Keeping the Peace in the Cyprus Crisis of 1963–64

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To Lorna

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Chronology

1955

- 1 April: Start of violence in the Greek Cypriot campaign for union with Greece (enosis).

1958

- 6 December: Private meeting at the United Nations headquarters between the foreign ministers of Greece and Turkey.

1959

- 11 February: Greece and Turkey, meeting in Zurich, Switzerland, reach an agreement on the future of Cyprus – the Zurich Agreement.
- 19 February: At a conference in London this Agreement is, in an amended form, accepted by Britain, Greece, and Turkey, and by the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, as ‘the agreed foundation for the final settlement of the problem of Cyprus’ – the London Agreement.

1960

- 16 August: Cyprus becomes independent on the basis of the Zurich and London Agreements.

1963

- 30 November: President Makarios makes 13 proposals for the amendment of the Cypriot Constitution.
- 21 December: Outbreak of fighting between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.
- 25 December: Turkey threatens to intervene.
Britain offers to play a peacekeeping role, together with Greece and Turkey, if so invited by Cyprus.
Cease-fire agreement reached towards the end of the day (but is highly precarious).
- 26 December: Makarios agrees to the tripartite peacekeeping proposal, and British troops move out of the British Sovereign Base Areas on the island of Cyprus to establish the ‘Joint Force’. It is under the command of Maj.-Gen. P.G.F. Young. (The Force proves, however, to be ‘Joint’ only in theory, as in effect Greece and Turkey play no part in it.)
- 27 December: British troops begin patrolling.
- 30 December: Agreement is reached on the line which, in Nicosia, divides the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot fighters, and on it being occupied and patrolled by British troops. After the colour in which it was originally drawn on the map, it becomes known as ‘the Green Line’.

1964

- 15 January: Opening of the London Conference on Cyprus.
- 17 January: UN Secretary-General, U Thant, appoints Lt.-Gen. P.S. Gyani of India as his Personal Representative in Cyprus.
- 23 January: London Conference on the point of collapse.
- 24 January: Britain begins her efforts to get the peacekeeping role in Cyprus taken over by a Nato-linked force.
- 14 February: Due to Makarios' steady opposition, the idea of a Nato-linked force (or some variant of it) is abandoned.
- 15 February: Britain requests an early meeting of the UN Security Council to consider the Cyprus problem.
- 19 February: Maj.-Gen. R.M.P. Carver assumes command of the Joint Force in place of Young.
- 4 March: After much discussion, the Security Council recommends the creation of a UN peacekeeping force, with a life of three months.
- 12 March: Turkey threatens to act in support of the Turkish Cypriots unless Greek Cypriot attacks cease.
- 13 March: Difficulties in securing contributors for the UN Force are overcome.
- 25 March: UN Secretary-General appoints S.S. Tuomioja, of Finland, as UN Mediator in Cyprus.
- 27 March: UN Force (Unficyp) declared to be operational. Its Commander is Lt.-Gen. Gyani of India, with Maj.-Gen. Carver as Deputy Commander.
- 26 April: Serious fighting breaks out in the region of St Hilarion Castle, in the hinterland of Kyrenia.
- 11 May: Three Greek Cypriots killed in Famagusta. In retaliation, many Turkish Cypriots abducted, not to reappear.
- UN Secretary-General appoints Galo Plaza, of Ecuador, as his Special Representative in Cyprus.
- 4 June: Turkey prepares to invade Cyprus.
- 5 June: President L.B. Johnson of the United States addresses an extremely strong note to Turkey, which causes her to hold back.
- 20 June: UN Security Council extends the life of Unficyp for a further three months.
- 1 July: At the instigation of the United States, Dean Acheson, the American elder statesman, becomes involved in the mediatory process at about this time.
- 8 July: General K.S. Thimayya of India takes over from Gyani as Commander of Unficyp.
- 17 July: Dangerous incident occurs at Temblos, near Kyrenia.
- 5 August: Heavy exchanges of fire in Nicosia.
- 6 August: Greek Cypriots launch a heavy attack on Turkish Cypriots in the north-western area around Kokkina.
- 8 August: Turkey begins air strikes on the attacking Greek Cypriots.
- 9 August: Greek Cypriots halt their offensive, but establish an economic blockade of Turkish Cypriot villages in the area and elsewhere.

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- 31 August: Acheson gives up his mediatory efforts at about this time.
9 September: Tuomioja, the UN Mediator, dies.
10 September: Turkey threatens to act in support of the economically beleaguered Turkish Cypriots.
15 September: Makarios lifts the economic blockade on Turkish Cypriot areas.
16 September: Galo Plaza, formerly the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative in Cyprus, appointed as the new UN Mediator.
25 September: UN Security Council extends Unficyp's life for a further three months.
26 October: Nicosia-Kyrenia road reopened under exclusive Unficyp control.
18 December: UN Security Council extends Unficyp's life for a further three months.

1965

- 30 March: The Mediator submits his report, which is rejected by Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots.

1967

- November: Serious fighting in southern Cyprus.

1974

- July: Turkey invades Cyprus.
August: Turkey extends her campaign and takes over the northern third of Cyprus.

1983

- November: The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is promulgated.

2000

- The deadlock continues.

Leading Personalities

Unless otherwise indicated, positions are those held during the crisis of 1963–64. In American terminology, the ‘Secretary of State’ is the foreign minister, and the ‘Department of State’ the foreign ministry. The ‘Under-Secretary of State’ is in effect the minister’s deputy. In Britain, the ‘Secretary of State for ...’ is indicative of a ministerial position; but the ‘Permanent Under-Secretary of State’ is the head official at a ministry.

