

INDEPENDENCE POSTPONED: CYPRUS 1959-1960

Hubert Faustmann

Abstract

From the settlement of the Cyprus dispute at a conference in London in February 1959 until the declaration of independence on August 16th 1960, a final agreement on all outstanding issues concerning the putative Republic had to be reached. By July 1960, the political and constitutional order of the new state was finalised. Cyprus was ready for independence. But on some of the controversial issues only temporary arrangements had been made by the two communities which would soon be disputed or not adhered to. Moreover, the constitutional order created during the Transitional Period on the basis of the agreements of Zurich and London was not to last for longer than three years. The article will focus on some of the most controversial issues that were negotiated during these eighteen months and assess the extent to which the breakdown of the constitutional order in 1963 might have had its roots in the Transitional Period.

The Cypriots commemorated the 40th anniversary of their independence on October 1st 2000. Most Cypriots were aware that the low profile celebrations were actually six weeks late since the island had become independent on August 16th 1960. Practical as Cypriots are, in July 1963 the council of ministers moved Independence Day to October 1st in order to avoid the summer heat and the main holiday season. What most Cypriots do not know, however, is that if things had progressed as planned, this change would not have been necessary. At the London conference in February 1959, Independence Day had originally been set for February 19th 1960. But the Transitional Period, during which the agreements reached in Zurich and London about the future Republic of Cyprus were to be deliberated in detail, lasted six months longer than planned. The negotiations ran into unforeseen difficulties and independence had to be repeatedly postponed. Moreover, the agreements reached during that period were not to last. Only three years later, the constitutional order of the Republic broke down. In an attempt to reconstruct some key aspects of the negotiations during those eighteen months, this article will therefore also focus on the extent to which the crisis of 1963 had its roots in the Transitional Period.

For the sake of more clarity within a rather complicated topic, this article is divided into three parts:

- a) A general overview of some of the main events and developments during those eighteen months;
- b) An account of the negotiations concerning British military requirements being the main reason for the delayed independence as well as being the most important and contentious issue between the Cypriots and the British;
- c) A brief analysis of the three issues disputed and negotiated mostly between the Greek and Turkish sides, which were to be in the centre of the bi-communal dispute after 1960:
 - i. The 70/30 ratio of Greek and Turkish Cypriots in the civil service.
 - ii. The establishment of separate municipalities.
 - iii. The distribution of executive and legislative power.

Part I: A General Overview of the Transitional Period

On March 1st 1959, the Greek Cypriot leader, Archbishop Makarios, returned to the island in triumph after almost three years in exile. However, he had not brought with him the prospect of *enosis*, the union of Cyprus with Greece, but a future as an independent state which neither the Greek Cypriots nor the Turkish Cypriots had really wanted until 1959.

Moreover, the leader of the Greek Cypriot armed struggle in Cyprus, Colonel Grivas, had not yet even officially accepted the agreements of Zurich and London. One week after Makarios' arrival, Grivas finally declared his acceptance of the Cyprus agreement as a *fait accompli* in a leaflet distributed throughout the island. But the EOKA leader, who had become a legend within the Greek Cypriot community, did not hide his disapproval making clear that he was neither happy about the settlement nor about the fact that he had not been consulted before to agreements were signed.¹

The way Grivas should leave the island was the dominant issue in early March since the British would not tolerate his presence on Cyprus as long as they were officially in power. Moreover, any open triumph of Grivas, who was held responsible for the death of dozens of British soldiers and civilians, was not acceptable to the British. On March 17th Grivas finally left the island without a hero's farewell since the public was not informed about the precise date and time of his departure, though the way he was received in Athens largely made up for this.²

With Grivas out of the picture and the emergency finally over, the negotiations about the putative Republic of Cyprus could commence. In Zurich, the Greek and Turkish delegations had agreed that three committees should finalise the treaties and negotiate the outstanding issues:

- i. The Transitional Committee and the Joint Council, located in Cyprus.
- ii. The Joint Committee, also called Constitutional Committee, also located in Cyprus.
- iii. The London Joint Committee on Cyprus, located in Britain.

The Transitional Committee was established in Cyprus on March 5th 1959. It was responsible for "*drawing up plans for adapting and reorganising the Government machinery in preparation for the transfer of authority to the independent Republic.*"³ Moreover, it was the British intention to share responsibility for administration with the Cypriots whenever possible already during the Transitional Period, and to train the future Cypriot ministers. Therefore, the Transitional Committee formed together with the Governor's Executive Council a *Joint Council* which functioned as the main governing body during the Transitional Period.⁴ The purpose of the Joint Council was to set up a Cabinet system and a system of ministerial responsibility. Therefore, the Cypriot members of the Transitional Committee were "*invited*" by the Governor in April to assume special responsibilities for specific departments and functions of government as "*Ministers*" at a ratio of seven to three.⁵ For a long time, the Transitional Committee remained the only body in which rapid progress could be achieved since it had to make decisions only on practical but not on principal matters.⁶

