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The Year After: Cyprus and the Shipwrecking of British Sovereignty

Introduction

An extrapolation, analysis and evaluation of the latest foreign policy documents for Greece, Turkey and Cyprus released (partially) by the British government for the year 1975, the year after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, throw into vivid relief the current debate both on Britain's perceived (by many) rôle as a pageboy (euphemistically speaking) of the US in defence matters¹ and on her anachronistically elginistic attitude towards clinging to its Sovereign Base Areas (SBA's) in Cyprus (3% of the country)². Indeed, the documents demonstrate how those two factors are closely intertwined, then as now. They show, in Guicciardini's words, how the past illuminates the future, the world has always been the same, and how the same things return with different colours. For Cyprus' history is one of continuous meddling by external forces. Despite Cyprus' membership of the European Union –achieved under a continuing illegal Turkish occupation of almost 40% of its territory– it is still near the root of the all-important 'Eastern Question' and an epicentral object, hostage and victim of the atavistic power politics of large powers biting their fingernails of geostrategic rivalry and ambition.

The main points to emerge from the quagmire of papers are: Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) soul-searching about British interests in Cyprus and an admission that British strategic interests in Cyprus were minimal, connected to a desire to relinquish responsibility for Cyprus altogether and to give up the SBA's; the possibility of the US paying Britain secretly to keep

1. See Leigh, David and Norton-Taylor, Richard, 'We Are Now a Client State,' *The Guardian*, 17 July 2003.

2. See Mallinson, William, 'Britain's Elginism and the Evolution of its Attitude towards the SBA's: a Historical Overview,' Athens, December 2005.

the SBA's; British views on the French rôle in Greece; British opposition to a strong rôle for the European Economic Community (EEC) in Greek-Turkish relations; the readiness of the FCO to run the risk of straining relations with Greece rather than with Turkey; the FCO's skepticism about Turkish claims vis-à-vis the Aegean; the British government's readiness to help to supply arms to Turkey if the latter agreed to return to the conference table; British irritation at Turkish stalling, double-agendas and unsavoury forms of pressure; the British Embassy, Athens', suspicion of official (Greek?) involvement in the publication of an article in the *Athens News* by the 'Committee of Greeks and Greek Americans' giving details about CIA personnel in Greece, including (accurate) addresses and telephone numbers; and the British Foreign Secretary, Callaghan's difficulty in telling the truth.

The Sovereign Base Territories and the Americans

In an extraordinarily frank vein, the FCO wrote in a paper on British interests in the Eastern Mediterranean that:

Given our decision not to use military force in Cyprus and the relatively small amount of pressure we can bring to bear upon Cyprus, Greece and Turkey, this puts us in the invidious position of having *responsibility without power*. This has brought us no advantages whatsoever and it must be in British interests for us to work for a solution which will not involve Britain in any guarantee obligations or other lasting commitments over Cyprus. Such a solution is however remote and will be particularly difficult to achieve *as long as we retain a physical presence in the Bases* [my italics]³.

In 1970, the FCO had already recognised that the SBA's, and even more, British sites and facilities, were hostage to Cypriot goodwill⁴, while two months after the Turkish landing on Cyprus, it had recognised the SBA's had been an embarrassment⁵, proceeding to a large reduction of staff at the SBA's.

It appears clear that without US pressure, Britain might well have given up the SBA's⁶. The FCO wrote:

3. 'British Interests in the Eastern Mediterranean,' *paper* prepared by South East European Department, FCO, 11 April 1975; PRO FCO 46/1248, DP1/516/1.

4. Secondé to Bendell, Brimelow and Daunt, *minute* of 23 September 1970, PRO FCO 9/1178, WSC 10/14.

5. *Steering Brief* for Secretary of State's discussions with Dr. Kissinger in New York, 24 September 1974, PRO FCO 82/446, AMU 3/548/8, pt. B.

6. Weston to Morgan, *minute*, PRO FCO 9/2207, WSC 10/11.

The US Government are firmly attached to the view that withdrawal from our bases in Cyprus would have a destabilizing affect upon the Eastern Mediterranean, with implications for the Middle East [...] Dr. Kissinger in particular is anxious that we should continue to occupy this square on the world chess board, [sic] we do not any longer seek a world role. Although our own preferred policy is for a complete British military withdrawal from Cyprus, we recognize that we cannot do so at present, given the *global importance of working closely with the Americans* [my italics]⁷.

Despite FCO recognition that the SBA's should be relinquished and its view that British strategic interests in Cyprus were now minimal⁸, Britain preferred to subsume its interests (or lack of them!) in US global policy. At the end of April, the American ambassador in Nicosia went as far as to tell a senior FCO official that the US government should be prepared to contribute towards the cost of the SBA's if Britain were ever tempted to withdraw on financial grounds. While admitting that this view was not universally held in Washington, he thought that if ever the problem became actual, there would be no difficulty about producing the money, secretly if necessary⁹. He was clearly under instructions from the State Department: no ambassador would ever stick out his neck so far on such an issue.

Whatever the polemics surrounding the question of Britain's anachronistic retention of part of another country (the British government continues to refuse to release various papers), it is clear that her emotional ties with America, a quasi-automatic need to hide under American coat-tails when expedient and a wish to serve US global interests even when they may not be in British interests were, and are now in yet greater measure, the order of the day.

Extracts from a telephone conversation between Kissinger, the new US president (Ford), and the Foreign Secretary, Callaghan a few hours after Turkey launched its second invasion of Cyprus on 14 August 1974 make fascinating reading in the context of the 'special relationship.'

7. Op. cit., 'British Interests etc.' Some cosmetic alterations were subsequently made to the paper, but not such as to alter its essence.

8. Ibid.

9. Weston to Morgan, *minute* of 28 April 1975, PRO FCO 9/2152, WSC 1/5, pt. C.

Foreign Secretary

Well, I was just thinking- I think in military terms, obviously the Turks will carry on until they have got this line that they have figured out on the map, and cynically, let's hope they get it quickly.

Dr. Kissinger

I agree.

[...]

Foreign Secretary

[...] You're not going to act, we're not going to act unilaterally and the UN is going to get out of the way.

Dr. Kissinger

O.K. Why don't we let the thing sit then for a day and see how it looks tomorrow morning.

[...]

President

[...] I want you to know that we appreciate what you have been trying to do in a very difficult situation.

Foreign Secretary

Well, that's very kind of you. You know that Henry and I –well I have a great respect for him, and I hope we've got a great friendship together and Mr. President, I just want to say this to you, Sir, that in the end, when the chips are down it's only the United States who can really pull the chestnuts out of the fire, and there are times when not even you can do that. This was one of them.

President

I fully appreciate that, but we have to have good friends and allies like Great Britain to work with and for that reason we are darn grateful for all that you have been trying to do¹⁰.

