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## **Cypriot Nationalism, Communism, and the Cold War:**

### **An Interwoven History**

#### Introduction

“Since WWII every successful revolution has defined itself in national terms...and in so doing, has grounded itself firmly in a territorial and social space inherited from the prerevolutionary past.”<sup>1</sup> Benedict Anderson

Greek nationalists had called for enosis, or unification with the island of Cyprus, since the revolution that led to Greek independence in 1832. Although other islands had unified with the Greek nation during the nineteenth century, through the end of WWII, Cyprus remained formally under British administration. Thus the questions of Cypriot nationalism, enosis or independence, and the status of the Turkish-speaking population of Cyprus, questions which dominated Cypriot politics in the 1950s and 60s, offer insight into the ways that nineteenth-century ethnic nationalism intersected with post-WWII calls for independence and Cold War strategic planning.

Most Cypriots had been on the island for an extended amount of time and their heritage was no longer Greek but Cypriot. The identity of most Greek-Cypriots was Greek as they had the same language and religion, although their heritage was Cypriot. The mainland Greeks and the Greek-Cypriots felt extremely passionate regarding enosis, which was congruent with the idea of a Greek imagined

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<sup>1</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, (London and New York: Verso), 2006, 2.

community and the boundaries that extended to Cyprus. The two over-lapping factors, religion and language, were enough justification and it did not matter that their ethnicity might be different. The Greeks had convinced themselves that Cyprus was part of the Greek community and that notion was enough of a propelling force.

Benedict Anderson says that nationalism is “the pathology of a modern developmental history”<sup>2</sup> and is used by insecure nations as an ideology under which people can unite. Anderson says a nation is an imagined political community and is limited and sovereign. The rise of nationalism in a limited social space and the need for a community feel without the ability to know everyone. It is imagined because even in small communities most people will never know everyone yet in their mind lays the image of a larger group of people grouped together by the idea of nationalism.

Anderson concludes the idea of an imagined community by saying the nation is “a deep horizontal comradeship.”<sup>3</sup> The “fraternity”<sup>4</sup> that extends to communities and justifies war and peoples’ willingness to die for their country: an imagined area. Without nationalism people would not fight and die for their countries in the masses they have since the late eighteenth-century.

Yael Tamir takes the idea of fraternity even further. Tamir differentiates from a friend or a political acquaintance in that a fraternity extends to the well being of the community and makes the “nation as a community to a common descent and

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

fate.”<sup>5</sup> Tamir also challenged Anderson’s theory of an imagined community. He said that an imagined community is not defined by the size or the face-to-face contact but based on a commonly projected image, a “certain image of the nation that is based on their perceptions and feelings.”<sup>6</sup> Cyprus also falls into this definition of an imagined community because it was the perception and the feeling of the Greeks that Cyprus should be united with Greece rather than follow history. Most Greeks felt Cyprus was an extension of their mainland and had an extremely emotional response.

Cyprus offers an interesting case study to examine in relation to Tamir’s and Anderson’s theory of an imagined community because of its unique situation in which the Cypriots had no voice of their own but had to speak through neighboring countries. Cyprus had its own identity yet was dwarfed by its parent countries, Greece and Turkey. Cyprus is unique because it is an island and therefore has a natural border, the Mediterranean Sea, and neither Greece nor Turkey had the naval capacity to usurp the power. Turkey and Greece fought constantly with one another because they felt as if the Turkish and Greek-Cypriots were part of their fraternity. In their imagined nation of either Turkey or Greece the people on Cyprus were an extension of themselves.

The larger picture of world affairs is also part of Cyprus’ history. Influenced by the Cold War, Cyprus had an immense amount of pressure from the American politicians not to engage with Russia, while Russia offered them monetary funds to

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<sup>5</sup> Yael Tamir, “The Enigma of Nationalism,” *World Politics and Quarterly Review of International Relations* (1995): 425.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 423.

align with the Soviets. Anderson credits nationalism to a bourgeoisie middle class that had the economic resources to sustain nationalism: “How else to account for the use, for over a century, of the concept ‘national bourgeoisie’ without any serious attempt to justify theoretically the relevance of the adjective?”<sup>7</sup> He says he tries to understand why the bourgeoisie, a class defined by its production, would be so significant. He argues that the bourgeoisie were the propelling forces behind nationalism hence their continued relevance throughout history. The real reason was not to keep a middle class alive but to keep nationalism alive. Anderson discredits the need for a strong political leader and does not see it as a necessity.<sup>8</sup>

The complexity of nationalism in Cyprus stems from the large presence Greece and Turkey played in dictating the political atmosphere of Cyprus. Greek nationalism was expressed by enosis and, as a reaction, Turkish nationalism became the desire for partition. The British, the United States, and the USSR all saw Cyprus as a geo-political Communist battleground and had the power to escalate the Cold War from an ideological war to an arms war. The looming threat of the strong Communist Party, and its Cypriot nationalist appeal, further threatened all of the external powers that vied for control of Cyprus for decades. Cypriot nationalism and Communism shared an identity because of the Cypriot Communist Parties inclusive nature and strong political presence in Cyprus. Against the backdrop of The Cold War, Britain and the US feared the interwoven identity of nationalism and Communism as a threat to western democracy and were anxious Cyprus would lead to a spread of Communism in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Cypriots themselves

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<sup>7</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

could not find a common ethnic identity therefore the rise of the Communist Party created a shared identity not available through their ethnic ties.

### Enosis

The roots for enosis, unification between Greece and Cyprus, ran deep within the Greek and Greek-Cypriot community, despite the fact Cyprus was never part of Greece. Initially the Greek-Cypriots identified themselves with Greece and enosis was a platform for Greek nationalism as well as Cypriot nationalism. Enosis was the closest idea Cyprus had to nationalism and any Cypriot identity was lost under Greek influence and nationalist sentiment.

Greeks colonized the island during the Byzantine period, not the Classical period.<sup>9</sup> The biggest uniting features between Greece and Cyprus were the language (Greek) and the religion (Greek-Orthodox). Many Greek-Cypriots identified with Greece even though their families had been living on Cyprus for centuries. During WWI Great Britain offered to transfer Cyprus to Greece in exchange for Greek support of Serbia. The Greeks rejected this offer but unification during that time could have eliminated the strife that plagued the Greeks and Cypriots for the next century.<sup>10</sup> In the 1950's and 60's enosis became the main political objective of the Greeks on the mainland. Led by Cypriot President and Archbishop Makarios III, Cyprus became acknowledged on an international scale. In addition to Greece and

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas Ehrlich, *Cyprus 1958-1967: International Crises and the Role of Law* (New York and London: Oxford University Press), 9.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

Turkey, the super powers, Great Britain, the United States, and Russia, all became involved in the Cypriot question, would Cyprus unite with Greece?

Enosis had been the main goal of the Greeks since Greece regained its independence in 1832. Enosis was more than a political union with Greece; it was a highly volatile and emotional cultural movement. The Ottomans raided and captured Cyprus in 1571 and remained under Cypriot rule until the Greek war of independence in 1821. Many Greek Cypriots rebelled against Ottoman rule on Cyprus and four hundred and sixty-eight Greek Cypriots were put to death in Nicosia, including four bishops and the archbishop Kyprianos. In a climate of nineteenth-century nationalism, this act of suppression along with the Ottoman dictatorial power, created the Greek desire for enosis. The Greeks saw themselves as a democratic and individualistic group of people and resented outside governance and regimentation, which they were subjected to by the Ottomans and later, the British.<sup>11</sup> When Greece gained its independence in 1832, many Cypriots thought they would have their dream of enosis, but it remained under Ottoman rule until 1878. It wasn't until the Russo-Turkish war that Cyprus was freed from Ottoman rule and was now under British jurisdiction.<sup>12</sup> Whenever the Greek politicians would call for Cypriot union with Greece the British politicians would say that the "island was not theirs to give since legally it was on lease from Turkey."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Thomas W. Adams and Alvin J. Cottrell, *Cyprus Between East and West*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), 8.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Charles Foley and W.I Scobie, *The Struggle for Cyprus* (Stanford: Hoover Institution publications, 1975), 2.

