Second, from a posture of let the UK do it, State suddenly panicked in response to UK panic ... we're still committed now to play a major role ...'¹⁶

The situation on the island continued to deteriorate and culminated in June, when Turkish Foreign Minister, Feridun Erkin informed US Ambassador to Turkey, Raymond Hare that the Turkish Cabinet was to meet on the evening of 4 June to discuss a possible military intervention.¹⁷ The result of this development was the infamous 'Johnson letter', in which the President unequivocally explained why he felt a Turkish intervention was not justified. The letter warned that a Turkish move could provoke a Soviet intervention and that if this transpired without prior consultation with, and the full consent of, Washington, the US would have to consider its obligation to protect its NATO ally.¹⁸ According to Hare, when he presented the letter to Prime Minister Inonu and Foreign Minister Erkin, the latter responded 'Mr Ambassador, after this the relations between Turkey and the US will never be the same'.¹⁹ Erkin was right as this would prove to be a landmark in US-Turkish relations, which subsequently deteriorated until the late 1970s. Within twelve months, Turkey had requested the US stop using Turkish bases for reconnaissance flights over the Soviet Union and began a gradual, yet deliberate, process of economic and political accommodation with Moscow, which by the 1970s made Turkey one of the biggest recipients of Soviet economic assistance outside the Warsaw Pact.²⁰

Having unwillingly been left in a position of responsibility and believing that Makarios could be bypassed as regards any possible solution to the current crisis, Washington embarked upon a journey during which it would attempt to enforce various settlements upon the island of Cyprus,

15 Frontline Diplomacy: Hermann Eilts interviewed by William Brewer, 12 August 1988.

16 LBJ Library, Papers of LBJ, Presidential Papers, National Security Files, National Security Council Histories, Cyprus Crisis, December 1963 – December 1967, Box 16, doc.3a, Staff Assistant to the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Robert Komer to Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, McGeorge Bundy, 15 February 1964.

17 LBJ Library, Special Files, Recordings and Transcripts of Telephone Conversations, White House Series, 1964, Box 4, doc.3623, US Secretary of State Dean Rusk to President Johnson, Telcons, 4 June 1964.

18 *FRUS, Johnson Administration: 1964-1968, Vol. XVI*, Cyprus; Greece; Turkey, doc.54.

19 Frontline Diplomacy: Raymond Hare interviewed by Dayton Mak, 22 July 1987.

20 A. Constandinos (2009) *America, Britain and the Cyprus Crisis of 1974: Calculated Conspiracy or Foreign Policy Failure?* Milton Keynes: AuthorHouse, p. 61.

enlisting both Ankara and Athens, in ways that would crystallise Cypriot suspicions of US foreign policy towards their island for years to come.

Conspiracy in 1964?

Considerable evidence can be found in both the American and British archives to support copious secondary source material which suggests that in 1964 Washington favoured the partition of Cyprus as a solution to the irritable Cyprus Problem.²¹

On 19 June, the CIA concluded that due to the mutual hostility between the two Cypriot communities, a settlement based upon co-operation between them could be excluded. This left *Enosis* and double *Enosis* as the only two possibilities which, with the support of Ankara and Athens, could be forced upon the Cypriots and thereby secure Western security and intelligence interests in this strategically vital region of the world.²² The demographic realities on the island made *Enosis* the most practical solution. However, for geopolitical reasons, Washington valued her alliance with Ankara over that with Athens and generally saw the Turkish Cypriots as the victims on the ground, which meant that some kind of concession had to be made to Turkey.²³ Based upon these considerations, Dean Acheson, former Secretary of State and author of the Truman Doctrine, formulated various 'solutions' to the crisis in Cyprus that would all ensure:

- (a) That by dividing the island between the Greeks and Turks it would be removed from the non-aligned and possible Communist spheres of influence, and enter the NATO sphere. Britain would retain her bases and the US her communication facilities.
- (b) That Makarios be politically neutralised.²⁴

Essentially, Acheson's plans were based upon the premise that the majority of the island should unite with Greece with a concession being made to Turkey in the form of a military base. Following the failure of Acheson's first plan, a second plan was devised which hoped to assure Turkey of her security by leasing, as opposed to ceding, a portion of the island to Ankara, which could be used as a military base.²⁵

21 For example: Strigas, A. (1995) *Diethneis Synomotes*. Athens: Nea Thesis, B. O'Malley and I. Craig (2004) *The Cyprus Conspiracy, America, Espionage and the Turkish Invasion*, London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, and M. Packard (2008) *Getting it Wrong, Fragments from a Cyprus Diary 1964*, Milton Keynes: AuthorHouse.

22 CIA: FOIA: Special National Intelligence Estimate, 'The Cyprus Dispute', 19 June 1964.

23 NARA: Record Group (RG)59, Central Foreign Policy Files (CFPF), 1964-1966, Political and Defence, Demonstration Riots, Cyprus, memorandum, US Ambassador to Greece, Philips Talbot to the Under Secretary 'Cyprus Solution - Tactics Toward Accomplishing *Enosis* or double *Enosis*', 18 May 1964.

24 TNA: FO 371/174750, CI015/1361, 'Washington talks: Cyprus', John Rennie, Assistant Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office, 17 April 1964.

25 NARA: State Department Subject Numeric Files, 1964-1966, POL 23-8, CYP, Box 2088, US Ambassador to Greece, Henry Labouisse to the State Department, tel.171, 30 July 1964.

Acheson's second plan was rejected by Ankara. Whilst a frustrated Ball and Acheson considered their next move, further intercommunal violence erupted on the island, when Greek Cypriot forces attacked Turkish Cypriots in the Kokkina and Mansoura region.²⁶ A few days later, Cypriot Foreign Minister, Spyros Kyprianou informed the US Embassy in Nicosia that in the face of another Turkish threat to engage in military activity, Nicosia had asked Moscow to intervene.²⁷ Coupled with the existing frustration at Makarios' intransigence and the consequent stalemate in negotiations, the Americans turned to a previously drafted contingency plan. Greece and Turkey would have to reach a broad agreement on *Enosis*, which would have to be publicly stated before parliamentary votes in Athens and Nicosia, endorsed the plan. Following that, Greece would be allowed to 'take over' in Cyprus and 'use force if necessary to remove Makarios'.

Acheson relayed this plan to Britain's representative at the Geneva talks, Lord Hood, who described the plan as 'pretty explosive stuff'.²⁸ Earlier in 1964, US policymakers had drafted a similar plan in which Turkey would be allowed to invade the Karpass peninsula, trigger a Greek response, resulting in *Enosis* with concessions for Turkey. The plan was only to be used if Ankara could not be dissuaded from military action. It was cleared by the Department of Defence and the decision was made that if the Greeks further provoked the Turks, and Ankara threatened to intervene, the US would 'delineate areas into which Turkey could move her forces, so that the Greeks would see it as a limited intervention and thus not go to war'. Once it was clear that Turkey would take action, the US Ambassador in Ankara, would inform the Turkish Premier that he could proceed with a 'deliberate and carefully controlled movement', rather than a full-scale military invasion. This would avoid a Greek retaliation, prevent a war within NATO, and convince international opinion that Turkey had invoked her rights under the Treaty of Guarantee, rather than having simply reacted emotionally. Washington would try to delay the Turks for as long as possible. Once they could no longer defer a Turkish intervention, Ankara would have to be informed of the predetermined areas it could invade, so as to avoid conflict with the Greeks. It would be suggested Turkey should:

'... move out from Kyrenia into a rough triangle including Lefka and having its apex in the northern half of the walled city of Nicosia.'²⁹

26 NARA: State Department Subject Numeric Files, 1964-1966, POL 23-8, CYP, Box 2089, US Ambassador to Cyprus, Taylor Belcher to the State Department, tel.178, 6 August 1964.

27 NARA: State Department Subject Numeric Files, 1964-1966, POL 23-8, CYP, Box 2089, US Ambassador to Cyprus, Taylor Belcher, unnumbered telegram, 9 August 1964.

28 TNA: FO 371/174753, 'Moves to try and resolve the Cyprus Problem', Britain's representative at Geneva, Lord Hood to John Rennie, Assistant Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office, 14 August 1964.

29 NARA: RG59, CFPP, 1964-1966, Political and Defence, Demonstration Riots, Cyprus: Memorandum from Executive Secretary Benjamin Read to McGeorge Bundy, National Security Adviser, 'Contingency Planning to "Control" Turkish Unilateral Action', 14 February 1964.