Two hours later, the British Prime Minister, Wilson, telephoned President Ford:

Prime Minister

We don't see that there is anything that can be done in a military sense either by ourselves or through the UN or anything else. It's got to be along diplomatic haul now.

10. *Record of telephone conversation*, 2:45 p.m., Wednesday 14 August 1974, PRO PREM 16/20.

President

I would agree with that and I think that Henry and Mr. Callaghan have pretty well agreed that we ought to let the dust settle.

Prime Minister

I think that’s right as long as we can both keep together, not only bilaterally but in NATO, UN and wherever else we may be deploying our joint efforts.

[...]

Prime Minister

[...] We’ve both got the same inflation problem; dangers of unemployment and again, it’s one of those things we’ve got to come as close as we can to one another about.

President

If we work together, I think we can do a great deal better¹¹.

Such shoulder-to-shoulder bonhomie was certainly not replicated in the case of the British-French relationship, despite Britain having recently been welcomed into the EEC. We now turn to the French connexion.

The French Connexion

It was not only Britain’s Disraeli who had turned his beady eyes towards Ottoman Cyprus in 1878 and earlier, but Napoleon III, who is reported to have ‘recognised Cyprus as an important observatory over the provinces of Turkey in Asia and Africa¹²’. When Britain obtained it, France was irritated¹³. In 1916, the Sykes-Picot agreement carving up the Middle East included a clause whereby the British government agreed to consult the French in the event of the former giving up the island¹⁴. As for de Gaulle, he thought that Cyprus was not properly speaking a state at all, and that it should be returned to Greece, to the obvious consternation of the Foreign Office¹⁵. In 1971,

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11. *Record of telephone conversation*, 5:00 p.m., Wednesday 14 August 1975, PRO PREM 16/20.
 12. Litsas, Spyros, ‘The Origins of the Enosis Question in Cyprus,’ *Defensor Pacis*, issue 17, Athens, July 2005, p. 119.
 13. Coughlan, Reed, *Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950*, Vol. XI, Sources for the History of Cyprus, edited by Wallace, Paul W. and Orphanides, G., Greece and Cyprus Research Centre, Altamont, New York, 2004, p. 178. Coughlan quotes Arnold Toynbee’s celebrated article ‘Cyprus, the British Empire and Greece.’
 14. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
 15. Butler to Dodson, *letter* of 4 May 1964, PRO FCO 371/174750, C10115/1400.

France took the same line as the USSR and the United Nations in supporting President Makarios against ‘double-enosis,’ while the British government, but especially the Ministry of Defence, was growing increasingly irritated at French plans, later realized, to install a ‘broadcasting station’ on Cyprus¹⁶.

Shortly before the Turkish invasion, the French government became increasingly suspicious of the Anglo-Saxon special relationship vis-à-vis Cyprus. The French Foreign Minister, Sauvagnargues, told Callaghan that although the Americans had told them that they wished to avoid unilateral Turkish action, they were not putting pressure on the Greek government to withdraw their National Guard officers from Cyprus. The FCO also annoyed the French by not providing them with information in the two days preceding the invasion¹⁷. By this time, Kissinger had prevailed upon Callaghan to toe the American line, and thus part of Anglo-US strategy was to pull the wool over French eyes. It is likely, in this connexion, that the future Greek Prime Minister, Karamanlis, (who had been in self-imposed exile in Paris for over ten years) was in close contact with the French government during this period¹⁸.

When Karamanlis took over as Prime Minister on the fall of the Junta, he almost immediately took Greece out of the integrated military structure of NATO (which led to some heavy-handed American pressure on Greece¹⁹). France had of course done precisely the same thing ten years previously. Thus, given the post-invasion extreme Greek distaste for the rôle of Britain and the US in the whole Cyprus débâcle (understandable, given the circumstances), Franco-Greek relations began to flower, to the consternation of the British and Americans. The British Embassy reported to the FCO in September that the Cyprus crisis ‘can only have seemed to swell the numbers of those who so consider that Greece can stand alone –perhaps with France as arms supplier;²⁰’ and in January 1975, the Ambassador in Athens wrote to the FCO:

16. Mallinson, William, *Cyprus, A Modern History*, I. B. Tauris, London, 2005, p. 71: Ramsbotham to Secretary of State, *Cyprus: Annual Review for 1970*, 1 January 1971, PRO FCO 9/1358, WSC1/1. See also Kilburn to Killick, *letter* of 9 September 1974, PRO FCO 9/1946, WSC 3/303/1.

17. Mallinson, William, ‘US Interests, British Acquiescence and the Invasion of Cyprus,’ *Defensor Pacis*, Issue 16, Athens, January 2005: Callaghan and Sauvagnargues, *record of conversation*, 19 July 1974, PRO FCO 9/1894, WSC 1/10, pt. E.

18. It is perhaps ironic that the mess to which Karamanlis returned to try and sort out was the result of the incipiently cratocidal treaty package to which he had himself agreed in 1959.

19. Callaghan to Ukdell NATO, *telegram* of 10 October 1975, PRO FCO 9/2229, WSG2/579/2, pt. C.

20. Op. cit., Mallinson, ‘US Interests etc.’, p. 176: Richards to Killick, *letter* of 9 September 1974, PRO FCO 9/1946, WSC 3/303/1.

The conviction that we failed as a guarantor Power in Cyprus lingers. Our wider responsibilities there, together with the need to maintain tolerable relations with Turkey both intrinsically and in an Anglo-American context [shades of today, viz. Guicciardini!] have made us less popular among Greece’s western friends and allies than some less actively engaged, notably France [...] Over the EEC, France has again emerged as Greece’s major champion and is losing no time in capitalising on her advantage²¹.

Three months later, the FCO concluded that Turkey was more important to Western strategic interests than Greece, and that this conclusion ‘was diametrically opposed to that which the French appeared to have reached.’²² Within the EEC context, also, the French government took a line more favourable to Greece, and less favourable to Turkey, than that of the British, pressuring for a stronger *démarche* to be made with the Turks and Turkish Cypriots than the British seemed to want²³. As regards Greek moves to join the EEC, France was Greece’s main sponsor²⁴, while the British Embassy in Athens reported, perhaps with a tinge of envy, that the French could do no wrong, and that the slightest thing they did was given wide and sympathetic coverage in the Greek media²⁵.

The brief period of relative independence from the US and the more genuinely European ‘communaire’ approach of the Conservative government of Edward Heath was now of course no longer, and was replaced by the then Euro-skeptical socialist Wilson government, which had even organised an *a posteriori* referendum on EEC membership. The strong socio-political emotions on the ‘European question’ and Edward Heath’s defeat in the elections at the end of 1974 contributed to the re-establishment of the ‘special relationship.’ Thus, although the British government went along with joint EEC action to try and get the Graeco-Turkish antagonists together again, they worked against Greece and French pressure to make strong or frequent *démarches*. What, however, of the British attitude towards Turkey?

