



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

RELEASE IN PART
B6

December 9, 1974

SECRET

TO : M/FSI/SSFP -

FROM : S/P - Samuel W. Lewis, Acting *jm*

SUBJECT : Your Dissent Memorandum, "Critique of The Substantive Handling of The Cyprus Crisis" dated August 9, 1974.

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In accordance with the procedures set forth in the Department Notice of May 8, 1974, concerning dissent messages, this will constitute the response to your Dissent Memorandum on Cyprus dated August 9, 1974. Although the Secretary has had the opportunity to consider your Memorandum, the Policy Planning Staff takes responsibility for this reply, in which the Bureau of European Affairs also concurs. I apologize for the length of time which has elapsed.

This is essentially an argument about US prescience and US power. You assert, in substance, that:

1. The status quo ante crisis was infinitely better than the present situation, and we should therefore have made greater efforts to preserve it. This argument brackets the time sequence of the actual crisis.

2. Before the coup, it was known that Ioannides intended to overthrow Makarios and that the consequences would be severe;

-- strong US representations to Ioannides would have prevented the crisis;

-- nevertheless, foreknowledge was not translated into policy, primarily because intelligence from Athens was at best conflicting and because the USG was not in touch with the decision-making element in the GOG.

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3. After the coup, it was known that a Turkish military intervention could only have been prevented by removal of Sampson and the Greek coup leaders on Cyprus;

-- strong US representations to the Greeks to remove them would have prevented the intervention;

-- nevertheless, foreknowledge was, again, not translated into policy.

4. After the Turkish intervention, it is a fact that the present situation, which is tending to evolve toward partition of the island, is fraught with peril: permanent Greek-Turkish confrontation, with permanent destabilization of NATO's southeastern flank and permanent opportunities for the USSR in the area;

-- strong US pressure on Turkey in favor of a tradeoff of Turkish military withdrawal for federation on Cyprus can substantially correct this situation, even if the status quo ante cannot be restored;

-- nevertheless, it does not appear that these perceptions are being translated into policy.

Nobody would claim perfection for our policy concerning Cyprus, but a different view of what we could have foreseen and what we could have done is, I think, legitimate.

1. In general, it would have been very hard for the USG, as a government, to foresee the present situation ~~in all its complexities before the crisis~~ and to make greater efforts to preserve the status quo on Cyprus in consequence, even if our channels of communication had been perfect.

Most people concerned with the area worried about the status quo in the whole area, whose importance transcended that of Cyprus. The status quo on Cyprus (however good it looks in retrospect) was based on second-class status for the island's Turkish population and had been repeatedly called into question since independence -- not least by Makarios himself.

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It was clear that the two status quos were somehow related, but it was not clear how they were related. For this reason, it could not be clear that resolute US action to preserve the status quo on Cyprus was the sine qua non of regional stability, even had it been true, and even had the success of US action been assured. The hesitancy which marked our Cyprus policy before the coup may therefore have been inevitable, or at least, natural.

2. In that general framework, our specific policy before the coup was almost bound to be hesitant too. Intelligence reports from Athens were at best conflicting, as you put it. Beyond that, as you also note, stronger US representations might not have been heard in Athens. But even if they had been made and heard, the long-term consequences for US policy in the area were problematic. Ioannides might in fact have backed down and then been ejected in favor of a civilian government. But we might also have been left in the center of a dispute between an enraged Turkish government and an irritated and more entrenched Greek junta coming off a successful coup on Cyprus, with very important US/NATO facilities in both Greece and Turkey in jeopardy. With the best of information, we would have confronted a range of difficult choices.

3. This was also true after the coup, which clearly made Turkish intervention likely and some kind of US action necessary. There was no real doubt that after over a decade of acquiescence the Turks were determined this time to set right what they considered a fundamentally wrong and necessarily unstable situation on Cyprus, and that they would not be denied again. It seemed very likely that Turkish intervention would provoke the Greek-Turkish war everyone wished to avoid. But the question of how best to avoid it was, once again, complex.