Makarios had not just frustrated the Americans, but certain British officials too began arguing for his removal, with Britain's Ambassador in Athens, Sir Ralph Murray advocating Britain should 'go all out for *Enosis* by hook or by crook', which would result in the removal of Makarios.³⁰ This was subsequently discussed in some detail by British officials within the Foreign Office's Central Department.³¹ It was suggested that if the coup was made to look like a Cypriot affair and as long as Greece and Turkey had both given Washington assurances that they would not engage militarily, Greece could be allowed to launch a coup, with Turkey being compensated with a base in the Karpas and the cession of the island of Kastellorizon. If both Greece and Turkey gave these assurances to the US, all parties could publicly deny any Greco-Turkish agreement and could save face by denouncing each other's moves.³² Ultimately however, the Foreign Office made it clear that Britain:

... cannot be privy to any plan of a *coup d'état* against another Commonwealth Government or to any suggestion of making representations to a third Government on the basis that such action is being planned.³³

The following day, Ball informed the British Embassy in Washington that President Johnson believed the negotiations had come under threat by reports, reminiscent of events in Cuba, that Russian technicians were about to install Surface-to-Air missile sites in Cyprus. Ball revealed that Johnson had instructed Acheson that any move for *Enosis* would have to come from Greece alone, as the US would play no further part and that Washington hoped for full British co-operation in this initiative.³⁴ There is no current archival record of what made President Johnson adopt this line. According to Parker Hart, US Ambassador to Turkey in 1965-1968, American support for a Greek move was denied during a meeting in Washington, attended by Acheson, Ball, Defence Secretary Robert McNamara, Dean Rusk, senior White House official McGeorge Bundy and President Johnson. With upcoming presidential elections, deteriorating developments in Vietnam, indications that Soviet support for Makarios might not have been as strong as first believed and the fact that President Johnson did not believe such a plan could be 'neatly and tightly controlled', it was ultimately decided not to follow this course.³⁵

30 TNA: Ministry of Defence (DEFE) 11/455, 'Cyprus', doc.3335, tel.19, British Ambassador in Athens, Sir Ralph Murray to the Foreign Office, 4 August 1964.

31 TNA: FO 371/174754, 'Moves to try and resolve Cyprus Problem', tel.38, British Ambassador in Athens, Sir Ralph Murray to the Foreign Office, 14 November 1964.

32 TNA: FO 371/174754, 'Moves to try and resolve Cyprus Problem', paper by Foreign Office official, Robert Wade-Gery, 'Cyprus', 20 August 1964.

33 TNA: PREM 11/4712, 'Internal Situation, pt.38', unsigned tel.2602, from the Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Athens, 19 August 1964.

34 TNA: PREM 11/4712, 'Internal Situation, pt.38', tel.2938, Minister at the British Embassy in Washington, Sir Denis Greenhill to the Foreign Office, 20 August 1964.

35 NARA: RG59, CFPE, 1964-1966, Political and Defence, Demonstration Riots, Cyprus, tel.479, US Secretary of

Acheson recommended that Washington should cease promoting Greco-Turkish agreement on Cyprus and concentrate US policy on preventing the island from becoming another Cuba.³⁶ The belief among some within Washington that Makarios was the 'Castro of the Mediterranean' belonged very much to the Johnson administration. It suited their 'black and white' view of the world and displayed a high level of ignorance with regards to Makarios' domestic relations.

Soon after, Soviet support began to drift away from Nicosia towards Ankara as Moscow sought to exploit the troubles caused within the US-Turkish relationship by the Johnson letter.³⁷ Both Kennedy and Nixon, who both had audiences with Makarios, knew that as long as Makarios was in power, there was little threat of a Communist election victory in Cyprus. They realised that, despite being a member of the non-aligned movement and his flirtations with Moscow, Makarios was actually pro-Western, with Kissinger even admitting that 'we didn't consider him anti-American particularly'.³⁸

As far as Britain was concerned, the fact that Athens and Ankara had not reached an agreement on 'instant *Enosis*', meant that Whitehall instructed Lord Hood to inform Ball that Britain could not support or be associated with any Greek move that did not come with a prior Turkish agreement.³⁹ That same day, Ball confirmed that the idea 'was dead'.⁴⁰ Clearly, there existed a degree of support within Whitehall to go along with the plan to have Makarios removed.⁴¹ However, as soon as Washington expressed a change of heart, any possibility of Britain going ahead with such a move evaporated.

Research in the National Archives of both Britain and the US verifies the multitude of secondary sources that have suggested that in 1964 Washington was intent on dividing the strategically valuable island between Greece and Turkey, thereby ensuring a NATO stake in Cyprus, securing the Sovereign Base Areas and US communication facilities on Cyprus and eliminating Makarios.⁴² Britain, which since independence had shown a distinct lack of concern

State, Dean Rusk to former US Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, 23 August 1964: '... Khrushchev's August 9 letters give [sic] no promise of military support ...' and P. Hart (1990) *Two NATO Allies at the Threshold of War: Cyprus, a Firsthand Account of Crisis Management, 1965-1968*, London: Duke University Press.

36 TNA: PREM 11/4712, 'Internal Situation, pt.38', tel.406, Head of British Permanent Mission to the European Office of the UN in Geneva, Charles Scott to the Foreign Office, 23 August 1964.

37 TNA: DEFE 11/461, 'Cyprus', doc.4154, tel.2356, British Ambassador in Moscow, Sir Trevelyan to the Foreign Office, 9 November 1964.

38 H. Kissinger (1999) *Years of Renewal*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p. 199.

39 TNA: PREM 11/4712, 'Internal Situation, pt.38', tel.10368, Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Washington, 25 August 1964.

40 TNA: PREM 11/4712, 'Internal Situation, pt.38', tel.2972, Minister at the British Embassy in Washington, Sir Denis Greenhill to the Foreign Office, 25 August 1964.

41 TNA: PREM 11/4712, 'Internal Situation, pt.38', Note of a meeting at 10 Downing Street, 18 August 1964.

42 CIA: FOIA: Special National Intelligence Estimate, 'The Cyprus Dispute', 19 June 1964; NARA: Record Group 59, CFPF, 1964-1966, Political and Defence, Demonstration Riots, Cyprus, memorandum, from the Assistant

for its former colony, adopted a co-operative background approach, so that when the US initiative was ultimately called off, Britain was perfectly happy to follow suit.

The existence of these contingencies within the State Department and Foreign Office has led many commentators to believe that the events of 1974 were part of an Anglo-American conspiracy.⁴³ To base this assumption purely on the existence of such contingency plans is naïve and shows a lack of understanding of the workings of a country's Foreign Service. For example, in the immediate aftermath of the coup in 1974, it was unclear whether Makarios had survived the attack on the Presidential Palace. In Washington, the 'Contingency Planning Working Group' drafted multiple contingencies based on various factors, including whether the Archbishop was dead or alive.⁴⁴ It is, of course, possible that a country may ultimately use a previously-drafted contingency plan, but in order to ascertain whether it did so, one cannot simply rely upon its mere existence. Despite the failure of the various Ball and Acheson initiatives, Washington was not too disappointed for as long as there were no adverse effects on Greco-Turkish relations and therefore no disruption to the cohesion of the south-eastern flank of NATO, there was no reason to object to the continued independence of the island.

The United States, Kissinger and Cyprus, 1968-1973

Unlike some of his predecessors, Kissinger did not see Makarios as a threat to US interests in the Eastern Mediterranean, instead recognising that Makarios' immense domestic popular support made him a stabilising factor in an otherwise precarious region. As far as the only direct American interest in Cyprus was concerned, its communication facilities, Makarios had formally acknowledged American use by virtue of an agreement in 1968 and the National Security Council had concluded that as long as Makarios remained in power, Washington was assured

Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Phillips Talbot to the Under-Secretary 'Cyprus Solution – Tactics Toward Accomplishing *Enosis* or double *Enosis*', 18 May 1964, in which Talbot commented: 'That double *Enosis* could not therefore be a lasting solution' and TNA: FO 371/174750, CI015/1361, 'Washington talks: Cyprus', British Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, John Rennie to the Foreign Office, 17 April 1964.

- 43 For example: B. O'Malley and I. Craig (2004) *The Cyprus Conspiracy, America, Espionage and the Turkish Invasion*, London: I.B. Tauris Publishers; M. Packard (2008) *Getting it Wrong, Fragments from a Cyprus Diary 1964*, Milton Keynes: AuthorHouse; F. Argyrou (2000) *Conspiracy or Blunder? The Evolution of a Bizonal Bicomunal Federation in Cyprus*, Nicosia: Adouloti Kyrenia and C. Hitchens (1984) *Hostage to History: Cyprus: From the Ottomans to Kissinger*, London: Quartet Books Limited.
- 44 NARA: Nixon Presidential Materials Staff (NPMS), National Security Council (NSC), Institutional File, Washington Special Action Group Meetings (WSAGM), Memorandum for US Secretary of State Dr Henry Kissinger from his National Security Council staff, Richard Kennedy, Henry Appelbaum and Rosemary Niehuss, 15 July 1974.

continued use of these facilities.⁴⁵ Britain, too, recognised that although Cyprus followed a non-aligned foreign policy, the island was essentially pro-Western.⁴⁶ Further, despite the irritation at Makarios playing the East-West game, his ability to distinguish himself from all political factions was never better illustrated than when he visited China in May 1974, exemplifying his independence from the pro-Soviet left.

