
Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Britain
THE CARVE-UP OF CYPRUS

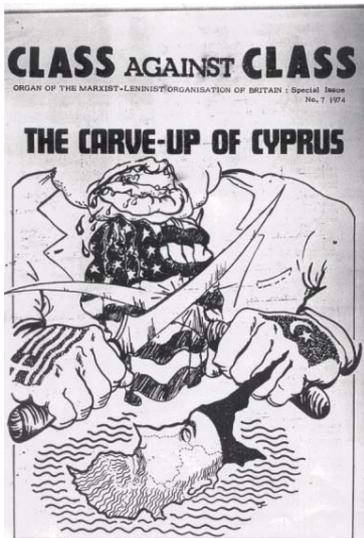
First Published: *Special Issue of "Class Against Class"; No.7, 1974.*

Transcription, Editing and Markup: Paul Saba and Sam Richards

Copyright: This work is in the Public Domain under the [Creative Commons Common Deed](#).

You can freely copy, distribute and display this work; as well as make derivative and commercial works. Please credit the Encyclopedia of Anti-Revisionism On-Line as your source, include the url to this work, and note any of the transcribers, editors & proofreaders above.

THE CARVE-UP OF CYPRUS



BEHIND THE EVENTS IN CYPRUS OF JULY 1974 -- THE COUPS AND COUNTER-COUPS, THE MASS GRAVES AND THE INVASION -- ARE TO BE FOUND THE BLOODY HANDS OF THE UNITED STATES IMPERIALISTS, STRIVING DESPERATELY TO RECOVER SOME OF THE INFLUENCE THEY HAVE LOST DURING THE PAST DECADE.

THE AIM OF THE US MANOEUVRES IS TO BRING THE STRATEGIC MEDITERRANEAN ISLAND OF CYPRUS MORE FIRMLY INTO THE GRIP OF THE UNITED STATES' CLIENT STATES, GREECE AND TURKEY, AND SO WITHIN THE ORBIT OF THE US-DOMINATED NATO MILITARY BLOC OF WHICH BOTH THESE STATES ARE MEMBERS.

The "Independence" of Cyprus

The island of Cyprus (about half the size of Wales) is situated in the eastern Mediterranean, 40 miles south of Turkey and 60 miles west of Syria. Of its population of some 600,000, 820% are of Greek origin (the Greek Cypriots) and 18% are of Turkish origin (the Turkish Cypriots).

From the 16th century until 1878, Cyprus formed part of the Turkish Empire, but in the latter year it came under the effective control of Britain. In November 1914, on the outbreak of World War I, Britain annexed the island, and it became a British colony in 1925.

The movement for liberation began under Turkish rule among the Greek Cypriots, who suffered particular oppression, and its main demand was for "Hellenic unity", for "enosis"

(that is, union with Greece). The movement continued to develop under British rule, and with the development of a weak Cypriot national bourgeoisie this class came to lead the liberation struggle. The effective leader of the movement was the Ethnarch of the Greek Orthodox Church, Mihail Mouskos -- Archbishop Makarios -- and embraced two organisations:

- 1) the National Organisation for Cypriot Struggle (EOKA), a right-wing body sponsored by the Greek government and led for many years by Greek General Georgios Grivas; and by
- 2) the Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus (AKEL) a body representing more directly the interests of the Cypriot national bourgeoisie, and presenting a left-wing image to appeal to the workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie; it is now led by Ezekias Papaioannou.

As the liberation movement developed after World War II to the point where direct British colonial rule became no longer practicable, agreement was reached at conferences in Zurich and London in February 1959 (the latter attended by representatives of the British, Turkish and Greek governments and of the Cypriot liberation movement) for the transformation of the colony into a nominally "independent", but in reality neo-colonial, "Republic of Cyprus". This change was brought about by an Act of the British Parliament, and the Republic of Cyprus came into existence on August 16th, 1960.

In December 1959, prior to the granting of "independence", elections were held for a Provisional President of Cyprus, Makarios stood on a platform of acceptance, with reservations, of the British imperialists' plan and was elected by a large majority.