The second body was officially called the Joint Committee but became known as the Constitutional Committee. Its task was to draw up the constitution of the Republic of Cyprus adhering to regulations and principles laid down in the Zurich agreement. Interestingly, Britain was not part of this body. Cyprus was one of the few colonies where Britain did not play a key role in shaping the constitution of the putative state.⁷ The leader of the Greek Cypriot delegation was the close aide of Archbishop Makarios, Glafkos Clerides, while his Turkish Cypriot counterpart was Rauf Denktash, who after Dr. Fazil Kutchuk was the second most influential Turkish Cypriot politician. The Greek delegation was headed by the eminent Athenian lawyer and former Minister of Justice, Themistocles Tsatsos. Turkey had sent the expert on international law and former Minister of State, Professor Nihat Erim, who later became Prime Minister. The Swiss expert on constitutional law, Professor Marcel Bridel, was jointly appointed by Greece and Turkey as a "neutral" legal advisor to the Committee.⁸

The "*London Joint Committee on Cyprus (LJC)*" consisted of representatives of

the three governments and the two Cypriot communities. Its duty was to prepare the final Treaties which put the conclusions of the London Conference into effect.⁹ Given that the LJC was the only body in which all signatories of the Cyprus Agreement were members (the UK was not represented in the Constitutional Committee; Greece and Turkey were not in the Transitional Committee), it was regarded as the central body for negotiations on all topics during the Transitional Period. The reasons for its key role as well as its London location were largely tactical. In keeping with the spirit of the Zurich/London agreement, the British hoped for Turkish and Greek support during the negotiations against any Greek or, less likely, Turkish Cypriot resistance which might endanger a final agreement. Therefore, the British opposed any attempt to *"reduce the importance of the London Joint Committee and try to concentrate work in Cyprus where of course H.M.G. would have to deal with Makarios (and [the Turkish Cypriot leader, H.F.] Kutchuk) without the intervention of the Greeks (or Turks)."*¹⁰ Only after the negotiations in the London Joint Committee had failed to produce any significant results would the British change strategy. After February 1960, the London Joint Committee lost its significance and British officials conducted direct talks with Makarios and Kutchuk on the key issue of British military requirements in Cyprus.

Dealing with the representatives of Britain, Greece and Turkey in London were the former diplomatic advisor of Makarios, Zenon Rossides, and his Turkish Cypriot colleague, Osman Orek, Secretary-General of Kutchuk's *Cyprus-is-Turkish Party*, and first Defence Minister during the Transitional Period as well as after independence.¹¹

While the negotiations in the various committees were in progress, a serious rift occurred within the Greek Cypriot community. On July 30th 1959, the traditionally uneasy relationship between Grivas and Makarios escalated into an open conflict. Grivas *"formally disclaimed responsibility"* for the Cyprus agreement.¹² The former EOKA leader, who had decided to enter Greek politics, warned the Cypriots against the ratification of the Zurich/London agreement, explaining that he withdrew his support because the signatories had entered into verbal commitments in London, of which he was not aware in spring 1959. Moreover, he informed Makarios that the British base areas were too large for him to accept. He also intimated that Makarios was making concessions which would adversely affect the interests of the Cypriots.

Soon the right wing of the Greek Cypriot community was sharply divided into Grivas' and Makarios' supporters. The danger of a violent clash between the two camps as well as an armed struggle against the supporters of the Cyprus agreement was imminent, alarming the British. The internal Greek Cypriot feud became a dominant feature for the rest of the Transitional Period putting Makarios

under immense pressure not to make concessions in his negotiations with the British and the Turkish Cypriots.¹³

On October 18th the famous *Deniz* incident took place. A British naval patrol boarded and searched the Turkish vessel *Deniz* off the coast of Cyprus. They found two cases of ammunition. The incident was a serious blow to the relations between the two communities. It confirmed Greek Cypriot suspicions that the Turkish Cypriot underground organisation, TMT, was still active in Cyprus and that the Turkish Cypriots were arming themselves as a precaution against future troubles or a breakdown in the negotiations.¹⁴ In response to the incident Makarios suspended the work of the Greek Cypriot team in the Constitutional Commission. Kutchuk, who had denounced the incident, questioned, albeit not very convincingly, if the ship's real destination had been Cyprus. The Turkish Government quickly denied any involvement.

In late 1959, Makarios was heavily criticised by both the right and the left. He had upset the traditional elites when he had called only young EOKA fighters and their close associates into the Cabinet. The older men of influence from the left and the right felt ignored and contemplated revenge as the presidential elections were drawing near.¹⁵ A campaign led by the Bishop of Kyrenia and the mayor of Nicosia, Themistocles Dervis, was launched in November with a view to removing Makarios as the political leader of the Cypriots and overthrowing the Zurich and London agreements.¹⁶ On November 15th John Clerides, a widely respected Greek Cypriot (and father of Makarios' close aide, Glafkos Clerides) and his previous opponent, Dervis, met in Nicosia and decided to form a new party, the Democratic Union. Their objective was to oppose Makarios in the upcoming presidential elections.¹⁷ Makarios was criticised for ruling the Greek Cypriot community in a dictatorial manner and failing to use the *Deniz* incident to oppose the stationing of Greek and Turkish troops on the island. Not surprisingly, Clerides himself became the presidential candidate of the Democratic Union by the end of November.¹⁸