The overthrow of Greek democracy on 21 April 1967 by the Greek military dramatically changed the dynamics of Greco-Cypriot relations. As the junta controlled the armed forces on Cyprus, 'Makarios had to ... establish a certain amount of confidence with the junta'.⁴⁷ Policymakers in both Whitehall and Washington had concluded that a prerequisite for a Greek attempt on Makarios' life was a Greco-Turkish agreement. Without such an agreement, any Greek move against Makarios would logically result in a Turkish invasion. Britain had information confirming 'a series of secret exchanges' between Athens and Ankara even before the junta came to power.⁴⁸ Washington too, had been monitoring the apparent Greco-Turkish *rapprochement*, and deduced that due to the junta's firm control of their domestic situation, it was able to contemplate making concessions which other Greek governments could not.⁴⁹ The CIA believed the junta's leader George Papadopoulos had convinced his colleagues that the continuation of the Cyprus Problem harmed Greece's long-term interests and that it needed to be solved, even if it meant making concessions to Turkey.⁵⁰

It appears that the CIA, or at least some of its officers, was aware of what certain elements within the junta were planning. In late February 1970, the US Ambassador to Cyprus, David Popper warned Makarios that an attempt on his life would be made within the next fifteen days. By this point, Makarios, who had just visited Kenya, had already received the same warning from the US Embassy in Nairobi.⁵¹ Makarios later described these events to journalist Laurence Stern:

45 NARA: NPMS, National Security Council Files (NSCF), Senior Review Group Meeting (SRGM), 'Pakistan/Cyprus', part 2, 6 August 1971.

46 TNA: FCO 9/1667, 'Cyprus: Annual Review for 1972', Counsellor at the British High Commission in Cyprus, Derek Day to the FCO, 1 January 1973.

47 H.A. Richter (2010) *A Concise History of Modern Cyprus, 1878-2009*, Ruppolding, Germany: Peleus, Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Griechenlands und Zyperns, Band 50, Verlag Franz Philipp Rutzen, p. 152.

48 TNA: FCO 9/63, 'UK Policy: Cyprus', Foreign Office/Colonial Office draft paper 'Cyprus' requested by 10 Downing Street, doc.39: Between May and December 1966.

49 NARA: NPMS, NSCF, Cyprus/Greece, tel.2608 from the US Ambassador to Turkey, William Handley to the State Department, 16 April 1971.

50 CIA: FOIA, National Intelligence Estimate, Number 291-68: 'Greece', 11 April 1968.

51 Confirmed by Makarios initially in an interview with Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci. See: O. Fallaci (1976) *Interview with History*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, p. 317. In early 1977, Makarios repeated the assertion to *New York Times* journalist Cyrus Leo Sulzberger. See: TNA: FCO 9/2501, 'Cyprus: Internal Political Situation' (Part A), telegram from the British Ambassador to Greece, Sir Brooks Richards to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, doc.2, WSC 014/2, 28 January 1977.

'We were about to have lunch. I was late in arriving and someone in the American Embassy insisted that he had an urgent message. We were in a hurry and I was not very pleased at the interruption, but I agreed to hear him. The message was this: "According to reliable sources, when you go back to Cyprus there are plans for your assassination at the airport in Nicosia." This was the first time I had heard of an attempt being made on my life. I smiled and said "Thank you very much, but I don't think it is probable." Actually, I didn't think the airport would be a suitable place for an assassination. But the American said, "Be careful".'⁵²

A recently declassified document from the US National Archives reveals there were two reasons the CIA decided to warn Makarios of the plot against him. Having received credible evidence that Georkadjis was involved in the planning of an assassination attempt against Makarios in January 1970, Washington informed US officials in Kenya to pass this information to Makarios who was in Nairobi, making a stopover during a tour of Africa. A CIA memorandum from the Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Directorate of Operations dated 17 March 1970 reveals the reason behind the US Government's decision to forewarn Makarios:

'The decision to warn Makarios was based on the fact that whatever one may think of him his continued survival is vital to the stability of Cyprus and this is in the interests of U.S. foreign policy.'

The CIA memorandum goes on to say:

'... that the decision was also motivated by a belief that if Makarios had independently discovered the plot, he would have suspected U.S. involvement since Georkadjis had close contacts with U.S. officials during his long service as Interior Minister.'⁵³

CIA official George Constantinides argues that those who know 'the full story of the events of that period and of the fascinating and imaginative effort that went into both the collection and distribution of information' relating to the plotting against Makarios, know that any allegation of CIA involvement is unfounded.⁵⁴

In February 1972, in response to the creation of EOKA-B, an anti-Makarios organisation set up by the septuagenarian Grivas, Makarios imported a large amount of arms from Czechoslovakia,

52 *FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXIX, Eastern Europe; Eastern Mediterranean, 1969-1972, doc.350, Editorial Note*, quoting the interview with Laurence Stern. Also found in L. Stern (1977) *The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of American Diplomacy*, New York: Time Books, pp. 86-87.

53 CIA, Records of the Office of the Deputy Director of Operation, Job 79-01440, Near Eastern Division, found in *FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXIX, Eastern Europe; Eastern Mediterranean, 1969-1972, doc.350, Editorial Note*. Additional documentation on the attempted assassination plot against Makarios is in the CIA, Records of the Directorate of Operations; NARA: NPMS, National Security Council Files (NSCF), Box 592, Country Files – Middle East, Cyprus, Volume I, January 1969 – 30 June 1974; and NARA: NPM, NSCF, Box 1235, Saunders Subject Files, Greece, 10 January 1969 – 31 December 1969.

54 NARA: CREST: CIA Studies in Intelligence, George Constantinides, Vol. 22, No. 1, Spring 1978.

at a cost of approximately \$1.3 million, in order to equip his supporters, and in particular, his new Tactical Reserve Force.⁵⁵ Athens used this as a pretext for their long-standing desire to unseat Makarios and on 11 February delivered an ultimatum demanding these arms be placed under UN control, that Makarios take strong action against Cyprus' Communist party (AKEL) and that he recognise Greece to be the centre of Hellenism.⁵⁶

Of course Makarios was not the only Greek Cypriot importing weapons into Cyprus. At a social event in Nicosia on 15 September 1972, Glafkos Clerides, President of the Cypriot House of Representatives, took William Crawford, the Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy in Cyprus to one side in order to discuss the Cyprus Intelligence Service (CIS)' infiltration of Grivas' entourage. They had revealed a shipment, valued at 180,000 Cypriot pounds (approximately \$468,000) from an unidentified party in Lebanon, delivered to Cyprus by three *caïques*. The arms contained within the shipment were believed to be mainly of Soviet manufacture, and 'thought to include 500 automatic weapons and heavy machine guns and bazooka-type weapons'. Neither Makarios nor Clerides were sure as to the precise involvement of the junta and its intelligence service in this shipment and consequently did not pass on this information to KYP. However, shortly after receiving the information from CIS, KYP provided Makarios with the same information. Clerides recalled that:

'Greece informed [sic] Archbishop of Grivas absence from Athens very promptly after his disappearance from home last fall. At the time Clerides noted, Greek services, to his positive personal knowledge, had known for approximately two months of Grivas' plans to return to Cyprus.'⁵⁷

Clerides continued his private briefing by divulging that the penetration of Grivas' organisation had also shown that Grivas planned to overthrow Makarios 'between now and the scheduled presidential elections in February 1973' should Makarios accept any settlement in the meantime that expressly ruled out *Enosis*. In order to finance his anti-Makarios campaign, Grivas had received:

'50,000 Cypriot pounds (approximately US\$130,000) from the Bishop of Kyrenia, 10,000 pounds (approximately US\$26,000) from [the] Bishop of Kitium, and a very large personal contribution from a mainland Greek shipping magnate.'⁵⁸

55 CIA, Records of the Directorate of Intelligence, Intelligence Information Cable, found in *FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXIV*, Eastern Europe; Eastern Mediterranean, 1969-1972, doc.389, 'Purchase of Czechoslovakian Arms by the Government of Cyprus', 4 February 1972.

56 NARA: NPMS, National Security Council Institutional Files, Box H-084, WSAG, 11 February 1972.

57 *FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXIX*, Eastern Europe; Eastern Mediterranean, 1969-1972, doc.417, tel.1717, 'Arms Delivery to Grivas', from the US Ambassador to Cyprus, David Popper to the State Department, 16 September 1972.

58 *Ibid.*

In an attempt to convince the US Embassy of the 'thoroughness of Makarios' penetration of Grivas' organisation', privately called into question by the US Embassy, Clerides disclosed information that Grivas had recently instructed a member of his organisation to 'prepare a report on means of bugging telephones' of both Makarios and other senior officials and that this information had been at the disposal of Makarios within 24 hours. Makarios had therefore been able to 'establish the identity of the individual concerned and has him under surveillance'.⁵⁹ Greece had embarked on a coordinated effort to build up its assets in Cyprus, which were essentially being used in support of Grivas and against Makarios.