Your advice, judging from your Memorandum, would have been to remove the basis for Turkish intervention (and therefore of Greek-Turkish war) by pressure on the Greeks to remove Sampson and the Greek officers responsible for the coup. Had such pressure been applied, and been successful, the Turks might have backed down; in the upshot, the humiliated Greek junta might have been replaced. Unhappily, this was not the only possible

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or even only likely prospect. As you note, success could not have been assured even with better intelligence. And, another result might have been Sampson in the Greek-Cypriot saddle, an infuriated Greek junta at war with Turkey which had landed on Cyprus, the US in the middle, and the whole infra-structure of the Western security position in the Eastern Mediterranean at risk. Or, alternatively, since Sampson appeared from the outset a very dubious horse with little staying power, especially after Makarios' escape became known, it was arguable whether any push was needed. At least, I think, it is hard to argue that the range of ambiguous choices shrank with the coup.

In this situation, we chose to struggle for breathing space. We sought to encourage the UK to bring the other two Guarantor Powers into negotiation, to discourage the Turks and reprove the Greeks without condemning either publicly in ways which could only harden both their positions, and to warn them both off war. This policy was not totally successful, in large part because the Turks apparently made a definite decision to intervene and placed their demands in London at a high enough level to ensure rejection. But war was avoided, negotiations began, and, in the upshot, civilian government was restored in Greece. We were not entirely responsible for either the successes or the failures, whatever the Greeks may now insist. But this outcome, with all its faults, avoided the worst, preserved some US capacity to mediate between two valuable Allies, and thereby at least opened onto a future consonant with broad US policy interests.

4. ~~Since the Turkish intervention, I see us as~~ engaged in essentially the course you recommend: encouraging the parties toward a solution acceptable to them, in the awareness that Turkey, with its strengthened position, will need to make the most concessions, and that some form of tradeoff between military withdrawal and federation will probably underlie any agreement.

Thus there appears to be no basic disagreement on current policy. There is none concerning the perils of the present situation for US and Western interests in the critical area. At the same time,

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I recognize we may have different views on timing and what the US can and should do. It is apparent that the road ahead will be long and involved, and the outcome uncertain. But that is the real problem: we cannot assure a given outcome by maximizing pressure on Turkey, or on anyone. Both the Greeks and the Turks are aware that we do not necessarily espouse all their objectives as a matter of policy. All we favor as a matter of policy is a solution that they, the communities on Cyprus, and the international community can live with. Only time and much more effort will tell whether one can be achieved. Still, while there are few grounds for optimism, there are as yet no grounds for despair.

6/5 per fwe
Concur: EUR - Mr. Stabler

cc: The Secretary
The Executive Secretary
S/P - Mr. Lord
EUR - Mr. Hartman
S/P-OFD - Mr. Smith

fwe
Drafted by: S/P:TWSimons, Jr.:anc
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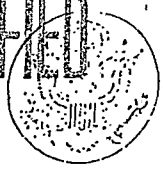
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BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

S/S

August 9, 1974

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DISSENT MEMORANDUM

To: The Secretary
Thru: S/PC - Mr. Lord ✓
From: EUR/SE - Thomas D. Boyatt ✓

Critique of the Substantive Handling of
the Cyprus Crisis

In response to your request for views -- including dissenting views -- on US handling of the Cyprus crisis I submit the following ("astonishing") comments.

1. The intelligence from Athens was at best conflicting. The CIA is backgrounding the press that US intelligence had forewarning of the coup on Cyprus. This is a misrepresentation. While the State Department's area specialists anticipated trouble on Cyprus and attempted to do something about it as early as May 17 (STATE 103030), [redacted] reported on July 14 that Ioannides had decided not to intervene in Cyprus. In fact, the CIA summary of July 15 -- the day of the coup -- contained the statement that Ioannides had decided not to intervene on Cyprus. It is clear that Ioannides deliberately misled the USG.