The foundation of the Democratic Union was followed by the re-emergence of the communist party, AKEL, which had been proscribed during the EOKA emergency. On December 4th 1959, only one week before the presidential elections, the British Governor, Hugh Foot, finally lifted the ban on the communist party.¹⁹ AKEL came out in full support of Clerides, who was now supported by a mosaic of political forces: radical supporters of the political right, determined to overthrow the Cyprus agreement, communists, who at least accepted the settlement as a necessity for an interim period, and moderates, who opposed Makarios for various reasons.²⁰

During the pre-election period fighting broke out between supporters and

opponents of Makarios as well as between the Left and Right in several districts.²¹ On December 13th 1959, Makarios won the first presidential election gaining 67% of the votes, while Clerides received 33%.²² The island returned to an uneasy calm. Considering the traditional strength of AKEL, which claimed to control about a third of the electorate, and the opposition to Makarios, this was a big political success for the Archbishop and a clear signal that any policy aiming to abrogate the Cyprus agreement would be resisted by two thirds of the electorate.

The Turkish Cypriot leader, Fazil Kutchuk, had an easier task. He automatically became Vice-President since he had been unopposed.²³ For the first time, the Cypriots had elected and recognised political leaders with a democrat legitimisation to sign agreements.

Originally, elections for the House of Representatives were scheduled for January 17th and for the two Communal Chambers for December 31st, which would have completed the establishment of the legislative and executive bodies of the future Republic.²⁴ But the British linked the date for the elections with a successful outcome regarding their military and other requirements.²⁵ This could not be achieved by the intended date for independence in late January. Therefore, these two elections were postponed pending agreement on the outstanding issues, which did not come about until early July 1960.

Consequently, polling days for the parliamentary bodies took place in late July and early August 1960.²⁶ In the run-up to the election for the House of Representatives, the communist party AKEL changed sides in exchange for a guarantee of five seats offered by Makarios. It was known after the municipal and presidential elections that AKEL represented about 30% of the electorate but was not granted a corresponding number of seats. In a Cold War context, any higher representation of the communist party was regarded as unacceptable by all outside powers involved in the Cyprus question.²¹ The Democratic Union of Clerides and Dervis boycotted the elections rightly accusing the electoral system of being discriminatory.

It was already clear before the elections for the House of Representatives and the Communal Chambers actually took place that the existing leadership of each community would prevail. On the Turkish Cypriot side there had never been any significant opposition during the Transitional Period. The candidates of Kutchuk's Turkish National Party won all seats in the House of Representatives and the Turkish Cypriot Communal Chamber with little opposition. The very few independent candidates were well behind those of the Turkish National Party.²⁶

Cyprus finally became an independent Republic on Tuesday, August 16th 1960,

hardly six weeks after the end of the long and intricate negotiations. Only by early July had it become clear that independence was imminent and that it would be granted on August 16th. Consequently, there had been no time for large-scale preparations of the celebrations which turned out to be simple and improvised. Foreign guests were not pouring into the island to celebrate the establishment of a state nobody had really wished for.²⁹

Following the handover of power by the British to the Cypriot representatives, the Greek and Turkish military contingents, whose presence had been decided in the Zurich/London agreement, arrived and went to their respective provisional camps on the afternoon of Independence Day.³⁰ The Turkish soldiers were welcomed by a large number of Turkish Cypriots while a significantly smaller number of Greek Cypriots assembled to greet the Greek contingent. Most of them attended the enthusiastic welcoming ceremony for twenty-one EOKA exiles who returned to Cyprus from Athens.³¹

The celebrations were rather ominous. The two communities celebrated separately, one celebrating the arrival of the Turkish contingent, the other the return of the exiles. On the streets mostly Greek and Turkish flags were used for decoration while hardly a Cypriot flag could be seen.³²

Part II: The Negotiations About the British Military Requirements

For the Greek Cypriots a success in the bases question was, as the British scholar Robert Holland describes, *"one of the few ways that the Greek-Cypriot politicians could sustain the illusion that Lancaster House [i.e. the Zurich and London agreement] had been a great 'victory' for themselves."*⁶³ It was the only question of substance in which the Greek Cypriots had retained a free hand in the otherwise mainly imposed Cyprus agreement. That was at least what they thought. The British view was exactly the opposite. Therefore, the stage was set for a British - Greek Cypriot confrontation of a magnitude that would exceed the worst British fears.

Negotiations on British military requirements became the dominant issue throughout the Transitional Period. The most important, but not the only disputed topic, was their size. When the first official British maps were tabled in the London Joint Committee in May 1959, the British demanded an area of 152 square miles,³⁴ which included seven villages with a Cypriot population of about 4.400, as sovereign base areas. The area represented about 4,1% of the entire island and was larger than the island of Malta. The Greek Cypriots were outraged and offered, in their counterproposal in October 1959, 36 square miles excluding any Cypriot population.