During WWI the Turks entered the conflict on the German side, and Cyprus was annexed by Britain and was offered to Greece as incentive to join the Allies.<sup>14</sup> Athens could not enter the war at that point and when she did the British would no longer consider the offer and for thirty years they would not hear of any unification with Greece.<sup>15</sup> Britain wanted Greece to join in the fight against Germany and Turkey because of their geographic proximity to Turkey. Greece could not enter the war because of its internal political problems; Athens had a royalist pro-German government who wanted to join the side of the central powers, but Thessaloniki had a Venizelist pro-Britain government who wanted to side with the allies. Greece entered the war in 1917 after their governments were united and joined the side of the allies, but by that time Britain said it was too late for Cyprus.

The British presence on Cyprus and the fight for enosis triggered the Turkish revival of the “*ghazi*,”<sup>16</sup> proud representation of the Turkish conquerors who ruled Cyprus for 300 years and were former subjects of the Ottoman Empire. The Greeks saw Cyprus as a place that had always been a Greek island and “waves of foreign invaders have left no influence upon it.”<sup>17</sup> While the Greek-Cypriots first resented the British imperialists, they became frustrated with the Turkish-Cypriots and were angered by the Turkish-British alliance. There were growing tensions between Greek nationalism and a developing movement towards Cypriot independence. Greece wanted removal of British influence so the Cypriots would report to the

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 2-3.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>16</sup> Adams and Cottrell, *Cyprus Between East and West*, 8.

<sup>17</sup> Stanley Mayes, *Cyprus and Makarios*, (London: Putnam Press), 82.

Greek politicians but a growing movement towards Cypriot independence directly threatened Greece's agenda.

By 1959, the Greek-Cypriots decided the Turkish-Cypriots had collaborated with the British and were thwarting their plans for self-determination.<sup>18</sup> This dispute continued to grow and became magnified as each community held onto nationalistic tendencies and a strong connection to their mother country. Britain held the view that enosis was "a Frankenstein's monster"<sup>19</sup> created by the Greek Orthodox Church and no Greek-Cypriots actually wanted to be connected to Greece.

Greece was frustrated with the Turkish-Cypriots and their refusal to accept unification or acknowledge the much larger majority of Greeks rather than Turks on Cyprus. Prime Minister Alexander Papagos, was a Greek General who led the Greek Army in the Greco-Italian War and the Greek Civil War and was the Prime Minister in 1952. He was known for his anti-communist stance and served on American military bases on Greek territory and an anti-communist security apparatus was created. Papagos declared:

Cyprus is a Greek island, inhabited by Greeks for thousands of years...The foreign dominations which have succeeded each other in the course of three thousand years have invariably been a passing, temporary and transitory element. Greece alone has been the lasting element, the unalterable factor. The only permanent reality in the island of Cyprus. It would be an understatement to repeat once again that Cyprus belongs to the Hellenic world; Cyprus is Greece herself.<sup>20</sup>

The Greeks denied that Turkish-Cypriots had any jurisdiction on the island of Cyprus and immensely resented the relationship between the British and the

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<sup>18</sup> Adams and Cottrell, *Cyprus Between East and West*, 9.

<sup>19</sup> Foley and Scobie, *Struggle for Cyprus*, 3.

<sup>20</sup> Mayes, *Cyprus and Makarios*, 82-83.



Turkish politicians. The British politicians protected the Turks, which further angered Greece and the Greek-Cypriots.<sup>21</sup> The Greeks continued to deny any permanent settlement of Turks on the island, regardless that ninety thousand Turkish-Cypriots called Cyprus home.<sup>22</sup>

### Archbishop Makarios III

Archbishop Andreas Makarios III was born Michail Christodolou Mouskos in 1913 in the coastal village of Panayia, Cyprus. At the early age of thirteen he was admitted to the prestigious Kykko monastery and joined the “black” or celibate priests who were groomed to become elected bishops. Michail Mouskos adopted the clerical name Makarios, which translated to, “blessed.”<sup>23</sup> In 1950, Makarios was elected the Archbishop of Cyprus and became the official head of the Orthodox Church as well as the political leader of the Greek-Cypriots.

From the beginning, Makarios pushed the idea of enosis and supported a Cypriot unification with Athens, making him wildly popular with many of the Greek-Cypriots as well as the Greeks living on the mainland. The Greek-Cypriots following Makarios, saw no place for the Turkish-Cypriots in Cyprus and made their disdain for their presence well known.

Makarios disregarded the Turkish-Cypriots and made it clear from the start of his time in office he felt the Turks did not belong on Cyprus nor were they to have

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<sup>21</sup> Adams and Cottrell, *Cyprus Between East and West*, 9.

<sup>22</sup> Mayes, *Cyprus and Makarios*, 83.

<sup>23</sup> “Makarios of Cyprus”, *Time Magazine*, February 28, 1964, Volume 83 issue 9, 43.

the same rights as Greeks.<sup>24</sup> Makarios and the other Greeks did not believe that 17.5% of the population (the Turkish-Cypriots) should impose upon 78.8% of the population (the Greek-Cypriots).<sup>25</sup> In April 1955, the EOKA, the Greek terrorist group in favor of Greek domination and enosis, launched their first formal attack in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus. The EOKA aimed to attack the British military and sabotage their presence in Cyprus as well as kill as many Turkish Cypriots as needed to achieve enosis. The EOKA believed the only way to achieve their goal was by force.<sup>26</sup> In 1957, Makarios declared negotiations were only possible between him and the British government and the Turkish Cypriots could not be present because they did not share an equal voice in politics. The Turks on Cyprus feared Greek domination and were increasingly more afraid of the Greek Cypriots.

Reacting to the Greek fight for enosis, the Turks created their own desire for taksim, or partition in Cyprus and a complete separation between Greeks and Turks. Under the guidance of Constantine Karamanlis, prime minister of Greece from 1955-1963 and then again from 1974-1980, the goal of enosis was abandoned in order to achieve Cypriot independence from the British. This was a turning point towards establishing Cypriot national identity. The Communist Party was also in favor of independence; therefore the Cypriot national identity began to coincide with Communism. For the first time, the Cypriots were not trying to align with a more prominent country but create their own identity alongside their own culture and

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<sup>24</sup> Mayes, *Cyprus and Makarios*, 87.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

traditions. This also gave a re-emergence to the Communist Party, whose members held their beliefs with more vigor.

Karmanalis was a constant proponent of democracy and promoted peace between Greece and Turkey. He legalized the Communist Party of Greece, the KKE, to try and propel the movement of inclusivity in Greece. The Communist Party in Cyprus was the most inclusive political party in Cyprus and Greece tried to mirror that sentiment by legalizing the KKE. Karamanlis had come to the conclusion that self-determination was not a viable option and pressured Makarios to adopt a platform of independence to help the violence cease. In 1958 in the 5th appeal to the UN, the Greek Government and Makarios dropped the idea of “self-determination” and stuck to an idea of “independence for Cyprus”. A few days earlier Makarios had told *The New York Times* that although the Greek-Cypriots were campaigning for independence they desired enosis above all else.<sup>27</sup> The Greek delegation was displeased with Makarios but as the Turks appealed to the UN for “self-determination” (partition), the only solution was a treaty of independence for Cyprus.

The Zurich and London Agreement began in 1959 and was an agreement between Turkey, Greece, the United Kingdom, and Cyprus. Archbishop Makarios represented the Greek Cypriots and Dr. Fazil Kucuk represented the Turkish Cypriots. The London agreement set the basis for two further treaties, the Treaty of Alliance and the Treaty of Guarantee in 1960. The Zurich and London Agreement seemed to be a big step for the Cypriots in which Makarios abandoned enosis and

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 122.

worked with the international superpowers for cohesion in Cyprus as well as a new beginning without being under British jurisdiction.