At this point, Washington had already discovered that Athens had informed Ankara of its intentions and asked Turkey to treat any possible move against Makarios as an 'internal affair'.⁶⁰ Both the US Embassy in Turkey and the CIA confirmed that Greece and Turkey were 'in cahoots' and had reached a broad agreement on a solution to the Cyprus Problem.⁶¹ A recently declassified document from the US National Archives reveals that the US Embassy in Cyprus itself had 'glimpses into private channels of communication between Athens and Ankara'.⁶² This assertion is crucial and goes to the very heart of our understanding of what might have induced Ioannides to launch his coup against Makarios in 1974 in such firm belief that Turkey would not invade. Consequently this document is worth quoting in some detail:

'During a visit here, Acer's deputy referred to a link using Papadopoulos' private secretary (name not given) and Ambassador Turkmen. Specifically, he spoke of a message received on this channel in which Papadopoulos had signified his support of double-*enosis* as the only solution. A military channel also seems to exist, using the Greek military Attaché in Ankara. At a higher level, we would be curious to know the content of exchanges now taking place in Athens between Turkish General Staff Chief of Staff General Tagmac and his Greek counterparts. Locally we are aware of a "hot line" between "Bozkurt" and General Kharalamvopoulos. For example, General Edward Leslie, Chief of Staff, UNFICYP, tells us of tense situations in which he has found his own (inimitable) phrases used with the Turkish Fighter leadership coming back at him an hour or two later from Kharalamvopoulos.'⁶³

The existence of a 'hot line' contact between Papadopoulos and Ankara has also now appeared in a recently released British government document written by the British Ambassador to Greece, Sir

59 *Ibid.*

60 NARA: NPMS, NSCF, WSAG, tel.973, from the US Ambassador to Turkey, William Macomber to Henry Kissinger, 11 February 1972.

61 NARA: NPMS, National Security Council Institutional Files, Box H-084, WSAG, 11 February 1972.

62 *FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXIX*, Eastern Europe; Eastern Mediterranean, 1969-1972, doc.383, letter from the Counsellor at the US Embassy in Cyprus, William Crawford to the Cyprus desk officer at the State Department Thomas Boyatt, 19 November 1971.

63 *Ibid.*

Brooks Richards. It suggests that this 'hot line' was already in existence in 1970 and although the trigger for enquiries made by the British Embassy into the validity of this claim was an article in *The New York Times* by Cyrus Leo Sulzberger, Richards admits that:

... preliminary enquiries here suggest that the existence of a "hot line" was a matter of public knowledge at the time and it looks therefore as though the key question is likely to be whether it was used as an instrument of treasonable collusion between Papadopoulos and the Turks in 1970.⁶⁴

Historian Claude Nicolet's publication *United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 1954-1974: Removing the Greek-Turkish Bone of Contention* is generally regarded as the best authority on US policy during this period. Nicolet contends that Papadopoulos had planned to launch a coup against Makarios in 1972 and that the US prevented Athens from doing so.⁶⁵ Recently declassified material contradicts this contention.

US Ambassador to Greece, Henry Tasca was instructed by Kissinger to inform Papadopoulos that the initiative was potentially 'highly dangerous' and to delay the ultimatum. Papadopoulos rejected this and the ultimatum was delivered.⁶⁶ Safe in the knowledge that Greece and Turkey were 'in cahoots', Washington took a cautious approach. If the junta were able to manufacture a swift *fait accompli*, then US interests would not be harmed.

However, Kissinger and his staff were concerned that if Athens bungled the coup, it could develop into protracted civil war which might lead to Soviet involvement.⁶⁷ Greece's Ambassador to Cyprus, Constantinos Panayiotakos revealed the junta's thinking in that Athens believed the Greek Cypriots would choose Greece over Makarios. Despite the strong feeling for Hellenism in Cyprus, this assessment proved completely inaccurate. Many Greek Cypriots held the junta in low esteem and had great admiration for their *Ethnarch*.⁶⁸ Following the Greek ultimatum, Makarios was able to rouse huge domestic support which put Papadopoulos in a position where he would either have had to take additional steps to escalate the situation 'or lower the temperature'.⁶⁹ Having already survived thirteen Greek Governments, Makarios rejected the ultimatum, but

64 TNA: FCO 9/2501, 'Cyprus: Internal Political Situation' (Part A), telegram from the British Ambassador to Greece, Sir Brooks Richards to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, doc.2, WSC 014/2, 28 January 1977.

65 C. Nicolet (2001) *United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 1954-1974: Removing the Greek-Turkish Bone of Contention*, Mannheim und Moehnesee: Peleus, Studien zur Archaeologie und Geschichte Griechenlands und Zyperns, Band 9, Bibliopolis, pp. 406-407.

66 NARA: Record Group 59, Central Files 1970-1973, DEF 19-6, CZECH-CYP, tel.762, from the US Ambassador to Greece, Henry Tasca to the State Department, 11 February 1972.

67 NARA: NPMS, National Security Council Institutional Files, Box H-084, WSAG, 11 February 1972.

68 NARA: NPMS, NSCF, Box 594, Country Files, Middle East, Greece, Volume III, tel.288, from the US Ambassador to Cyprus, David Popper to the State Department, 11 February 1972.

69 NARA: NPMS, NSCF, Box 594, Country Files, Middle East, Greece, Volume III, tel.971 from the US Ambassador to Greece, Henry Tasca to the State Department, 18 February 1972.

knew he would have to yield the minimum to prevent a Greco-Turkish move. This he did, by placing the Czech arms in UN custody and a few months later by removing his Foreign Minister Spyros Kyprianou (as requested by the junta).⁷⁰

Contrary to some observations, declassified documents provide exculpatory evidence that Washington did not collude with either Athens or Ankara and that when Clerides approached the US Ambassador to Cyprus, David Popper to inform him that Greece was ready to make a 'move tonight', neither Kissinger nor his staff believed him.⁷¹ Although the CIA had information that Greek forces on the island were ready to move 'at a moment's notice', they had no intelligence to support Clerides' specific claim.⁷² Believing Makarios and Clerides simply wanted to involve the US, Kissinger instructed his Ambassador to delay any meeting with Makarios and Clerides for as long as possible.⁷³ This does not mean that Greece was not planning a move, as there is evidence supporting Nicosia's belief that Athens, possibly in collaboration with General Grivas, had prepared to launch a coup.⁷⁴

Neither Kissinger nor his staff were able to categorically explain why 'the move' never came but it appeared as though Athens had greatly underestimated Makarios who had once again proven himself as a 'shrewd poker-player'. Ultimately Kissinger adopted a policy of non-involvement and concluded that Washington would not associate itself with military intervention by Greece or Turkey in a move that would have extinguished the independence of Cyprus. Washington played no part in preventing a possible coup and State Department official John Irwin II jokingly commented that Makarios 'may even have thought we were instrumental in stopping the Greeks'.⁷⁵ Clerides certainly thought so.⁷⁶

Several developments had taken place which would substantially influence the events in 1974. Washington had discovered that unlike the Turkish Cypriot leadership which was controlled by Ankara, Makarios would not succumb to Greek, or any other, pressures if he felt they were not in the interests of Cyprus. Additionally, Washington should have realised that both Greece and Turkey would not prioritise the cohesion of NATO over their national prestige, a mistake which the Americans repeated a decade later. Further, Washington demonstrated that its primary

70 NARA: Record Group 59, Central Files 1970-1973, DEF 19-6 CZECH-CYP, tel.409 from the US Ambassador to Cyprus, David Popper to the State Department, 8 March 1972.

71 L. Stern (1975) 'Bitter Lessons: How we failed in Cyprus', *Foreign Policy* (Summer), p. 129.

72 NARA: NPMS, National Security Council Institutional Files, Box H-085, WSAG, 14 February 1972.

73 NARA: NPMS, NSCF, WSAG, tel.25339 from Henry Kissinger to the US Ambassador to Cyprus, David Popper, 16 February 1972.

74 CIA, Records of the Directorate of Intelligence, Intelligence Information Cable found in *FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXIV*, Eastern Europe; Eastern Mediterranean; 1969-1972, doc.389, 'Purchase of Czechoslovakian Arms by the Government of Cyprus', 4 February 1972.

75 NARA: NPMS, National Security Council Institutional Files, Box H-116, WSAG, 16 February 1972.

76 G. Clerides (1989) *Cyprus: My Deposition, Volume III*, Nicosia: Alithia Publishing, p. 140.

concern was the stability of NATO and as long as Cyprus did not cause difficulties in Greco-Turkish relations, US policymakers were quite content with the *status quo*.

Henry Kissinger and 1974

By 1974, Kissinger not only held the position of National Security Adviser but was also US Secretary of State as well as chairing various other National Security Council committees, prompting Robert Dellums of the House and Senate committee that had been established in order to scrutinise the performance of US intelligence, to comment:

'Frankly, Mr. Secretary, and I mean this very sincerely, I am concerned with your power, and the method of your operation.'⁷⁷

Kissinger had manoeuvred himself into the forefront of American foreign policy to such an extent that foreign policy decision-making in Washington had virtually become a one-man show.