Even though the British presented their military requirements from a position of strength, as the rulers of the island, this position had in fact been decisively weakened by the Zurich/London agreement. By signing it, Britain had agreed to give up sovereignty over the island only if its military demands were met. However, politically, Britain had in fact committed itself to leaving Cyprus. Consequently, the British position from spring 1959 that there was nothing to negotiate, had to be gradually abandoned since the Greek Cypriots insisted on a negotiated agreement on British military requirements before any real progress on other outstanding issues could be achieved. But, when the first British concession was offered in late 1959, it could not prevent a head-on collision with the Greek Cypriots. It was not simply the divergent views on the size of the bases that made an agreement difficult. There was also a difference in the perception of what the British sovereign bases should be and what practical and political implications derived from sovereignty. Originally, the British demanded, in effect, small colonies with a separate civil administration and a military purpose, "*our Gibraltors*",³⁵ as the British Prime Minister, Macmillan, had named them. Britain was determined not to be dependent on Cypriot goodwill in running the bases. Therefore, London insisted on large areas with access to the sea which could function even against the will of the Cypriots.

The Greek Cypriots, on the other hand, were determined to eliminate any traces of "colonialism". They were only willing to agree to purely military installations under British sovereignty with extensive external sites and facilities. Moreover, once the rift between Makarios and Grivas had become open, the Archbishop was under even greater internal pressure to make a determined effort to reduce the area of the British military bases.

The unavoidable deadlock over the issue of British military requirements soon paralysed the entire negotiation process and threatened to prevent an agreement in time for the intended date of independence, February 19th 1960. In a last minute attempt to reach an agreement, another London conference was convened in January 1960 (16-29th). As in 1959, the idea was to bend Makarios by the joint pressure of Greece, Turkey and Britain at a meeting of principals. But this time, Makarios was determined to prevent a repetition of 1959 and succeeded in doing so for five reasons.

First, already prior to the conference, Makarios had freed himself from the deadline pressure by indicating that he would rather accept a postponement of independence than an unsatisfactory settlement.

Second, he was no longer dependent on Greece since all parties were bound by the Cyprus agreement. When Greece aligned with Turkey and Britain during the

conference in order to push the Archbishop into an agreement, as they had done in 1959, Makarios resisted, carried on negotiating and made the rift between him and the Greek government public. Much to the embarrassment of Athens, he successfully demanded that Greece (thus also Turkey) be excluded from the final negotiations on British military requirements in and after London.

Third, the other parties had no realistic scenario in hand which could force Makarios to agree in order to avert a worse development. Neither a return to the Macmillan Plan nor a partition threat could be brought forward as a credible scenario anymore after the Zurich/London agreement had been reached. No British government could justify in parliament and to the public a return to violence and the suppression of colonial people because of disagreement on the size of its bases.

Fourth, the three-country front Makarios was now facing was not as united as in 1959. Greece as well as Turkey did endorse to some degree Makarios' claim to limit the size of the bases and exclude as much population as possible. Greece, which was caught in the middle of the dispute with interests, loyalties and commitments to both sides, extended only conditional support to the British claims. In particular, the British refusal to state its intentions concerning any future cession of the bases caused suspicion in Athens and limited Greek support.

Finally, the position and role of the Turkish Cypriots had changed in London. In the light of extensive British demands concerning the size of the bases as well as sites and facilities, the Greek and Turkish Cypriots finally joined forces instead of opposing each other as they had done throughout 1959.

In order to understand this change it is necessary to briefly outline the goals and principles that had shaped Turkish Cypriot policy during 1959. For most of 1959 (and to a lesser extent during 1960) the negotiations on British military requirements as well as on many other issues had only two protagonists: the British and the Greek Cypriots. The Turkish Cypriot leaders regularly subordinated Cypriot national interests to a policy of corroboration, or at least not upsetting, the British.

Why?

First of all, the Greek Cypriot goal to make the new republic as independent as possible ran contrary to the Turkish Cypriot aim to ensure the maximum Turkish and British influence as a safeguard against future Greek Cypriot domination or attempts to effect *enosis*.

Secondly, Turkish Cypriots as well as Ankara could not afford to oppose Britain in order to ensure British support in pending key demands of the Turkish side such

as the veto rights of the Vice president, the separate municipalities, the 70/30 ratio in the public service, and British financial aid.

Thirdly, the Turkish Cypriots followed the orders and instructions of Ankara, which throughout the Transitional Period remained a loyal ally of Britain with very few exceptions. But since most of the vital Turkish and Turkish Cypriot demands for which British support was needed had been satisfied in early 1960, the Turkish Cypriot policy could now change. Starting with the London conference, their leadership pursued a seesaw policy between safeguarding some Cypriot national interests by siding with the Greek Cypriots, mediating between the British and the Greek Cypriots and trying to squeeze out as much British aid for their community as possible in exchange for the support of British claims.

At the London conference the Turkish Cypriot support in many, though not all, issues strengthened Makarios' negotiating position decisively, given that any settlement against the will of either community would have had an openly imposed character. This could not go down well amongst the British as well as the world public opinion. The old mechanisms of divide and rule were no longer effective. Against joint resistance the British views had no chance of prevailing.