Despite the fact that Makarios represented the interests of the Cypriot national bourgeoisie, the British imperialists felt it safe to hand over "power" to a government headed by him by reason of the antagonisms artificially built up between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities on the island, believing that these antagonisms and other "safeguards" could be effective in preventing the Makarios government from taking any steps to end the neo-colonial status of the island.

In the first place, the "Basic Structure of the Republic of Cyprus" imposed on the people of the island obliged the Cyprus government:

"not to participate, in whole or in part, in any political or economic union with any state whatsoever",

while the Treaty of Guarantee by which the British, Greek and Turkish governments undertook to recognise and maintain:

"the independence, territorial integrity and security",

of the Republic of Cyprus provided that:

"In the event of any breach of the provisions of the treaty of Greece, the United Kingdom and Turkey undertake to consult together with a view to making representations or taking the necessary steps to ensure observance of these provisions. In so far as common or concerted action may prove impossible, each of the three guaranteeing Powers reserves the right to take action with the sole aim of re-establishing the state of affairs established by the Treaty".

In the second places the Basic Structure gave representatives of the Turkish Cypriot minority (in fact, of the Turkish Cypriot comprador bourgeoisie, i.e., that section of the Turkish Cypriot capitalist class linked with and dependent upon imperialism) the right of veto over all important acts of the government, and was designed to intensify to the maximum the

artificially created antagonisms between the two communities. The Turkish Cypriot minority was given separate electoral registers, separate municipal councils in towns where there were significant numbers of Turkish Cypriots, the right to appoint 3 of the 10 members of the Council of Ministers (government), and the right to elect the Vice-President, with powers of veto corresponding to those of the President. 30% of the police and 40% of the proposed 2,000-strong army had to be composed of Turkish Cypriots, and each of the communities had to elect a Communal Chamber with powers to levy taxation on its community and to regulate matters of education, culture and religion.

In the third place, Greece was permitted to keep a contingent of 950 troops on the island, Turkey a contingent of 650, and Britain an unlimited number of troops in two bases 99 sq. miles in area over which Britain retained sovereignty.

Cyprus was to remain within the sterling monetary bloc controlled by the British imperialists and to accord most-favoured-nation status to Britain, Greece and Turkey. In March 1961 it was admitted to the Commonwealth.

The "independent" Republic of Cyprus which came into being on August 16th, 1960 was, in reality a neo-colony of British imperialism.

The Manoeuvres of the Makarios Government

Unwilling to mobilise the masses of the Cypriot people for an armed struggle for genuine national liberation, the Makarios government -- possessing no state apparatus of force of its own and surrounded by powerful enemies armed to the teeth -- sought to advance Cyprus towards genuine unification and national liberation by manoeuvres, by seeking to take advantage of the contradictions between the various powers.

Five months after "independence", in January 1961, the Cyprus House of Representatives approved a government Bill to proceed with the setting up of an army. On October 20th. the Bill was vetoed by the Turkish Cypriot Vice-President, Fazil Kutchuk.

In December 1962 Makarios attempted by Presidential decree to set up single, unified municipal councils in the towns. The mass of the Turkish Cypriots were persuaded by their comprador bourgeois leaders that this measure represented a "threat" to their community, and proceeded to organise armed bands to resist the operation of the decree in the areas where separate Turkish Cypriot municipal councils functioned. The Greek Cypriots were in turn persuaded by their comprador bourgeois politicians to form similar armed bands, and during 1963 armed clashes between the unofficial forces of the two communities increased, reaching a peak of violence in December 1963.

By this time the economic and military strength of British imperialism had greatly declined relative to that of United States imperialism, and in January 1964, on the pretext that the Cyprus government was unable to maintain order, Washington put forward a plan to send a NATO "Peace-keeping force" to the island. In the face of the firm objections of the Cyprus government, this plan was changed to a "United Nations Peace-keeping Force" (UNFICYP), which was formally established in March 1964. As a manoeuvre to press the Cypriot people into acceptance of this foreign armed forces the Turkish government in collaboration with its Washington overlords, had ordered its troops on the island to set up road blocks and was threatening, to invade the island "to protect the Turkish-Cypriot community".