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Then on July 18, the [redacted] reported that: "the Greek military are now solidly behind strongman Brigadier General Ioannides;" "what Ioannides has achieved for Greece on the island is parity with the Turks;" and "any Turkish invasion of the island would unite all of the Greek nationals behind Ioannides."

It would be hard to imagine judgments more divorced from reality than these. As events were soon to show,

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DEPT OF STATE APPEALS REVIEW PANEL (ARP)	
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(✓)	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELEASED
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Exemptions <u>B1 25X1 25X6</u>	
ARP Action Cert <u>LT</u>	Date <u>9-30-09</u>

STATE DEPT. DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW

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Declassify in part and excise as shown

EO 12958, 25X () () ()

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the facts of the matter were just the opposite: the Greek military was not behind Ioannides, the Ioannides coup on Cyprus made a Turkish invasion inevitable, Turkey's effort to remove the Greek military shattered rather than solidified Ioannides' military base, and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus did not unite all Greek nationals behind Ioannides but rather convinced the army to bring in a civilian government which the people would support.

Why was the reporting from Athens wrong on all counts? The answer appears to be that [redacted] were completely bemused and bedazzled by the [redacted] contact with Ioannides. In this connection, the recent Inspector's Report on Athens expressed concern that the USG's only link with Ioannides was [redacted]

2. The status quo ante crisis on Cyprus was infinitely better for US interests than the present situation. Before the Greek-engineered coup on the island there had been no intercommunal violence for several years, the political situation within the Greek Cypriot community and between the Greek and Turk Cypriots was reasonably stable, Greece and Turkey were not in direct confrontation, and the US was not involved. Now Greece and Turkey are directly engaged in Cyprus, the internal situation is fragile and volatile, the death and devastation are enough to fuel the hatred of both sides for many years, and the US is involved. Because of the overriding USG interest on preventing Cyprus from causing a Greco/Turk confrontation, we should have made greater efforts to preserve the status quo before the crisis.

3. The present crisis could have been prevented. On May 17 the Department suggested that Ambassador Tasca get word to General Ioannides of the US view that "If the National Guard and EOKA-B succeed in 'getting rid' of Makarios and installing a leadership responsive to Athens, a direct confrontation between Greece and Turkey would become inevitable." (This prediction in STATE 103030 proved to be all too accurate.) Ambassador Tasca argued against such representations and continued to do so. It is also important to realize that (although he later

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changed his tune) General Ioannides in late June or early July told [redacted] that he was planning an anti-Makarios coup. When the Department learned that Ioannides was "giving us a message" we cabled Embassy Athens stating "It is evident that Ioannides is seriously considering a way to topple Makarios from power, a move which could have disastrous consequences for US interests in eastern Mediterranean as well as for peoples of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey. In our view effort to remove Makarios by force contains unacceptable risks of chaos eventually causing Greco/Turk confrontation, involving Soviets in Cyprus situation." (STATE 141500). Ambassador Tasca continued to argue against such representations. Eventually the Department was informed by phone that the US message had been conveyed "at appropriate level below Ioannides." I do not think the USG knows whether or not our message was really conveyed to Ioannides. In any case Ioannides and his friends are now putting out the line in Athens that the USG was informed of the anti-Makarios coup and said nothing.

I believe that strong US representations to Ioannides would have prevented the crisis. This judgment is shared by the rest of the Greek language/area specialists in SE. The assertion, of course, cannot be proved. But it is certain that no (or very faint) representations to Ioannides resulted in his pushing ahead with the anti-Makarios coup which set in train the crisis and brought the predicted results.

4. Turkish intervention on Cyprus could have been prevented. Following the Greek army coup which placed Sampson in power, the GOT insisted on two things: replacement of Sampson and the withdrawal of elements of the Greek army responsible for the coup. Only the achievement of these goals could possibly have prevented a Turkish invasion. If the US had made strong representations to the Government of Greece for the removal of Sampson and the Greek coup leaders, the Greek military (which eventually overthrew Ioannides) might well have taken such actions in order to avoid Turkish intervention. This assertion likewise cannot be proved. In retrospect, however, it is clear that the failure of any party connected with the Cyprus situation to move against Sampson and the Greek coup rendered intervention by Turkey inevitable.