After Makarios had refused to accept a reduced British demand of 122 square miles for their bases and had gained Kutchuk's support against the British intention to create a separate civil administration within the base areas, it was agreed to postpone independence for one month, until March 19th. Following the advice of the Greek Foreign Minister, Averoff, "*to get tough*", the British gave the Cypriot delegation a ten-day ultimatum to reach agreement otherwise independence would have to be postponed once again.³⁶ It was agreed that negotiations between Makarios, Kutchuk and a new British chief negotiator, Colonial Under-Secretary Julian Amery, should continue in Cyprus and on February 4th, Amery arrived. In order to meet the new deadline for an agreement, he aimed to settle the outstanding issues within 48 hours after his arrival.³⁷ In the end, he spent almost four months on the island.

No agreement could be reached until the set deadline. But this time no new date for independence was announced and it was postponed indefinitely until agreement on the British military requirements could be reached.

To make things worse for London, Kutchuk and Makarios issued statements which in varying degrees blamed the British government for the failure to reach an agreement. In particular, Kutchuk's criticism upset the British as well as Ankara. In an angry telegram the British Ambassador in Turkey, Burrows, cabled to the Foreign Office: "*Several members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have recently drawn our*

attention, to the fact that Kutchuk is tending to pay considerably more attention to the views of Makarios and not to be so blindly obedient to the requests of the Turkish Government as previously. They detected in this a growth of 'island mentality' in which the provincial interests of the Cypriot politicians were beginning to weigh more strongly than the wider international considerations.³⁸ Now the Turkish Cypriot leader came under strong pressure by the Turkish Foreign Minister, Zorlu, to back the British position publicly. This produced some results although the conversations between Zorlu and Kutchuk were now, according to another report by Burrows, "almost acrimonious and Kutchuk had even threatened to resign"³⁹ In the end, Kutchuk bowed to the Turkish pressure and closed ranks with the British again.

By mid-February, the negotiation positions of the three sides could be summarised as follows: The British demanded 120 square miles under British sovereignty. Makarios was willing to offer 80 square miles plus 40 under Cypriot sovereignty with Britain possessing special facilities. Kutchuk suggested 80 square miles plus 40 under joint British-Cypriot sovereignty.

In order to overcome the stalemate, the British repeatedly asked the Greek and Turkish governments to exert strong pressure on Makarios. But despite the support the British seemed to enjoy from Greece and Turkey – they had now virtually formed a new alliance that was publicly annoyed by Makarios – Athens and Ankara, in fact, softly pressured the British to settle for less than 100 square miles, the maximum figure regarded as acceptable to Makarios.

On March 30th 1960, the British had finally, albeit only internally, agreed on the magic figure of 99 square miles. This was also the position wholeheartedly supported by Greece, Turkey and Kutchuk. It was clear that once the British had been brought down to 99 square miles, no further concession would be possible. While an agreement seemed imminent Makarios escalated the situation in a speech delivered in commemoration of the outbreak of the EOKA struggle on April 1st. He publicly threatened to instigate civil disobedience against British authorities and proclaim independence unilaterally. Moreover, he stated that the struggle for *enosis* would continue in a different form "*preserving [...] the same substance and the same contents[...] The realisation of our hopes and aspirations is not complete under the Zurich and London Agreements[...] We have acquired a bastion and starting point for peaceful campaigns.*"⁴⁰ Makarios' open declaration that the Cyprus Agreement was not the final solution to the Cyprus problem rightly upset Kutchuk and reinforced the strong Turkish Cypriot suspicions that the Greek side would not adhere to the Zurich and London agreements after independence.

Nevertheless, negotiations continued and a final agreement over the size of the bases was reached on April 25th when Makarios accepted the British proposal of

99 square miles. But the issue of the Sovereign Bases was far from settled. Agreement on the size did not mean agreement on its precise delimitation. Moreover, the differences over an eventual cession of the bases if the British were ever to give them up and the inclusion of Cypriots in the base areas were still unresolved. Still, one of the biggest obstacles for a Cypriot-British agreement had been overcome. Now the question of an eventual cession of the bases became the central issue of the negotiations. The Greek side had demanded that the British bases should be ceded to the Republic of Cyprus if they were ever to be relinquished and was determined to exclude the possibility that they could be handed over to Turkey. Ankara had up to now blocked any formula which excluded the possibility that one or both of the British bases be ceded to Turkey in the future. A dramatic political change in Turkey made an agreement on this topic possible. On May 27th, the Turkish government was overthrown and their successors, eager to reach an agreement in Cyprus, gave their approval to a formula that would allow the transfer of the British bases only to the Republic of Cyprus. Consequently, the negotiations about the British military requirement could be successfully concluded in time for independence on August 16th.

The last obstacle for independence proved to be the lack of an agreement on two issues negotiated between the Greek and Turkish sides: the 70/30 ratio in the public service and the separate municipalities.

Part III: Sources for Bi-Communal Conflict after Independence

70/30 Ratio

The Zurich/London agreement had granted the Turkish Cypriots 30% of the posts in the public service and 40% in the army following independence. Since the Turkish Cypriot community comprised only about 18% of the population, most Greek Cypriots regarded this as an unjustified privilege.