21. Richards to Secretary of State, Greece: *Annual Review* for 1974, 7 January 1975, PRO FCO 9/2226, WSG 1/3.

22. Weston to Lane, *letter* of 11 April 1975, PRO FCO 46/1248, DP1/516/1.

23. FCO Brief No. 4: *European Political Cooperation Ministerial Meeting*, Venice, 11-12 September 1975, PRO FCO 9/2184, WSG 2/598/2, pt. A.

24. Vereker to Weston, *letter* of 24 April 1975, PRO FCO 9/2247, WSG 10/1, pt. A.

25. Wainwright to Cornish, *letter* of 11 December 1975, PRO FCO 9/2230, WSG3/304/1.

'Briturkey'

As we shall see, the FCO was particularly critical –in private– of Turkey's behaviour and attitude towards the International Court of Justice (ICJ), protection of property, residents in the occupied zone, constitutional changes, and of its negotiating tactics. Despite this, the British government was not prepared to do anything that might upset Turkey inordinately, the reasons being essentially strategic. Extracts from an FCO paper set the tone:

[...] our primary role in the area is to maintain the pro-western alignment and membership of NATO of Turkey, and, to a lesser extent, Greece; [...] however hard we try to avoid it, issues may arise which do face the West with the choice of incurring serious Greek ill-will by building up Turkey's pro-western alignment, or further straining Turkish loyalty while keeping the Greeks sweet. We should aim to divorce Cyprus as much as possible from other issues affecting our relations with Greece and Turkey, although Greece particularly will be loathe to do so. We should also recognise that in the final analysis *Turkey must be regarded as more important to Western strategic interests than Greece and that, if risks must be run, they should be risks of further straining Greek rather than Turkish relations with the West* [my italics]²⁶.

Not long before the invasion, Turkey had started to question Greek sovereignty over parts of the Aegean continental shelf, certain Greek islets and Greek airspace, clearly part of a double-pronged military strategy against Greece, once the invasion had taken place. In this way, Turkey was, and is, able to play off one issue against the other, whatever efforts have been made to separate the territorial claims and the Cyprus issue.

Having agreed in February 1975 to allow the International Court of Justice to handle the issue of the continental shelf, the Turkish government then changed its mind, to the extent that considerable doubt can be cast on its original commitment. Despite this setback, the Greeks agreed to hold bilateral talks, whereupon the Turks postponed them on the grounds that the Greeks wished to issue a communiqué beforehand. The British Embassy in Ankara summed up the Turkish approach succinctly and cogently, if a little cynically:

26. *Op. cit.*, 'British Interests in the Eastern Mediterranean.'

Another example of perhaps typically Turkish thinking on this occurred when I was discussing this subject with Mr. Dağ, a First Secretary who works to Süylemez. Dağ said that everything depended on bilateral discussions between the two sides and that after such discussions the matter would either be completely solved in itself or there would be an agreed approach to the International Court or there would be no progress at all. I asked Dağ for his views on the likelihood of progress in bilateral discussion. *He said that all that was needed for progress was that the Greeks should give in!* I was left with the impression that reference to the International Court was still seen as something rather irrelevant and that the Turks hankered firmly, however unrealistically, for a bilateral solution. This is perhaps not surprising, *as they can presumably not have much confidence in winning their case at the Court on its merits alone.* In other words, the agreement in principle earlier this year to refer the matter to the ICJ was probably seen by the Turks as a convenient means of cooling the situation at that time, not as a means of actually finding a solution to the problem [my italics]²⁷.

In fact, the Embassy in Ankara had already suggested to the FCO three months previously that Turkish officials were ‘spinning things out in the hope that they could avoid actually going to the Court more or less indefinitely²⁸.’ The same is true today.

Thus, it is clear that, then as now, Turkey never intended to allow the ICJ to deal with the matter, but rather to use it as a means by which to try to force the Greeks to negotiate bilaterally, and then to obfuscate when put on the spot. To its credit, the FCO did inform the Turkish government that it regarded the Greek proposal to refer the Aegean to the ICJ as a ‘conciliatory and constructive move²⁹.’

On the other hand, Britain tended to subtly reinforce the Turkish stance(s) in certain fora. For example, in discussing the wording of EEC statements with its partners, the FCO preferred to delete references to ‘The President of Cyprus,’ preferring the phrase ‘Government of Cyprus’ without reference to President Makarios³⁰, for whom the Turks had an ‘obsessive hatred,’ according to the

27. Fullerton to Wright, *letter* of 24 September 1975, PRO FCO 9/2233, WSG3/318/1.

28. Lane to Goodison, *letter* of 27 June 1975, PRO FCO 9/2235, WSG 3/318/2, pt. B.

29. Dublin to FCO, *telegram CP/MUL ETR 213*, PRO FCO 2231, WSG3/318/1, pt. A.

30. David to Goodison, *minute* of 28 October 1975, PRO FCO 9/2181, WSC2/598/1, pt. D.

British High Commission in Cyprus³¹. The British government was naturally itself somewhat sensitive about the plucky Makarios (who had survived enforced British exile and imprisonment, assassination attempts, a military coup and a Turkish invasion), given his pointed and insistent arguments that the British government had not met its legal obligations vis-à-vis the invasion and occupation³². On the question of illegal citrus fruit and potato exports from occupied Cyprus, the British government was also somewhat expedient³³.

Turkish Pressure

Although it would be both churlish and childish to even intimate that the British government was blackmailed into barking without biting, it does appear obvious that it was nudged into an ostrich-like position, at the deep root of which lay US insistence that it keep its territories on Cyprus. One example of ‘John Bull’s demise’ was Britain’s disinclination to do more than just complain to the Turkish government about the treatment of Greek Cypriots and their expulsion. The Turkish government was particularly keen at the beginning of 1975 both to circumvent a ban on arms exports from the US and to gain as much recognition as it could for the ‘independence’ of Northern Cyprus. On the arms question, the amoral Kissinger managed to resume and continue military supplies’ until ‘at least February 5³⁴,’ while in March, Callaghan advocated supplying Turkey with arms in return for an agreement to go back to the Conference table.³⁵ As late as October, the FCO were writing in a (defensive) brief for the visit of the Greek Prime Minister to London:

We do not think the supply of arms from Britain to Turkey will affect Turkey’s position in Cyprus. Our attitude to this question however might well affect Turkey’s attitude to NATO³⁶.

31. Perceval to Jones, *letter* of 27 March 1975, PRO FCO 9/2165, WSC 1/5, pt. C.

32. Olver to Callaghan, *telegram* 106 of 24 January 1975, PRO FCO 9/2165, WSC 1/9, pt. A.

33. Day to Weston, *letter* of 5 June 1975, PRO FCO 9/2200, WSC 7/1, pt. A.

34. Kissinger to Callaghan, *letter* of 16 November 1974, PRO FCO 9/1948, WSC 3/304/2, pt. B.

35. *Record of Discussion* between Kissinger and Callaghan at London Airport on 23 March 1975, PRO FCO 9/82/151, AMU 3/548/14.