It is essential to the understanding of the crisis of 1974, that these events and the policies held by the respective governments need to be distinguished from those of the 1960s. For one, relations between the US and Makarios had improved substantially. Despite some residual concern over Cyprus' economic relations with the Communist countries the days when the State Department feared Cyprus could become the 'Cuba of the Mediterranean' appeared to have gone.⁷⁸ A combination of Moscow's improved relations with Turkey, as well as the development of *détente*, led Washington to conclude that Moscow's interest in Cyprus was no more than that of a distant observer.⁷⁹

In addition, Makarios had recently (1968) signed an agreement with the US over the use of the latter's communication facilities and in October 1970, US President Richard Nixon met with Makarios in Washington.⁸⁰ During their meeting in the Oval Office, Makarios emphasised that despite being a member of the non-aligned movement, Cyprus was pro-West and could never become like Cuba, 'partly because Cypriots are a deeply religious people'. Makarios added that he had never appointed a left-wing person to a significant post and that:

77 *US Intelligence Agencies and Activities: The Performance of the Intelligence Community*, Hearings before the Select Committee on Intelligence, US House of Representatives Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1975-1976, (94th Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions, July 1975-February 1976), pt.2, pp. 842-852.

78 CIA: FOIA: Intelligence Memorandum, 'Cyprus: Increasing Economic Dependence on the USSR and Eastern Europe', 1 August 1968, p. 10.

79 NARA: Lot 70D46, Entry 5191, Office of the Executive Secretariat: Cyprus Crisis Files, 1967: Working Papers, Box 3, memorandum, Thomas Hughes, Director of Intelligence and Research, State Department to the Cyprus Working Group, 'Contingency Planning on Cyprus – Assessment of Likely Soviet Action', 22 November 1967.

80 NARA: State Department, Lot 72D328, Entry 5037, Executive Secretariat: Briefing Books, 1958-1976: Summary of US Relationships, August-September 1972, Box 152, 'Summary of Cyprus-US Relationship', 31 August 1972.

'They support me because they can't do otherwise and I accept their support because it is a good way of keeping them under control. The simple people of Cyprus have more confidence in me than anybody. I don't rely on the army or on the police force; my strength is my goodness.'⁸¹

The reality was that on the eve of the Cyprus crisis, US Secretary of State Dr Henry Kissinger knew and cared little about the domestic developments on the island and as long as American interests were not affected he was happy continuing with his policy of non-involvement.⁸²

Washington and Whitehall

The interaction of American and British policy during the Cyprus crisis nicely encapsulates a growing trend that developed within the special relationship possibly since the end of the Second World War, but almost certainly since the Suez Crisis of 1956. Throughout the Cyprus crisis, British Foreign Secretary James Callaghan struggled to coordinate British foreign policy along the lines of the views expressed by his counterpart across the Atlantic. He firmly believed that strong Anglo-American co-operation was needed and was ultimately left frustrated by its failure to materialise.

On issues such as the continued recognition of Makarios following the 15 July coup, Britain's belief that only the withdrawal of the Greek officers from Cyprus following the coup could prevent a Turkish invasion, the possibility of a naval blockade being used in between the northern coast of Cyprus and southern coast of Turkey in order to prevent further Turkish troop reinforcements following the initial Turkish landings, as well as on the issue of employing the correct approach to be used at the Geneva conferences, British and American policy diverged to various degrees.⁸³ Callaghan's struggle to align Britain's policy with that of his American counterpart on the issues of recognition and restoration stand as a case study for what was to come and consequently deserves a more in-depth analysis.

81 NARA: RG59, CFPE, 1970-1973, 'Cyprus', Political and Defence, Box 2224, memorandum of conversation (MemCon) between Secretary of State Kissinger, President Nixon and President Makarios in the Oval Office, 10.00, 25 October 1970.

82 NARA: NPMS, NSC, Institutional Files, Meeting Files, WSAGM, Box H-185, 'US Policy towards Cyprus, Contingencies and Options' prepared by National Security Council Interdepartmental Group for the Near East and South Asia, July 1971, p. 12 and attached Analytical Summary, 6 August 1971, p. 13. The reviewed study from April 1974 can be found in Box H-096.

83 TNA: FCO 9/1894, 'Military Coup in Cyprus – Friday 19 July', tel.528, British Foreign Secretary James Callaghan to British UN representative Ivor Richard, doc.274, 19 July 1974 and TNA: PREM 16/19, 'Coup, Sampson, Invasion and SBAs', Letter by Prime Minister Harold Wilson's Private Secretary, Lord Bridges, 18 July 1974 and TNA: War Office (WO) 386/21, 'Report on the Cyprus Emergency', 'The Proposed Royal Navy Blockade of Northern Cyprus', Commander of the British Forces Near East Sir John Aiken, 15 May 1975 and *FRUS, Nixon/Ford Administration, 1973-1976, Vol. XXX*, MemCons, 'Cyprus', doc.137, 17 August 1974.

Almost immediately after news of the coup had reached London, Callaghan informed the British Embassy in Athens that Makarios was the legitimate President and that Athens should unambiguously state what its intentions were whilst removing the Greek officers in the National Guard responsible for the coup.⁸⁴ Sir Robin Hooper, the British Ambassador, met with the acting Foreign Minister, Constantine Kypraios, and explained Britain's position. Kypraios 'balked slightly' and asked why Britain still did not recognise the Portuguese dictator Dr Caetano or Colonel Papadopoulos, the leader of the initial junta, at which point Hooper explained there was a difference

'... between a freely and constitutionally elected President and one imposed without genuine popular consultation.'⁸⁵

The reaction across the Atlantic was very different. Throughout the crisis, Ambassador Robert Anderson, the State Department's press spokesman, would inform the media of Washington's stance during his daily noon briefings. Anderson had received instructions from Kissinger to avoid any binding statements regarding the recognition of Makarios.⁸⁶ On the day of the coup, Anderson commented that the situation in Cyprus was 'unclear', that there was no confirmation of whether Makarios was dead or alive and that

'The question of recognition ... does not arise because the situation on the island is changing. It is necessary first to know who controls the territory of Cyprus ... Our policy remains that of supporting the independence and territorial integrity of Cyprus and its constitutional arrangements.'

By not condemning the coup, the US was tacitly recognising Nikos Sampson who had unconstitutionally been sworn in as the new President of Cyprus. A CIA report dated 19 July revealed that Kissinger had argued that it was better to deal with Sampson, than risk offending the junta, as otherwise they could 'toss the Sixth Fleet out of Greek ports'. US policy concentrated on preventing the declaration of *Enosis*, as Turkey would not allow this and it would almost certainly result in a war between two NATO allies, thereby weakening the Alliance's south-eastern flank, with only one possible beneficiary – Moscow. Washington, already concerned over its relations with Ankara due to the dope trade, showed further concern upon discovering that Russia, 'always eager to foment trouble, has lined up with Turkey'.⁸⁷

84 TNA: FCO 9/1891: Instructions from James Callaghan to the British Embassy Athens, 16 July 1974.

85 TNA: FCO 9/1891: tel.204 from British Ambassador to Greece Robin Hooper to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 16 July 1974.

86 NARA: State Department, tel.154133, 17 July 1974, 'Department press briefing – Cyprus'.

87 Under Ecevit, Turkey had re-commenced poppy cultivation. For several years, US pressure and financial aid had persuaded Ankara to ban such cultivation. Ecevit wanted Turkey to move away from its dependence upon other countries, most notably the US and NARA: CIA Records Search Tool (CREST), CIA report, Research Institute Staff, Friday 19 July 1974.

On 16 July, Anderson was asked whether the Makarios government was the government of Cyprus, to which Anderson replied 'I would rather just not comment on it at all'.⁸⁸ This was almost twenty-four hours after it had been revealed that Makarios was still alive and almost two hours after Callaghan had spoken to Kissinger about evacuating Makarios from Cyprus. Callaghan explained that he felt Britain should continue to recognise Makarios as he believed the Archbishop was genuine in his desire for Cypriot independence and by supporting him, one could 'avoid him turning to Moscow. This I did'.⁸⁹

At 14.30 on 17 July, Makarios met with the British Prime Minister, whom he told that he had never expected the junta to launch a coup against him on 15 July. Once more he told the story of his escape and explained that when, on the following day, a small National Guard warship approached Paphos port and began shelling the Bishopric, he realised he would have to leave. Makarios expressed his gratitude for the British Government's remarks in the Commons and at the UN, although he admitted that they could have been stronger.⁹⁰

A few hours later, Makarios met with Callaghan, and expressed criticism of the Americans, which Callaghan understood. Washington was officially worried that Makarios would enlist the support of the Soviet Union, to the possible detriment of NATO, although we now know that the CIA downplayed the possibility of this occurring.⁹¹

Makarios informed the Foreign Secretary that he intended to leave London the following morning and was certain that if the Greek officers could be made to withdraw from Cyprus, Sampson would fall. When Callaghan asked about the future of the National Guard, Makarios explained that he did not want an army, but that Athens had felt it was necessary to protect Cyprus from Turkey. Ironically, Makarios concluded, it had now become clear that Greece posed a greater threat. Finally, Callaghan outlined his own thinking on the matter, by confirming that Britain continued to recognise Makarios as President and that he wanted him to return to Cyprus in that capacity.⁹²

Already on 15 July, the British Government had unequivocally expressed her continued recognition of President Makarios. Following several days during which Washington made it abundantly clear that the US view on this matter was diametrically different, Callaghan sent a revealing telegram to the UK's representative at the United Nations, Sir Ivor Richard, underlining the extent to which Britain was happy compromising her foreign policy in order to maintain good

88 L. Stern (1977) *The Wrong Horse*, New York: Time Books, p. 112.

89 J. Callaghan (1987) *Time and Chance*, London: Collins, p. 338.

90 TNA: FCO 9/1892, 'Military Coup in Cyprus – Wednesday 17 July', Makarios' meeting with Prime Minister Harold Wilson at 10 Downing Street, 14.30, 17 July 1974.