Eager to cash in their gains, the Turkish Cypriots wanted the 70/30 ratio in the civil service to be implemented prior to the end of British rule.⁴¹ Since the Greek Cypriots held more than 78% of the posts in 1959, the correct proportions could only be achieved either by dismissing Greeks or by enlarging the civil service to an extent not justified by its workload.⁴²

Consequently, Archbishop Makarios, demanded a gradual implementation and the employment of only sufficiently qualified Turkish Cypriots. This created a problem for the Turkish Cypriots since their educational level on average was much lower than that of the Greek Cypriots, so there were not enough of them possessing the necessary qualifications.⁴³ But their two leaders, Fazil Kutchuk and particularly

Rauf Denktash, insisted on the immediate implementation of the 70/30 ratio irrespective of practical difficulties.⁴⁴

After hard bargaining during the last days before independence it was finally agreed that the implementation of the 70/30 ratio should take effect within five months from the date of the declaration of independence.⁴⁵ The Greek Cypriots did not deliver on their commitment. This upset the Turkish Cypriots and became a source of bi-communal conflict after 1960, though by December 1963 the 30% ratio had almost been fulfilled.

Separate Municipalities

The second unresolved issue by June 1960 concerned the establishment of separate municipalities. The concept of administrative communal separation on which the constitution was based was also applied on a municipal level. In acknowledgement of the fait accompli created by the Turkish Cypriots in 1958, article 20 of the *Basic Structure for the future Republic of Cyprus* had ruled that: "*Separate municipalities shall be created in the five largest towns of Cyprus by the Turkish inhabitants of these towns.[. ..] The President and the Vice-President shall examine within four years the question whether or not this separation of municipalities in the five largest towns shall continue.*"⁴⁶

While the Greek Cypriot mayors publicly pressed Makarios to amend this article of the Zurich/London agreement and prevent the official establishment of separate municipal councils, the Turkish Cypriot leadership insisted that the separate municipalities should officially already be in place during the Transitional Period. These demands triggered a conflict about the interpretation of article 20.

During the negotiations the dispute centred on the question of whether separate municipalities should be maintained for a limited period of time or permanently. The Turkish Cypriots insisted that municipal segregation should be permanent, while the Greek side was only willing to accept a temporary separation.⁴⁷

Moreover, the Turkish Cypriots wanted to establish separate municipalities in a geographical as well as administrative sense, meaning Turkish Cypriot control over the Turkish quarters of the towns. The Greek Cypriots, on the other hand, interpreted article 20 of the Zurich agreement as administrative but not geographical separation. All Greeks should be administered by Greek Cypriot and all Turks by Turkish Cypriot municipal councils but there should be no Turkish Cypriot control over territory.

For the Turkish Cypriots, separate municipalities were an important achievement

on the way to self-administration and potentially a first step towards partition should the Republic of Cyprus fail. The Greek Cypriots, on the other hand, were opposed to separate municipalities for exactly the same reasons that the Turkish Cypriots wanted them. Next to the obvious functional disadvantages, they were regarded as a first step towards partition and as the Trojan horse of mainland Turkish influence on the island.

The boundaries of the separate municipalities also remained subject to agreement. That was virtually impossible since, despite the ethnic cleansing and terror in 1958, Greek and Turkish Cypriots still lived together in mixed areas. Moreover, property ownership by the two communities hardly followed a pattern of separate communal areas.⁴⁸

Bi-communal negotiations on the issue were fruitless. On October 12th 1959, an interim legislation was enacted which temporarily authorised action by the Turkish Cypriot municipal authorities in the five main towns created in July 1958.⁴⁹ The Turkish Municipal Committees, as the provisional councils were called, were allowed to *“exercise all rights and powers and perform any duties expressly or by implication conferred or imposed on a Municipal Council in regard to the collection and recovery of revenue...”*⁵⁰ This was a success for Makarios since this provisional organ was working on the basis of administrative but not geographical segregation. This provision should expire *“upon the establishment of separate municipalities by the Turkish inhabitants of the five towns.”*⁵¹

Again, it proved impossible to reach a final agreement by the time of independence. As a compromise, article 177 of the constitution gave the Greek President and the Turkish Cypriot Vice-President the right to determine the delineation of the separate municipalities. This looked like a Turkish Cypriot victory on the lines of geographical partition. On the other hand, article 173 ruled that the municipal councils should be elected by their respective communities, which made sense only in the case of purely administrative separation.⁵²

Consequently, the issue of separate municipalities remained unresolved and became one of the permanent sources of dispute that eventually led the constitutional order to collapse.

The Distribution of Executive and Legislative Power

The third conflict stemming from the Transitional Period concerned the distribution of Executive and Legislative power. The constitutional power balance between both communities had been agreed upon by Greece and Turkey already in February 1959 in Zurich and there was not much scope left for negotiations within

the Constitutional Committee. The fundamental principle of the constitution was the dualism of power between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

The parliament consisted of two different bodies. The House of Representatives comprised of thirty-five Greek and fifteen Turkish Cypriot members. It was responsible for all the laws which affected the affairs of both communities. Laws about taxes, finances and elections had to be approved by separate majorities. Therefore, theoretically, eight Turkish Cypriots out of the fifty members could block any law in the above mentioned areas. Moreover, separate Communal Chambers were in control of all religious, cultural and educational affairs of the respective communities.