36. *Brief No. 4 for Visit of Greek Prime Minister to Britain, 9-11 October 1975*, PRO FCO 9/2229, WSG 2/579/2, pt. B.

What, however, were the Turks doing to elicit such a helpful British attitude? They began to harass the British population of occupied Cyprus. In July 1975, the British High Commissioner in Nicosia, Oliver, wrote:

I attribute the continuing difficulties that we are having in part to bureaucratic inefficiency and the difficulty experienced by the Turkish Cypriot authorities in obtaining co-operation from the Turkish military, and in part to the fact that most of those concerned have Greek names³⁷.

Back in London, the FCO wrote:

In the last resort, we cannot allow this small community (numbering no more than 200 people) to be used as a constraint on our freedom of action. It may therefore be necessary at some stage to take the decision that their interests must be put at risk *or even sacrificed* [my italics]³⁸.

What was it that the British would not—and could not—give way on, regarding their ‘freedom of action’? It was the fear of an internationally recognised sovereign state in occupied Cyprus. For a new international border would administer the coup de grâce to the incipiently cratocidal 1960 package of treaties that had established the allegedly sovereign Republic of Cyprus in 1960, upon which British tenure of its military territories so closely depended.

As the FCO had already privately admitted, an abandonment of Britain’s position on the Treaty of Guarantee could call into question the 1960 settlement as a whole and expose Britain to pressure on its moral (as distinct from legal) right to hang onto the areas³⁹. Thus Britain, given its US-inspired strategic interests in having to hang onto the SBA’s against her own inclination, would do whatever possible to meet Turkish demands, as long as the SBA’s remained sacrosanct. In the face of Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot threats of a unilateral declaration of independence (with its concomitant implication of the end of the 1960 arrangement on which the SBA’s depended), Britain even asked the Greek government to make parallel representations to the Turkish

37. Wall to Anson, *minute* of 25 July 1975, PRO FCO 9/2216, WSC 18/1, pt. F.

38. Weston to Goodison, *minute* of 8 May 1975, PRO FCO 9/2160, WSC 1/7, pt. C.

39. *Op. cit.*, Mallinson, William, *Cyprus: A Modern History*, pp. 92-3: Steel to Fearn, *minute* of 10 February 1971, PRO FCO 9/1374/WSC 3/548/5. The Foreign Office had already admitted that the UN Charter overrode the Treaty of Guarantee; and as early as 1964, the FO admitted that its embassies could not be expected to handle British arguments on the UN Charter and the Treaty of Guarantee successfully; see Darwin to Parsons, *minute* of 28 February 1964, PRO FCO 371/174762, C1193/39.

government, to stress that a declaration of independence would be a breach of the Treaty of Guarantee⁴⁰. Then, as now, Britain would not budge on anything that would affect the Treaty of Guarantee, especially since President Makarios was being highly critical of Britain- with considerable justification, for not meeting its treaty obligations⁴¹. Instead, Britain opted for the softer option of affording whatever *de facto* recognition it could, even in those ‘early days’ of the illegal occupation, as long as it fell short of diplomatic recognition and recognizing sovereignty.

Turkey and the Denktash administration did their best to harass and expel not only the Greek Cypriots but, for a while, the British residents. One ploy to try to force the British to recognise the ‘Turkish Federated State of Cyprus’ (‘TFSC’) was an attempt to involve the British government in a £5 ‘search fee’ which British residents of occupied Cyprus were asked to pay to (re-) register their properties⁴². Then there was the question of British properties being ‘taken over and persistently looted.’⁴³ Wilson even raised the problem with the Turkish Prime Minister, but received a stonewalling response⁴⁴.

Whatever private official British anger and frustration existed, perceived strategic interests took priority. Kissinger, the chief backstage enabler of the Turkish invasion and occupation, impressed upon the British Ambassador to the US that Turkey’s rôle was crucial to US-Soviet relations over the Middle East. If Turkey’s security was undermined, there would no longer be any barrier between the Soviet Union and Syria [and Israel!]⁴⁵. Here, Kissinger was probably concerned about Israel’s security.

Before turning to British views on Turkey’s negotiating practices vis-à-vis the inter-communal ‘Vienna’ negotiations that resumed at the end of April 1975, a look at Britain’s predicament vis-à-vis the thousands of Turkish Cypriots who had fled to the Western (Akrotiri) territory suggests, again, that if anyone had to be irritated, it was the Greeks rather than the Turks. The Greek Cypriot leadership was understandably anxious that the Turkish Cypriots would leave the SBA following an agreement with the Turk-

40. *Brief for Secretary of State’s meeting with Greek Foreign Minister*, PRO FCO 9/2167, WSC 1/11, pt. A.

41. Olver to Callaghan, *telegram* 106 of 24 January 1975, PRO FCO 9/2165, WSC 1/9, pt. A.

42. PRO FCO 9/2209, WSC 16/2, pt. A. Virtually, the whole file is relevant.

43. PRO FCO 9/2210, WSC 16/2, pt. B. Ditto.

44. *Record of Meeting between British and Turkish Prime Ministers*, 30 May 1975, PRO PREM 16/321.

45. Ramsbotham to Callaghan, *telegram* no. 97 of 9 January 1975, PRO PREM 16/321.

46. See PRO FCO 9/2211, WSC 18/1.

ish Cypriots⁴⁶. The British, however, proceeded unilaterally, and the Turkish Cypriots were flown out at the end of January 1975.

Significantly, 2,577 of the 11,967 Turkish Cypriots returned to their homes in the free part of Cyprus⁴⁷. This contrasts with the fact that, far from allowing Greek Cypriot refugees back into their homes, the Turkish army was busy expelling them. Understandably, the Greek Cypriot government was furious, accusing the British of promoting partition, which was *contrary to the Treaty of Establishment*⁴⁸. Particularly irritating for the Greek and Cypriot governments was that Britain had acted in a biased fashion by not insisting that the Turkish government respond by allowing Greek Cypriot refugees to return to their homes⁴⁹. Britain did at least later give up some ‘retained sites’ in the occupied zone to help displaced Greek Cypriots, to the anger of the Turkish government⁵⁰. What, however, of private official British criticism of Turkish negotiating practices at the inter-communal and connected negotiations?