The Treaty of Guarantee aimed to protect the territory of the Republic of Cyprus by the UK, Turkey, and Greece. It promised to defend Cyprus from any other state or the partition of the island. It acknowledged the independence of Cyprus and also authorized the powers involved to use force, if necessary, to keep the current state of affairs. It also approved the UK to keep their military bases on Cyprus. In 1974, the Turks used the treaty of Guarantee to their advantage to invade Cyprus.

The Treaty of Alliance was a treaty between Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey. This treaty aimed to unite the three nations and unify them if any were attacked. It also broke down how the three nations will work together militarily.<sup>28</sup>

The most important treaty and the one that had the biggest impact were the Zurich and London Agreements. The Agreements re-established the independence of the Greek Government (they could regulate foreign relations without Makarios' veto), made Cyprus an independent country, and created a constitution for the Greek and Turkish Cypriots to live harmoniously together. The Supreme Constitutional Court was created and was comprised of one Greek Cypriot, one Turkish Cypriot, and a neutral President. Makarios and Turkish Vice President Dr. Kutchuk agreed upon Ernest Forsthoff, a German scholar in constitutional and

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<sup>28</sup>Gillian King, "Documents Relating To The Founding Of Cyprus, Including The Treaty Of Guarantee," *Documents on International Affairs* (1959): [http://www.kypros.org/Cyprus\\_Problem/treaty.html#C](http://www.kypros.org/Cyprus_Problem/treaty.html#C)

administrative law from the University of Heidelberg.<sup>29</sup>

At the Zurich Agreements a constitution was drawn up for the new independent nation. In a speech given by Makarios as the Zurich agreement was signed he declared: "Cyprus is free. Celebrate, my brethren, and raise your heads high with pride."<sup>30</sup> Makarios was elected as the president and Dr. Fazil Kuchuk was elected as Vice President. Makarios, however did not follow the constitution he signed in 1960 which stipulated the Cypriot people into two communities on the basis of ethnic origin. The President had to be a Greek-Cypriot elected by the Greek-Cypriots, and the Vice-President a Turkish-Cypriot elected by the Turkish-Cypriots. The Vice-President was granted the right of a final veto on laws passed by the House of Representatives and on decisions of the Council of Ministers which was composed of ten ministers, three of whom had to be Turkish-Cypriots nominated by the Vice-President. The Constitution also stipulated that the House of Representatives would be comprised of seventy percent Greek and thirty percent Turkish members. The civil service and police would be constructed in the same manner and main towns would have separate Greek and Turkish municipalities.<sup>31</sup>

The constitution further created a Cypriot identity: article three asserted the original languages were Greek and Turkish and official documents must be published in both languages, verifying both ethnicities.<sup>32</sup> Article four required that Cyprus "shall have its own flag of neutral design and color, chosen jointly by the

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<sup>29</sup> Ehrlich, *Cyprus 1958-1967*, 41-42.

<sup>30</sup> *Time Magazine*, "Makarios of Cyprus," 43.

<sup>31</sup> Foley and Scobie, *Struggle for Cyprus*, 156-157.

<sup>32</sup> The Constitution of Cyprus 1960, Published July 1960 Cmnd. 1093. Accessed at: <http://www.kypros.org/Constitution/English/Introduction.html>.

President and the Vice-President of the Republic,"<sup>33</sup> and article five stated that the Greek or Turkish Cypriots could celebrate any holiday.<sup>34</sup> The constitution helped create a clear Cypriot identity separate from any Greek or Turkish influence. Interestingly enough, the introduction of the constitution did not talk about ethnic identity but did establish a Cypriot identity separate from Communism, or any other political party.

Makarios did not want to sign the Zurich or London Agreements but he received pressure from the Greeks, the British, and the Turks to accept the arrangement.<sup>35</sup> Independence of Cyprus was declared on August 16, 1960 and Makarios was elected as president of Cyprus by sixty-seven percent of the vote.<sup>36</sup> The Greeks who still desired enosis were not happy, nor were the Turks who wanted takism. Some of Makarios' supporters turned against him because of his new stance for independence.

By 1963, Makarios suggested thirteen amendments, which would essentially diminish all influence of the Turkish Cypriots. Makarios sought to diminish the (Turkish) Vice-Presidents power to veto, the requirement of separate majorities in the House for passage of important legislation, a limited security force, assurance of thirty percent representation in the public service, and forty percent in the army. One change that would have benefited the Turkish-Cypriots was Makarios' amendment to authorize the Vice-President to act as President in the absence of the

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Mayes, *Cyprus and Makarios*, 125.

<sup>36</sup> Ehrlich, *Cyprus 1958-1967*, 39.

President.<sup>37</sup> The amendments did not talk about Cypriot identity but mainly concentrated upon settling constitutional disputes in favor of the Greek Cypriots.<sup>38</sup> While his amendments did not pass the Turkish, disdain towards him never faded.

### Cyprus and the Cold War

Makarios was known for playing the Kennedy administration and Nikita Khrushchev against each other in order to accomplish his goals and receive aid from whichever country was more generous. The biggest fear held by Kennedy and Johnson, and the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, was that the Russian army would invade Cyprus and turn it into a Russian satellite. There was great fear that the strength of the Communist Party on Cyprus could act as an entry for the Russian military. In multiple telegrams sent from the Embassy in Cyprus and the Greek Prime Minister, Konstantino Karamanlis, to the American State Department, it became apparent that President Makarios doubted the seriousness of the Communist Party and did not believe it was a real threat: "the Cypriot Communists did not now pose any serious threat here and that if danger should subsequently develop he [Makarios] would utilize any means to resolve the matter..."<sup>39</sup> Makarios credited the real success of the Communists not to their economic beliefs, but to their organization and inclusivity of both Turks and Greeks in a very divided country:

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Thirteen Amendments to the Constitution of Cyprus, November 29, 1963: accessed on [http://www.cyprus-conflict.net/13\\_points.html](http://www.cyprus-conflict.net/13_points.html).

<sup>39</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States: Eastern Europe; Cyprus; Greece; Turkey 1961-1963 Volume XVI, *Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State, Washington, October 13, 1962, 538.*

[the] US had well-established democratic system with educated electorate and only two political parties; Cyprus did not have well-established democratic system and many of its people were unsophisticated politically. It was true the Communists were organized; at the same time it was too early similarly to organize right wing because, as in Greece, every Cypriot wanted to be a political leader.<sup>40</sup>

The telegrams also highlighted the fickleness of Makarios and the way he played American politicians, like Fraser Wilkins, ambassador to Cyprus from 1960-1964, and Russian Premier Nikita Krushchev against each other.

In 1961, the US was wary of the economic relationship Cyprus had with Russia, supplying them with citrus fruits and raisins. The Soviets also distributed Communist literature throughout Cyprus, and President John F Kennedy decided that the US needed to install the Voice of America (VOA) to “reduce Communist Strength.”<sup>41</sup> The VOA was an installation of a relay station that would carry broadcasts into South Asia, Eastern Europe, and the USSR. Vice President Lyndon B Johnson argued that having a VOA would enhance the domestic anti-Communism program and benefit the nation economically. Makarios would not commit because he wanted Cyprus to stay neutral and asked the US for more aid.<sup>42</sup>

Johnson was sent to Cyprus to try and bolster the relationship between the US and Cyprus; Johnson’s visit was deemed successful and the two heads of states had a friendly rapport and got along shockingly well. Nevertheless, Makarios did not

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 539.

<sup>41</sup> Mitchell Lerner, “A Big Tree of Peace and Justice: The Vice Presidential Travels of Lyndon Johnson” (*Diplomatic History*, Volume 34, # 2, (2010): 376.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 357-393.



agree to any of Johnson's conditions and Johnson viewed Makarios as sly and untrustworthy.<sup>43</sup>

In 1963, a telegram was sent from the Cypriot Embassy to the State Department in which Makarios declared he was going to ask the USSR for assistance to prevent a Turkish invasion.<sup>44</sup> Whether the threat of asking for Soviet aid was true, he involved the press and gained Greek and American assistance. Makarios was determined to eliminate British rule from Cyprus and extract Western influence. As historian James Ker-Lindsay described Makarios, "Western leaders wildly mistrusted him. His flirtations with the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War, his effort to limit NATO influence on the island, and his key role in the nonaligned movement led many to view him as the Castro of the Mediterranean."<sup>45</sup>

Makarios had definite incentive to placate the American fears of the Communist Party to receive aid and the Americans were suspicious of his motives. It seems he was genuinely not concerned about Communist power and does not see them as ever gaining enough votes for their candidate to win the 1965 election. According to Makarios, the American fear of Russia was neither legitimate nor valid.