On April 19th., 1964 the Turkish Foreign Minister, Federidun Erkin, declared that Turkey would insist on "a federal solution" to the "problem of Cyprus", and successive Turkish governments since that date have reaffirmed that aim.

By the spring of 1964 the UN forces were manning barricades between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities all over Cyprus. The representatives of the Turkish Cypriot comprador bourgeoisie then withdrew from the government and the House of Representatives and behind the barricades, proceeded to set up their own "semi state". This was formally inaugurated on December 29th., 1967 as a "Transitional Administration", with its own "President" (Fazil Kutchuk), Vice-President" (Rauf Denktash), Executive Council (government), House of Representatives, courts and police -- a rebellion against the Cyprus government carried out under the protection of the UN force and its own unofficial army, 10,000 strong.

The government replied in kind. On June 1st., 1964 the House of Representatives, in the absence of the Turkish Cypriot representatives, passed a Bill setting up a National Guard on the basis of conscription of the Greek Cypriot population. The measure was allowed to go into effect on one important condition: that it was officered by 650 officers from the Greek army. The Cypriot people were enjoined to have confidence in the "good faith" of the new "progressive" government of Georgios Papandreou elected on February 16th., 1964.

Then seeking to take advantage of the contradictions between the US imperialists and the Soviet neo-imperialists, in August 1964 Makarios appealed for military aid to the Soviet Union and Egypt; on October 1st. the Soviet government agreed to sell Soviet arms to Cyprus. Later in the month, at the Conference of Non-Aligned States in Cairo, Makarios pledged that the Cyprus government would pursue "a foreign policy of non-alignment". On his return to Cyprus, an officially-sponsored campaign began demanding the elimination of British bases from the island.

The Soviet arms failed to arrive. On March 30th., 1965 the ships carrying them to Cyprus under the agreement of October 1964 were diverted, as the result of a secret ultimatum from Washington.

Meanwhile, the Makarios government proceeded with its attempts to bring some degree of unification to the island. On November 28th., 1964 the House of Representatives approved a Bill establishing unified municipal councils in the principal towns. And in July 1965 it passed two further Bills: one abolished separate electoral registers; the other set up a Ministry of Education to take over one of the main functions of the Communal Chambers.

On October 11 th., 1965, in an effort to win over the Turkish Cypriot workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie from their comprador bourgeois politicians, the Makarios government issued a "Declaration of, Minority Rights", promising autonomy for minorities in matters of education, culture and religion, together with reserved seats in the House of Representatives and local councils in proportion to population. The government of Turkey, claiming to speak for the Turkish Cypriot community, immediately denounced the declaration as - "unconstitutional" on the grounds that the Turkish Cypriot community constituted not a "minority" but a "national community with special rights".

By 1966 Greece had become a semi-colony of US imperialism, and this position of dependence was reinforced by the military coup of 1967 which established a military

dictatorship in Greece subservient to US imperialism. From now on the demand of the Cypriot national bourgeoisie (represented by the Makarios government) for national independence had the overwhelming support of the mass of the Greek Cypriots, while enosis became the demand only of the pro-imperialist Greek Cypriot comprador bourgeoisie. At the Presidential election of February 1968 Makarios received of the votes, while his pro-enosis opponent, Takis Evdokas, received only 450'. In February 1973 Makarios was returned unopposed.

The Plot is Hatched

By 1971 Makarios had become

" . the 'Castro of the Mediterranean' in the eyes of Athens and the Pentagon".
("The Observer". July- 2list., 1974; p. 7).

It was in June of that year that Makarios paid an official visit to the Soviet Union.

AND IT WAS IN THAT YEAR THAT THE PLAN TO OVERTHROW THE MAKARIOS GOVERNMENT BY FORCE AND TO CARVE UP THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS WAS AGREED UPON.

