

# Reinterpreting Macmillan's Cyprus Policy, 1957-1960<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

*Commentators universally accept that successive British Governments wanted sovereignty over Cyprus until Harold Macmillan became Prime Minister in January 1957 who then decided to relinquish Cyprus. This assertion is made because the Macmillan Government had determined that the whole of Cyprus was not needed as a base and that bases in Cyprus were sufficient for British military purposes. The Macmillan Government's plans for a solution, however, never included the complete withdrawal of British sovereignty over the island. Ultimately, Britain was not involved in terminating its colonial rule over Cyprus and was indeed reluctant to accept independence as a solution. By tracing the development of the concept of sovereign enclaves, a gap in the published historiography will be filled, while also answering what it was that made sovereignty over Cyprus so vital to British defence policy. The establishment of Sovereign Base Areas on the island questions the view that Cyprus was "relinquished", let alone "decolonised". The delay between the signing of the Zurich-London Accords and Cypriot independence, blamed on Makarios' uncompromising attitude towards British military needs, will be reviewed. This article is a reinterpretation of the Macmillan Government's Cyprus policy.*

**Keywords:** Cyprus, Harold Macmillan, Sovereignty, Decolonisation, Sovereign Bases Areas

In January 1957, Harold Macmillan succeeded Anthony Eden as Prime Minister of Great Britain with British prestige in the Middle East at its lowest ebb. Eden's government Suez escapade had left his government paralysed in the Middle East and Eden a shattered man. He had presided over one of the great British military fiascos and had also damaged Anglo-American relations. According to Scott Lucas, Eden had so lost the support of the Cabinet by December 1956, that Macmillan was able to collude with Washington in a "plot" to overthrow him, as a means of restoring Anglo-American relations.<sup>2</sup> Whatever the truth of this claim, within weeks of coming to power, Macmillan had supposedly decided to withdraw from Cyprus, where the British had moved their Middle East Head Quarters from Egypt in 1952 and where since April 1955 a terrorist group,<sup>3</sup> EOKA (National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters), had been trying to force the

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1 I thank Professor Ian Copland, School of Historical Studies, Monash University, for reading a longer version of this article. I also thank Associate Professor Hubert Faustmann for his comments.

2 W.S. Lucas (1987) 'Suez, the Americans, and the Overthrow of Anthony Eden', *LSE Quarterly*, pp. 227-254.

3 No doubt 'one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter' and in the case of Cyprus for many Greek Cypriots EOKA members were 'freedom fighters' while for many British, EOKA members were 'terrorists'. This may be

British out of the island in favour of uniting it to Greece (*enosis*).

Historians have generally characterised Macmillan as the leader who reluctantly accepted Britain's diminishing imperial position by decolonising the Mediterranean and Africa.<sup>4</sup> His famous 1960 "winds of change speech" indicates how the idea of Empire had radically changed for the Conservatives since they had regained power in 1951. Wars or 'emergencies' to maintain the Empire in Kenya, Malaya and Cyprus had proved costly economically, politically, militarily and prestige wise. Historians claim that Macmillan wanted to accelerate the process of decolonisation in Cyprus and within months of coming to power, he decided that Britain would withdraw from the island.<sup>5</sup> Macmillan himself has contributed to this idea when claiming in his memoirs that his efforts to find a solution to "the Cyprus tangle" were sincere.<sup>6</sup> If this is indeed the case and Macmillan was really prepared to decolonise Cyprus and therefore end British sovereignty over the island, why did it take until February 1959 – over two years after coming to power – for a settlement to be reached?

Some might think that two years is not a very long time, but Glafkos Clerides, a former President of Cyprus (1993-2003), posed this intriguing question in his memoirs:

The real question ... which requires to be answered is why British Governments were so obsessed with the need to retain sovereignty over Cyprus. The argument that British ... strategic requirements could only be served by Britain retaining sovereignty over the Island does not hold water. British and allied strategic requirements could have been served by

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the case out in the coffee-house or in other social environments; conflicts are usually heated when being discussed by participants or their descendants. But this is an academic article and my position on terrorism broadly agrees with that of Alex P. Schmid: "Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby - in contrast to assassination - the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat- and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperilled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought". A.P. Schmid and A.J. Jongman *et al.* (1988) *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories, and Literature*, Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Group. In my view, the 'Cyprus Emergency' reveals group based terrorism from EOKA and TMT, as well as state terror from the British.

4 R.F. Holland (1985) *European Decolonization, 1918-1981: An Introductory Survey*, Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan; J. Darwin (1988) *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World*, Basingstoke: Macmillan Education.

5 R. Stephens (1966) *Cyprus: A Place of Arms*, London: Pall Mall Press, pp. 157-158; S. Panteli (1984) *A New History of Cyprus*, London and The Hague: East-West Publications, pp. 292-308; R. Holland (1985) *European De-Colonisation, 1918-1981*, pp. 200, 256; B. Lapping (1985) *End of Empire*, London: Granada, pp. 335-337; E. Hatzivassiliou (1997) *Britain and the International Status of Cyprus, 1955-1959*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, p. 103; B. O'Malley and I. Craig (1999) *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, London: I.B. Tauris, pp. 49-50, 53.

6 H. Macmillan (1971) *Riding the Storm 1956-1959*, London: Macmillan, pp. 657-701.

Britain retaining sovereign military bases on the Island, as in fact was finally agreed in 1959. If this was possible in 1959, it was equally possible in 1957.<sup>7</sup>

The view that somehow the settlement reached in 1959 could have been reached two years earlier will be contested here. London made no decision to relinquish British sovereignty over Cyprus in 1957 or for that matter in 1958. In fact, London never made such a decision in 1959 either; it was Greece and Turkey that worked out the Zurich Accords that granted Cyprus independence the details of which were kept secret from the British government while they were being negotiated.<sup>8</sup> All that the British did was sign on the dotted line when the two governments brought the documents to London.

Various studies have attempted to explain the events of the unique “decolonisation” of Cyprus, but none have explored in depth the principle reason offered here to underpin the reluctance of Macmillan’s government to relinquish complete British sovereignty over all of Cyprus – namely the stationing of nuclear weapons on the island in pursuit of the Baghdad Pact.<sup>9</sup> This is why during the negotiations to determine the size of the British Sovereign Base Areas (BSBA) independence of the island was delayed from February 1960 to August 1960. Hubert Faustmann’s e-book (his PhD dissertation) and chapter in his co-edited collection *Britain in Cyprus* went a long way to rectifying these omissions by 1) recognising that Macmillan’s government “aimed at the continuation of British rule [and that] the sharing of the power would have happened largely under British control”;<sup>10</sup> and 2) thoroughly covering the negotiations between British and Cypriot representatives over the size of the BSBA.<sup>11</sup> His noteworthy work on the ‘transitional period’ (between the signing of the Zurich-London Accords in February 1959 and the coming into being of the Republic of Cyprus in August 1960), rightly identifies the negotiations over the size of the bases as the primary cause of postponement of independence. What Faustmann does not do is situate these negotiations alongside the earlier ideas and concepts for exclusive sovereign British territory at a time when (as he acknowledges) the British were only interested in sharing sovereignty over the rest of the island and interested in much smaller areas under exclusive British

7 G. Clerides (1989) *Cyprus: My Deposition*, IV, Nicosia: Alithea Publishing, p. 39.

8 R. Holland (1998 [repr. 2002]) *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus, 1954-1959*, Oxford: Clarendon Press p. 306.

9 F. Crouzet (1973) *Le Conflit de Chypre, 1946-1959*, Bruxelles: E. Bruylant; S. Xydis (1973) *Cyprus: Reluctant Republic*, The Hague: Mouton; Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*; I.D. Stefanidis (1999) *Isle of Discord: Nationalism, Imperialism and the Making of the Cyprus Problem*, New York: New York University Press; C. Nicolet (2001) *United States Policy Towards Cyprus, 1954-1974: Removing the Greek-Turkish Bone of Contention*, Mannheim and Möhneseec: Bibliopolis.

10 H. Faustmann (1999) *Divide and Quit? The History of British Colonial Rule in Cyprus 1878-1960 Including a Special Survey of the Transitional Period February 1959-August 1960*, (e-book) Mateo - Mannheimer Texte Online, Mannheim, p. 245.

11 H. Faustmann (2006) ‘Independence Postponed: Cyprus 1959-1960’ in H. Faustmann and N. Peristianis (eds.), *Britain in Cyprus: Colonialism and Post-Colonialism 1878-2004*, Mannheim and Möhneseec: Bibliopolis, pp. 413-429.

sovereignty. In this connection it is worth mentioning the unpublished PhD dissertation of Klearchos Kyriakides, which is as comprehensive account of the establishment of Cyprus as a British military base in the Middle East and the establishment of the BSBA. This also does not tie all the threads together with respect to why the British were only willing to discuss shared sovereignty, the lengths they went to maintaining British sovereignty, their miscalculation that the Greek and Turkish governments would agree over Cyprus, and the subsequent larger area wanted under exclusive British sovereignty, which ultimately caused the delay to Cyprus' independence, but which also resulted in the British not being particularly interested or focussed on the transition of Cyprus from a British colony to a consociational republic, with the existence of two armed and violent camps.<sup>12</sup>

At the time, Macmillan's government insisted that it was only interested in solving the problem and retaining its military assets on the island and therefore implying that the British would accept a Greco-Turkish agreement on Cyprus. Conservative leaders and military figures had concluded by mid 1957 that the use of the whole of Cyprus as a base was no longer necessary. Macmillan would have it believed that

Britain had no interest except peace both in Cyprus and between Greece and Turkey, together with the preservation of the bases which were so essential to the defence of the Eastern Mediterranean and the resistance to Communist aggression.<sup>13</sup>

Macmillan claims that both peace and bases were his interests, but what if the desire to hold bases prevented or prolonged peace and led to an escalation and expansion of violence? If peace and bases in Cyprus, as opposed to the whole of Cyprus as a base, were the aims, why was Macmillan's government reluctant to relinquish complete British sovereignty of Cyprus, when its strategic vitality had supposedly diminished after the Suez debacle? Moreover, why did it take eighteen months after the Zurich-London Accords were signed for independence to be proclaimed and why did Britain retain sovereign territory on the island even then? What is the relationship between the "partial" decolonisation of Cyprus and the Macmillan government's attempts to find a solution?