The thorniest problem in the negotiations about the constitution proved to be the exercise of executive power. The Turkish Cypriots claimed that the Greek Cypriot President and the Turkish Cypriot Vice-President should have equal powers to be exercised jointly. The Greek side insisted that the equal powers of the Vice-President were limited to foreign affairs, security and defence. In November 1959, an agreement on the guidelines for exercising executive power was finally achieved. It ruled that the Greek Cypriot President and the Turkish Cypriot Vice-President should have a separate veto power on issues concerning foreign policy, defence and security, as well as the right to return decisions of the Council of Ministers and laws of the House of Representatives for reconsideration.⁵³ So, unlike the issue of the 70/30 ratio and the municipality issue which were still unresolved at the time of independence, the work on the substance of the Cyprus constitution had been completed by January 1960. The power distribution between the two communities had been agreed upon long before Independence Day. Therefore, any change in this sphere required an amendment of the constitution which was exactly what Archbishop Makarios intended with the thirteen proposals he submitted in 1963.

Conclusion

What is the legacy of the Transitional Period? As far as the British military bases are concerned, the riots against the installation of a new antenna for espionage purposes in 2001 illustrate that the bases and their colonial character remain a bone of contention between the Cypriots and their former ruler. However, despite the extremely difficult and controversial negotiations during the Transitional Period, the British military bases did not stand in the centre of the Cyprus dispute after 1960. This is unlikely to change until a solution to the Cyprus problem has been found. Things are then likely to look very different and a conflict about the future of those two colonial relics will seem inevitable.

Of more importance with respect to the collapse of the constitutional order of the Republic in 1963 was the fact that no final and mutually acceptable agreement on the 70/30 ratio in the public service and in the municipality issue could be reached by Independence Day. The differences were patched up during the last days of the Transitional Period in order to achieve independence with temporary agreements that were not to last or be adhered to by the Greek Cypriot side. One can speculate with good reason that the Republic of Cyprus would have secured a better start had these two issues been resolved, finally and not purely temporarily during the Transitional Period. This was not the case and the non-agreement over both of these issues contributed to the escalation of the conflict which culminated in 1963.

However, at the heart of the collapse of the constitutional order in 1963 stands the dispute over the power distribution within the Cyprus Republic. The constitution had established the Turkish Cypriot minority as a second, and politically almost equal community on the island. This was bitterly resented by the Greek Cypriots. The wish to reverse these Turkish achievements, which were used by the Turkish Cypriots to paralyse the state machinery in order to achieve their goals, led to Makarios' thirteen proposals in late 1963. In substance, the thirteen proposals aimed at reducing the status of the Turkish Cypriot community to that of a protected minority. The most important of the proposals were the abolition of the veto-rights of the Turkish Cypriot Vice-President and the need for separate majorities for certain laws in the House of Representatives. This proved to be unacceptable to the Turkish side.

In conclusion, the question of whether the agreements reached during the Transitional Period provided a basis on which the Republic of Cyprus could have functioned longer than just three years is one of the most disputed issues in Cypriot historiography. While many authors regard the constitution as unworkable it should be pointed out that anything else but this complex diarchic order – unacceptable as it was to the Greek side – would not have been feasible given the power-political strength of the Turkish side in the years after 1958. The debate about the power distribution between the two communities has remained unresolved and controversial ever since 1963. It is most likely that if a solution of the Cyprus problem is found the power distribution in a re-united Cyprus will be even more favourable to the Turkish Cypriot side than in 1960. Any future constitution will be based to an even greater extent than in 1960 on the cooperation of each community if it is to succeed. Will both sides this time accept a new status quo and commit themselves to making probably an even more complex constitution work? This is the question that will be the deciding factor over peace and stability in a post- solution Cyprus.

Notes

1. Charles Foley (ed.): *The Memoirs of General Grivas*. (London: Longmans, 1964), p. 198.
2. Robert Holland. *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 327.
3. Cmnd. 1093, *Cyprus*. Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence by Command of Her Majesty. July 1960. Reprinted at the Printing Office of the Republic of Cyprus, pp. 3-4.
4. Nancy Crawshaw, *The Cyprus Revolt. An Account of the Struggle for Union with Greece*. (London: George Allan and Unwin, 1978), p. 351.
5. FO 371/144652. Report about the progress of the negotiations by J. M. Addis from 15 October 1959.
6. Crawshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 351.
7. Holland, *op. cit.*, p. 331.
8. Cmnd. 1093, *op. cit.*, p. 173 and Crawshaw, *op. cit.*, pp. 351-352.
9. The opening meeting on 23 March was held at Carlton House Terrace. But all meetings after 1 April took place in York Terrace. FO 371/144642. Undated Official Memorandum on the London Joint Committee on Cyprus from February 1959.
10. FO 371/144646. Undated and unsigned report on the work of the London Joint Committee written sometime between the 11 and 15 April 1959.
11. FO 371/144643. Undated and unsigned Foreign Office note on London Joint Committee Personalities.
12. Evangelos Averoff-Tossizza, *Lost Opportunities: The Cyprus Question, 1950-1963*. (New Rochelle, N.Y: Caratzas, 1986), p. 387.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 388-389.
14. Crawshaw, *op. cit.*, pp. 353-354.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 354.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Glafkos Clerides, *Cyprus: My Deposition*. Vol. 1. (Nicosia: Alithia, 1989), pp. 90-92.
18. Crawshaw, *op. cit.*, pp. 354-355.