The Americans did not understand the evolution of Cypriot identity and its relationship to Communism. The Communist Party worked to create a cohesive country and rejected the idea that it should be Greek or Turkish, but rather Cypriot. Makarios and the Communist Party differed because Makarios' primary concern was

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States: Eastern Europe; Cyprus; Greece; Turkey 1961-1963 Volume XVI, *Telegram From the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State, Nicosia, December 31, 1963*, 601.

<sup>45</sup> James Ker-Lindsay, *The Cyprus Problem: What Everyone Needs to Know*, (New York and London: Oxford University Press), 18.

the church and connecting Cyprus to the Byzantine period, when Greece did have a presence in Cyprus.

The Communist Party aimed for a clean future and rejected the idea of a pre-revolutionary past, usually connected to corruption and exploitative practices. In a post-WWII era, nationalism was directly linked to politics and many countries aimed to define themselves through their political landscape: Communism, Socialism, or Capitalism. Nationalistic sentiment was now viewed more warily because of the implications from WWII. Even though Western Europe and America feared the rise of Communism and nationalism in Cyprus, Cyprus never aimed to expand or control any other nations. Rather, it gave the Cypriots a common ground in which they could be retain their Greek or Turkish heritage and politically be a new entity.

### Communism Within Cyprus

In a telegram sent from the Greek Embassy to the State Department, Denktash (the President of the Turkish Cypriots) and Kutchuck (the Vice President of the Turkish Cypriots) agreed the spread of Communism must stop in order to keep the integrity and independence of the country.<sup>46</sup> While many citizens on Cyprus were Communists, their ideology was less capitalistic and the popularity stemmed from its inclusive stance and the membership offered to both Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The Communist Party held a lot of sway in Cyprus and Makarios

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<sup>46</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States: Eastern Europe; Cyprus; Greece; Turkey 1961-1963 Volume XVI, *Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, Athens, September 3, 1962*, 535.

was careful to stay on the good side of the Communists because they had the power to over-throw his presidency. The division and constant warfare present on Cyprus made the Communist Party extremely appealing and different than the Greek or Turkish-Cypriot political parties. The tolerance of the Communist Party towards both Greek and Turkish-Cypriots helped create the evolving identity of these two ethnicities. The nature of nationalism was to unite and create a common identity, both ideas the Communists were able to accomplish.

The Communist Party was the most organized political party in Cyprus and many felt safe because there was one clear leader rather than multiple parties and leaders. Cyprus had a multi-party system with three or four strong parties that dominated the political landscape. The 1970's established the two most prominent parties alongside the AKEL. The Nationalist Centre Democratic Party (DIKO) was formed by Makarios as he became less popular in the AKEL. The right wing Democratic Rally Party (DISY) was formed by Glafkos Clerieds, President of the Greek Cypriot Communal Chamber, and based around Nationalist support.<sup>47</sup>

Makarios belittled the American fear that the Communists in Cyprus were becoming a powerful party, which could potentially take office in the 1965 election. Makarios sent a telegram from the Cypriot Embassy to the State Department stating he was merely entertaining the Communist Party because it was easier to "retain

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<sup>47</sup>Oliver P Richmond, *Mediating in Cyprus: The Cypriot Community and the United Nations*, (Portland, Oregon: *Cass Frank Publishers*), xvii.

their cooperation”<sup>48</sup> than risk any uprising within the largely Communist Cypriot community.

Makarios explicitly stated he did not see the Communists as a threat but understood the appeal of a cohesive political party:

There is no doubt about my anti-Communist views. At the same time I must make use of them now and concentrate on making new Cypriot Government work and getting economic development program under way. I cannot risk dissension within Greek Cypriot community, but I will crush Communists if they try to take over our democratic republic.<sup>49</sup>

Makarios’ laissez-faire attitude towards the Communists countered the American hype surrounding the party and the geo-political power they might hold. The Cypriots did not see the Communists as a big threat but because the Americans were confined by their cold war ideology they were extremely fearful of Eastern Europe becoming satellite countries of Russia.

The US had promised fair and equal aid to both the Greeks and the Turks in order to prevent the spread of Communism.<sup>50</sup> The Turkish-Cypriots were thrilled about the prospect of US aid for themselves as well as the Greek-Cypriots. As Denktash said “Vice President [Johnson] visit had given Turk Cypriots new heart and determination to make the Republic work and progress”<sup>51</sup> The Turks did not receive the same aid and western attention as Greece which was apparent in the

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<sup>48</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, *Telegram from the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State, October 13, 1962*, 538.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, *Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, September 3, 1962*, 535.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 536.

negative reaction of the Turkish politicians. Communist ideology was not necessarily nationalistic but the Communist Party was a constant presence in Cyprus, while finding Cypriot identity was more of a process. The Communists had already broken away from the Greek-Orthodox church and after enosis was abandoned the Greek-Cypriots practiced Greek-Orthodox as a religion, but the church no longer dictated politics.

### The AKEL

The AKEL, founded in 1941, was the Progressive Party of Working People, or Cyprus' Communist Party. It was known for its Leninist ideology, but above all its inclusivity towards all working class and goal to unite everyone who felt suppressed by the government. By 1946, the AKEL had become Cyprus' strongest political party.<sup>52</sup> From the beginning, the AKEL was aligned with Moscow before and after independence and Soviet propaganda was broadcast in Greek to Cyprus daily from Radio Budapest.<sup>53</sup> The AKEL rapidly grew with an estimated thirty seven thousand four hundred members by 1963, out of total population of six hundred and thirty thousand.<sup>54</sup> In 1948, the AKEL aligned itself with the USSR and was a firm supporter of Leninist ideology.<sup>55</sup> The AKEL supported the slow emergence of enosis, rejected Greek nationalism, and wanted to unite Turkish and Greek Cypriots in a struggle for economic and social rights within the trade union movement. The party had given

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<sup>52</sup> Adams and Cottrell, *Cyprus Between East and West*, 15.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>55</sup> Richard Dunphy and Tim Bale, "AKEL--Red Flag Still Flying?: Explaining AKEL-Cyprus's Communist Anomaly," *American Political Science Association* (2007): 287-304.

priority to class unity rather than ethnic or communal division. The AKEL became a party of “class cooperation,” and after Archbishop Makarios supported the least-right-wing moderate candidate.<sup>56</sup> The AKEL had wanted reconciliation between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots since 1974, and has been friendly with the Republican Turkish Party.

Dr. Fazil Kucuk, the first Turkish Vice President of an independent Cyprus under President Makarios, and one of the founders of the Association of the Turkish minority of the Island of Cyprus (KATAK), aimed to promote the social, economic, and political well-being of the Turkish-Cypriot people. Kucuk also helped transfer the Evkaf (a Turkish religious fund) from British to Cypriot control. Kucuk saw the AKEL as a threat and believed around seventy percent of Greek-Cypriots were Communists.<sup>57</sup> That number was highly contested by the Greeks and the Greek-Cypriots, blaming the loyal following not upon policy but rather on AKEL’s ability to organize.

Mr. Zenon Rossides, a Greek Cypriot barrister and senior member of the Ethnarchy Council told *The New York Times* in 1964, “the Greek Cypriot population [of communists] was nearer thirty percent than sixty percent...many of those who professed support for the party were not Communists at heart.”<sup>58</sup> In 1944 and 1945 the AKEL supported an “independent Cyprus” rather than enosis. While it entertained the idea of uniting in Greece the left-wing leadership was more in favor

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Mayes, *Cyprus and Makarios*, 70.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

of a constitution and independence rather than enosis.<sup>59</sup> In 1951, the AKEL aligned themselves with the church and embraced the idea of enosis rather than a constitution because the Nationalist party had ruled out the idea of full self-government in Cyprus. The AKEL stood by the notion of enosis because “The enosis slogan permits the strongest anti-imperialist mobilization under the conditions existing at present.”<sup>60</sup> The Communists were able to remove themselves from the constant violence while their goals were still being accomplished.