‘Having their Cake and Eating It’

Between 28 April and 10 September, four rounds of ‘inter-communal talks’ took place, mainly in Vienna, the fourth round failing because Denktash failed to submit concrete proposals agreed in the previous round⁵¹. The talks were naturally complicated by the declaration of the ‘TFSC,’ as can be inferred from a letter from Olver:

One implication of the current Turkish Cypriot constitutional moves, and specifically of Denktash’s confirmation to me that they regard the posts of President and Vice-President as having lapsed, is the extent to which the whole 1960 Treaty apparatus be held to have lapsed [...] we [...] continue to regard the 1960 constitution as still in practice operative, despite the various derogations by both Greek and Turkish Cypriots since 1963. But the Turkish side is in effect saying increasingly openly and firmly that the 1960 constitution is defunct. They are, of course, freely *having their cake and eating it by applying the view only when it suits them* [my italics]⁵².

47. See PRO FCO 9/2251, WSG 25/1.

48. Op. cit., Olver to Callaghan, *telegram* 106.

49. *Cabinet Paper (extract)* of 5th meeting on 23 January 1975, PRO FCO 9/2213, WSC 18/1.

50. Weston to Goodison and Morgan, *minute* of 22 September 1975, PRO 9/2217, WSC18/1, pt. G.

51. Mirbagheri, Farid, *Cyprus and International Peacemaking*, Hurst, London, 1998, p. 91.

52. Olver to Goodison, *letter* of 4 March 1975, PRO FCO 9/2159, WSC 1/7, pt. B.

More incisively, however, an FCO legal adviser wrote:

It is not, however, open to the Turkish Government to pick and choose between the various parts of the 1960 Treaty apparatus as it suits their purposes [...] the Turks cannot rely on the collapse of the Constitution in order to justify intervention for the purpose of re-establishing the state of affairs established by the basic Articles of the Constitution and, having intervened with that aim, then ignore that aim because the Constitution has lapsed⁵³.

The British Ambassador to the UN was blunt in his evaluation of the Turkish negotiating stance: ‘The Turks were uncompromising throughout.’⁵⁴ Denktash was, in any case, little more than a (willing) marionette of the Turkish armed forces: the UN Secretary General, Waldheim, told Callaghan that the Turkish armed forces in Cyprus had been taking the line that Denktash had no authority to commit them when he signed the communiqué after the last round in Vienna (Turkey had reneged on the agreement to protect Greek Cypriots in the occupied zone)⁵⁵. Callaghan replied that ‘it now appeared easier to get the Greeks to reach agreement than to get the Turks to do so.’⁵⁶

By October 1975, it must have been patently clear to the British and others that the Turkish government was simply intent on sitting on its spoils, and simply stonewalling and obfuscating. At the end of the month, Callaghan was recorded as telling that Cabinet that:

The Greek Government were ready to accept in principle, subject to clarification of details, particularly on the boundaries. The Turkish Government response was less satisfactory: they were being deliberately vague about boundary adjustments [...] He could not exclude the possibility that the Turks were playing a double game with us in those negotiations since in parallel discussion with the Federal German Government they had suggested not a bi-zonal federation but three zones, the central zone to be jointly administered⁵⁷.

53. Batstone to Jones, *minute* of 21 March 1975, PRO FCO 9/2159, WSC 1/7, pt. B.

54. Richard to Callaghan, *telegram* 293 of 13 March 1975, PRO PREM 16/321.

55. Op. cit., Weston to Goodison and Morgan, *minute* of 22 September 1975.

56. *Record of Conversation between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the UN Secretary General*, 4 September 1975, PRO FCO 9/2148, WSC 1/3, pt. D.

57. *Cabinet Paper (Extract)* of 45th meeting, 30 October 1975, PRO FCO 9/2156, WSC 1/5, pt. G.

‘Pick and choose,’ ‘having their cake and eating it,’ ‘uncompromising’ and ‘playing a double game’ sums up the attitude of those British involved in negotiating with Turkey. No criticism of this nature was directed against the Greeks, although the latter were not averse, in their understandably indignant frame of mind, to exercising what pressure they could, as a telegramme from Callaghan to Athens suggests:

Mr. Karamanlis said that if, after the Cyprus situation, the EEC were to block the Greek application, Greece might then have to take certain decisions about her political orientation⁵⁸.

Britain backed Greece’s application to the EEC. Despite Turkish anger at Greece’s application, and concern that the latter would use EEC membership to isolate Turkey, the British were not at that time in a position to create further difficulties for Greece, particularly since their own position in the EEC was somewhat precarious (vis the *a posteriori* referendum on its membership), and since France was championing the Greek cause. The Embassy in Athens wrote:

The Greeks will try to use the EEC as a channel for polemics against Turkey and as a forum for enlisting support on Cyprus and other questions at issue with Ankara [...] I am sure that it is right to maintain a welcoming public posture and to allow the process of negotiation itself to bring home to the Greeks some of the harder facts of European life⁵⁹.

So much, then, for the private official British approach to their (enforced) dealings with the Turkish government, brought on by the invasion. Before looking briefly at the question of Callaghan’s memory in the aftermath of the invasion, let us turn to Greek affairs in 1975, specifically to what the British Embassy thought about the arrest of supporters of former junta strongman Ioannides, former Prime Minister Papadopoulos, political stability and anti-Americanism.

58. Callaghan to British Ambassador, Athens, *telegram* no. 143 of 4 June 1975, PRO FCO 2152, WSC 1/5, pt. C.

59. Denson to Butler, *letter* of 15 July 1975, PRO FCO 9/2244, WSG 6/598/1, pt. B.

Papadopoulos, Ioannides and 17 November

Following the imprisonment of Papadopoulos and other former junta leaders in January 1975, suspicion and worry about the rôle of the army still abounded. A group of officers was arrested in February on suspicion of conspiracy. The British Defence attaché wrote:

The arrests [of thirty-seven officers] made were largely predictable as some of Ioannides' most fervent supporters are included. Our conclusion is that although army officers may be plotting to impose terms on the civil government, it is most unlikely that many of those arrested would ever be involved in such conspiracies, as they are too well known to the authorities. There is a growing suspicion that the affair was engineered by Karamanlis and Averoff as an excuse to arrest Ioannides' closest associates simultaneously and as a salutary reminder to the officer corps of the consequences of disaffection. The army is almost certainly not ready or organized to interfere with the civil government at this stage⁶⁰.

The Ambassador, for his part, thought that a serious weakening of the position of two of Karamanlis' key ministers (Averoff and Bitsios) would, even if they remained in office, 'make the pursuit of sensible but unpopular policies towards the West much harder' and that Greece 'might be tempted to cling rather desperately to the EEC as her only Western lifeline.'⁶¹ Here, the Ambassador was reflecting London's view, (which it still holds!) that NATO was a more important 'Western lifeline' than the EEC, where, of course, French influence predominated. As we have mentioned, France's relations with Greece were excellent at the time, perhaps enhanced by the general anger towards the US and Britain. At the end of November, the *Athens News*, caught up in the general media anger, published a letter from the 'Committee of Greeks and Greek Americans' which included the names, addresses and telephone numbers of CIA agents, along with information about their careers. A week later, the newspaper received another letter, this time from 'the Committee to keep Greece Greek' (the same committee?), listing ten members of the Soviet Embassy and alleging them to be members of the KGB. Although the *Athens News* refused

60. Richards (for British Defence Attaché) to Ministry of Defence, *telegram no. 451 FOG* of 26 February 1975, PRO FCO 9/2224, WSG 1/1, pt. A.