Macmillan's government reluctance to relinquish Cyprus was a reluctance no less stubborn and only less overt than that of his predecessor's government, Anthony Eden. While a "coup" to oust Eden was fermenting in his absence (to recover from the Suez escapade) from 23 November to 20 December 1956, Alan Lennox-Boyd, the Colonial Secretary, devised a plan to play Turkey off against Greece by proposing a partition of the island. Macmillan had himself succeeded in this ploy back in 1955 when as Foreign Secretary his chairmanship of the Tripartite Conference (attended by Greece, Turkey and Britain) in London brought Turkish objections to *enosis* to the

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12 K.A. Kyriakides (1996) 'British Cold War Strategy and the Struggle to Maintain Military Bases in Cyprus, 1951-60'. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge.

13 Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p. 663.

fore.<sup>14</sup> Partition had not been on the agenda then, but after Lennox-Boyd had initially rejected the suggestion of it by the then Governor of Cyprus, Sir John Harding, in October 1956, he reconsidered partition when Ankara demanded it.<sup>15</sup> Now he felt that partition might “have advantages”, it could, he mused, “cause [the] Greek Cypriots to reconsider the merits of the *status quo*”.<sup>16</sup> So in other words he adopted partition as a foil to *enosis* and in the hope – a rather misguided hope – that the Greek Cypriot EOKA terrorists would lay down their arms and agree to the continuance of British colonial rule. But the Cabinet hesitated at his suggestion because it could mean that Cyprus might be “partitioned against the wishes of the majority” – the 80% Greek Cypriot community.<sup>17</sup> Lennox-Boyd promised the Cabinet that he would not mention partition while on his trip to Athens and Ankara, but in Ankara, he negotiated a “very clever formula” to apply “double self-determination” to Cyprus.<sup>18</sup> Each community would vote on self-determination, but if the Turkish Cypriots opted for union with Turkey, Cyprus would be partitioned.

When Lennox-Boyd threw partition into the pot as a way of forcing the Greek Cypriots to back away from *enosis*, he also announced the constitutional recommendations of Lord Radcliffe, the eminent legal authority chosen to devise a constitution for Cyprus.<sup>19</sup> According to Radcliffe's terms of reference, the whole of Cyprus would remain under British sovereignty for the lifetime of the constitution.<sup>20</sup> Lennox-Boyd failed to cite, however, that Radcliffe rejected the idea of a federation with reservations as it was a claim “by 18 percent of a population to share political power equally with 80 percent”. Radcliffe believed it unfair since the Cypriots lived in neighbouring and mixed villages across the island.<sup>21</sup> Yet, Lennox-Boyd had committed Whitehall to consider partition, a solution anathema to the Greek side and viewed as politically, economically, and morally unfathomable by Lord Radcliffe, who had drawn up India's partition line. Lennox-Boyd's undermining of Radcliffe's constitution has taken a backseat to its rejection by the Greek side.

Consequently, when Macmillan came to power, the Anglo-Turkish alliance over Cyprus, which began under Eden, was freshly reaffirmed. Indeed, within weeks, the new Cabinet showed

14 Turkey's uninterested history was recorded by a prominent and well respected Turkish Cypriot community leader Dr Ihsan Ali, who in the 1970s became a political adviser to President Archbishop Makarios. Dr Ihsan Ali (1980) *Ta Apomνημoneύματα Μου* [My Memoirs], Nicosia: Zavalis Press, p. 9.

15 FO 371/123932/2285, 4 October 1956; CAB 128/30, 5 October 1956; FO 371/123932/2280, and FO 371/123932/2279, 25 October 1956.

16 CAB 129/84 C(56)33, 'Memorandum by Mr Lennox-Boyd for Cyprus Policy Committee', 26 November 1956.

17 CAB 128/30/2, C.C. 98(56)1, 11 December 1956. Note: Cabinet Conclusions (CC) and Memoranda (C).

18 CAB 128/30/2, C.C. 99(56)2, 12 December 1956; Stephens, *Cyprus: A Place of Arms*, pp. 148-150. A Turkish FO official involved with Cyprus revealed this to Stephens, a former Middle East correspondent for the *Observer*, in 1965. Official documents confirm this. See, R. Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*, p. 166.

19 Hansard, House of Commons, 19 December 1956, pp. 1267-1269.

20 *Constitutional Proposals for Cyprus*, Report submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the Right Hon. Lord Radcliffe, G.B., HMSO, London December 1956, cmd 42, p. 6.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 13. Radcliffe gave the Greek Cypriots a majority in the legislature. The Turkish Cypriots were protected through a Department of Turkish Cypriot Affairs and by checks on the legislature from interfering in their affairs.

that British policy had changed little from the Eden “never-never land”<sup>22</sup> period, when it discouraged Washington from tabling a UN resolution urging London to find a settlement.<sup>23</sup> Not wishing, however, to project an image of total intransigence, particularly given Macmillan’s earnestness to mend Anglo-American relations, the Cabinet decided to finally allow the NATO Secretary-General to “use his good offices for conciliation”.<sup>24</sup> Lord Ismay, the first NATO Secretary-General, who had been Winston Churchill’s adviser during the Second World War, had offered to mediate earlier,<sup>25</sup> but in December 1956 he announced his retirement. His replacement, in May 1957, was Paul-Henri Spaak, a former Labour Prime Minister of Belgium. Perhaps because of his socialist roots or because he may see in Cyprus a place where the Belgian system of government could be established, the Cabinet decided against accepting mediation and to discourage any suggestions for it.<sup>26</sup> Lennox-Boyd simultaneously proposed that Archbishop Makarios, in exile in the Seychelles Islands since March 1956, be released in exchange for a public denunciation of EOKA.<sup>27</sup> Both these measures were taken despite the fact that Makarios had been exiled for refusing the same ultimatum and Britain’s subsequent encouragement of Turkish objections to a Cyprus settlement had further poisoned Greco-Turkish relations.

Indeed Adnan Menderes’ government, which was strongly anti-communist and pro-western, promptly rebuked Britain on the move to involve NATO and release Makarios – it had become accustomed to doing so whenever it objected to a proposal it disliked – but this time the Cabinet rejected this, *only* because Turkish protest would make a solution even *less* likely.<sup>28</sup> When Makarios responded that he would condemn violence if the emergency was ended and an amnesty declared, London faced a dilemma because Ankara objected to these conditions.<sup>29</sup> At the time, Macmillan was in Bermuda with United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who asked him to free Makarios.<sup>30</sup> Macmillan decided to do so – without Makarios responding to the prerequisite

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22 On 28 July 1954 Henry Hopkinson, the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, was pressed by a Labour MP on what the proposed new constitution meant for the future status of Cyprus. Hopkinson replied 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”. Hansard, House of Commons, 28 July 1954, p. 508. This was the birth of the so-called “never-never land” policy, a term used by Robert Holland, see R. Holland (1993) ‘Never, Never Land: British Colonial Policy and the Roots of Violence in Cyprus, 1950-54’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, pp. 148-176.

23 CAB 128/31, C.C. 6(57)1, 1 February 1957.

24 CAB 129/85, C(57)49, 28 February 1957; CAB 128/31, C.C. 21(57)1, 18 March 1957.

25 Obituary, ‘Lord Ismay: Vital Role in British Defence’, *The Times*, 18 December 1963, p. 9.

26 *Ibid.*

27 CAB 129/86, C(57)71, 16 March 1957.

28 CAB 128/31, C.C. 21(57)1, 18 March 1957.

29 CAB 128/31, C.C. 23(57)4, 25 March 1957; CAB 128/31, C.C. 24(57)1, 26 March 1957.

30 Department of State, Conference Files, Lot 62 D 181, CF 866, Secret, ‘Memorandum of a Conversation, Mid-Ocean Club, Bermuda, March 21, 1957’, *FRUS, 1955-1957: Soviet Union, Eastern Mediterranean*, XXIV, pp. 465-466. There is little evidence that Macmillan freed Makarios in a pact with Eisenhower. See, O’Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 50.

demand – but by banning him from entering Cyprus, and sustaining the war against Colonel George Grivas and his EOKA guerrillas, Macmillan contented both Turkey and Eisenhower.<sup>31</sup> Macmillan's initial conciliatory move did not result in any constructive developments to solve the Cyprus crisis, nor did it encourage NATO efforts – quite the opposite, a rivalry developed between Britain and NATO over the handling of the Cyprus question.

NATO concern over Cyprus was not new, but Secretary-General Paul-Henri Spaak now decided that only a quick and realistic compromise could avoid a NATO schism between Britain, Greece and Turkey. Over the next few months he held discussions with the Greek and Turkish Governments and with Makarios in Athens.<sup>32</sup> In mid-July he wrote to Menderes, the Turkish Prime Minister, to explain that he rejected partition as a “demarcation line would ... be wholly artificial [and] involve large transfers of population ... not ... in tune”, he maintained, “with present-day thinking”.<sup>33</sup> At length he asked Menderes to consider “guaranteed” independence as:

Under the treaty in which the independence ... would be anchored, the Powers concerned would renounce all sovereignty over Cyprus ... not only never to lay claim to such sovereignty, but also to reject any offer of sovereign rights.<sup>34</sup>

Menderes was indifferent to this idea, but Spaak began a dialogue with the Greek and Turkish NATO delegates.<sup>35</sup>

Macmillan, on the other hand, had already rejected independence when Eisenhower had suggested it to him in Bermuda,<sup>36</sup> but decided to undermine Spaak's efforts anyway. He did this through a “new” policy which he explained in the following memorandum:

Our essential military needs in Cyprus are to secure the continued use of an operational air base, primarily for the support of the Baghdad Pact, and of certain wireless facilities for intelligence and propaganda purposes which cannot be provided elsewhere. These needs can be met if we insist on retaining exclusive British sovereignty over relatively small enclaves ...<sup>37</sup> (see also MAP II)

Historians have defined this as a sharp break with the “never” policy of successive British governments.<sup>38</sup> Macmillan and strategists had been stunned by the failure of Cyprus to live up to

31 CAB 128/31, C.C. 24(57)1, 26 March 1957.

32 P-H. Spaak (1971) *The Continuing Battle: Memoirs of a European, 1936-1966*, Boston: Little, Brown and Co., pp. 281-283. Spaak was a former socialist Prime Minister of Belgium.