Makarios used Communist support when it was convenient for his campaign and on June 28, 1953, Makarios appealed to the Communists in a speech he gave at the Phaneromeni Church in Nicosia.<sup>61</sup> Makarios said: “In our efforts to gain our desired freedom we shall stretch out both our right hand and our left to receive the help offered from the East and from the West.”<sup>62</sup> Makarios was not secretive about playing the East and the West against each other in order to gain the independence the Cypriots desired.

Makarios was constantly in contact with the AKEL, especially when making an appeal to the UN. Yet two months later when Makarios was interviewed by the Diplomatic conference of *The Times* in London the reporter inquired whether he “had an agreement with the Communists for united action.”<sup>63</sup> Makarios is reported in *The Times* on October 15, 1954, as saying “I have many times read in the papers that the Church co-operates with the Communists. This is not true. The Church can

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 70-71.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

never compromise with Communist doctrine. I do not take into consideration the existence of the Communist Party.”<sup>64</sup> This statement was completely untrue and if the Communists supported enosis they were naturally aligned with the church. Makarios could lead the left and the right therefore making him the Ethnarch.

The ultimate aim of the Communists was to deny the use of Cyprus as a base to Britain or NATO and align themselves with the “progressive elements” in Greece and the Communist bloc in the Balkans and the Soviet Union. They sought to use constitutional means but also used violence as they saw fit. The AKEL nominated their own candidate to run against Makarios, and decided to support Clerides from the Democratic union. Makarios won against Clerides but the Communist vote was not more than thirty three percent. While Makarios won by a landslide, it was apparent from that election that he did not have the Communist support behind him and the strength of their party. When it came to voting, the AKEL did not draw as big a crowd, cementing the idea people were Communists in their ideology but less so in their politics. People did not want the Communists in power but wanted their inclusive platform and associated them with Cypriot identity.

The continued success of the AKEL was credited to their ability to modernize policy and improve electoral position by constantly revolutionizing government while still maintaining its Communist sub-culture and symbols. The party had kept very close to the leftist Marxist traditions and embraced their ideas and culture. Cyprus’ Communist Party has been an anomaly because of its ability to combine “ideological and policy moderation with a clear and continued attachment, both

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 74.



organizationally and rhetorically, to its past.”<sup>65</sup> AKEL’s continued popularity within Cyprus is tied to its ability to draw on the positive aspects of the past while it continued to move forward. As Anderson said, the Communists were grounded in a territorial space, not an ideology.

While Cypriots were constantly being imposed on by other nations, the AKEL was less focused on siding with a specific country but working with the Cypriot community. The AKEL had always taken a moderate political stance and had never aimed to try and convert other nations; rather it had always worked for the good of all Cypriots. This was how the AKEL used nationalist rhetoric to present their aims and their party.

The AKEL had always supported Cyprus to become independent of Britain, Turkey, and Greece, and reunite the Greek and Turkish Cypriots without the influence of external powers. The AKEL never favored the Greeks over the Turks but represented the nationhood. Their continued success can be credited to their emphasis upon national identity.<sup>66</sup>

### Russia and Communism

Russia had been in constant negotiations with Cyprus for many reasons. They wanted all British influence to be distracted, created a further divide between Cyprus and the NATO states, and further created political stability in Cyprus in

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<sup>65</sup> Dunphy and Bale, “AKEL--Red Flag Still Flying?,” 289.

<sup>66</sup> Stein Tonnesson, “The Class Route to Nationhood: China, Vietnam, Norway, Cyprus-and France,” *International Peace Research Institute* (2009): 391-392.

order to divert the attention of the Greek, Turkish, American, and British politicians.<sup>67</sup>

Russia continued to support the Cypriot Communists even though they stopped encouraging enosis. In 1959, after the AKEL was legal again the Soviets tried to help the AKEL regain its strength in order to help eliminate British rule.<sup>68</sup> After the Zurich and London Agreements were finalized, the Kremlin<sup>69</sup> was aware the British military were not going to leave Cyprus therefore, it was in Russia's best interest to support Makarios' presidency, as he was also anti-British.<sup>70</sup> The Kremlin tried to walk a fine line between supporting Makarios and the AKEL as they were no longer politically cohesive. The Kremlin offered to buy all of Cyprus' raisins and other citrus fruits in exchange for Soviet cement and timber. Makarios hesitatingly accepted this offer but tried to remain neutral rather than take a pro-Communist stance. Nevertheless, this economic partnership worried the US State Department.<sup>71</sup>

Moscow aligned themselves with enosis and inevitably chose Makarios over the AKEL, therefore straining their relationship with George Grivas, the leader of the AKEL. Regardless, Cyprus refused China's offer to adopt a pro-Peking stance, which was applauded by the US.<sup>72</sup> Fear of a Russian-induced Communist take over was verbalized in *The New York Times* in August 1961,

There is only one country where [the Soviet Union] may reasonably hope to see Communism take over by normal democratic procedures.

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<sup>67</sup> Adams and Cottrell, *Cyprus Between East and West*, 29-30.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>69</sup> The government of the Soviet Union and its highest powers including: General Secretaries, Premiers, Presidents, Ministers, and Commissars.

<sup>70</sup> Adams and Cottrell, *Cyprus Between East and West*, 32-33.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 34.

That country is Cyprus. Since independence, [the Communists'] hold has expanded as unemployment increased...Some diplomats calculate that, in free election the Communists would gain 35% of the vote today...If one recalls the strategic importance of Cyprus one see the ultimate danger to the West.<sup>73</sup>

In 1963 Makarios and the AKEL combined forces and Moscow was able to support both parties. There were many rumors that Makarios was making deals with the Soviets to "turn Cyprus into a military bridgehead."<sup>74</sup> The Soviet Premier went through great lengths to try and persuade Makarios to abandon enosis, fearing a conciliation with Greece would lead to the outlaw of the AKEL just as the KKE, the Communist Party of Greece, was outlawed."<sup>75</sup>

Moscow went through great lengths to try and keep foreign influences out of Cyprus. They began to encourage the U.N.'s role in Cyprus in order to counter any solution President Johnson might put forth with the help of the Greek or Turkish Prime Ministers.<sup>76</sup> The U.S.S.R held their pro-Makarios stance but Khrushchev warned a Turkish invasion could cause a "dangerous chain reaction"<sup>77</sup> and once again called for full British removal from Cyprus. The increased Soviet interest in Cyprus had a direct correlation to the strengthened US position. The US and Great Britain introduced a resolution in the UN Security Council calling for a cease-fire of Turkish bombing.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 38.

The USSR began to take a more rigorous stance on the threat of a Turkish invasion and Khrushchev warned that the Turkish air attacks were part of an “imperialist plot led by the U.S. and Great Britain.”<sup>79</sup> The Soviets claimed they were going to take a more aggressive stance if the Turks continued to bomb Cyprus.

The next shift in tactics for the USSR was to once again have a more direct relationship with President Makarios. As Makarios wished, the Soviets voiced loud opposition to the presence of the UN peacekeeping force on Cyprus. This prompted a military assistance agreement between Moscow and Makarios.<sup>80</sup> In 1965, N.V. Podgorny, let a Soviet delegation to Turkey and Moscow and began to take a pro-Turkish stance. The Soviets continued to try and drive a wedge between the NATO allies and hoped by befriending Turkey, they could split NATO. While Podgorny ceased its outward support of Makarios, the USSR continued to send arms to Makarios under the radar.<sup>81</sup> On October 17, 1965, Cyprus had received seventy million dollars in aid from the USSR, yet the Soviets were still taking a pro-Turkish stance.<sup>82</sup> The Soviets abandoned enosis, which put them in good favor with the AKEL but not with Makarios. They endorsed the idea of “two communities,” an idea which had been supported by the Turkish government.<sup>83</sup> The Soviets worried that if Cyprus was united with Greece they would also join NATO and never become a Soviet ally. The Soviet-Turkish alliance put further strains on the relationship

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 39-40.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 50.

between the USSR, Greek relations, as well as Soviet relations with Makarios and the AKEL.