61. *Ibid.*, Richards to Morgan, *letter* of 26 February 1975.

to publish this second letter on the grounds that it was anonymous, the letter received wide coverage after being distributed to news agencies and other newspapers. The embassy wrote: ‘Neither letter appeared to be the work of amateurs, since recent addresses and telephone numbers were included; we do not preclude some official involvement in the exchange [my italics].⁶² ‘Official involvement’ did not of course necessarily apply exclusively to Greek officialdom, although there were probably some disgruntled KYP (Greek Secret Service) members and perhaps some senior military intelligence people who would know the addresses. The ‘appropriate staff’ of the American, French, British and Soviet (at the very least) embassies and their homologs in their home countries would also have had access to the addresses: ‘certain staff’ at some embassies expend a fair amount of energy spying on each other’s embassies (and on themselves) as well as on the government of their host country. At any event, the British Embassy alluded, perhaps a little exaggeratedly, to Greeks traditionally blaming others for their misfortunes, and was fairly scathing about the Greek press’s criticism of US policy:

The same paper [‘Eleftherotypia’] had run a series of articles about the extent of the CIA’s activities here and, in addition, claimed that Athens was to be the new CIA Middle East centre following the troubles in Beirut. [...] The trouble is that the Greeks tend to believe all this rubbish. [...] It would not be so bad if there was any attempt in other papers to be truthful, objective or even fair about the US Administration; but no paper really cares to risk losing its readership by giving sympathetic coverage to any of the constructive, generous or helpful actions of the US Administration⁶³.

The above-mentioned letter published in the *Athens News* listed, among others, the name, address and telephone number of the CIA head of station, Richard Welsh. One month later he was shot dead outside his home. Whether the drafters of the letter were involved or whether some other group read the letter (serendipitously for them) and proceeded, remains a moot point to this day.

Apart from the killing of Welsh, the other dramatic event at the end of ‘the year after’ was the ‘Polytechnic trial’ of Papadopoulos and others. The former junta prime minister seems to have impressed some people.

62. Op. cit., Wainwright to Cornish, *letter* of 11 December 1975.

63. Ibid.

The British Embassy wrote:

During the Polytechnic trial last week [...] Papadopoulos [...] spoke without a note for over two hours, not only about the Polytechnic, but about the six years of his rule [...] Even some of Papadopoulos' staunchest opponents reluctantly admitted that his performance was one of the best he had ever given. In contrast with his usual style of speaking, his address to the court had great clarity of thought and was convincing in its delivery [...]. While one may quarrel somewhat with the content of the speech, one cannot escape the conclusion that Papadopoulos is still head and shoulders above any of the other junta figures⁶⁴.

Unlike Papadopoulos' performance before the court, Callaghan's performance before the Select Committee on Cyprus did not display the same clarity of thought, particularly when juxtaposed with some recently released records:

Callaghan's Memory

On 26 February 1976, Callaghan gave evidence to the Select Committee on Cyprus. It is worth recording a particularly crucial exchange, before establishing some related facts.

Rees-Davies: [...] You recognised, did you not, that there was to be an immediate invasion by the Turks of at least Northern Cyprus at that time and that that was imminent?

Callaghan: No!

[...]

[...] We expected that the lines would stabilize after the first Geneva Conference.

Rees Davies: That is right. You expected it, but, in fact events did not turn out that way. They still continued to indicate that there was a real danger of a further advance, did they not?

Callaghan: No, I do not think that was indicated at all⁶⁵.

Notwithstanding Callaghan's above protestations, British Intelligence had, through the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) already informed Callaghan's

64. Wood to Cornish, *letter* of 18 December 1975, PRO FCO 9/2225, WSG 1/1, pt. B.

65. *Minutes of Evidence of Select Committee on Cyprus*, Thursday 19 February 1976, PRO FCO 9/2192, WSC 3/548/10, pt. C.

private secretary of a likely Turkish invasion, *before* the invasion took place:

The situation envisaged below is an invasion of Cyprus by Turkish forces in the next few days in accordance with the JIC expectation of the Turkish plan of operations⁶⁶.

Then, during the first ‘Geneva Conference’ (25-30 July), the Turkish armed forces were continuing to advance: on 25 July, Olver reported on Turkish reinforcements and consolidation of various areas, mentioning ‘flagrant violations⁶⁷.’ During the second ‘Geneva Conference’ (8-13 August), British defence officials in Geneva reported to the FCO that Callaghan ‘*was most concerned* at hard line attitude being adopted by Turkish delegation at Geneva and the *strong indications* that they may soon *attempt a major break out* from the area at present under their control [my italics]⁶⁸. The same day (10 August), the Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff reported to Callaghan:

The Turkish army is looking for an excuse to continue operations. The next likely objective is to include the size of their area to take in the entire North East of Cyprus, bounded by a line from five miles east of Morphou, through the southern suburbs of Nicosia and along the old Famagusta road to Famagusta⁶⁹.

It is not for the writer of this paper to cast aspersions on Callaghan’s personal integrity or otherwise. He was in any case accompanied by three ‘Yes, Minister’⁷⁰ minders, including the head of South East European Department and the FCO’s chief legal adviser. However, in view of the fact that we now know what Callaghan knew about both the planned initial Turkish invasion and the continuing ‘creeping advance’ and likelihood of a major Turkish land-grab, his answers to the Committee are nothing short of extraordinary. When taken together with what we know of Kissinger’s express stalling tactics after

66. Thomson to Private Secretary, *record of meeting* of 19 July 1974, PRO FCO 9/1894, WSC 1/10, pt. E.

67. Olver to Callaghan, *telegram* no. 416 of 25 July 1974, PRO FCO 9/1900, WSC 1/10, pt. K.

68. Ukdal Geneva to FCO, *telegram* no. 806 of 10 August 1974, PRO FCO 9/1915, WSC 1/10, pt. Z.

69. *Ibid.*, Mellersh to Secretary of State, *minute* of 10 August 1974.

70. For readers unacquainted with the BBC television series ‘Yes, Minister!’, the programme brings out (in a humorous manner) how British Civil Servants can run rings around their own ‘political masters.’