91 CIA, Executive Registry, Job 86-B00269R, Box 12, Folder 83, found in *FRUS, 1973-1976, Volume XXX, Greece; Cyprus; Turkey, 1973-1976*, doc.171, 'Study prepared by the Intelligence Community Staff for Director of Central Intelligence Colby', Washington, January 1975.

92 TNA: FCO 9/1892, 'Military Coup in Cyprus – Wednesday 17 July', Makarios' meeting with James Callaghan at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 1745 GMT, 17 July 1974.

Anglo-American relations. Callaghan instructed Richard that although Britain believed Makarios was the legitimate President of Cyprus, if the US were to make an issue out of it:

‘... don’t commit to continued recognition of Makarios indefinitely regardless of the circumstances.’⁹³

Kissinger was fearful that Makarios would enlist the help of Moscow at the UN or secure his recognition as the head of state in a resolution. Ultimately, Washington’s policy on Makarios would have a significant effect on the development of Britain’s intention of restoring him as the legitimate head of state.

The question of restoring Makarios as President of Cyprus also revealed differences between London and Washington. At a Cabinet meeting on the morning of 16th July, Harold Wilson informed his Cabinet that Britain was ready to implement contingency plans if needed, suggesting that Britain was seriously considering restoring Makarios to Cyprus.⁹⁴ On the following morning, Anthony Acland Callaghan’s Private Secretary, together with Callaghan, reviewed answers given to Callaghan by the Ministry of Defence on this question.

The Ministry of Defence felt that the British forces in the Sovereign Base Areas could cope with the National Guard, but if they were to be used offensively, they would need reinforcing. The aircraft carrier, *HMS Hermes* was twenty-four hours from Cyprus and other forces were currently seven days notice away and could only be made available at the expense of Britain’s Northern Ireland contribution.⁹⁵ Provisionally, the Ministry of Defence felt Makarios could be restored militarily, provided the only opposition was that of the National Guard.⁹⁶ It was considered that National Guard standards of training were poor, their equipment heavy and weapons old and that their morale before the coup was not high. The Ministry of Defence believed the operation could be successful, but that the problem might come afterwards, with Britain being left with a situation similar to that in Northern Ireland.

The question that needed to be answered was whether a situation could be created where British troops could simply return to the Sovereign Base Areas and leave Makarios and his Government in a secure state – extremely low was the conclusion. One of the difficulties would be the 23,000 civilians (service dependants, British citizens and friendly nationals) living in Cyprus, as they could be used as hostages. They would have to be evacuated first, which might initiate action by the National Guard which Britain would want to forestall.⁹⁷ A minimum force

93 TNA: FCO 9/1894: James Callaghan to the British representative at the UN, Ivor Richard, 19 July 1974.

94 TNA: CAB 128/55: Cabinet meeting, 10 Downing Street, 11am, 16 July 1974.

95 TNA: DEFE 11/729: Paper related to ‘preliminary draft’, 17 July 1974.

96 The National Guard comprised 10,000 men, light tanks, artillery and heavy equipment and could mobilise a further 30,000.

97 TNA: DEFE 11/729: Paper related to ‘preliminary draft’, 17 July 1974. Of those 23,000, 17,500 live outside the Sovereign Base Areas of which 13,000 are service dependants or UK personnel employed in the Sovereign Base Areas.

would 'require three brigades plus a HQ element and a detachment [sic] close air support airfield', which would take two weeks to mount.⁹⁸

However, it was concluded that Britain would enjoy international support for this venture as long as the operation was based on the Treaty of Guarantee.⁹⁹ If Britain failed to act, Turkey 'might go it alone'. Possible disadvantages cited were that even with Makarios restored, the situation would still be unstable, he would have to make improved constitutional arrangements and might ask for 'some kind of continuing military guarantee' which could affect the Defence Review.¹⁰⁰ Crucially, it was also agreed that the US Government would have to be warned in advance and that they should seek assurances from Moscow not to intervene. It was clear that Washington would never agree to such a venture, having failed to denounce the coup or recognise Makarios as President of Cyprus.¹⁰¹ Additionally assurances would be needed from Ankara that the Turkish Cypriot and Turkish forces on the island would not resist Britain and might even give unsolicited assistance.¹⁰² On 18 July, Wilson told his Cabinet that urgent studies were being made of the implications of military intervention. While he thought that intervention was undesirable, if diplomatic pressure on Athens failed, military action would have to be contemplated. 'HMG had made some precautionary naval dispositions and [sic] looking at [sic] usefulness of [sic] international blockade ...'¹⁰³

Washington and Whitehall had already differed fundamentally with regards to the continued American vacillation over recognising Makarios and US failure to condemn the coup, for which Washington was receiving considerable domestic media criticism. For example the lead editorial of *The New York Times* read 'It is disgraceful that the US has not seen fit to take an equally [UK] strong stance ...'.¹⁰⁴ These differences continued to appear throughout diplomatic contact on Wednesday 17 July.

When British Ambassador in Washington, Sir Peter Ramsbotham, spoke to Kissinger, the latter revealed that in his opinion Britain's stance was too absolute and asked Ramsbotham if Whitehall could agree 'to play the hand more slowly'.¹⁰⁵ Further discussions were held in Washington between British and US officials about the imminent UNSC meeting, during which

98 TNA: DEFE 11/729: paper (not draft), 17 July 1974.

99 TNA: PREM 16/19: 'Implications of Reinstating Makarios with UK military support'.

100 TNA: FCO 9/1915, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Sir John Killick to head of the Southern European Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Alan Goodison, 17 July 1974, Anthony Acland and James Callaghan.

101 NARA: NPMS, National Security Council (NSC), Greece/Cyprus, 'The Cyprus situation – today's WSAG Meeting', 16 July 1974, memorandum for Nixon from Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Brent Scowcroft.

102 TNA: FCO 9/1915, Top Secret: 'Possible military intervention in Cyprus'.

103 TNA: CAB 128/55: Cabinet meeting, 10 Downing Street, 11.30am, 18 July 1974.

104 *The New York Times*, lead editorial, 17 July 1974.

105 TNA: FCO 9/1892, 'Military Coup in Cyprus – Wednesday 17 July', tel.2414 from the British Ambassador to the US, Sir Peter Ramsbotham to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 17 July 1974.

the Americans expressed difficulty with any UN Security Council resolution in which Makarios was referred to as 'President'.¹⁰⁶ On this point, the British were being backed by UN Secretary-General, Kurt Waldheim, who felt that the threat of an increase in the UNFICYP (UN force in Cyprus) through the addition of British soldiers could be enough to force a swift Greek withdrawal and cause the Nicosia regime to collapse.¹⁰⁷ Callaghan and Makarios both believed that if the Greek soldiers could be made to withdraw, the Sampson regime would be unsustainable.¹⁰⁸

Early that morning the US Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs Joseph Sisco arrived in London, and was met by the British Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Sir John Killick. Sisco informed Killick that the UN process needed to be slowed down and felt it was wrong to support Makarios as it would be impossible to reinstate him by political means. He urged a joint Anglo-American approach at the UN and that a package deal could perhaps be put to both Ankara and Athens. Callaghan later said that he disagreed with a good deal of this analysis, but that a package solution was required.¹⁰⁹ During a Cabinet meeting later that morning, Callaghan again expressed his disappointment and confusion over American policy, still believing that if the Greek officers could be made to withdraw, Sampson would probably fall and Makarios would be free to return.¹¹⁰

Whitehall had recommended to Washington that 'they would establish the principles, and we would implement the policy'. Even if Britain had principally approved the decision to restore Makarios militarily, it was unwilling 'to do anything to bring it about. They wanted to leave that to us [Washington]'.¹¹¹ Makarios could not be restored politically and Britain realistically did not have the means to restore him militarily. The only way a military restoration of the Archbishop could have been achieved was by a joint Anglo-American or unilateral US venture. Britain had also expressed its desire for the removal of the coupists from Cyprus. However, the US Ambassador in Athens, Henry Tasca informed Washington that such a request would 'be received in the most negative fashion' by Greece. The US Embassy in Greece believed that to make such a request to the junta would be tantamount to inviting its overthrow.¹¹²

106 *Ibid.*

107 TNA: FCO 9/1892, 'Military Coup in Cyprus – Wednesday 17 July', tel.786 from the British permanent representative at the UN, Ivor Richard to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 17 July 1974.

108 J. Callaghan (1987) *Time and Chance*, London: Collins, p. 338.

109 TNA: FCO 9/1892, 'Military Coup in Cyprus – Wednesday 17 July', Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Sir John Killick to Alan Goodison, head of the Southern European Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 'Note for the Record' – Cyprus.