As described above, the Soviets had no issues with rapidly changing sides and positions within Cyprus and between the superpowers. The two goals that did remain constant throughout the years were to eliminate British bases on Cyprus as well as weaken NATO.

Russia tried to capitalize on the fact that the Cypriots were not connected to an identity and they kept a solid presence in Cyprus to help form the Cypriot national identity, which would be friendly to the East. By 1965, Russia had abandoned enosis and put their support behind the AKEL, even if they couldn't have a military base on Cyprus. Their presence on Cyprus kept the Americans involved and they stayed present to hopefully extract British presence and keep Cyprus from joining NATO.

### NATO

“NATO, a military agreement, was a cohesive force binding Greece and Turkey throughout the 1950s and 1960s...As a defensive alliance, NATO helped to lessen the risk of a violent clash by two of its members. It also provided a forum where Greek and Turkish officials were virtually forced to sit down together.”<sup>84</sup>

Established on April 4, 1949, NATO, The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, was an intergovernmental military alliance situated in Brussels, Belgium. The first countries to sign the Treaty were: Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, the United Kingdom, Canada, Portugal, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, and the United States. In 1952, Greece and Turkey joined the alliance and the US and Britain

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<sup>84</sup> Ehrlich, *Cyprus 1958-1967*, 123.

had to discuss how to proceed with the two countries militarily. Cyprus has never joined NATO.

Makarios was unhappy with NATO and gained a lot of support from the AKEL. He was known for dictating Greek foreign policy and had no issue weakening Greece's valuable alliance with NATO. Besides the Communists, Greece and Turkey were thrilled to finally become part of NATO, as it provided military security and sealed their recognition of status as a "western" part of Europe.<sup>85</sup> Part of the role of the Cypriot government was to promote NATO installations of the island. The AKEL and Communist Left detested the presence of NATO therefore Makarios did little to support or encourage NATO as he focused his interests upon placating Communist desires. Makarios' interest lay in the economic development of Cyprus as well as extracting British rule.

In 1955, the relationship between Greece and Turkey began to once again deteriorate, which promoted disorder in Cyprus. After the intentional destruction of Greek property in Istanbul, and the attack on the Greek wing of the Izmir headquarters, Greece and Turkey were no longer co-operating in NATO exercises and defence planning was impossible.<sup>86</sup> As a result, many Greeks thought they should leave NATO, but Prime Minister Karamanlis insisted they must remain in NATO for the Cyprus question, as well as the security of the country.

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<sup>85</sup> Mayes, *Cyprus and Makarios*, 145.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

By 1956, the Greeks agreed with Britain that Athens should follow the route of self-determination in the Eastern Mediterranean and the role of NATO should be to determine when the appropriate time was for Greece's new political movement.<sup>87</sup> By 1956 Makarios was closely associated with the insurgency for an independent Cyprus against Britain and was heavily disliked by British authorities. The British Special Branch, a military sect responsible for Britain's national security, intercepted Makarios as he tried to board a flight at the Nicosia airport. By this time, Makarios had become closely identified with the insurgency, and talks broke up without any agreement in early 1956. The coup was codenamed Operation Airborne, and Makarios was exiled to Mahe Island in the Seychelles on March 9, 1956. While on the Seychelles (islands off the coast of Africa), he resided as a "guest" of Sir William Addis, Governor & Commander-in-Chief of the Seychelles. Makarios remained in exile until 1957 and although he was not allowed back into Cyprus, he resided in Athens where he continued to work on enosis. After the London and Zurich Agreements had been decided upon, Makarios was allowed back into Cyprus and he returned on March 1, 1959 but by that time, dreams of enosis had been abandoned for independence.

When Makarios was released from the Seychelles in 1957, Lord Ismay, the secretary General of NATO offered to become a mediator. The Greek government rejected NATO's offer to impose any solutions on Greece and as Makarios said in an interview with the newspaper, *The Times of Cyprus*, NATO would complicate issues

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

in Cyprus rather than bring them closer to a solution.<sup>88</sup> It was at this time that Mr. Averoff, the Greek Foreign minister, told Makarios afterwards that no specific proposal had been put forward and there had been no discussion of the possibility of Cyprus becoming a NATO base. It was then that Makarios declared categorically that a NATO “mandate” over Cyprus was “unacceptable.” Regardless of Karamanlis’ desire to use NATO for Greece’s advantage, Makarios remained unsatisfied with the Western influence upon Cyprus.

In 1958, after extreme unrest between Greece and Turkey, the Turkish-Cypriots began their fight for partition. British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan proposed a seven-year partnership scheme of separate communal legislative bodies and separate municipalities; it was nicknamed the Macmillan Plan. Both the Greeks and Greek-Cypriots rejected the plan saying that it was equivalent to partition. The Greeks went through great lengths to insure prevention of Macmillan’s Plan to keep Turkey out of Cyprus. Secretary General of NATO, Paul-Henri Spaak, succeeded Lord Ismay and held office from 1957-1961. After the rejection of the Macmillan Plan, Spaak returned to NATO to discuss different possibilities between the two communities, and continued to encourage self-government. Spaak’s plan was essentially the same but differed in two points: first, he added a joint Cypriot assembly in addition to two communal assemblies; second, the governor was to be assisted by the Cypriot presidents of the communal assemblies, instead of being advised by representatives of the Greek and Turkish governments. Makarios had

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.



run out of options and in order to stay in power he needed to change his ideology and adapt to the current political atmosphere.

Prime Minister Karamanlis agreed with Makarios' next step towards independence and promoted his new initiative. When peace talks between Greece and Turkey were once again a possibility, Makarios immediately rejected a round table discussion in 1957, saying Greece wanted a decision in her favor before the conference met.<sup>89</sup> Many Greeks and Greek-Cypriots were worried about Makarios' strong stance and his influence of the AKEL and decision to please the UN rather than NATO. Makarios was less concerned with pleasing the Greek and Turkish politicians who were both part of NATO and wanted to keep the AKEL on his side because of their large political presence in Cyprus. The Greek and Turkish foreign ministers finally came together with foreign secretary, Mr. Selwyn Lloyd in their first direct talks about Cyprus in three years. After a meeting in Paris to discuss NATO, Turkish Minister of State and Acting Foreign Minister, Fatin Zorlu, and Evangelos Averoff-Tositsas, the minister of national deference of Greece, had several private conversations and after the Cyprus settlement, Greek officers and men returned to the NATO headquarters at Izmir.<sup>90</sup>

In 1961, a memorandum between Truman and Karamanlis, they discussed the various options to strengthen NATO. Karamanlis stated that the first requirement was "a common policy against Communism."<sup>91</sup> Karamanlis emphasized

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>91</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States: Eastern Europe; Cyprus; Greece; Turkey 1961-1963 Volume XVI, *Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, April 19, 1961*: 610.

that Greece was the link between Turkey and Yugoslavia and it was crucial for Cyprus to stick to a neutral policy because of its geo-political location.<sup>92</sup>

In 1975, a paper was written on British interest in the Eastern Mediterranean and the influence of US policy on NATO and Cyprus. The importance of NATO took a new form of significance in Greece. The US and most of Western Europe was part of NATO but Greece was one of the last countries to be invited into the alliance. Greece was the geographic link between Turkey and the rest of NATO. Greece had the ability to restrict Soviet access and it was the role of NATO to guarantee, "her sympathies remain with the West."<sup>93</sup> If Greece aligned with NATO, Turkey would be isolated from the rest of the NATO allies and the West, but if she aligned with the USSR, Yugoslavia could become more of a threat.<sup>94</sup> Cyprus held less of a benefit to NATO and the bases had no direct NATO role. If Greece and Turkey did not join NATO it would be the goal of the West to keep them non-aligned and deny the Russians access to their military facilities.<sup>95</sup>

The US put an astonishing amount of weight upon the threat of the Communist Party in Cyprus. Cyprus offered no mineral wealth yet the geo-political location and hatred between the two communities living on Cyprus had the potential to ignite a war between NATO allies: Greece and Turkey, which resulted in it being a crucial battleground for Communism. <sup>96</sup>If Cyprus fell to Communism, it would be a block of land on the Eastern Mediterranean, and would be the perfect

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 608.