33 Spaak letter to Menderes, dated 16 July 1957, Spaak, *The Continuing Battle*, p. 284.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 285.

35 Spaak, *The Continuing Battle*, pp. 285-286. R. Holland (1995) ‘NATO and the Struggle for Cyprus’, *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, pp. 33-61, 45-48.

36 Hatzivassiliou, *Britain and the International Status of Cyprus*, p. 104.

37 CAB 129/88, C(57)161, 9 July 1957.

38 Hatzivassiliou, *Britain and the International Status of Cyprus*, p. 112; O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 53.

military expectations during the Suez campaign. When Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal in July 1956, Eden demanded military action, but was told that an immediate operation was impossible. British facilities on Cyprus were underdeveloped, the paratroopers were tied-up fighting EOKA in the mountains, and the marines had not received proper training for a year.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, the British rejected Grivas' 'truce' offer in early August because this would have been a sign of weakness and also that a military operation was being hatched for Egypt. In September, the head of the operation against Egypt, Charles Kneightley, warned that Nicosia airfield suffered from dated facilities and was "vulnerable" to EOKA attack. He ordered that Akrotiri and Tymvou airfields be hastily upgraded to meet Eden's demand for an attack on Egypt.<sup>40</sup>

Colonel Grivas sensed his chance to escalate EOKA terror.<sup>41</sup> During the first half of August 1956, EOKA bombed military installations and security forces daily and strikes crippled bases at Akrotiri, Episkopi and Dhekelia.<sup>42</sup> This meant that the Anglo-French attack on Suez planned for 15 September could not take place on military grounds (perhaps it was this reason which led to the British and the French agreeing to the second Suez Canal Users Conference on 19 September). From that date, until the end of October, 63 bomb attacks, mostly inside military installations, with 21 such attacks on 2 November alone, were carried out.<sup>43</sup> EOKA terror clearly restricted the development of Akrotiri and Tymvou.<sup>44</sup> Then, on the eve of the Anglo-French operation, an EOKA bomb "completely destroyed" the runway of Akrotiri airfield, crippling it for two weeks.<sup>45</sup> Gorst and Lucas concluded that the Anglo-French failure to seize the Canal was due to the "lack of will ... of the British military and politicians to carry out a rapid parachute landing ... within a few days of the Israeli invasion".<sup>46</sup> However, Nicosia, Akrotiri and Tymvou were the only airfields feasible for this task and since Akrotiri was out of action, an instant drop was impossible. Within days of neutralising the Egyptian air force, Britain vetoed French plans to launch an airborne attack. At the time the British military authorities argued that their paratroopers had just been relieved from fighting EOKA and Akrotiri was still under repair.<sup>47</sup> When the paratroopers did

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39 General Hugh Stockwell, the Commander-in-Chief of Middle-East Land Forces, noted this. See A. Gorst and SW. Lucas (1988) 'Suez 1956: Strategy and the Diplomatic Process', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, pp. 391-436, 400; Also, O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 38.

40 PREM II/1130, Kneightley's despatches, O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, pp. 37-38.

41 G. Grivas-Dighenis (1964) *The Memoirs of General Grivas*, (ed.) London: Charles Foley, p. 85.

42 *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87; CO 926/418, Harding's daily situation reports, O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, pp. 38-39.

43 O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 40; Grivas, *Memoirs*, p. 101.

44 Tymvou housed French transport aircraft. O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 39.

45 Grivas, *Memoirs*, p. 97. The British concealed the attack from the public.

46 Gorst and Lucas 'Suez 1956: Strategy and the Diplomatic Process', p. 429.

47 In Cyprus the British had 20 squadrons of Canberra and Valiant bombers, eight infantry battalions, the commando 3rd Brigade and three paratroop battalions. The French had at least 40 Thunderstreaks, 600 troops, and several transport and bomber squadrons. The French utilised Cyprus on the first night of the Israeli invasion to secretly airlift food and arms to the Israelis behind the lines. O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 41.



eventually leave for Egypt on 5 November, Akrotiri was not used.<sup>48</sup> Thus, had Nasser bothered to challenge the allied aircraft carriers, perhaps the Anglo-French air action may have been crippled, since Cypriot airfields were "too distant" to permit bombers "more than ten to fifteen minutes" over Egyptian targets.<sup>49</sup> Kneightley concluded that the operation failed because of a "shortage of airfields and ports in Cyprus when operations started", as the former were "under construction or repair" and the latter did not exist.<sup>50</sup> In the event, a sea-borne attack was launched from Malta, nearly 1,000 miles to the west of Alexandria!

Therefore, Macmillan's "new stance" was a revision of the belief that the whole of Cyprus was required for British military needs in the region. Now bases in Cyprus would be sufficient to safeguard these interests. The primary interest was the Baghdad Pact, an alliance formed a few days after EOKA terror had started in April 1955 and which included Turkey, and aimed at preserving British military and political authority in the Middle East against the Soviets, and against the interference of the United States in an area that was traditionally a British concern.<sup>51</sup>

The idea of sovereign enclaves, however, was not new. The instigator (although not originator) of the concept seems to have been Francis Noel-Baker, a Labour backbencher, a Philhellene with family connections to Lord Byron, a landholder in Greece, and an acquaintance of Archbishop Makarios. His unique position resulted in Harding and the Eden government accepting him to act as "go-between" during the ill-fated Harding-Makarios talks of 1955-1956.<sup>52</sup> Noel-Baker was a strong advocate for a more liberal treatment of the Greek Cypriots, without ever supporting or condoning the use of violence. In this sense, the Conservatives had always been wary of his views, but they liked the last proposal of his "four point plan for Cyprus", which he outlined in an interview with the *Observer* reporter Philip Deane in June 1956. This held that before self-determination (which for Noel-Baker, like Greek Cypriot elites, equated to *enosis*), for which a date would be set according to point two of Noel-Baker's plan, "British military installations in Cyprus should be concentrated in an enclave which would remain British territory indefinitely whatever the results of self-determination".<sup>53</sup> Noel-Baker told Deane that he was

convinced this enclave could be made acceptable to Archbishop Makarios and the Greek Cypriot community and to the Greek Government. It would reassure the Turks who fear that Greece would use Cyprus as a base to attack them. It would do much to allay the fears

48 *Ibid.*, p. 42.

49 P. Darby (1973) *British Defence Policy East of Suez 1947-1968*, London: Oxford University Press, p. 112.

50 COS56 (220), COS minutes by Kneightley, 11 October 1957; O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 44.

51 DEFE 4/78, COS 56(55), 12 July 1955, *Egypt and the Defence of the Middle-East: Part III 1953-1956*, Discussed in notes for Document 597, 432. By 1954, the new Foreign Secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, warned that America was usurping British supremacy in the Middle East. CAB 129/66, C(54)53, 'Middle-East: Anglo-American policy': Lloyd note for the Cabinet, 15 February 1954, *ibid.*, Document 491, pp. 218-220.

52 F. Noel-Baker (1985) *My Cyprus File: From My Personal Records, 1956-1984*, London: Christopher Terry, Ross Features International.

53 P. Deane, 'Four Point Plan for Cyprus', *Observer*, 17 June 1956.

of the Turks in Cyprus. And for Britain's strategic needs, such an enclave would be as safe as Gibraltar ... and be a purely British base from which the British could act independently of the wishes of her NATO partners.<sup>54</sup>

It is clear that in comparing the enclave to Gibraltar and labelling it "a purely British base", Noel-baker was proposing an enclave that would be British sovereign territory. In any event, this is what Eden thought. The day after the interview appeared on 17 June, a Foreign Office (FO) clerk reported that Eden "thought that consideration might be given to retaining an area of UK sovereignty in an area of Cyprus after self-determination had been granted". Eden acknowledged that there would be difficulties, namely that Governor Harding and the military chiefs "objected to it".<sup>55</sup> This means that Noel-Baker was not the first to tout the concept of a sovereign enclave or enclaves.

As it was, Eden's government did not give the idea much consideration, firstly because the main priority was to find a solution that the Turkish government agreed to and Ankara opposed self-determination for Cyprus;<sup>56</sup> and because of the Eden government's resolve to use force on Egypt after Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal.

It was not until after the Suez catastrophe when the idea of sovereign enclaves was again pushed. In December 1956, a letter to the editor of *The Times* by A.G. Bourne opined that "the only security for a British base in Cyprus is for a portion of the island to be retained as British territory".<sup>57</sup>

The plan that Macmillan had in mind, however, did not intend to fully relinquish British sovereignty over the rest of Cyprus, but instead:

We (Britain) should offer to surrender the rest of the island to a condominium of the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey. The sovereignty would be vested in the three countries jointly. The indigenous population would acquire Greek and Turkish as well as British nationality.<sup>58</sup>

The use of the word surrender could only be described as an oxymoron: Britain would "relinquish" the government of Cyprus to two other foreign powers, Greece and Turkey, as well as to itself! In

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54 *Ibid.*

55 FO 371/123002/RG/1081/1377, John B. Denson, minute, 18 June 1956; Kyriakides, *British Cold War Strategy and the Struggle to Maintain Military Bases in Cyprus*, pp. 217-220.

56 Department of State, Central Files, 747C.00/7-1356, Secret, 'Memorandum of a Conversation', Department of State, Washington, 13 July 1956, *FRUS, 1955-1957, XXIV*, pp. 379-380. Dulles slammed the Turkish veto since Turkey "had no legal basis to obstruct a settlement". Department of State, Central Files, 747C.00/6-2256, Secret, 'Memorandum of a Conversation', *ibid.*, p. 371. Note, on 14 June, Greece, unaware of the British scheme, proposed to pass-over self-determination for 13 years. CO 926/551/730, Noel-Baker to Eden, 14 June; E. Hatzivassiliou (1990-1991) 'Blocking *Enosis*: Britain and the Cyprus Question, March-December 1956', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, pp. 247-263, 252-253.

57 *The Times*, A.G. Bourne, Letter to Editor, 27 December 1956, 7e.

58 CAB 129/88, C(57)161, 9 July 1957.

reality, here was a plan for retaining the substance of British sovereignty and political control over Cyprus. It would have made Cyprus an isle of arms, from which Britain, and indeed Turkey, could perpetuate their defence alliance. The scheme could not have been further removed from Spaak's initiative to create an independent Cypriot state.