110 TNA: CAB 128/55, Cabinet meeting at Downing Street, 11.30, 18 July 1974.

111 NARA: RG 59, Executive Secretariat, Daily Activity Report from Principals, 1973-1975, Box 4, 'Cyprus Critique', pp. 9-10.

112 NARA: NPMS, NSC, Country Files, Box 595, Greece, tel.4538 from the US Ambassador to Greece, Henry Tasca to Secretaries of State and Defence, 17 July 1974.

It is too easy to simply blame the US for preventing Britain from implementing her contingency plan with regards to the military restoration of Makarios. This is a discussion which will have to be confined to debates on alternative history. However, what can be deduced is that Britain's intention to implement this plan was seriously affected by policy-decisions in Washington, and had the US agreed with this proposal, we could claim with some degree of certainty the likelihood of its joint implementation.

From the onset of the crisis, Callaghan strongly believed that only Washington had enough influence in order to put sufficient pressure on both Athens and Ankara to prevent the escalation of the crisis.¹¹³ At times, Kissinger did apply enough pressure to affect the development of the crisis. On 22 July, American pressure was to a certain extent responsible for the declaration of a ceasefire, whilst Callaghan himself recognised that the first Geneva Conference might well have collapsed had it not been for Kissinger's 'behind-the-scenes' manoeuvring.¹¹⁴

Callaghan concluded that throughout the crisis US policy had remained nebulous, that consequently Anglo-American policy had 'never marched together', which Callaghan, despite Watergate, attributed to Kissinger's 'habitual reluctance to be open with his allies' and ultimately questioned Washington's handling of the crisis.¹¹⁵

As the crisis developed and with the benefit of hindsight, it has become clear that it was the US who had the greatest leverage over the foreign policy decisions in Britain, Greece and Turkey and thereby the greatest ability of affecting the events of the summer of 1974.

Additionally, members of the State Department also recognised that Washington had a primary responsibility for Cyprus as Washington had played an active mediatory role through the Ball (1964) and Vance (1967) missions in preventing previous crises. However, despite an argument that the US should influence the situation in a positive way to avoid further crises, it was believed that any active role would expose the US to criticism from all parties and that as long as the intercommunal talks continued, the threat of violence in Cyprus was minimal. Direct US intervention was therefore only to be used as a last resort should an outbreak of uncontrollable violence seem imminent.¹¹⁶

113 TNA: FCO 9/1892, 'Military Coup in Cyprus – Wednesday 17 July', 'Note for the Record-Cyprus', Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs John Killick to head of Southern European Department, Foreign Office, Alan Goodison, doc.175/Q, 17 July 1974.

114 *FRUS, Nixon/Ford Administration, 1973-1976, Vol. XXX, Turkey*, Intelligence Interagency Memorandum, 'Turkey after the US Arms Cut-off', doc.217, 21 February 1975 and NARA: NPMS, Heinz Alfred Kissinger (HAK), Transcript of Telephone Conversation (TCT), Kissinger and Callaghan, 18.15 GMT, 22 July 1974 and TNA: (Cabinet Office) CAB 128/55, 10 Downing Street, 11.30, 1 August 1974.

115 J. Callaghan (1987) *Time and Chance*, London: Collins, p. 356 AND TNA: FCO 9/2186, 'Relations between UK and Cyprus', Callaghan to British High Commissioner in Cyprus, Stephen Oliver, 'British Policy on Cyprus: July – September 1974', doc.26, 28 April 1975.

116 NARA: RG59, Central Files, 1970-1973, POL27, CYP, Action Memorandum from Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Joseph Sisco to Secretary of State William Rogers, 'Cyprus: Strategy Paper for Next Steps', 1 September 1971.

The Crisis

During a post-crisis discussion with his staff, Kissinger revealed his belief that only a huge show of American force could have prevented the second Turkish military operation and, not wanting to establish a precedent of 'Great Power intervention', he refused to entertain the idea. Further, opposing the Turks would have meant adversely affecting relations with Ankara, something Kissinger was not willing to do on account of Turkey's strategic importance. Had the US acted in response to Turkey's breach of the United Nations Security Council resolution, it would also have set a dangerous precedent in terms of Washington's relationship with Israel.¹¹⁷

Ultimately, allowing Turkey to take a third of the island was not against American interests, as with Greece in no position to oppose Turkey, the threat of war within NATO ceased to be of concern. In fact allowing Turkey to proceed might actually be better than the uneasy *status quo ante bellum*. As far as Cyprus was concerned, Kissinger would be quite frank in conceding that he cared little about what happened on the island itself.¹¹⁸ In relation to Defence Secretary James Schlesinger's threat of removing US nuclear weapons from Greece and Turkey, Kissinger summed up the importance his *Realpolitik* approach had assigned to the fate of the people of Cyprus: 'If we took them [nuclear weapons] in this minor-league crisis over a third-rate island, God knows what we would have to do elsewhere'.¹¹⁹

As far as the coup was concerned, Kissinger once famously asserted that information on the coup 'was not exactly lying in the street'. However in the introduction to its investigation on Cyprus, the Select Committee on Intelligence disagreed, questioning the failure to predict the coup in view of the abundance of strategic warnings.¹²⁰ This was attributed to poor reporting from the US Embassy in Athens, in part due to the CIA's exclusive access to the junta's leader Dimitrios Ioannides and the analysts' failure to react to claims of an 'impending crisis'.¹²¹

117 NARA: RG59, AI, Entry 5403, Office of the Secretary, Records of Henry Kissinger, 1973-1977, Box 9, MemCons, 'Cyprus', 17 August 1974, p. 2.

118 TNA: FCO 9/1947, 'US Reaction to the Cyprus crisis', tel.4, British Ambassador to Washington, Sir Peter Ramsbotham to the FCO, doc.15, 12 August 1974.

119 Digital National Security Archive (DNSA): MemCons, Kissinger Transcripts (KT)01286, 'Cyprus', 08.15, 14 August 1974.

120 NARA: Access to Archival Database (AAD), Diplomatic Records, tel.158901, 'Press Conference by Secretary Kissinger on Cyprus Situation', 22 July 1974.

121 *Crisis on Cyprus: 1975 One Year after the Invasion*, Staff Report prepared for the Subcommittee to investigate problems connected with refugees and escapees of the Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate; preface by Edward M. Kennedy, Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1975, 94th Congress, 1st session, 20 July 1975, p. 9 and *US Intelligence Agencies and Activities: The Performance of the Intelligence Community*, Hearings before the Select Committee on Intelligence, US House of Representatives Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1975-1976, part 2, 4 and the final report. (94th Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions, July 1975-February 1976). Extracts of which are published in: *CIA: The Pike Report*, with an introduction by Philip Agee, Spokesman Books, 1977, '6. Cyprus: Failure of Intelligence Policy', p. 158.

Thomas Boyatt, the State Department's Cyprus Desk Officer, described the intelligence from Athens as conflicting at best. He referred to the CIA's later claim that US intelligence had forewarning of the coup on Cyprus as a misrepresentation, citing two CIA documents, one dated 12 July, and the other from the day of the coup which contained the statement that Ioannides had decided not to make a move against Makarios. Various officials within the State Department believed that Ioannides had in fact 'deliberately misled the US government', believing that due to Washington's important strategic relationship with Athens, he would have enough leverage over the US to allow him to be intransigent.¹²²

William Hyland, Director of Intelligence and Research at the State Department concluded that Ioannides might first have interpreted the weak US pre-coup responses as US acquiescence and secondly that Washington had warned of Greco-Turkish fighting, so that 'as long as his gambit was intra-Greek' the US would not be concerned. According to the CIA, when Ioannides was asked immediately after the coup about foreign reactions, he replied 'the Americans are okay'.¹²³ It appears the CIA had become so close to the Greek regime that they had lost all objectivity. Boyatt was adamant:

There they [CIA] were, sitting there with the entire intelligence establishment of the United States in all of its majesty having been conned by a piss-ant Greek brigadier general.¹²⁴

After Kissinger removed Henry Tasca from his post as US Ambassador in Athens, the former personally selected veteran diplomat Jack Kubisch as his replacement. Kubisch immediately requested that Stacy Hulse be replaced as CIA station chief, who according to a former CIA official had been assigned the task of 'controlling' Ioannides, and the CIA consequently sent Richard Welsh, who had already served as station chief in Lima and Guatemala City, as his replacement.¹²⁵ Welsh had only been in Athens for a few months, when he was shot outside his home in Athens on 23 December 1975, and became the first station chief in the agency's history to be assassinated.¹²⁶ Kubisch described what he had experienced in Athens as '... the terrible price the US government must pay when it associates itself so intimately ... with a repressive regime'.¹²⁷

122 Gerald R. Ford Library: PCF for Middle East, Pouch Asia: Folder Title: Cyprus. MR 08-30, Memorandum from Thomas Boyatt to Dr Henry Kissinger, 8 September 1974. In 1964 and 1967, Washington had prevented Turkey from invading the island.