In its issue of May/June 1972 the then organ of the Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Britain summed up the plot of the US imperialists in relation to Cyprus:

"In September 1971 a campaign was launched by the Greek fascist regime, in collaboration with the US imperialists, for the overthrow of the Cyprus government of the Patriotic Front headed by Archbishop Makarios and representing the Cypriot national bourgeoisie.

In this month Greek General George Grivas was landed secretly on the island and given sanctuary in the Greek military headquarters from where he proceeded to issue communiques denouncing Makarios as a "traitor" for opposing Enosis (the union of Cyprus with Greece).

Faced with the opposition of Turkey to full Greek control of Cyprus, at the end of 1971 a secret meeting of representatives of Greece and Turkey took place in Lisbon under the auspices of NATO, at which plans for partitioning the island between the two NATO states were agreed upon.

In an effort to defend itself, the Cyprus government -- which has no armed forces of its own apart from a small Presidential bodyguard -- imported arms from Czechoslovakia. The Greek government then sent an ultimatum to the Cyprus government demanding the surrender of the arms and the formation of a "government of national unity" which would include pro-Enosis politicians. It was planned that, if this ultimatum was rejected, the Greek-officered National Guard would overthrow the government.

However, when the Soviet imperialists, anxious to prevent the passing of this strategically important island into the control of the bloc dominated by US imperialism, intervened and declared their full backing for the Makarios government, the US government anxious to avoid for the time being a direct confrontation with their Soviet rivals in the Mediterranean -- forced the Greek fascist regime to hold up its planned coup".

(RED FRONT, May/June 1972; p. 6).

The Plot is Put into Effect

By the summer of 1974, the reasons for postponement of the planned coup mentioned above were no longer operative. In the EEC, West German imperialism had, following the removal of Willy Brandt as Chancellor, swung towards US imperialism, while Britain had a Labour government representing that section of British monopoly capital dependent upon US imperialism. Furthermore, the position of the Soviet neo-imperialists had been greatly weakened as a result of events in the Middle East.

In July therefore, the plot was put into effect.

The pretext for action was a note from Makarios to Greek President Phaedon Gizikis on July 2nd., demanding the recall of the Greek officers of the National Guard on the grounds that they had been collaborating with EOKA-B (the terrorist Organisation formed by Grivas following his return to Cyprus in 1979 and continuing in existence after Grivas's death in January 1974) in attempts to assassinate him and overthrow the government. The note set the deadline of July 20th. for compliance with the demand.

So, on July 16th, on the orders of their Greek officers, units of the (Greek Cypriot)-- National Guard, in full collaboration with EOKA-B and with the Greek troops stationed on the island, staged a military coup and established a military dictatorship over the part of the island outside the enclaves under the control of the Turkish Cypriot comprador bourgeoisie's "Transitional Administration". A new puppet "President" was installed, one Nicos Sampson, a curfew imposed and thousands of supporters of the Makarios government arrested.

The Greek government recognised its puppet regime almost immediately. while the Turkish government threatened that unless the situation in Cyprus were reversed it would order its troops to invade Cyprus under the Treaty of Guarantee.

For four days the US imperialists and their allies in London, not only took no action, they deliberately obstructed the calling of the Security Council of the United Nations which could have taken some action. As Lord Caradon put it bluntly in a letter to the press:

"Due to the deliberate delay of the United States and the United Kingdom, it was not until after the invasion (i.e. of Cyprus by Turkish troops -- Ed.) that the Security Council passed any resolution at all".

(Lord Caradon: Letter to "The Guardian" 11 July 31st, 1974; p. 12).

Meanwhile, Makarios had managed to escape from Cyprus. He was received by the British government with formal, but non-committal, protocol, but the United States government talked with him only in his ecclesiastical capacity":

"The President (i.e., Makarios -- Ed.) had been given the chilly US reception of -- in Dr. Kissinger's terms -- 'a loser', without hope of a comeback".

("The Observer", July 28th.9 1974; p. 9).

On July 20th., therefore, some thousands of Turkish troops invaded northern Cyprus according to plan, occupying the principal area inhabited by Turkish Cypriots from the port of Kyrenia to the outskirts of the capital, Nicosia.