The tri-condominium plan grew out of Defence Minister Duncan Sandys' review of Britain's global military strategy in the post-Suez era in April 1957. He reported that "bomber squadrons operating from Cyprus ... [and] capable of delivering a heavy counter-blow with nuclear weapons" were vital to defend the Baghdad Pact.<sup>59</sup> Britain had vested its Middle East interests on the Baghdad Pact, with Turkey and Iraq, as a buffer against Soviet penetration into the Middle East. London now felt that its main contribution to the Baghdad Pact was nuclear weapons. In 1955 and 1956, Britain formed its first V-bomber squadron to carry atomic and hydrogen weapons, and dropped its first atomic bomb, while at the Bermuda Conference in 1957, Anglo-American nuclear relations had been restored.<sup>60</sup> In mid-1956, the British Chiefs-of-Staff had projected that Cyprus' military value "should be viewed against the background of the nuclear counter-offensive", especially as Akrotiri airfield was to become "an advanced base for the V-bomber force".<sup>61</sup> These plans were now a reality. It meant little that Cyprus would be "within range" of Soviet bombers and ballistic missiles, and thus a target in a nuclear conflict.<sup>62</sup> Accordingly the military warned the Cabinet that London must remain on close terms with any future Cypriot administration, so it would be "extremely dangerous" to surrender sovereignty.<sup>63</sup> Sandys also listed thirteen military sites outside the proposed enclaves, principally intelligence networks and training grounds, where British sovereignty could *never* be relinquished (see MAP II).<sup>64</sup> Thus, the tri-condominium scheme points to another ruse to facilitate the continuance of British control over Cyprus, to ensure that a future Cypriot government could not threaten British nuclear capability or maintenance of intelligence networks scattered across the island.

The Cabinet realised that the only hope for the tri-condominium plan lay in Washington coercing Athens into accepting it. The US was against playing this role as it favoured independence. So Britain tried to discredit the idea of independence throughout 1957 by proposing

59 CAB 129/86, C(57)69, 15 March 1957, revised CAB 129/86, C(57)84, 1 April 1957.

60 See, S.J. Ball (1995) 'Military Nuclear Relations between the United States and Great Britain under the Terms of the McMahon Act, 1946-1958', *The Historical Journal*, pp. 439-454.

61 DEFE 5/69, COS(56)231, annex. 'Facilities required by HM forces in Cyprus in peace and war': COS Committee memorandum on the strategic importance of Cyprus, 14 June 1956.

62 *Ibid.*, pp. 512-513.

63 *Ibid.* In November Randolph Churchill made news when he divulged that "Britain could knock down 12 cities in the region of Stalingrad and Moscow" and the Crimea from bases in Cyprus and that Britain "did not have that power at the time of Suez". *The Times*, 14 November 1957.

64 Sandys' delineation of the enclaves and the facilities outside remains classified. The de-classification of the map, however, which was a map to the classified notes, and his November memorandum listing the outside facilities, provides adequate information of size and use of the enclaves. CAB 129/88, C(57)178, 26 July 1957; CAB 129/88, C(57)184, 30 July 1957; CAB 129/90, C(57)265, 12 November 1957.

a tripartite conference between Greece, Turkey and itself, with US and NATO observers. London wanted this conference to fail, as it was thought that only then would America accept the British plan for want of a better solution.<sup>65</sup> But Greece refused to attend a conference. According to its Foreign Minister, Evangelos Averoff, his government and that of Ankara were not adverse to the idea of independence,<sup>66</sup> yet the Cabinet warned that Spaak “should be discouraged from lending any support” to it at all costs.<sup>67</sup> By the end of 1957, London had wasted six months sabotaging NATO efforts while trying to trap Athens and Washington into accepting a plan neither desired.

Meanwhile changes were made at the head of the Cyprus Government. Harding had supposedly asked to retire in October. Macmillan wrote in his memoirs that Harding

felt, and I could not but share this view, that in the new phase and in the light of the new policy which we were trying to put forward ... his immediate task was accomplished.<sup>68</sup>

His task had been to crush EOKA; but this had not been achieved.

Sir Hugh Foot, the Governor of Jamaica, replaced Harding.<sup>69</sup> Historians have seen this as confirmation that Macmillan wanted Britain to soften the British government’s policies in Cyprus and even as an indication of withdrawal.<sup>70</sup> There is evidence to suggest, however, that Foot’s employment had little to do with British plans for a withdrawal. Macmillan claimed that he made the appointment because Foot was a “leading figure” in the Colonial Service and because of his success as an administrator and negotiator and because he wanted a new face to represent his “new policy”.<sup>71</sup> It is difficult to argue that Foot was a “leading figure” in the Colonial Service given that he was the Governor of Jamaica (indeed his first governorship), and even more difficult to assert that he had especial negotiating skills, when there is no parallel in Foot’s career that compares to “the Cyprus tangle” (although during his early career he had served in Palestine as an assistant secretary, distinguishing himself as a mediator between Arabs and Jews). The appointment was also made after Foot had expressly refused London’s prerequisite directive to pledge “not [to] resign on grounds of policy”, that is, to be loyal and obedient regardless of what London decided. Moreover, he criticised the policy that had induced interference from Athens and Ankara. He believed that only the Cypriots could find a solution.<sup>72</sup> Macmillan was at the time beset with the

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65 CAB 129/88, C(57)178 MAP A, 26 July 1957; CAB 128/31, C.C. 52(57)1, 16 July 1957. The Cabinet felt Turkey would need little inducement to reject independence. CAB 129/90, C(57)276, 20 November 1957.

66 E. Averoff-Tossizza (1986) *Lost Opportunities: The Cyprus Question 1950-1963*, New York: New Rochelle, pp. 166-168; Spaak, *The Continuing Battle*, pp. 281-283.

67 CAB 128/31, C.C. 81(57)1, 21 November 1957.

68 Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p. 664.

69 Foot was the Governor of Jamaica.

70 Panteli, *A New History of Cyprus*, p. 298; O’Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, pp. 56-57. L. Ierodiakonou (1971) *The Cyprus Question*, Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, pp. 160-162.

71 Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p. 664.

72 Sir H. Foot, (Lord Caradon) (1964) *A Start in Freedom*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, pp. 157-158.

tri-condominium scheme, a plan clearly distinct from Foot's ideas. Even so, Foot was given the job, why?

Robert Holland has argued that it was insurance against the Labour Party using the Cyprus crisis against Macmillan in upcoming elections that influenced his choice of Foot.<sup>73</sup> Foot came from a distinguished Cornish Methodist family of liberal-radical political orientation. His father had been a Liberal MP and two of his brothers Labour supporters. One of these, Michael Foot, co-authored *Guilty Men*, a socialist polemic against the evil Tory policy in Cyprus and Egypt, later led the Labour Party. There is no direct correlation between concerns over an election and the appointment, but such a connection cannot be discounted. In his memoirs, Macmillan adds weight to this view when he admits to being aware of "the radical opinions" that Foot had "inherited from his Cromwellian father."<sup>74</sup> Macmillan's concern with domestic politics is further evidenced by the increasingly graphic front-page reports of the carnage emanating from Cyprus. In November 1956, Derek Lambert published an article in the *Daily Mirror* entitled 'It's Murder Mile', with a photograph of Arthur Hallam, an architect, lying dead on Nicosia's Ledra Street or "Murder Mile."<sup>75</sup> The murder of civilians could turn a public against a tough and uncompromising policy very quickly, while the murder of soldiers and police could create a "body-bag condition."<sup>76</sup>

The sources, however, establish that the Cabinet was principally concerned about Britain's international position. Quite apart from the fact that Harding had come to symbolise Eden's tough uncompromising military solution to the problem (despite Harding's genuine efforts to end the Emergency through negotiation with Makarios), he had also distinguished himself for presiding over hangings and allegations of torture by the security forces against Greek Cypriot detainees. Athens (thanks to research conducted by Glafkos Clerides, then a leading Greek Cypriot lawyer, thus thrusting him into national politics) had taken the conduct of the security forces to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and Harding had since February 1956 been trying to prevent investigators from coming to Cyprus.<sup>77</sup> In April 1956, two British officers, Captain O'Driscoll of the Intelligence Corps, and Lieutenant Linzee of the Gordon Highlanders, were court-martialled and convicted of causing physical harm during an interrogation. On 10 May 1956, two EOKA members, Michalis Karaolis and Andreas Demetriou, were hanged. In August and September 1957, the ECHR was pressuring to investigate in Cyprus, but Harding and Lennox-Boyd were violently opposed.<sup>78</sup> No doubt Harding would have considered this insulting

73 Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*, pp. 214-215.

74 Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p. 665.

75 Derek Lambert, 'It's Murder Mile', *Daily Mirror*, 16 November 1956.

76 Kyriakides, *British Cold War Strategy and the Struggle to Maintain Military Bases in Cyprus*, pp. 213-215.

77 A.W.B. Simpson (2001) *Human Rights and the End of Empire*, London: Oxford University Press, pp. 884-1055.

78 CAB 129/90, C(57)258, 4 November 1957. Lloyd and Lennox-Boyd Memorandum; For the British attempts and failure to deflect criticism of the actions of the security forces onto EOKA see, S.L. Carruthers (1995) 'EOKA and the Struggle for Enosis in Cyprus, 1955-59', *Winning Hearts and Minds: British Governments, the Media and Colonial Counter-Insurgency, 1944-1960*, London: Leicester University Press, pp. 239-244.

to British officers doing their patriotic duty in a climate of terror. But Foot had promised to stabilise Anglo-Cypriot tensions and the fact that his career and family background were liberal, was an antithesis to Harding. Within days of arriving, Foot visited Cypriot leaders, rode through villages, and on Christmas Eve released 100 detainees, all the women held without trial, and removed movement restrictions on 600 others.<sup>79</sup> Also, an announcement was made that the ECHR could send a team of lawyers to investigate the Emergency procedures. Although Foot did not make this decision, many in his administration blamed him for it, and thus it is clear that London used Foot in order to appease the Court and repair Britain's international image without scaring its own military and more conservative circles. London's rejection of Foot's plan for a solution after Turkey vetoed it verified this. The Foot Plan envisioned an immediate end to the emergency, for Makarios to return, and for Cyprus' status to be settled after five years of internal self-rule.<sup>80</sup> The Cabinet approved, but Foot knew it depended on London standing up to Turkey, who would be presented with his plan first. As he predicted the Turkish veto stuck in the "gullers" of the Macmillan Cabinet.<sup>81</sup>

In just over a year of trying to "withdraw" from Cyprus, all that Macmillan's government had achieved was to strengthen Ankara's position. Menderes' government now demanded a base on the island, a veto on any interim constitution, and that no long-term settlement was possible short of partition.<sup>82</sup> In January and February 1958, Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd and Foot visited Ankara to offer Turkey a base and Foot's constitutional plan which envisaged communal self-determination after a period of self-government.<sup>83</sup> But the Turkish government rejected the proposal and Turkish Cypriot riots in Nicosia confirmed Turkish opposition to it.<sup>84</sup> Then in May 1958, the Macmillan "Partnership Plan" was devised.<sup>85</sup> It provided for: continued British sovereignty unless a tri-condominium was accepted; Greek and Turkish government representation in the Cyprus government; and a constitution with separate houses of representatives for each community.<sup>86</sup> The guise of partition was inherent in all these provisions, acknowledged even by Macmillan who described it as "metaphysical partition", and the Colonial Office called it "pre-partition".<sup>87</sup> It was not so much that the constitution, in trying to protect the

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79 Foot, *A Start in Freedom*, p. 161.