71. See *op. cit.*, Mallinson, William, ‘US Interests, British Acquiescence and the Invasion of Cyprus,’ where Kissinger’s stalling tactics are brought into full relief. Kissinger appears to have been desperate to allow the Turks to invade and take over at least one third of the island. He did not wish Makarios to retake control or, indeed, to return to Cyprus as President, following his escape.

the Sampson coup of 15 July, the whole affair certainly appears tawdry⁷¹, particularly when one considers what Kissinger told the British Ambassador in Washington some five months after the invasion:

Kissinger [...] said that [...] Cyprus was a peripheral issue from the US perspective, when compared with the importance of Turkey to the security of the Eastern Mediterranean. In particular, Turkey's role was crucial to US-Soviet relations on the Middle East⁷².

To say that Cyprus was a peripheral issue after spending an inordinate amount of energy on ensuring and then condoning the invasion of Cyprus reveals a particularly hypocritical and arrogant streak in Kissinger's thinking.

Conclusions

Much of what this paper has demonstrated is highly pertinent to current developments. Again, we cannot avoid Guicciardini's wisdom in saying that the same things return with different colours, and that the past illuminates the future. On the question of the EU, for example, the British government is keen to minimize any serious rôle for Brussels in a Cyprus solution, fearing, in particular, any possibility that Cyprus could participate as an equal partner in EU defence structures (or NATO ones), since this would render the SBA's yet more anachronistic than they already are, and anger Turkey which, now as then, is more important to 'BRITUSA.' We can also connect 1975 to today in the perceived rôle of France in the Cyprus question. For example, the French Prime Minister, de Villepin, has made the point more strenuously than most, that Turkey must fulfill its obligations in its EU accession negotiations. Far more strongly, former French president Giscard d'Estaing has said that Turkish admission to the EU would mean the end of Europe. A further 'then and now' comparison can be made between Britain and France regarding their relations with the US. Essentially, France is far more its own master than Britain could ever claim to be. The 'Liberté, égalité, fraternité' dictum holds true internationally, as well as nationally. Unlike Britain, France is rarely forced to do what it does not wish to.

72. Ramsbotham to Callaghan, *telegram* no. 97 of 9 January 1975, PRO PREM 16/321.

British policy in the mid-seventies, namely to do all it could to recognise occupied Cyprus *de facto*, but not *de jure* (fearing an international border and the coup de grâce to the cratocidal 1960 treaties) is being replicated now: recently, the British Foreign Secretary, Straw, caused a major outcry in Greece and Cyprus by meeting the Turkish Cypriot leader, Talat, in his ‘presidential’ office and subsequently saying that Cyprus is using membership of the EU to ‘try unacceptably to seek progress on United Nations-related issues⁷³.’ Even the usually staid Greek *Kathimerini* wrote of Britain’s ‘pointless imperial syndrome,’ ‘striving to show the boss how useful it is, like every good employee⁷⁴.’ The fact that the British Prime Minister’s wife has been hired to represent a British couple, so that they can keep their property, stolen from a Greek-Cypriot refugee, undoubtedly rankles with those who believe that current British behaviour is sour grapes for the massive rejection of the cratocidal ‘Annan Plan’. Britain’s almost manic efforts to get Turkey into the EU (with US prodding), before Turkey meets its legal obligations, is also germane to Britain’s atavistic, hard-nosed yet sometimes curiously emotional stance. The leader of the Akel party in Cyprus appears to have seen through the whole web, by pointing out that full British recognition of occupied Cyprus would blow up the 1960 treaties on which the SBA’s depend⁷⁵. British policy is indeed to help the illegally occupied zone now, as it has since the mid-seventies, to promote partition and thereby render a genuine inter-communal agreement difficult. This amounts to ‘Taiwanisation.’

On the question of Turkish claims to Greek territory in the Aegean and the rôle of the ICJ, Britain’s backstage position is unlikely to have changed since the mid-seventies, but it would be loathe to raise the issue with Turkey today. Just as Britain has tried to separate the Cyprus and Aegean issues, Turkey ensures a particularly close linkage between the two. It would be naïve to claim otherwise. The evidence is above.

We cannot write a paper such as this, with so much ‘fresh’ evidence, without eluding to morality: Straw was recently asked what action he could take to defend the interests of British citizens, such as a Mr. der Parthog, whose property and homes had been expropriated by the military, since the ‘civilian Turkish [Cypriot] authorities would not accept representations relating to the behaviour of the military (shades of 1975!).’ Straw slithered out of the question by blaming the stance of the Cypriot government⁷⁶.

73. *Cyprus Weekly*, 1016 February 2006.

74. Lygeros, Stavros, *Kathimerini*, 10 February 2006.

75. *Cyprus Weekly*, 17-23 February 2006.

76. *Cyprus Weekly*, 10-16 February 2006.

Had Mr. Parthog been a Gibralterian Jew in 1850, whose property in Athens was ransacked, then the British government would have sent warships to Greece and demanded compensation from the unfortunate man. So things, perhaps, do not always return with different colours. But then a rule needs its exceptions. ‘Interest’ is of course the key word: it is not in British-US interests to irritate Turkey. It is ‘interests’ that sent Britain across the world to save the two thousand (white-skinned) British subjects, of the Malvinas-Falkland islands in 1982, while expelling about the same number of (dark-skinned) British Chagos islanders from Diego Garcia in the late sixties and early seventies, because the US did not wish anyone to observe its military and other activities, having rented the islands from Britain.

Although, as we have intimated, it is naïve to even consider morality as a factor in the formulation of foreign policy objectives (whatever the asinine statements made by politicians about ‘ethical foreign policies’), we can consider emotion as a factor. Despite Callaghan’s caving in to Kissinger, (or perhaps because of it?), he certainly had some unfortunate things to say about the Turks (to Kissinger):

Now as regards Greece and Turkey, it is Greece who will need massaging because the Turks are too jingoistic, indeed too close to Hitler for my liking. All right?⁷⁷

While on the question of emotion, and Callaghan’s views of the Turks, we should perhaps record here the Turkish ‘Hymn of Hate,’ broadcast and sung from 1964 and recited at the first (annual) celebration of the Turkish invasion of 20 July.

As long as vengeance fills my veins
 As long as my heart heats for Turkism
 As long as the word ‘Greek’ exists in dictionaries
 By Allah, this hate will not leave me
 A thousand heads of the Greeks will not wash away this hate.

I will crush the heads of 10,000 of them
 I will pull the teeth of 20,000 of them
 I will throw into the sea the bodies of 30,000 of them
 But by Allah this hate *will never leave me* [my italics]
 A thousand heads of the Greeks will not wash away this hate.

77. Op. cit., *record of telephone conversation* between Callaghan, Kissinger and Ford.

As long as my fists can stand up in the air
As long as 120,000 hearts can beat together
As long as 40 million [Turks] support me
By Allah this hate will not leave me
A thousand heads of the Greeks will not wash away this hate⁷⁸.