Later the same day, the US and British imperialists brought the Security Council into action, and it passed a resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire on Cyprus. And Greece and Turkey -- despite being, according to the world press "on the verge of war" - dutifully obeyed.

As for the Soviet neo-imperialists, the calculations of Washington that they would do no more than issue a verbal protest proved accurate:

"The Soviet Union has been careful to avoid direct criticism of the United States. . . . Moscow has been signalling to the United States that it wants in effect no repetition of last autumn's nuclear alert over the Middle East.

Yesterday the official news agency Tass put out an angry denial of Western agency reports that Soviet ships in the Eastern Mediterranean . . . had been put on alert. The reports were a provocation and utterly false".

("The Guardian" July 22nd; 1974; p.13)

THE FIRST, MILITARY STAGE OF THE PLOT AGAINST CYPRUS HAD NOW BEEN COMPLETED. THE SECOND STAGE WAS TO ERECT A "DEMOCRATIC" FACADE OVER THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST STAGE.

The Colonels Take Off Their Uniforms

On July 23rd. the military junta that had exercised a military dictatorship suddenly stepped into the background over the people of Greece since 1967, and announced that they had invited civilian politician Konstantinos Karamanlis to form a civilian Cabinet.

Karamanlis is mainly remembered for his role as Prime Minister in arranging the murder (and its subsequent cover-up) of rival politician Gregori Lambrakis (portrayed in the film "X"). While in exile in Paris, he was in June 1965 committed for trial by an investigating committee of the Greek Parliament for "bribery, dereliction of duty and maladministration".

Due to an unfortunate error, the "democratic revolution" in Athens was announced by US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger the day before it actually happened. Even the capitalist press was compelled to treat the "revolution" with some cynicism:

"Dr. Kissinger and his emissary Mr. Joseph Sisco have played a key role in promoting governmental change in Greece."

("The Guardian", July 24th., 1974; p. 2).

And in fact, little fundamental in Athens seemed to be changed. True, a considerable number of political prisoners were released (a necessary step in order to obtain enough politicians to form a government). But Brigadier-General Dimtrios Ioannides remained in office as head of the hated military police, martial law continued and in his Message to the Nation Karamanlis was careful not to mention the word "democratisation".

By a curious coincidence, another "democratic revolution" took place in Cyprus. The appalling Sampson stepped down and was replaced by the more respectable figure of Glafkos Clerides, President of the House of Representatives as "President" of Cyprus. Again the capitalist press treated the change cynically:

"From the start, the planners of the coup had earmarked Mr. Clerides as the man to fill Makarios's place".

("The Guardian", July 24th., 1974; p. 2).

Now all the leading personnel (with the exception of President Makarios who was told pointedly by Clerides not to return "at present") professed themselves happy with the way things had gone. Rauf Denktash (who had succeeded Kutuchuk as Turkish Cypriot Vice-President in February 1973) was happy with the new "President", of Cyprus and with the new Greek government. The Turkish government was happy with Clerides as well as with the new regime in Athens.

THE "DEMOCRATIC" FACADE HAD BEEN ERECTED OVER MILITARY COUP AND MILITARY INVASION WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS. NOW EVERYTHING WAS READY FOR THE "PEACE CONFERENCE".

The "Peace Conference"

On July 30th., 1974 the Tripartite Conference on Cyprus between representatives of the British, Greek and Turkish governments opened in Geneva. Its first act was to agree that Turkish troops could stay in Cyprus "for the time being" and to create a buffer zone between the Turkish-occupied area and the rest of the island.

According to the present time-table the Tripartite Conference will convene on August 8th. to draw up a revised "Constitution" for Cyprus to fulfill the requirements of the now situation in the country". Then the representatives of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot comprador bourgeoisies Clerides and Denktash will be brought in and informed what has been decided.

But behind the three governments participating in the Tripartite Conference stands the directing hand of Washington:

"The supervising influence of Dr. Kissinger has never been far from the action (of the conference -- Ed.)".

("The Guardian". July 31st., 1974; p.1).