80 *Ibid.*, pp. 159-163.

81 CAB 128/32, C.C. 4(58)2, 6 January 1958; CAB 128/32, C.C. 7(58)5, 20 January 1958; Foot, *A Start in Freedom*, pp. 163-164.

82 CAB 128/32, C.C. 12(58)1, 28 January 1958.

83 CAB 128/32, C.C. 17(58)4, 18 February 1958; J. Reddaway (2001 [1<sup>st</sup> edition 1986]) *Burdened with Cyprus: The British Connection*, Nicosia: Rustem, pp. 105-107.

84 Foot, *A Start in Freedom*, pp. 166-167; CAB 129/91, C(58)43, 17 February 1958.

85 For the first draft of the Partnership plan see, CAB 129/93, C(58)106, 12 May 1958. Macmillan explained his new proposal to the Cabinet the following day and revealed that both Greece and Turkey had rejected the tri-condominium plan. Cab 128/32, C.C. 42(48)2, 13 May 1958.

86 CAB 129/93, C(58)109, 14 May 1958.

87 FO 371/136370, Anthony Rumbold, minute, 2 July 1958.

demographic minority (Turkish Cypriots) from the potential tyranny of the majority (Greek Cypriots) in doing away with majority rule since a 20% minority would equally share power with a 78% majority. But it was rather that Greek and Turkish officials would be involved in the governance of the island, and that the British would never fully relinquish full sovereignty over all of Cyprus (only share sovereignty, despite saying that after seven years the issue of self-determination could be re-evaluated), which would never really be independent. Yet before London informed Turkey of this plan, civil war broke out on the island after the Turkish Consulate in Nicosia was bombed. Foot awoke in the “middle of the night to see from the balcony of Government House what looked like the whole of Nicosia aflame”.<sup>88</sup>

The British instantly blamed EOKA, but Rauf Denktash, then a Colonial Government lawyer and founder in 1957 of a secret Turkish Cypriot terrorist group *Türk Mukavemet Teskilati* (TMT), admitted in 1984 that a Turk “had put this little bomb ... to create an atmosphere of tension”.<sup>89</sup> Successive Conservative Governments promoted the politicisation of the Turkish Cypriot community. They encouraged Dr Fazil Kutchuk to found the “Cyprus is Turkish Party” and allowed TMT to function virtually at will.<sup>90</sup> The British formed an auxiliary police almost entirely of Turkish Cypriots and then a Turkish Mobile Reserve to combat EOKA. By 1958 the Greek Cypriots were outnumbered by a ratio of five to three in the police.<sup>91</sup> This was a policy of exploitation of the worst sort.

By spreading the conflict and encouraging inter-communal violence the British had only succeeded in plunging the island into civil war, with the result that partition seemed probable. Thus, the Menderes government, now in a position of strength, promptly accepted the “Partnership Plan”, but Athens fearing it a prelude to partition rejected it. From June to the end of October, Britain pressured Greece to acquiesce but failed.<sup>92</sup> Yet, Greece could not veto British proposals for Cyprus and the Cabinet decided to implement the “Partnership Plan” without Greece – a major “partner”.<sup>93</sup> Greek Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis instantly warned Spaak that London’s “insistence ... on applying its plan unilaterally” would jeopardise Greece’s membership in NATO.<sup>94</sup> Perhaps this forced Makarios’ hand, as he then dropped a bigger bombshell when he told Barbara Castle, the Chairman of the British Labour Party, then visiting Athens, that “Cyprus should become an independent state” with *enosis* and partition both

88 Foot, *A Start in Freedom*, p. 169.

89 Interview with Rauf Denktash in the documentary *Britain's Grim Legacy* (1984) Granada, UK.

90 C. Hitchens (1997) *Hostage to History*, London: Verso, p. 45. At the time Greek Cypriot political parties were banned. Also there were moderate Turkish Cypriot leaders like Dr Ihsan Ali who promoted Cypriot coexistence. Ali, *Ta Απομνημονεύματά Μου* [My Memoirs], pp. 8-9.

91 D.M. Anderson (1993) ‘Policing and Communal Conflict: The Cyprus Emergency, 1954-60’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 21, Iss. 3, pp. 177-207, 189-191.

92 CAB 128/32, C.C. 67(58)5, 12 August 1958; CAB 128/32, C.C. 69(58)2, 8 September 1958; CAB 128/32, C.C. 79(58)2, 30 October 1958.

93 See, CAB 128/32, C.C. 67(58)5, 12 August 1958.

94 Karamanlis letter, 22 September 1958, to Spaak, *The Continuing Battle*, p. 289.

excluded.<sup>95</sup> The Greek side, fearful of partition, decided to negate the perceived partitionist policies of Macmillan's government.

For the moment Greece's threat took precedence over Makarios' new stance, as London became more belligerent and NATO more concerned. Spaak called an emergency NATO meeting for 25 September (five days before the application of the "Partnership Plan") where he offered a solution contrary to the British scheme.<sup>96</sup> Turkey savaged his efforts, but other NATO members (bar Britain) sided with Spaak.<sup>97</sup> London then forced Spaak to include their plan alongside his for discussion at a conference.<sup>98</sup> But Ankara had already chosen and was preparing to send their official to Cyprus as part of the "Partnership Plan". Karamanlis' government decided to attend a conference on the condition that a final settlement would be discussed.<sup>99</sup> But the Turkish and British governments considered that a final settlement prejudiced an interim solution and reaffirmed their determination to apply the "Partnership Plan".<sup>100</sup> The situation had reached a stalemate.

Macmillan's fervent desire to execute his plan with or without Greek and NATO support was augmented by the collapse of the Baghdad Pact and by events in Cyprus. In July, Ankara and London became alarmed when a coup in Iraq resulted in the overthrow of the pro-British government and the coming to power of a neutralist regime. The Cabinet observed that Turkey was surrounded by neutral states, while the British policy to defend Western interests in the region had failed.<sup>101</sup> Within weeks, Washington was forced to take the initiative to stabilise the Middle East from further defections.<sup>102</sup> In fact in August, Britain was negotiating the terms that would have given America 400 acres to install and operate in Cyprus a 500-kilowatt transmitter to relay Voice of America programmes to Middle East countries.<sup>103</sup> Then in October, Cyprus flared-up when a British sergeant's wife was murdered and though Grivas denied liability, rage against

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95 D.S. Bitsios (1975) *Cyprus: The Vulnerable Republic*, Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, p. 78. Bitsios was a career diplomat, at the time Head of the Cyprus Desk in the Foreign Ministry in Athens, and later Greece's permanent representative to the UN. Castle told this to Karamanlis in Bitsios' presence. See also, B. Castle (1993) *Fighting all the Way*, London: Macmillan, pp. 289-310; and Makarios' interview with Stephen Barber, 'My Plan Would Rule Out Enosis', *News Chronicle*, 21 October 1958.

96 Spaak, *The Continuing Battle*, pp. 291-292.

97 *Ibid.*, pp. 292-293; Bitsios, *The Vulnerable Republic*, p. 83.

98 Spaak, *The Continuing Battle*, pp. 294-295.

99 Bitsios, *The Vulnerable Republic*, p. 89; Karamanlis to Spaak, 4 October 1958, *The Continuing Battle*, p. 298.

100 *Discussion on Cyprus in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation September - October 1958*, Cmnd. 566, HMSO, London, 1958.

101 CAB 128/32, C. C. 55(58), 14 July 1958; After the Iraqi coup an Anglo-American operation from Cyprus was launched to protect Jordan. CAB 128/32, C. C. 59(58), 16 July 1958. Stephens reasons that the Iraqi coup convinced Britain that Greco-Turkish reconciliation over Cyprus was needed, but no evidence suggests this. Stephens, *A Place of Arms*, p. 158.

102 CAB 128/32, C. C. 65(58)3, 29 July 1958.

103 CAB 129/94, C(58)173, annexes, 26 August 1958. The US requested this in November 1957, while they rejected a tri-condominium. The land was in Paphos outside the planned enclaves.



EOKA ensued.<sup>104</sup> Lennox-Boyd then summed up Whitehall's evaluation of the Cyprus question at the 9 October Conservative Party Conference at Blackpool. He labelled Cyprus a British "fortress colony" and a Turkish island, since it was "600 miles from Athens and only 40 miles from Turkey".<sup>105</sup> Turkey was besieged by foes, he claimed, so Cyprus had to stay in "strong hands", so he reaffirmed that the "Partnership Plan" would be implemented – with or without Athens.<sup>106</sup>

Then there was a sudden and unexpected development. In November the Cyprus question was once again debated in the UN – as had been the case since 1954 – and the three sides, Britain, Greece and Turkey trudged along, as usual the aim being to obtain the upper hand against each other. On the surface the debate revealed a hardening of Anglo-Turkish attitudes, but beneath the surface the seed of a settlement was planted. Britain aimed to have the UN endorse Macmillan's "Partnership Plan", while Turkey, led by Foreign Minister Fatin Zorlu, tried to have the Turkish Cypriot right to self-determination recognised.<sup>107</sup> Greece wanted to upset the British and Turkish schemes, and to argue for independence.<sup>108</sup> Averoff succeeded in discrediting the British and Turkish plans, but could not obtain UN support for independence because of an Anglo-Turkish threat of civil war in Cyprus.<sup>109</sup> Yet, before the General Assembly session finished on 6 December Zorlu privately told Averoff that Turkey would accept independence and that they should meet and discuss the matter further.<sup>110</sup> Within three months Athens and Ankara had reached a settlement!