One can wonder on what Callaghan based his opinion when talking to Kissinger. Perhaps he had read this poem (at least it was sent by the British High Commissioner in Nicosia to the FCO’s Southern European Department). Perhaps he was still smarting from his experience of negotiating with the Turkish government. Perhaps he knew some history, or had read of Harold Nicolson’s views about the Turks in his book about the Versailles negotiations. We cannot say with any strong degree of certitude.

Another ‘then and now’ comparison can be made, again ‘on the morality front,’ about lying. The story of the invasion and the US-British relationship is highly pertinent when juxtaposed with the pack of lies by Bush, Blair, Straw and the like about the invasion of Iraq. Both the Cyprus and the Iraq affair, while different, are connected by ‘strategic interests.’ In both cases Britain played the rôle of a ‘catamitic pageboy,’ and lied about foreknowledge of the Turkish invasion and about nuclear weapons in Iraq. Both affairs are products of the so-called theory of ‘political realism’ and the accompanying infatuation with the primitive theory of ‘geopolitics,’ propagated by the likes of Kissinger. So at least this story offers some rudimentary semi-intellectual starting-points for the international relations theorist. This writer prefers to stick to Guicciardini.

It is really a story which renders it easier –or less difficult– to understand how, for some, Britain became a client-state, through mishandling crises such as those of Suez and Cyprus and, stubbornly, continuing, at least in the case of Cyprus, to continue to mishandle them. Today, according to two *Guardian* journalists, Britain cannot fire cruise missiles without US permission; it cannot expel the US from its bases on British territories; it relies more on the US for intelligence-gathering than vice-versa, with the US receiving all Britain’s intelligence; and while Britain has agreed to extradite its citizens to the US without prima facie evidence, the US refuses to do the same with its own citizens⁷⁹.

78. Pawley to Ford, letter of 29 July 1975, PRO FCO 9/2162, WSC 1/7, pt. E.

79. Op. cit., Leigh, David and Norton-Taylor, Richard.

In February 1975, some seven months after the invasion, Olver wrote: The year ended then with the island divided into a northern third which, stagnating under the dead hand of the Turkish military, bid [sic?] fair to degenerate into a third-rate Turkish province [...] it will be a dead land [...] surviving on massive subsidies from Turkey. In the south, the future is harder to divine. Greek initiative and international aid might continue to produce a slender economic revival but only if the government has the strength to contain the pressures from the 180,000 refugees and their political supporters. More likely, alas, is a recrudescence of the internal schisms which have traditionally driven Cypriot society, but exacerbated this time by physical misery and desperation⁸⁰.

Hindsight tells us that the High Commissioner was mistaken about the politico-economic well being of free Cyprus. Few could however have foreseen at the time that free Cyprus would emerge so resiliently out of the confusion and death caused by fanatics and overseas armchair realist politicians such as Kissinger.

Shortly before he left Cyprus, Olver wrote his valedictory dispatch to Callaghan, with the following words of advice:

We could use our influence, either during the negotiation of a new arrangement to replace the present Treaty of Guarantee, or through the EEC, to set up a framework providing for regular political consultation between Cyprus, Greece and Turkey [...] the Bases are not diamonds⁸¹.

This sensible, moderate advice was, as we know, not taken. Hindsight suggests that perhaps this was a mistake, a mistake for which Cyprus is still paying a price imposed on it by the strategic obsessions of outside powers, some of whom insist on a political (and therefore not legal) solution, rather than one based on international law.

Athens, March 2006

80. Olver to Callaghan, *Cyprus: Annual Review for 1974*, PRO FCO 9/2149, WSC 1/4.

81. Olver to Callaghan, *Valedictory Despatch*, 10 October 1975, PRO FCO 9/2169, WSC1/12.

Obtaining Information

Obtaining some of the files necessary to even begin to sensibly analyse and evaluate the Cyprus conundrum has, in some ways, been like squeezing blood from a stone. Theoretically, it is now easier under the recently introduced ‘Freedom of Information Act.’ In fact, the same old ‘rules’ apply. If the FCO does not wish to release a file, it simply quotes various sections of the Act, usually Section 23 (security and intelligence) or 27 (2) (information received from other states). Occasionally a file even goes missing, for example PRO FCO 9/1187, WSC 22/2 (1970). The Orwellian-sounding FCO’s ‘Information Management Department’ is in many ways a ‘Control of Information Department.’ It seems strange that even after forty years, some files are still withheld. The British government is not of course the only reticent body. The Greek government, by act of parliament, refuses to release any papers on post-war Cyprus. There must still be many dirty skeletons lurking in many cupboards. This all makes the historian’s task difficult. This author has appealed to the ‘Information Commissioner’ for some files, and has asked the ‘Information Management Department’ to allow access to the following files for 1975. I attach at appendix a list of some of the latest files withheld.

Appendix

- FCO 9/2153/1, WSC 1/5 (1975), Negotiations between Turkey and Greece concerning future of Cyprus: *Folios 147A, 155A, 156 and 160A*.
- FCO 9/2154, WSC 1/5, Part E (1975), title ditto: *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2158, WSC 1/7, Part A (1975), Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (TFSC) (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2163, WSC 1/7 Part F, Ditto (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2164, WSC 1/8, Military Situation in Cyprus (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2165/1, WSC 1/9, Archbishop Makarios, President of the Republic of Cyprus: press reports and declarations (1975): *Folio 30*.
- FCO 9/2166/1, WSC 1 (?), Ditto, (1975): *Folio 44*.
- FCO 9/2171, WSC 2/502/1.PartA, Relations between Cyprus and the Commonwealth (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2173, WSC 2/502/1, Part C, Ditto, (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2189, WSC 3/548/5, Part B, Proposed visit by UK members of Parliament to Cyprus (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2194, file WSC 4/2, Part A, Turkish territorial concessions on Cyprus (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2195, file WSC4/2, Part B, Ditto, (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2198, file WSC 6/548/3, Cyprus: Financial claims (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2218, WSC 21/3, Part A, Nicosia International Airport: damage repairs and stranded aircraft (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2218/1, Ditto (?), Part B (?), (1975): *Folios 13, 14, 17, 18*.
- FCO 9/2223/1, WSC 25/2, Part C (?), UK Diplomatic Representation in Cyprus (1975): *Folio 56A*.
- FCO 9/2227, WSG 2/579/2, Part B (?), Relations between Greece and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) (1975): *Folio 15*.
- FCO 9/22237, WSG 3/318/4, Part B, Demilitarisation in the Aegean Islands (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2253, WSG 26/1, Ex-King Constantine of Greece (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2342, WST 3/3/304/1, Part A, Relations between Turkey and USA, US Army Embargo (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 9/2342, WST 3/3/304/1, Part B, Ditto (1975): *whole file*.
- FCO 82/581, AMU 3/548/14, Meetings between Dr. Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State, and James Callaghan, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs: includes meeting at London Airport, 25 March 1975 and 1 Carlton Gardens, 13 December 1975 (1975): *Folios 6, 10 and enclosure*.