What, then are the aims of the United States imperialists with regard to Cyprus?

THESE AIMS ARE TO BRING ABOUT THE EFFECTIVE PARTITION OF CYPRUS INTO AREAS DOMINATED RESPECTIVELY BY GREECE AND TURKEY, SO BRINGING THIS STRATEGIC ISLAND WITHIN THE ORBIT OF THE US-DOMINATED NATO BLOC, OF WHICH BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY ARE MEMBERS:

"Support for partition has come chiefly from Washington and Athens, where there was dismay at the course an independent Cyprus steered under Archbishop Makarios. Partition would eliminate a neutralist regime, noted, for its openness to the Soviet Union, and bring two NATO powers directly on to the island". ("The Guardian", July 23rd., 1974; p. 3).

But the actual legal partition of the island between two foreign powers "Double Enosis" -- would be a little too much at variance with repeated United Nations resolutions calling for the maintenance of the independence of Cyprus. It is, therefore, planned to disguise this partition under the euphemism of "federalism".

THE EFFECTIVE PARTITION OF CYPRUS -- SO IT IS PLANNED IN WASHINGTON -- WILL BE BROUGHT ABOUT BY GIVING LEGAL SUBSTANCE TO THE PRESENT DIVISION OF CYPRUS INTO TWO SEPARATE SEMI-STATES;

CONTROLLED RESPECTIVELY:

BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRO-IMPERIALIST GREEK CYPRIOT AND TURKISH CYPRIOT COMPRADOR BOURGEOISIES.

A massive transfer of population will then be encouraged between the two semi-states.

OVER THESE TWO SEMI-STATES WILL -- ACCORDING TO THE PLAN -- BE SET UP AN "INDEPENDENT" FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, A GOVERNMENT WITHOUT EVEN THE POWERS OF THE MAKARIOS GOVERNMENT - A

GOVERNMENT EXISTING ONLY TO CONCEAL THE REALITY OF
PARTITION WITH THE MASK OF "FEDERALISM".

The overall aim of the US imperialists was clearly exposed to a correspondent of "The Guardian" by Barbara Lyssarides the wife of Vassos Lyssarides, leader of another political party representing the interests of the Cypriot national bourgeoisie, the Democratic Centre Union Party (EDEK):

"The events of the past week are the result of a plan to which Turkey, Greece and the EOKA-B are all party. Its aim is the partition of Cyprus and the formation of two strong local governments, one Turkish, the other Greek, with a weak, token, central government".

("The Guardian", July 23rd., 1974; p. 3)

And by July 20th. the capitalist press was presenting "federation" as the "common sense" solution to "the problem of Cyprus":

"We may in the end arrive at a modest federal structure for Cyprus with Turkish police and Turkish local government officials superintending specifically Turkish areas. Now, given a Turkish outlet to the sea it is no more than common sense".

(Editorial, "The Guardian", July 29th., 1974; p. 10).

And the whole sordid plot was summed up in a succinct paragraph in the "Morning Star":

"The NATO Council in Brussels yesterday welcomed the Cyprus agreement and in Cyprus Acting President Mr. Glafkos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Mr. Rauf Denktash both said they would accept, a federal system".

("Morning Star", August 1st., 1974; p.3).

Of course, if the plan for the carve-up of Cyprus is carried through successfully, it will not end, but rather stimulate, the struggle of the Cypriot people for their national liberation -- a struggle with which progressives in all countries must act in solidarity.

But even genuine national liberation will not solve the social problems of the Cypriot working people.

**AN URGENT NEED OF THE CYPRIOT WORKERS AND PEASANTS IS A
MARXIST- LENINIST PARTY OF THE WORKING CLASS, A
REVOLUTIONARY PARTY UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF WHICH THE
WORKING CLASS MAY TAKE THE LEADING ROLE IN THE NATIONAL-
DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION AND TRANSFORM IT INTO A SOCIALIST
REVOLUTION.**

End

A publication of THE MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATION OF BRITAIN.
Originally listed as " Printed and published by: M.Baker, Camberwell, London".