The immediate question arises, who was behind the Turkish move? Was London behind Turkey's shift or was it in the dark? Zorlu does not indicate outside involvement and there is nothing to say that the initiative was not a Turkish one. Observers have argued that EOKA strength and Britain's "decision" in 1957 to "relinquish" Cyprus for bases meant that Britain endorsed the Greco-Turkish talks.<sup>111</sup> Foot attributes a British source for starting the dialogue.<sup>112</sup>

104 Grivas, *Memoirs*, p. 169; for the public backlash, Carruthers, 'EOKA and the Struggle for Enosis in Cyprus', p. 230. The woman's daughter testified that the killer was blonde, but the media overlooked this, as Holland points out because it is rare to find a blonde Cypriot. Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*, pp. 286-287.

105 "Imperium et Libertas", Alan Lennox-Boyd speech, 9 October 1958, *British Imperial Policy and Decolonisation, 1938-64*, II, 1951-1964, A.N. Porter and A.J. Stockwell, New York 1989, Document 74, 494. To illustrate his point Lennox-Boyd compared Cyprus with Athens and the Turkish mainland, and not Cyprus and Ankara and Cyprus and Athens because they have similar distances.

106 *Ibid.*, p. 496.

107 Bitsios, *The Vulnerable Republic*, p. 92.

108 *Ibid.*

109 Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost Opportunities*, pp. 278-279, 285. Before the British and Turkish threats, ten states supported Cypriot independence and the two-thirds majority needed seemed possible.

110 *Ibid.*, pp. 295-298.

111 Panteli, *A New History of Cyprus*, pp. 309-323; Ierodiakonou, *The Cyprus Question*, pp. 214-219.

112 Foot, *A Start in Freedom*, pp. 176-177. Foot's claim that the British ambassador to the UN, Pierson Dixon arranged the Averoff-Zorlu meeting does not mean that it can be assumed that he hinted that Britain would accept independence.

Lately it was alleged that an Anglo-American initiative forced Turkey's hand.<sup>113</sup> This article does not have the space to explore American involvement,<sup>114</sup> but will focus on the Macmillan government's stance on Cypriot independence and the Greco-Turkish talks.

Macmillan's government did not embrace the Greco-Turkish talks or the idea of independence, yet it never revealed this publicly.<sup>115</sup> In November, Commander Allan Noble, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs since 1956, had warned the UN that it would be dangerous "to endorse independence now, [or] even as a long term prospect".<sup>116</sup> But on 8 December, Foot sent a strongly formulated evaluation of the situation, arguing again for Makarios' return to Nicosia, but also for independence "as surely the right answer".<sup>117</sup> Two days later, however, Macmillan reiterated that the "Partnership Plan" would be implemented.<sup>118</sup> But within a week, Averoff and Zorlu continued their secret talks in Paris during the annual ministerial NATO gathering. When the other foreign secretaries realised that the Greek and Turkish governments had found common ground over Cyprus, the "only one ... annoyed" was Lloyd according to Averoff.<sup>119</sup> Lloyd pondered "whether the British might be allowed to know what was being hatched up for their colony".<sup>120</sup> When Averoff and Zorlu briefed him, Lloyd became so troubled by the prospect of independence, that he secretly met Zorlu again that night. Zorlu assured Lloyd that it was "not really a form of independence", as Britain would keep sovereign bases, and Greece and Turkey would share the rest of the island.<sup>121</sup> Lloyd, thinking of a bi-condominium concept outside the British areas, was shocked when told two days later that "Cyprus would be absolutely independent" and "parried out protestations", but to no avail.<sup>122</sup> He had utterly misread the situation. Hence, when he briefed the

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113 O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, pp. 68-73. O'Malley and Craig's thesis here lacks evidence. Indeed some of the evidence they provide assists the contrary contention offered here.

114 For US involvement see, Xydis, *Cyprus*, p. 342; it is not the purpose here to answer why Turkey changed its position.

115 This is primarily because it was Labour's policy to give Cyprus independence and elections loomed in 1959. See, Hansard, Hugh Gaitskill House of Commons, 28 October 1958, pp. 18-19. Indeed, though Gaitskill and subsequently Aneurin Bevan asked Macmillan about Makarios' independence plan, Macmillan refused to answer any questions that acknowledged its existence.

116 Baker, 'The Settlement in Cyprus', p. 244.

117 CO 926/630, Foot to Martin, 8 December 1958, quoted Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*, p. 292.

118 Hansard, House of Commons, 10 December 1958, pp. 350-351. Indeed, on the day Zorlu approached Averoff, Dulles telegraphed Athens and London, reiterating that the US supported the 'Partnership' plan, failing to mention Zorlu's approach to Averoff, or independence. Department of State, Dulles telegram, 5 December 1958/47C. 00/12-558, University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Bound Photocopies, United States Department of State Records, Washington.

119 Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost Opportunities*, p. 312.

120 *Ibid.*, pp. 311-312.

121 CO 926/630/622, 11:15pm, record of a meeting between Lloyd and Zorlu at British embassy in Paris, 16 December 1958, O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 72.

122 Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost Opportunities*, p. 316.

Cabinet on the Greco-Turkish rapprochement, he omitted to mention the independence talks.<sup>123</sup> Moreover, when Averoff asked London to publicly endorse Cypriot independence, Lloyd did not ask the Cabinet for its views on independence and therefore could not oblige Averoff.<sup>124</sup> Claude Nicolet recently claimed that London blessed the Greco-Turkish independence negotiations;<sup>125</sup> but it did not. Lloyd did not seek Cabinet approval, for the decision to “decolonise” Cyprus had already been made, and London had not made it.

For Macmillan's government, independence meant relinquishing British sovereignty over Cyprus. Warned by the military of the importance of keeping control of any government outside the enclaves, the aversion was understandable. It would not have sat well with the Conservative leadership to find Makarios, dubbed the “arch-terrorist” by the British media,<sup>126</sup> heading a Cypriot government. The fact that Cyprus had a strong Communist Party in AKEL (Progressive Party of the Working People) complicated matters further.<sup>127</sup> With British authority now usurped after the Greco-Turkish decision, Macmillan's response was swift and calculating. British authority needed reasserting and the ground gained politically, in forcing the Greek side into a corner with the “Partnership Plan”, had to be maintained. So against Washington's advice,<sup>128</sup> Macmillan's government embarked on a new military offensive to eradicate EOKA and execute the “Partnership Plan” (now with no partners at all!). This was no “blunder”,<sup>129</sup> the Macmillan government knew what it was doing and why: it wanted to show that they were the masters in Cyprus. Considering that Greece and Turkey had been at loggerheads over Cyprus for so long, there was no reason to believe that they would come to an agreement now. Even if they did, with a successful winter campaign against EOKA, British prestige would at least be preserved.

On Christmas Eve, Grivas declared a cease-fire after Foot released 527 EOKA detainees<sup>130</sup> in order to create an atmosphere of peace for the negotiations, but on Boxing Day, Macmillan demanded that British forces “continue to prosecute the anti-terrorist campaign with the greatest determination”.<sup>131</sup> Military operations against EOKA escalated, but Foot refused London's directive to re-arrest former EOKA detainees, and asked that the publishing of bills concerning the “Partnership Plan” cease.<sup>132</sup> London refused Foot's request, but was overruled by Zorlu when he informed Whitehall that a Greco-Turkish settlement was close.<sup>133</sup> Foot resisted Macmillan's

123 CAB 128/32, C.C. 86(58)1, 18 December 1958.

124 Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*, pp. 299-300; CAB 128/32, C.C. 87(58)2, 23 December 1958.

125 Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, p. 135.

126 *Daily Express*, 27 August 1956.

127 TW. Adams (1971) *AKEL the Communist Party of Cyprus*, Stanford, California: Hoover Institute Press.

128 Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, p. 135.

129 *Ibid.*

130 Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*, p. 301.

131 Grivas-Dighenis, *Memoirs*, p. 184; CO 926/938, Macmillan to Lennox-Boyd, 26 December 1957.

132 Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*, p. 301.

133 *Ibid.*, p. 302.

subsequent pressure to reverse this and implement the “Partnership Plan”.<sup>134</sup> Thus, instead of pacifying the island and reconciling the two communities to encourage the Greco-Turkish talks, Macmillan escalated the conflict. The Turkish Ambassador to London, Muharrem Nuri Birgi opined to the US Consul in Greece that he was unsure whether the British actually wanted a settlement.<sup>135</sup> Even the British Labour Party warned the Conservative government on 13 January that if it was “genuinely anxious ... that talks should be successful, it has the responsibility of creating a helpful atmosphere in Cyprus”.<sup>136</sup> But four days later, Macmillan’s government warned Washington to “refrain from becoming involved” in the Greco-Turkish talks and to order Spaak to do likewise.<sup>137</sup> The violence came to the fore in Cyprus on 24 January when a schoolteacher from Agros village was arrested and a woman seriously injured in the process. One historian reveals that General Darling, who was in charge of military operations against EOKA, “personally flew incognito over the town (sic) dropping tear-gas!”<sup>138</sup> These unprovoked acts prompted Averoff to inform the Consul of the US Embassy in Greece on 31 January that both he and Zorlu feared that the British escalation of violence at a time when all the other parties were working towards a solution would sabotage the chances of success.<sup>139</sup>

Nevertheless, the prevailing winds could not be stifled. By promoting a Greco-Turkish conflict and in conceding to accept bases in Cyprus, Macmillan’s government had implied a will to “relinquish” the island – while never offering to – if Athens and Ankara would agree to a solution. Thus, when the Greek and Turkish governments signed the Zurich Accords in February 1959, ruling out both *enosis* and partition and establishing an independent state, Britain could not refuse to sign.<sup>140</sup> When Averoff and Zorlu flew to London to explain the settlement, Macmillan was recorded as saying to Selwyn Lloyd: “this is getting interesting ... [but] we only need our Gibraltar’s”.<sup>141</sup> Clearly, despite the change of policy, there had been a reluctance and even an attempted sabotage of the independence negotiations, meaning that the Conservatives did not, and – if they had their way – would not, have relinquished total British sovereignty over Cyprus. Indeed, how can it be said that Cyprus was “decolonised” when it was two foreign states that decided to grant it independence, while the colonial power sought to oppose it?