123 *FRUS, Nixon/Ford Administration, 1973-1976, Vol. XXX, 'Cyprus Coup Post Mortem'*, doc.148, 10 September 1974.

124 Frontline Diplomacy: Thomas Boyatt, speech at Foreign Service Institute, 30 September 1992.

125 P. Agee and L. Wolf (1987) *Dirty Work, The CIA in Western Europe*, New York: Dorset Press, p. 82.

126 *FRUS, Nixon/Ford Administration, 1973-1976, Vol. XXX, Greece*, Memorandum prepared in the CIA, 'Assassination of Senior US Embassy Official in Athens', doc.58, 24 December 1975.

127 Frontline Diplomacy: Jack Kubisch interviewed by Henry Mattox, 6 November 1989.

Having told his CIA contact of his ability to remove Makarios should the Archbishop continue to provoke him, only strong representation through the same channel could have prevented Ioannides from launching his coup.¹²⁸ The Select Committee agreed that the US Embassy in Athens failed to take adequate steps to 'underscore for Ioannides the depth of US concern over a possible Cyprus coup attempt'.¹²⁹ Hyland's assessment was that Washington did not have:

'... what could be called "warning" of an impending crisis. What we did have were sufficient storm signals to warrant some diplomatic action – which, in retrospect, seems to have been weak and indecisive.'¹³⁰

The case against Kissinger was no doubt influenced by Washington's covert involvement in the 1973 coup against Chilean President Salvador Allende, but unlike the removal of the Marxist Allende, the removal of Makarios did not serve US interests. Due to Makarios' 'great ability and independence' he had functioned as a buffer to a direct Greco-Turkish confrontation over Cyprus. Kissinger's *Realpolitik* approach was all about stability, and Washington assessed that the junta's subversive tactics in Cyprus were far more destabilising than any Communist threat on the island. It was not believed that Makarios was pro-Communist – there were no Communists in his government – and his overwhelming electoral victory 'provided a needed element of stability in the Cyprus situation'.¹³¹

Additionally, not only was Kissinger busy flying around the world, but arguably the biggest domestic scandal in contemporary American history, Watergate, was about to reach its crescendo. Circumstances could hardly have been less conducive to warrant a crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean.¹³² Less than three months after the coup, Kissinger, sitting with Makarios in the Waldorf Towers in New York, gave the Archbishop his word that neither the US government nor the CIA had been involved in his overthrow.¹³³

128 Gerald R. Ford Library: PCF for Middle East, Pouch Asia: Folder Title: Cyprus. MR 08-30, Memorandum from Thomas Boyatt to Dr Henry Kissinger, 8 September 1974.

129 *US Intelligence Agencies and Activities: The Performance of the Intelligence Community*, Hearings before the Select Committee on Intelligence, US House of Representatives Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1975-1976, part 2, 4 and the final report. (94th Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions, July 1975 – February 1976). Extracts of which are published in: *CIA: The Pike Report*, with an introduction by Philip Agee, Spokesman Books, 1977, '6. Cyprus: Failure of Intelligence Policy', p. 160.

130 *FRUS, Nixon/Ford Administration, 1973-1976, Vol. XXX*, 'Cyprus Coup Post Mortem', doc.148, 10 September 1974.

131 NARA: AAD, Diplomatic Records, tel.103030, from Rush in Washington and drafted by the Cyprus desk, 'Cyprus: Cyprus/Greek Relations', 17 May 1974.

132 C. Nicolet (2001) *United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 1954-1974: Removing the Greek-Turkish Bone of Contention*. Germany: Mannheim und Moehnesee: Peleus, Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Griechenlands und Zyperns, Band 9 Bibliopolis, p. 421.

133 DNSA: KT01348, MemCons, Kissinger and Makarios, 2 October 1974.

If anything, the Cyprus crisis is a prime example of a failure of Kissinger's approach to foreign policy. Sufficient information about a possible coup had reached the US State Department. Boyatt had even drafted a contingency study which considered Washington's options if Athens attempted to depose Makarios in which he suggested that the US should put its views to Athens 'on an informal and personal basis'. This needed to be balanced as it could complicate US-Hellenic relations especially as Athens officially denied all ties to EOKA-B. Boyatt warned that:

'... if subversion were successful or very destabilising, low-key involvement may not be sufficient ... A hands-off approach would be interpreted by Athens and Ankara as tacit approval of a coup.'¹³⁴

Whilst it is beyond the scope of this article to deal with this issue in greater detail, future declassification of government documents may show that individual CIA agents, supported and encouraged the coup, but based on what has so far been declassified, it appears highly unlikely that they will reveal a conspiracy authorised by the CIA or by Washington. In early August, Kissinger told his staff:

'But if any actions were taken against Makarios by any American officials (which I do not believe occurred) it was against our instructions and against our convictions ...'¹³⁵

Kissinger's style of autocratic governance meant that he failed to take the advice of professional specialists within the Department who had been following events in Cyprus.¹³⁶ Kissinger later explained that with so many conflicting intelligence reports from different sources coming into the Department, it was easy, post-crisis, to pick out the accurate one as if it had been the only one.¹³⁷ This was a direct result of Kissinger's 'one-man-show' approach to US foreign policy as well as sustaining a set of conditions which essentially allowed the CIA in Athens to shape US foreign policy.

British policy was not primarily concerned with the stability of NATO or a desire to avoid the crisis from becoming internationalised, as provided the Sovereign Base Areas and the British servicemen and nationals on the island could be protected, Callaghan, at least in theory, was willing to go further to (a) remove Turkey's pretext for invading, and (b) prevent Turkey from expanding following its initial invasion. On both counts, Britain suffered from what Callaghan described as

134 NARA: NPMS, NSC, Institutional Files, Meeting Files, WSAGM, Box H-096 'NSC Interdepartmental Group for Near East and South Asia', *Contingency Study for Cyprus*, April 1974.

135 NARA: RG59, Executive Secretariat, Daily Activity Report from Principals, 1973-1975, Box 4, 'Cyprus Critique', p. 10.

136 *Ibid.*

137 *US Intelligence Agencies and Activities: The Performance of the Intelligence Community*, Hearings before the Select Committee on Intelligence, US House of Representatives Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1975-1976, 94th Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions, July 1975 – February 1976, part 2, p. 843.

'responsibility without power', as Britain, a signatory to the Treaty of Guarantee, had unwillingly been thrust into a position of responsibility, but assessing that no unilateral military action could be taken without American co-operation, lacked the power to take effective action. Despite receiving considerable criticism from all parties to the Cyprus crisis, including the House of Commons Select Committee on Cyprus, Callaghan believed that '... only those who overestimate our power can reproach us for the outcome'.¹³⁸

Whilst some obscurities remain *vis-à-vis* the American intelligence community's actions prior to the coup, no such ambiguity exists with regards the invasion. British and American knowledge of Turkish troop and naval movements as well as Turkey's errantly perceived co-operation in the evacuation of British and foreign nationals helped ferment the accusation of collusion. This accusation, based on the now released and declassified government documents, can be categorically refuted. Consequently, we can conclude that the British and American governments were responsible for the events on Cyprus in 1974 by virtue of acts of omission rather than commission.

In October 1974, Kissinger told Makarios that the best solution to the Cyprus Problem would have been to leave it alone.¹³⁹ This would have required an effective intervention by Washington in Greece, something which the US was unwilling to do. The American declassified documents reveal that Kissinger's knowledge of Cyprus was extremely limited as Kissinger simply believed 'a third rate island' such as Cyprus did not warrant his interest. As expressed by former CIA official George Constantinides:

'Kissinger's moves from the moment of Makarios' overthrow and his singleton performances were not among his finest moments, and there are those who will contend that after economics, he understood Cyprus least of all the issues he dealt with.'¹⁴⁰

In September 1974, Kissinger told Greek Foreign Minister George Mavros that had he been at Geneva he would have secured Turkish agreement to the 'cantonal solution' and then obtained Turkish agreement to reduce the occupied area.¹⁴¹ Had Kissinger shown an interest in Cyprus or accepted some of the policy advice from officials in the State Department, then the humanitarian tragedy that was the Cyprus crisis could possibly have been avoided. Perhaps this is why when asked about his professional failures Kissinger told Michael Parkinson:

138 TNA: FCO 9/2186, 'Relations between UK and Cyprus', James Callaghan to Sir Stephen Oliver, British High Commissioner to Cyprus, 'British Policy on Cyprus: July – September 1974', doc.26, 28 April 1975.

139 DNSA, KT01348, MemCon, Henry Kissinger and Archbishop Makarios, Waldorf Towers, New York, 11.25, 2 October 1974.

140 NARA: CIA Records Search Tool (CREST), CIA Studies in Intelligence, George Constantinides, Vol. 22, No. 1, Spring 1978.

141 DNSA, KT01329, MemCon, 'Secretary's meeting with Greek Foreign Minister, George Mavros', 09.30, 24 September 1974.

'... the handling of the Cyprus crisis in '74 coming as it did ... coinciding with the disintegration of the Nixon presidency was ... could have been more effectively done.'¹⁴²

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