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5. The USG was not in touch with the decision making element in the GOG.

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the Ambassador accepted the situation, both the Ambassador and the Ambassador were apparently very reluctant to tell Ioannides what he did not wish to hear, i.e., the US was opposed to a Greek coup on Cyprus. In short, there was no meaningful communication between the USG and the GOG until Under Secretary Sisco's arrival in Athens and his insistence on talking to Ioannides. By that time it was too late to avert the Cyprus crisis of 1974.

6. US handling of the crisis produced significant tactical successes but a protracted Greco/Turk confrontation over Cyprus may result. Since the outbreak of the Cyprus crisis a ceasefire has been achieved, a Greco/Turk war averted, and a negotiating process will soon begin with some chance of solving the Cyprus problem. The British are out in front with US diplomacy playing a crucial supporting role, Ioannides has been overthrown and constitutional government reestablished in Greece, the Soviets have been neutralized and the UN engaged in the peace-keeping aspect of the situation. However, our policy has not been an unmitigated success; there are real problems looming. These are:

-- The balance between Greeks and Turks on Cyprus has been upset. For the past several years the situation has remained in rough equilibrium because the Greek majority on the island itself was balanced by Turkish power in the area. Now the Turks have overwhelming power on Cyprus and in the area.

-- The situation of overwhelming Turkish power is unstable because of the likelihood that Greece will eventually respond by augmenting its own military presence on Cyprus both to improve its relationship vis-a-vis Turkey and to protect the Greek Cypriots.

-- Since the Cyprus power balance between Greece and Turkey strongly favors the latter, the chance for negotiations resulting in agreement is reduced. Turkey will push too hard (witness the continuing violations of the "cease-fire" of July 22 and the Geneva agreement), and Greece and the Greek Cypriots will be unable to accept a "humiliation" or "sell-out". The Geneva agreement is already being described in many Greek and Greek Cypriot quarters as both a humiliation and a sell-out.

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-- The fate of the Karamanlis government is closely linked to the Cyprus situation. Karamanlis, political government and constitutionalism in Greece are to some extent at the mercy of developments in Cyprus. Karamanlis will be required at a minimum to spin out the Cyprus negotiations while he strengthens his own position in Greece. Any developments in the Cyprus situation which result in further major military or diplomatic defeats for Greece would place Karamanlis and his government in extreme jeopardy.

-- If the Karamanlis government falls, its successor -- whether left or right, civilian or military -- will probably blame the US for Greece's defeat on Cyprus (the Greeks are not going to blame themselves), and would be dedicated to redeeming Greece's Cyprus humiliation.

-- If the Cyprus situation deteriorates further the Soviets will be presented with good opportunities in Greece and Cyprus. The detachment of Greece from NATO (and the elimination of US bases) under a Karamanlis successor government, and an anti-Turk insurgency on Cyprus should not be excluded as potential results of a failure of the Geneva talks.

7. US policy has favored Turkish objectives and positions. Following the July 22 "ceasefire", Turkey continued to pour men and war materiel into Cyprus and to acquire territory by force. Since the Geneva Agreement Turkey has continued to reinforce and is advancing as this is written (August 7). Regardless of whether or not strong USG representations to Turkey could, in fact, have contained their military thrust, Greeks and Greek Cypriots will regard the US, the author of the ceasefire, as responsible for Turkey's gains. Moreover, now that Turkey has an entrenched military position on Cyprus, it will be very reluctant to give it up and only strong pressure from the US (as well as the rest of the international community) will induce Turkey to do so. On the other hand, no Greek Government and no Greek Cypriot Government can accept a negotiated solution which involves mainland Turkey military presence on Cyprus in anything like their present numbers. Therefore, US "acquiescence" in Turkey's powerful military beachhead on Cyprus has made successful negotiations in Geneva extremely doubtful.

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