A further eighteen months passed, however, after the signing of the agreements, before Cyprus

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134 *Ibid.*

135 Samuel Berger, Counsel of the US Embassy in Greece to Dulles, University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Bound Photocopies, United States Department of State Records, Washington.

136 Walworth Barbour, US Deputy Chief of Mission to London, to Dulles, 14 January 1959, No. 3631, 747c.00/1-1459, *ibid.*

137 *Ibid.*, 17 January 1959, No. 3704, 747c.00/1-1759, Secret.

138 Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*, p. 306.

139 Samuel Berger, Counsel of the US Embassy in Greece to Dulles, Secretary of State, 31 January 1959, *FRUS, 1958-1960: Eastern Europe Region; Soviet Union; Cyprus*, X, pp. 764-766.

140 See, CAB 129/96, C(59)25, 16 February 1959. It is not the purpose of this thesis to discuss the constitution.

141 A. Horne (1989) *Macmillan, 1957-1986*, II, London: Macmillan, p. 691.

finally became independent from British rule.<sup>142</sup> It is not an issue of this time period being too long: indeed it was probably too soon given the groundwork required to establish peace, trust and understanding of the constitution, and proper demilitarisation of the paramilitary groups in Cyprus. The issue is that the eighteen-months were a delay according to the agreed schedule, which stipulated that the hand-over of power should happen in February 1960 (instead, Cyprus became independent in August).

The delay was chiefly caused by wrangling over the size of the British Sovereign Base Areas – territory that also questions the view that Britain “relinquished” Cyprus, since there is still a British presence on the island.<sup>143</sup> At the time, Macmillan’s government fostered a perception that Makarios’ “Byzantine” negotiating methods were completely to blame for the delay.<sup>144</sup> Conservative MPs constantly made their anger felt that “just as agreement is about to be concluded some new factor is brought in by them (the Greek Cypriots)”.<sup>145</sup> With a strain of impatience, one MP clamoured:

... the time has come when we should say to Archbishop Makarios and to Cyprus, “if you push us too far we shall chuck in our hand and go”.<sup>146</sup>

Somehow this seemed unlikely, but that was mild compared to the views of the Conservative F.M. Bennett, who refused even to mention Makarios by name or title, as he explained the reasons for the delay:

One has only to look at the map to see the size of the White Paper to realise that the delay arose ... largely because we have been bargaining with someone who indeed would do well in any form of huckstering about the price of any article in any and all parts of the world wherever he might choose to exercise his abilities. It has been a question of a little bit taken out of the base, a little enclave fitted in, an argument about this, an argument about that ... We have only to remember this to realise that these delays have taken place not because of any intransigence on the part of Her Majesty’s Government but because we have been dealing with someone of whom one has almost thought from time to time that he enjoys bargaining for bargaining’s sake.<sup>147</sup>

The view that Makarios was solely to blame for delaying the negotiations over the bases has remained unchallenged until now. In Macmillan’s July 1957 memorandum (discussed earlier) a

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142 See Faustmann, *Divide and Quit?*

143 The other reason for the delay was the trouble British authorities had stopping the Turks smuggling arms into Cyprus and to get EOKA to relinquish theirs. See, E. Hatzivassiliou (1993) ‘Post-Zurich Cyprus, 1959: Arms Smuggling and Confidence Building’, *Storia Delle Relazioni Internazionali*, Vol. 9, pp. 71-93.

144 Hansard, Viscount Hinchinbrooke, House of Commons, 9 May 1960, p. 25; Hansard, Healey, House of Commons, 9 May 1960, p. 26; Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, p. 700.

145 Hansard, Mr. Wall, House of Commons, 2 June 1960, p. 1643.

146 Hansard, Sir G. Nicholson, House of Commons, 9 February 1960, p. 346.

147 Hansard, F.M. Bennett, House of Commons, 14 July 1960, pp. 1640-1641.

top-secret map, indicating the size of the enclaves Britain wanted in 1957, completely alters the historical record (see MAP II).<sup>148</sup>

The Zurich-London Agreements allowed for Britain to receive two sovereign areas, but the size and conditions of use were left to British and Cypriot representatives to determine. Julian Amery, a leader of the “Suez rebels”, negotiated the terms with Makarios and Kutchuk – by now the recognised leader of the Turkish Cypriots. The Macmillan government’s aim was to include within the areas as many of the over 100 sites that would otherwise be in the Republic of Cyprus.<sup>149</sup> Initially, London privately considered that 170 square miles – 5% of Cyprus – was needed, but proposed instead 152 square miles.<sup>150</sup> This was a staggering request, as the enclaves determined in July 1957 (see MAP II) did not amount to half this.<sup>151</sup> Makarios’ concern was the number of Cypriots living in what would be British territory, and after his initial offer of 36 square miles, proposed 93 square miles: Macmillan’s government flatly rejected this, although it was forty times Gibraltar’s size.<sup>152</sup> To appease Makarios, Britain reduced its demand to 122 square miles: a further reduction was considered a “sacrifice of ‘elbow room’” and was discounted.<sup>153</sup> Labour criticised the delay, the value of the bases and their size – Francis Noel-Baker correctly retorted that Malta was 122 square miles.<sup>154</sup> Another MP pointed out that the installations covered twelve square miles and although it was recognised that room to manoeuvre was required, asking for almost ten times the area covered by the installations was a bit rich.<sup>155</sup> Even the US Ambassador to London condemned the British stance on the bases, but did not recommend any public statements to such an affect for fear of Makarios stalling further.<sup>156</sup> Nevertheless, on 1 July – three months after Kutchuk offered the compromise of 100 square miles – agreement was reached on 99 square miles (see MAP III).<sup>157</sup> Thus the eighteen-month delay was essentially due to London’s efforts to retain a larger slice of the cake than they had wanted in July 1957 when an independent Cyprus was not foreseen and smaller sovereign territory was acceptable.

Although Macmillan’s government failed to prevent the creation of an independent Cypriot state, it was the real victor in 1960. A Cypriot state was born, but Greek and Turkish Cypriot elites destroyed it in December 1963 when their competing desires for *enosis* and partition respectively

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148 CAB 129/88, C(57)161, 9 July 1957.

149 Hansard, Selwyn Lloyd, House of Commons, 1 February 1960, pp. 637-638.

150 CAB 129/100, C(60)44, 7 March 1960.

151 CAB 129/88, C(57)178, 26 July 1957.

152 Hansard, House of Commons, 1 February 1960, p. 637; and CAB 129/100, C(60)44, 7 March 1960.

153 CAB 129/100, C(60)44, 7 March 1960.

154 Hansard, Francis Noel-Baker House of Commons, 9 February 1960, pp. 331-333. Of particular interest are the questions put to the Conservative Government by Emrys Hughes, see, Hansard, House of Commons, 9 February 1960, pp. 341-344; Also see the long debate, Hansard, House of Commons, 14 July 1960, pp. 1613-1740 and 19 July 1960, pp. 377-446.

155 Hansard, Jeremy Thorpe, House of Commons, 9 February 1960, pp. 348-349.

156 Nicolet, *United States Policy Towards Cyprus*, p. 146.

157 Hansard, House of Commons, 6 April 1960, pp. 391-392; Hansard, House of Commons, 4 July 1960, p. 31.

collided into open civil war between the various Greek Cypriot paramilitary groups and TMT.<sup>158</sup> In 1960 two territories under British sovereignty within this state – the BSBA of Akrotiri-Episkopi and Dhekelia (see MAP IV and MAP V) were also established and maintained despite the violent 1960s and the 1974 coup against Makarios by the Greek Junta at its supporters in Cyprus and the subsequent Turkish invasion. The bases were not leased – despite popular Greek Cypriot notions that they were, and the British government is under no obligation to relinquish them. Although these enclaves are military bases they contain British run hospitals, schools, churches, police and fire departments, golf, tennis, cricket, rugby, boating, sailing, motorcycle, gun, go-kart, and saddle clubs, cinemas, and theatres; in essence they have the appearance of an operative civic society – “little colonies”.<sup>159</sup>

Britain also kept the unfettered control of thirty-one sites and installations scattered across the territory of the Republic, although the figure required in 1957 was eleven.<sup>160</sup> British personnel would guard these sites, but outside of them, the onus was on Cypriot authorities to provide security against any interference, including restricting the movement of vehicles and Cypriot citizens around them.<sup>161</sup> British authorities also had unrestricted use of roads and ports within the Republic, and Cypriot airspace without the need for permission. American installations, primarily sensitive communication facilities, were also safeguarded by the agreements and agreed to by Makarios in January 1960.<sup>162</sup>

There can be little doubt of Cyprus' military value to Britain and to the West, as in the case of the First Gulf War when some 10,000 sorties were launched from the island.<sup>163</sup> O'Malley and Craig also point out that the 1960 agreements were geared to protect the “sophisticated electronic listening equipment, which fed – and still feeds – a constant flow of top secret information to Britain and America”.<sup>164</sup>

158 A. Varnava and C. Yakinthou (forthcoming 2010) ‘Cyprus: Political Modernity and Structures of Democracy in a Divided Island’ in F. Hendriks, A. Lidstrom and J. Loughlin (eds.), *Handbook on Subnational Democracy in Europe*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

159 *Cyprus District Map of Akrotiri, Scale 1: 10,000, Akrotiri and Environs*, Directorate of Survey, Near East, 1968; *Cyprus Town Plans, Episkopi Cantonment*, Directorate of Survey, Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom, 1958; Lieut-Colonel J.D. Edgar (1955) ‘Cyprus’, *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, pp. 73-81, 79.

160 The number reduces to eleven since two of the sites originally proposed to be outside the enclaves were included in the Dhekelia base (hence its peculiar shape and substantially larger size from that proposed in 1957). These were the SCANT transmitter site near Akhna and the road to Ayios Nikolaos containing the Army Y station, the RAF message centre and the Army ordnance depot. See, also Hansard, Julian Amery, House of Commons, 14 July 1960, pp. 1734-1735.