19. DO 35/8021. Minute by the Commonwealth Relations Office from 31 December 1959.
20. Crawshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 355.
21. *Ibid.*
22. DO 35/8021. Minute by the Commonwealth Relations Office from 31 December 1959 and Cyprus. The Transitional Year (Cyprus Government, 1959), Vol. 111, pp. 6-7, here quoted from: Crawshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 355.
23. DO 35/8021. Minute by the Commonwealth Relations Office from 31 December 1959.
24. DO 35/8021. Minute by the Commonwealth Relations Office from 31 December 1959.
25. FO 371/144652. Report about the progress of the negotiations by J. M. Addis from 15 October 1959.
26. FO 371/152833. Foot to Lloyd from 5 July 1960.
27. FO 371/152834. Foot to Lloyd from 1 August 1960.
28. *Ibid.*
29. FO 371/152834. Minute entitled "Cyprus: Inauguration of the Republic" from I. F. Porter from 28 September 1960.
30. FO 371/152934. Inward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations Office from 18 August 1960.
31. FO 371/152834. Minute entitled "Cyprus: Inauguration of the Republic" from I. F. Porter from 28 September 1960.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Holland, *op. cit.*, p. 330.
34. In July, the British replied to the demand of the Greek side from 20 May to provide precise information about the size of each base. The estimated size of what was then named Episkopi/Akrotiri base in the British Memorandum was 75,3 square miles; that of Dekelia 74,8 square miles. FO 371/144649. Annex to Minutes of the 11th Meeting of the Committee of Deputies from 13 July 1959.
35. Alistair Horne: *Macmillan, 1957-1986*. Vol. II (London: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 691, here quoted from: Holland, *op. cit.*, p. 306.
36. *Cyprus Mail*, 31 January 1960.

37. FO 371/152864. Outline instructions for Mr. Amery from February 1960.
38. FO 371/152875. Telegram No. 236, Burrows to Foreign Office from 11 February 1960.
39. PREM 11/2923. Burrows to Foreign Office from 13 February 1960.
40. FO 371/152879. Text of a public statement by Kutchuk on the evening of 2 April in which he quotes the Archbishop.
41. . Crawshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 361.
42. FO 371/152833. Minute by the Secretary in the Joint Secretariat of the London Joint Committee and member of the Southern Department of the Foreign Office, R. Wade-Gery, from 13 June 1960.
43. Averoff-Tossizza, *op. cit.*, p. 385.
44. FO 371/152833. Minute by Wade-Gery from 13 June 1960.
45. FO 371/152833. Governor H. Foot to Colonial Secretary from 4 July 1960.
46. Article 20 of the Zurich Agreement, here quoted from: *Cyprus Mail*, 19 May 1959 .
47. *Cyprus Mail*, 11 April 1959.
48. Clerides, *op. cit.*, p. 121. In Limassol, for example, Ayios Ioannis should belong to the Turkish municipality, according to the British Surridge Report. But, its population composition was 1,273 Greek and only 160 Turkish Cypriots. At Chiflikoudhia, another area of Limassol, there were 240 Greeks and 170 Turks. *Cyprus Mail*, 11 April 1959.
49. FO 371/144652. Report about the progress of the negotiations by the Head of the Southern Department in the Foreign Office, J. M. Addis, from 15 October 1959.
50. FO 371/144602. Governor Foot to Colonial Secretary from 9 October 1959.
51. *Ibid.*
52. Cmnd. 1093, *op. cit.*, Art. 173 and 177, pp. 159-161 and Pavlas Tzermias, *Geschichte der Republik Zypern. Mit Berücksichtigung der historischen Entwicklung der Insel/ während der Jahrtausende.* (Ti. ibingen: Francke Verlag, 1991), p. 173.
53. Furthermore they had a veto right on the following matters: the design and colour of the Cyprus flag, the imposition of compulsory military service, the reduction or increasing of the security forces, the creation and awarding of honours, the exercise of the prerogative of mercy etc. Clerides, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

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CAB 129	Cabinet Memoranda
CO 926	Records of the Mediterranean Department, Colonial Office
DEFE 4	Ministry of Defence, Chief of Staff Committee, Minutes of the Meetings
DEFE 5	Ministry of Defence, Chief of Staff Committee, Memoranda
DEFE 6	Ministry of Defence, Chief of Staff Committee, Joint Planning Staff Reports
DO 35	Records of the Commonwealth Relations Office and Commonwealth Office
FO 371	Records of the Foreign Office Correspondence
PREM 11	Records of the Prime Minister's Office

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