<sup>93</sup> William Mallison, *Britain and Cyprus: Key Themes and Documents since WWII*, (London and New York, Tauris Academic Studies), 112.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 114-115.

military base for the Soviets. In a post-Vietnam era, the potential for a Communist uprising along the Eastern Mediterranean, spreading across Western Europe was frightening and plausible. Yugoslavia and Greece could also fall and the Russians would have a grave amount of power. Yugoslavia was experiencing a number of internal problems but they broke from Communist rule in 1948 and stuck to a strict policy of neutrality. However, Yugoslavia was extremely unstable and many feared they would easily fall back into Communism with any pressure from neighboring countries. The telegrams and state documents seem to prove there was no real Communist threat, yet President Makarios proved to be an un-trustworthy and un-reliable leader from the Western point of view and did not take a firm stance against Communism.

NATO had a huge influence upon Greece to keep it Westernized and Greece tried to influence Cyprus to do the same. This made Cyprus wary of NATO and it was extremely unpopular with most Cypriots, especially Makarios. The AKEL was adamant that Cyprus not join NATO and Makarios supported their stance to stay in favorable standings with the Communist Party. Even though Makarios said the Communists were not a threat, their power of political persuasion was unmatched. After Turkey wanted partition, and Greece wanted Cyprus to join NATO, Makarios began to support independence as both of these options would take away from Cypriot identity. This was one of the few times Makarios made a strong stance and the idea of a separate Cypriot identity, not influenced by the East or West, really came into being.

## US and Cyprus

The US decisions in Cyprus were directly related to what would serve US interests the most fruitfully. They had four main goals for Cyprus: first, they wanted Cyprus to join Great Britain, and Greece and Turkey to fight against Communism. Second, Cyprus should stress economic development and free democratic institutions towards a pre-West orientation. Third, the US should have unrestricted use of the communication facilities. Fourth, the British Sovereign Base area should be available to any Western nation at any time.

The US was more concerned with Makarios than Cyprus and the US “regarded him as a cunning and guileful priest, who undermined Hellenic nationalism and thereby the cause of enosis by allying himself with the enemies of the Greek nation.”<sup>97</sup> The US knew Makarios was not dedicated to the US; rather he was primarily dedicated to Cypriot and Greek relations. Makarios did not cooperate fully with the US and they saw him as a constant threat to their security.

The US offered extensive economic aid and benefits to Cyprus and welcomed Cypriot independence.<sup>98</sup> Cyprus was not receptive towards the US’s four main goals and resented their support of the London-Zurich Agreements. In 1964, former US ambassador to the UN, Adlai E Stevenson, changed the US policy towards a more “concerned disengagement” and was more preoccupied with peace in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>99</sup> In 1960, the US sent fifty thousand tons of wheat and barley to Cyprus to alleviate grain shortages caused by the drought. In 1962 the US sent

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<sup>97</sup> Sakkas, “The Greek dictatorship, the USA and the Arabs, 1967-1974,” 251.

<sup>98</sup> Adams and Cottrell, *Cyprus Between East and West*, 56.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 56-57.

another shipment of wheat and barely and the Cypriot-American friendship began to flourish.<sup>100</sup>

Makarios took the trip to the US to visit President Kennedy as well as Secretary of State, Dean Rusk. After the agricultural assistance the US provided, they expected protected and unlimited use of military communication facilities on Cyprus.<sup>101</sup> By 1963 US aid had amounted to twenty million dollars in Cyprus including loans, grants, and shipments under the Food for Peace program (US government purchased wheat and made a payment in local currency to help spur the local economy). As violence on Cyprus grew US began extracting aid as well as their presence because of unstable political conditions.<sup>102</sup>

June 4, 1964, was a set date for the Turks to invade Cyprus but President Johnson went through extreme measures to intercept the Greek and Turkish forces. Greece's elected premier George Papandreou and leader of the Center-Left political coalition promised military support for the Greek Cypriots. He ordered Greek warships to be ready off the coast of the Greek island, Rhodes, to intercept a Turkish force.<sup>103</sup> It is unknown whether Turkey would have been able to launch a full-scale attack by sea but because of the preventative measures taken by President Johnson there was no attack.<sup>104</sup> Turkish premier, Ismet Inonu later described the interactions between Johnson and the Turkish politicians: "Mr. Johnson said that if the Russians took action, our NATO guarantees might not hold. We might also face

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 59.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>103</sup> Foley and Scoubie, *Struggle for Cyprus*, 163

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

the danger of impeachment at the United Nations. In half an hour, we would be left without an ally.”<sup>105</sup>

Cyrus Vance worked as the Secretary of Defense under President Lyndon B Johnson from 1964-1976. In an interview with Vance in 1969, he discussed his 1967 trip to Ankara, Turkey and then Cyprus to try and avoid a civil war on Cyprus between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The Turks had been prepared to invade before Vance convinced them to withhold. The Russians told the Turks they would support them if they decided to invade Cyprus but they did not seem to be a contributing factor towards invasion. The US had extra incentive to prevent a war between the Greeks and Turks because of the looming threat of Russia’s involvement. The US also threatened to remove aid to both sides if Greece and Turkey went to war.<sup>106</sup> Greece would not have been able to win a war against Turkey without US militarization therefore giving US even more negotiating power over Greece.<sup>107</sup>

The Greeks refused to remove troops from Cyprus and the Turks threatened to invade Cyprus, saying the only thing holding them back was bad weather in Ankara.<sup>108</sup> The Turks wanted the Greeks to remove their troops in a completely unrealistic time frame and Vance tried to reason with the Turks for more time.<sup>109</sup> As a result, the Greeks and the Turks did not go to war on Cyprus that day and the Turks gave the Greeks a more reasonable time frame to remove their troops.

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ehrlich, *Cyprus 1958-1967*, 111.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 112. .

<sup>108</sup> *The Emporia Gazette*, November 23, 1967, 78th Year, No 99.

<sup>109</sup> Transcript, Cyrus R. Vance Oral History II, 12/29/69, by Paige E Mulhollan, Internet Copy, LBJ Library, 6.

The US organized another meeting between Greece and Turkey, in Geneva, with an official UN mediator Skario Tuomioja of Finland. Papandreaou sent a representative alongside Secretary of State Dean Acheson and a Turkish representative.<sup>110</sup> The Acheson Plan was leaked and the proposal was to bring Cyprus enosis with Greece, and Turkey and gain the Greek island of Kastellorizon and Turkish-Cypriots could immigrate to the newly acquired land.<sup>111</sup> Turkey was unhappy with this arrangement and began bombing the northwest part of Cyprus. Both Greece and Turkey rejected any American assistance but the US diplomats were relieved when a war between Greece and Turkey was avoided and no American troops or resources were needed.<sup>112</sup>

US foreign policy changed from its original plan but still aimed to keep the conflict between the indigenous Greek and Turkish communities not part of a larger war and to not have the political disorder on Cyprus affect US relations with Greece or Turkey.<sup>113</sup> The US was aware of Soviet threat because of its goal to ruin NATO as well as put a Soviet base on Cyprus. Soviet naval activity continued to grow stronger but in the end, never did place a base on Cyprus.