161 O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 84.

162 Walworth Barbour, US Deputy Chief of Mission to London, to Dulles, 13 January 1960, *FRUS, 1958-1960*, X, pp. 806-807. O'Malley and Craig are therefore wrong when they claim that the US used their facilities without reference to the Government of Cyprus. O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 82.

163 *The Times*, 5 July 2001, editorial, p. 17.

164 O'Malley and Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy*, p. 80.

The most controversial point, however, was the stockpiling of nuclear weapons. During the wrangling over the size of the bases a Labour MP tried to prevent the use and stockpiling of nuclear weapons on Cyprus by Britain without the consent of Nicosia. But Amery retorted that this amounted to “a key to the cupboard”.<sup>165</sup> Indeed, two years later, when the Minister of Defence was asked to give an assurance that nuclear bases would not be established in Cyprus he could not since:

For some years we have based in Cyprus ... bomber aircraft which are capable of delivering nuclear weapons ... [and] no question of seeking approval arises.<sup>166</sup>

A year later, when rumours spread that Cyprus would house nuclear rockets, the new Defence Minister did not deny them, stating that:

The essence of a sovereign base area is that we can deploy such weapons as we think fit at such time as we think fit.<sup>167</sup>

In 2000, journalist Jean Christou presented information from a newly declassified British document which prompted President (at the time) Glafkos Clerides to opine that it was possible that nuclear weapons were stationed on the island during the 1960s, triggering a stir on the island. This prompted one historian to write an article substantiating the claim from British and American government documents.<sup>168</sup> He need not have bothered: the existence of nuclear weapons was no top secret for it was made known in the House of Commons. But in the event, although the development of Cyprus as a nuclear-armed aircraft carrier made the island a hostage to a nuclear disaster, the tactical use of nuclear weapons remained impractical.

Britain maintained military sites and installations when withdrawing from other areas of its Empire, but never were these rights unfettered or in perpetuity as in Cyprus.<sup>169</sup> Nicosia has never challenged the legitimacy of the British Sovereign Base Areas, but riots in 2001, led by a local MP, Marios Matsakis, reminded the world community of their existence. It also made Tony Blair's government reassess their value, offering to relinquish some of the territory in the event of an agreement between the two communities on the island, which it did when the fifth and final version of the Annan Plan was put to a referendum in April 2004.

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165 Hansard, Emrys Hughes, House of Commons, 19 July 1960, pp. 400-402; and reply by Amery, pp. 405-406.

166 Hansard, Minister of Defence, Harold Watkinson, House of Commons, 14 February 1962, p. 163.

167 Hansard, Minister of Defence, Peter Thorneycroft, House of Commons, 27 March 1963, p. 1315.

168 C. Nicolet (2000) 'British Nuclear Weapons in Cyprus in the 1960s: The Evidence from the Archives', *Themis*, VII, pp. 373-376.

169 Britain's military presence in Iraq lasted from its independence in 1932 to the coup of 1958, though the bases were disbanded in 1955. British bases in Transjordan were leased and Britain left 10 years after Transjordan's independence in 1946. Britain's military presence lasted the longest in Egypt, from 1922 to 1956. It should be noted that Guantanamo Bay was leased to the United States; it is of no consequence that since Castro came to power no rent has been paid.



Ultimately, Macmillan's interest to preserve the British military position in Cyprus outweighed his interest in peace, because he never offered to relinquish full sovereignty over the whole island. It was during his reign that civil war broke out between the two communities: a tragedy that would have been averted had Macmillan's government actually proposed in mid-1957 to relinquish sovereignty over the territory outside the enclaves instead of insisting on the tri-condominium scheme. But it did not intend to do so even in 1959 when the decision was taken by Athens and Ankara.

When it is considered that Cyprus is the only independent state in the world to have a foreign state own territory within its geographic borders, then the question of Britain "relinquishing" Cyprus let alone "decolonising" the island is disputable. The granting of "independence" to Cyprus in 1960 and the tragic events since have overshadowed the fact that to obtain "freedom" the Cypriots had to cede 99 square miles of territory to Britain. At the time Liberal MP Jeremy Thorpe pointedly noted:

... the cession of sovereignty is a very high price for a small nation to have to pay in order to obtain independence. We have never asked any part of our Colonial Empire to pay such a price.<sup>170</sup>

In late 1958 Barbara Castle, Chairman of the British Labour Party, summed up the Macmillan government's Cyprus legacy most aptly. As she sat drinking local wine in an idyllic Cypriot open-air tavern "in the dappled sunshine of the lemon trees ... [she mused at] what a tragedy it was, that this predominantly Greek island with its little villages in the hills, where one ate black olives and drank the rather strong, resinous wine, had become the pawn of hard, militaristic, international politics".<sup>171</sup>

It is evident that Macmillan's government wanted to retain sovereign rights over all of Cyprus through 1) small pockets of territory under exclusive British sovereignty and 2) through sharing sovereignty and government of the rest of the island in a tri-condominium with Greece and Turkey. This is the first article to demonstrate that the reasons for this British policy was that the government wanted to station nuclear weapons on the island in pursuit of the aims of the Baghdad Pact and that the military advisers convinced the government that a government in Cyprus (especially one under Makarios) which may challenge the stationing of nuclear weapons would threaten the policy. Macmillan's government continued to position Britain between Greece and Turkey, making out that the Cyprus conflict was a Greco-Turkish problem, and that the issue for his government was securing its strategic interests. By doing this, however, Macmillan's government did not take into account that the Greek and Turkish governments might come to an agreement on Cyprus, and since all that Macmillan's government made out it was concerned about was its strategic interests, these, both Athens and Ankara thought, could be secured in areas under

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170 Hansard, House of Commons, 9 February 1960, p. 347.

171 Castle, *Fighting all the Way*, pp. 299-300.

exclusive British sovereignty. Despite its reluctance, in the end, Macmillan's government thought it not a bad thing to wash its hands of governing Cyprus and was content with small territory under its exclusive sovereignty, which meant areas where they could exercise unfettered control. But this did mean that Macmillan's government now wanted much more land under its exclusive sovereignty. So, instead of preparing Cyprus for its transition to independent republic by laying down the structures for the establishment of security and democracy, by insisting on the breaking up of the terrorist groups (EOKA and TMT) and ensuring that both communities understood the reasons behind the consociational system (namely the protection of the minority against any potential tyranny from the majority),<sup>172</sup> Macmillan's government was focused on extracting larger sovereign military bases than they had themselves considered suitable in 1957.

## MAP I

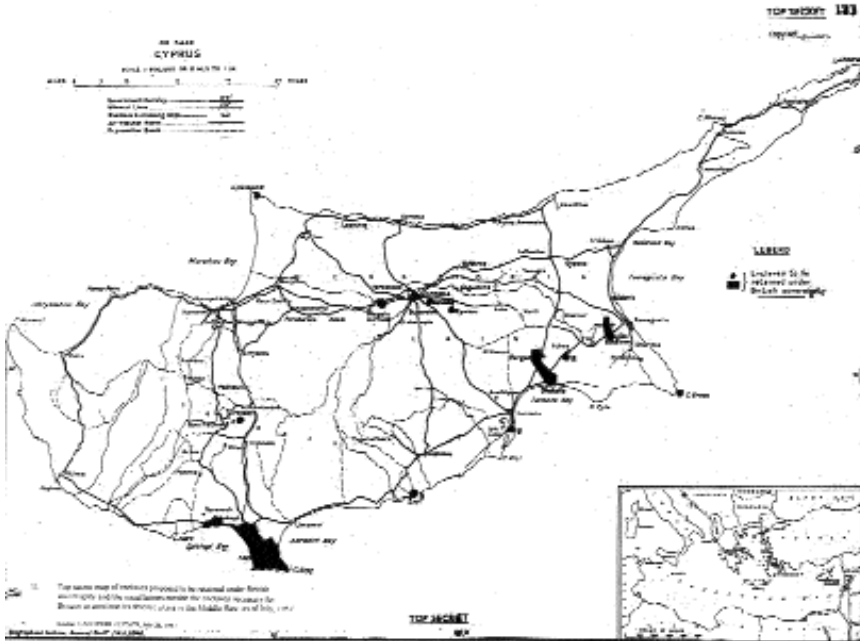


1. Map showing Cyprus' position in the east Mediterranean and the distance between Cyprus and various places.

Source: Istanbul University, School of Geography and Environmental Science.

<sup>172</sup> Varnava and Yakinthou, 'Cyprus: Political Modernity and Structures of Democracy in a Divided Island'.

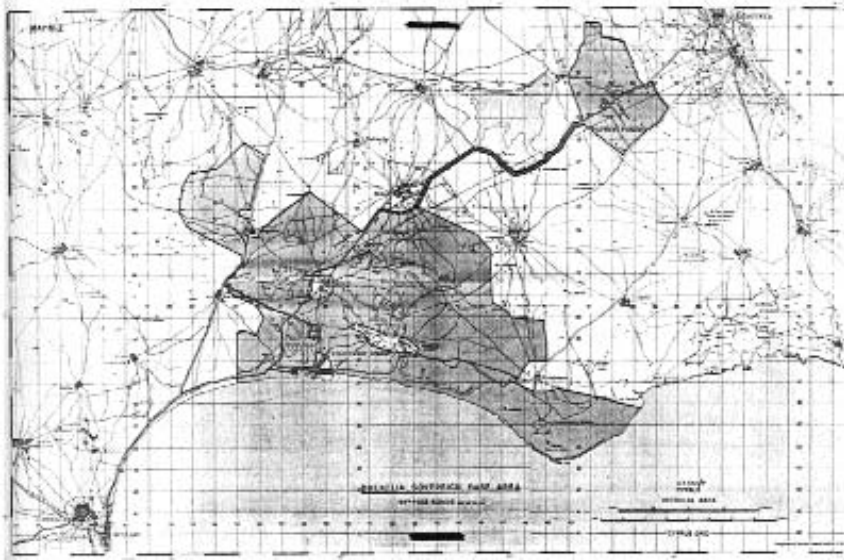
MAP II



MAP III



MAP IV



MAP V