Acheson, Dean American elder statesman.

Averoff-Tossizza, Evangelos Foreign Minister of Greece in 1958–59.

Ball, George Under-Secretary of State, US Department of State.

Bunche, Ralph Member of the UN Secretariat.

Butler, R.A. (Rab) Britain’s Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Caccia, Sir Harold Permanent Under-Secretary at Britain’s Foreign Office.

Carver, Major-General Michael Second Commander of the Joint Force, and then Deputy Commander of the UN Force.

Clark, Sir Arthur Britain’s High Commissioner to Cyprus until April 1964.

Denktash, Rauf In effect the deputy leader of the Turkish Cypriot community.

Dodson, D.S.L. An official at Britain’s Foreign Office.

Douglas-Home, Alec Prime Minister of Britain. In 1958–59, as the Earl of Home, was Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.

Grivas, George Leader of EOKA in the late 1950s. In mid-1964 takes command of Greek troops in Cyprus and of the Cypriot National Guard.

Gyani, Lieutenant-General P.S. Personal Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Cyprus, and then first Commander of the UN Force.

Inonu, Ismet Prime Minister of Turkey.

Johnson, Lyndon Baines President of the United States.

Kutchuk, Fazil The leader of the Turkish Cypriots, and first Vice-President of Cyprus.

Lloyd, Selwyn Britain's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1958–59.

Macmillan, Harold Prime Minister of Britain in 1958–59.

Makarios III, Archbishop The leader of the Greek Cypriots, and first President of Cyprus.

Papandreou, George Prime Minister of Greece.

Pickard, Cyril An official at Britain's Commonwealth Relations Office, and Acting High Commissioner to Cyprus in the early months of 1964.

Plaza, Galo Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Cyprus, and then second UN Mediator.

Rolz-Bennett, José Member of the UN Secretariat.

Rusk, Dean United States Secretary of State.

Sandys, Duncan Britain's Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.

Thant, U Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Thimayya, General K.S. Second Commander of the UN Force.

Tuomioja, S.S. First UN Mediator.

Young, Major-General Peter First Commander of the Joint Force.

Zorlu, Fatin Foreign Minister of Turkey in 1958–59.

Terminology, Sources and Abbreviations

The collapse of the bicomunal state of Cyprus at the end of 1963 necessarily raised the question of whether the state continued to have a single, legitimate government, or whether its government had legitimately devolved to each of its two component communities. Naturally, the Greek Cypriot majority claimed the former, seeing itself as solely entitled to govern; while the Turkish Cypriot minority, no less understandably, claimed the latter. Early in March 1964 a resolution of the United Nations Security Council referred several times to 'the Government of Cyprus'; the Greek Cypriot leadership had no difficulty in being identified as the entity to which the phrase referred – and hence as the one authorized to speak internationally on behalf of 'the Republic of Cyprus'; and very soon this position received virtually universal acceptance in the outside world. It must therefore be emphasized that the use of the term 'Greek Cypriot' in the later chapters of this book is not meant to carry any legal, moral, or political significance. It is employed simply as a helpful way of designating one side in the ongoing conflict between Cypriots of different ethnic origin.

There is a large body of secondary literature on, or bearing on, the Cyprus problem, my indebtedness to which is indicated, as appropriate, in the endnotes. The full reference for each such source is noted on the first occasion on which it appears in each chapter; any subsequent references in the chapter to that source are given in an abbreviated and cross-referenced form. Chiefly, however, this book is based on archival material, which is similarly noted. When quotations from archives are in the form of reported speech, it has generally not been thought necessary to draw specific attention to that. The documentary sources have been most valuably supplemented by interviews, telephone conversations, and correspondence, usually with people who were involved in the crisis. Those who helped in these ways are, as a rule, not individually identified in endnotes.

The main archival sources are indicated in endnotes in the following way:

- CNA: National Archives of Canada
- DSND: the papers of Duncan Sandys (Churchill Archive Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge)
- IMA: Military Archives of Ireland
- INA: National Archives of Ireland
- LBJ: Lyndon Baines Johnson Library
- PRO: Public Record Office (Britain)
- UNA: Archives of the United Nations
- USNA: National Archives of the United States

Other abbreviations used in endnotes, a few of which are also used occasionally in the text, are:

- BFC: British Forces in Cyprus
- CBFC: Commander of British Forces in Cyprus
- CDS: Chief of the Defence Staff (Britain)
- COS: Chiefs of Staff (Britain)
- CRO: Commonwealth Relations Office (Britain)
- CYP: Cyprus
- FO: Foreign Office (Britain)
- GOC: General Officer Commanding
- HMSO: Her Majesty's Stationery Office
- LON: London
- MoD: Ministry of Defence (Britain)
- NEA: Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (United States Department of State)
- NY: New York (United Nations Headquarters or national missions accredited thereto)
- POL: Political Affairs and Relations (part of the subject area, Political and Defense) (United States National Archives)
- SBA: Sovereign Base Area (British)
- State: Department of State (United States)

The text also makes reference to:

- AKEL: a left-wing Cypriot political party with Communist affiliations
- enosis: the union of Cyprus with Greece
- EOKA: an anti-British guerrilla movement in Cyprus in the late 1950s

Where an abbreviation is employed in the text, the full title together with its abbreviation is given on its first use in each chapter.

Map 1 The Middle East, 1963

Map 2 Cyprus, 1963

Map 3 Eurasia and north-east Africa, December 1963