US diplomacy has had more success since 1963. It prevented Turkish invasions and a Greco-Turkish war, managed to keep Greece and Turkey communicating, and did not escalate the tension between Russia and the US.<sup>114</sup> The US constantly faced difficulties in working with Cyprus and Dean Acheson expressed

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<sup>110</sup> Adams and Cottrell, *Cyprus Between East and West*, 65.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 65-66.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

his frustration in a speech in made to the Chicago Bar Association on March 24, 1965: “The losers are the NATO nations whose alliance has been gravely weakened- especially Greece and Turkey whose confidence both in one another and in the United States and Great Britain has been strained. The gainers are the Archbishop...the Russians who have weakened NATO...and gained another toehold in the Eastern Mediterranean...”<sup>115</sup>

December 1967 seemed to be a turning point in relations between Greece and Turkey. Narrowly avoiding several wars during that year, it seemed both countries backed off significantly: “Withdrawal of Greek troops from Cyprus probably averted a military disaster for Greece. It may have also reflected a fundamental decision by the Greek regime to disengage from the affairs of the Island. There is some evidence that the Turkish Government may be similarly inclined.”<sup>116</sup> The US and the Soviet Union were both concerned with keeping peace on the island and believed it would further their countries interest in comparison to other alternatives, such as war.<sup>117</sup> It seems that Greece and Turkey finally began to put their own political agenda aside for what was best for Cyprus. Both societies were hesitant to give Cyprus any power and try to maintain control from the mainland: “Both are no doubt wary of being swung by the tail by their respective communities on Cyprus. Both may have concluded that only those communities can settle the Island’s affairs.”<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 74-75.

<sup>116</sup> Ehrlich, *Cyprus 1958-1967*, 116.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.



The US was constantly influencing Cyprus to act in their best interest. They tried to pressure Greece to say Westernized and then have Greece pressure Cyprus. Makarios did not have any desire for American involvement unless they were offering him aid. The US wanted to avoid a war between Greece and Turkey at any cost, and if they had gone to war, would have felt pressured to send American troops and monetary assistance out of fear of Soviet involvement. The US could not separate the difference between the Cypriot Communist Party and Communism globally. However, the AKEL was its own entity, separate from outside influence. The US saw Communism as a global issue rather than an issue of Cypriot identity. They thought a Russian take-over was inevitable with a prominent Communist Party. As the Cypriots struggled to find their own identity, separate from Greece and Turkey, they also did not want any American influence. The US and Russia were in an ideological war and Makarios used that to his advantage, but there was no evidence that he was going to side with the East or the West.

### CONCLUSION

Cyprus had no international forum in which either the Turkish or the Greek Cypriots could express their views. Both communities had to speak through their parent countries, Turkey and Greece.<sup>119</sup> As a result, the positions of the country were distorted according to the benefits of the parent country. If the Greek and

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 126.

Turkish Cypriots could have made their own decisions without having to please the politicians or spokesmen, events could have played out very differently.<sup>120</sup>

Cyprus' President and Archbishop, Makarios III, was a leader who promoted fraternity and a common destiny for all Cypriots. Makarios was able to put Cyprus in an international conversation and seemed to give the country a voice. Makarios took advantage of this situation and used nationalism to initially promote enosis and then later on independence. Without Makarios, Cyprus would not have interacted with the other superpowers and would not have been able to leverage these larger countries to accomplish what he saw was in the best interest for the country.

Cyprus was never part of NATO or invited to the UN conferences, but because of its location both the Russians and the Americans catered to its needs, hoping to set up military basis on the island. The British had sovereignty but because of their own economic issues did not play an overly active role in Cypriot politics.

Cyprus falls into the pattern that Anderson set up in the way that Cypriot nationalism was strengthened because of its finite borders. If Cyprus had been geographically attached to either Turkey or Greece, it is plausible to assume that country would have taken it over. Cyprus as an island gives the Cypriots people more of an identity and less opportunity for Greece or Turkey to impose their culture on the Cypriot people.

Cyprus began to create their own identity, separate from the Greeks, Turks, British, American, or Russians. The biggest move towards a new Cypriot identity

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

was announcing themselves an independent nation in 1960. At the same time, the Communist Party began to grow and held a lot of power in Cyprus, and consequently in an international forum. The Cypriot national identity was directly tied to the prominent Communist Party, the AKEL, but Cyprus itself was not a Communist country. The Cypriots were not overly concerned with Communism, rather, it was the only political party open to Greek and Turkish Cypriots. As Anderson and Tamir said, it is the “fraternity” which creates an imagined community, as the AKEL was the only political party able to offer fraternity, regardless of ethnicity.

In the Cold War era mentality, the US saw everything very black and white: either Cyprus was a Communist or Capitalist country. Cyprus could not be broken into such a division. The AKEL was an appealing option for most people because they did not live in the past but looked towards the future and a purely Cypriot state. Cyprus struggled to find a Cypriot identity and the Communist Party helped facilitate an inclusive state and a cohesive community.

### EPILOGUE

In 2008, Cyprus elected a Communist president, Demestris Christofias, and was the first country in the EU to democratically elect a Communist. Communism is no longer an economic or political threat to the rest of the world therefore most countries did not take note of the abnormality of Cyprus. Christofias was an active member in the AKEL and has been determined to find peace between the Greek and Turkish-Cypriots. His political statement of inclusivity between the two sides was

consistent with the party's goals during the Cold War. Christofias was not concerned with the economic side of Communism, and swore to leave the free market alone. The Communist Party remains a very strong party on Cyprus and he had a better chance of being elected with their support. While he personally believes in Leninist economics he does not plan to implement the ideas upon the island and is more concerned with uniting the North and South. In his inauguration speech Christofias stated: "The solution of the Cyprus problem will be the top priority of my government"<sup>121</sup> "...to achieve the reunification of our country."<sup>122</sup> In a modern day society in which Communism holds no threat to the economy of the West, and the economics of Cyprus are irrelevant, having a Communist government in Cyprus has gone under the radar of most countries. The AKEL has had an enormous amount of success and their presence is more apparent than ever.

Christofias' political platform was built upon the idea of unification among the Greek and Turkish Cypriots, a popular notion. Christofias is much better liked than the president who preceded him, Tassos Papadpulos, who was notorious for his hatred of the Turks and rejection of the UN Reunification Plan in 2004. The Reunification plan, better known as The Annan Plan, was a proposal put forth by the UN to reunite Northern Cyprus with the Republic of Cyprus. The plan was to have a "United Cyprus Republic" which would contain both the Greek Cypriot State as well as the Turkish-Cypriot State. Leaders from the North and the South rejected this

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<sup>121</sup> Yan Liang, "New Cyprus president takes office with pledge for solution", *People's Daily Online*, February 28, 2008.

<sup>122</sup> Yiorgos Karahalidis, "Christofias Wins Cyprus Presidential Election" *USA Today*, February 25, 2008, [http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-02-24-cyprus-elections\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-02-24-cyprus-elections_N.htm)

idea while voters in the North accepted the idea voters in the South voted against this idea. Rejection of the Annan Plan let Cyprus fall into isolation from the rest of the EU.<sup>123</sup> Even though Cyprus officially became part of the EU in 2004, the plan would have made two political entities and safeguarded the settlement of Turks from the mainland. The most pressing reason for rejecting the Annan Plan was because it endorsed a con-federal state with a weak central government and considerable local autonomy. As a consequence of rejecting the Annan Plan, Cyprus became extremely cut off from the rest of Europe, socially as well as economically. Western Europe was disappointed Cyprus chose not to join the Annan Plan connecting them with the international community.

Christofias is described as an “Communist leader more in name whose party has a Marxist-Leninist ideology but whose policies are distinctly social democratic.”<sup>124</sup> Cyprus’ Communist policy has been so popular because of its ability to modernize while keeping a Marxist-Leninist ideology very close to heart. The Cypriots no longer want to unite with Greece or Turkey and are happily established as their own nation with strong allegiances to Greece and Turkey. Furthermore, troops are still stationed in Turkey to keep the peace between the Greeks and the Turks and the Communist Party is still today, the only party that allows both Greek and Turkish members. The present day Communist Party’s true purpose does not lie in economics but in the evolution of the Cypriot identity. The desire of the AKEL was

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<sup>123</sup> Helena Smith, “The peculiar solution: Cyprus,” *New Statesman*, March 3, 2008.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

never world domination or to spread Communism, rather it aimed to cultivate Cypriot nationalism.

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