

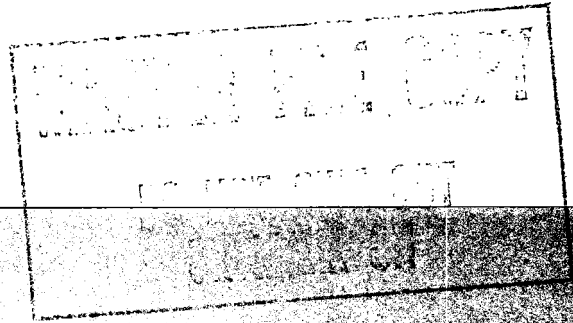


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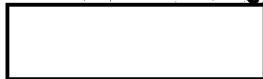
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Papandreou's Cyprus Policy



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An Intelligence Memorandum

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CUR 83-10012
January 1982

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Papandreou's Cyprus Policy [Redacted]

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An Intelligence Memorandum

*Information available as of 24 December 1981
was used in the preparation of this report.*

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This memorandum was prepared by [Redacted]
[Redacted] Office of European Analysis. Comments and
queries are welcome and may be directed to the
Chief, Iberia-Aegean Branch, EURA [Redacted]

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Papandreou's Cyprus Policy 

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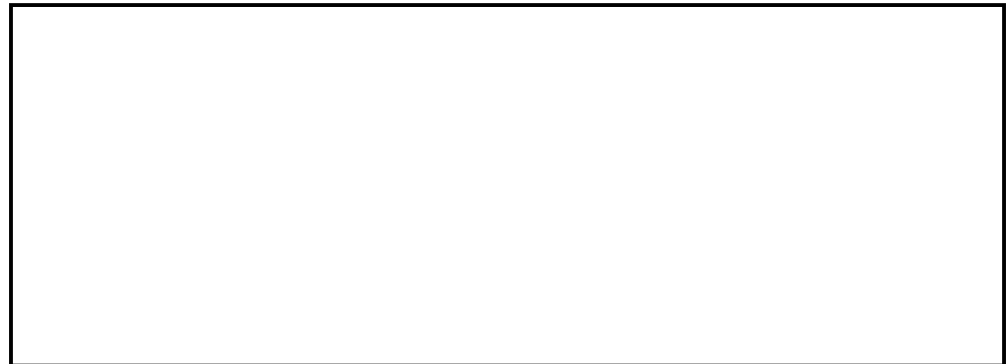
Summary

Tensions over Cyprus have increased in recent months—a development that stems in part from the election of Andreas Papandreou as Greece's Prime Minister. Papandreou has designated Cyprus a top-priority issue and has pledged "dynamic" support for the Greek Cypriots. His trip to Cyprus slated for February will be the first visit by a Greek head of government since the Turkish military intervention in Cyprus and the return of democracy in Greece in 1974. It is meant to symbolize to both domestic and international audiences the importance Papandreou attaches to the problem. 

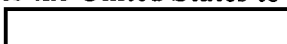
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Papandreou, however, is likely to find his options on Cyprus limited. There are no easy solutions to the problem; there is little room or willingness to compromise; and the costs of miscalculation are great. In addition, Greece's own economic and security interests are likely to assume a higher priority over time. 

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Cyprus has been a problem for more than two decades. The heart of the dispute is the conflict between the island's two ethnic communities—the Greek Cypriots who compose some 78 percent of the island's 600,000 inhabitants and the Turkish Cypriots who compose approximately 18 percent. Cyprus, however, has always been more than an intercommunal problem. The inability to find a solution is an unending source of tension in the region and has led Greece and Turkey close to war more than once. Greek-Turkish antagonism, moreover, weakens the southern flank of NATO and forces the United States to try to balance the objectives of two important allies. 


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Papandreou's Cyprus Policy 

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Introduction

Andreas Papandreou became Greece's first socialist Prime Minister on a platform emphasizing change. Among the many changes he offered was a new Cyprus policy. To underscore the importance he attached to Cyprus, Papandreou met during his first two weeks in office with President Kyprianou and nearly all major Greek Cypriot party leaders. 

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In a press conference following Kyprianou's visit, Papandreou announced Greece's "dynamic" support for the Greek Cypriots. The immediate manifestation of this support was a promise to double economic aid and begin a new diplomatic offensive. Both before and after the elections, Papandreou also indicated he intended to open the "dossier" on the abortive Cyprus coup of 1974, to include Cyprus in Greece's defense shield, and to link the Cyprus issue to Greece's relations with Turkey, the United States, and NATO. 

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The new Prime Minister, however, will find—if he did not know it before—that the Cyprus issue is a veritable minefield. Opening the Cyprus file could strain already delicate relations with the United States and Turkey and, more important, unnecessarily alienate a portion of the Greek military. Linking the Cyprus question to bilateral relations with the United States and Turkey could be counterproductive in the long run and weaken Greece's bargaining position on other bilateral issues of more immediacy to Athens. Changing the defense posture on Cyprus could cause a dangerous reaction from Turkey. In short, room for maneuver on the Cyprus issue is extremely limited, and Papandreou is likely to tread cautiously, playing for time as he has on other foreign policy issues and weighing his alternatives carefully to gain maximum benefits. 

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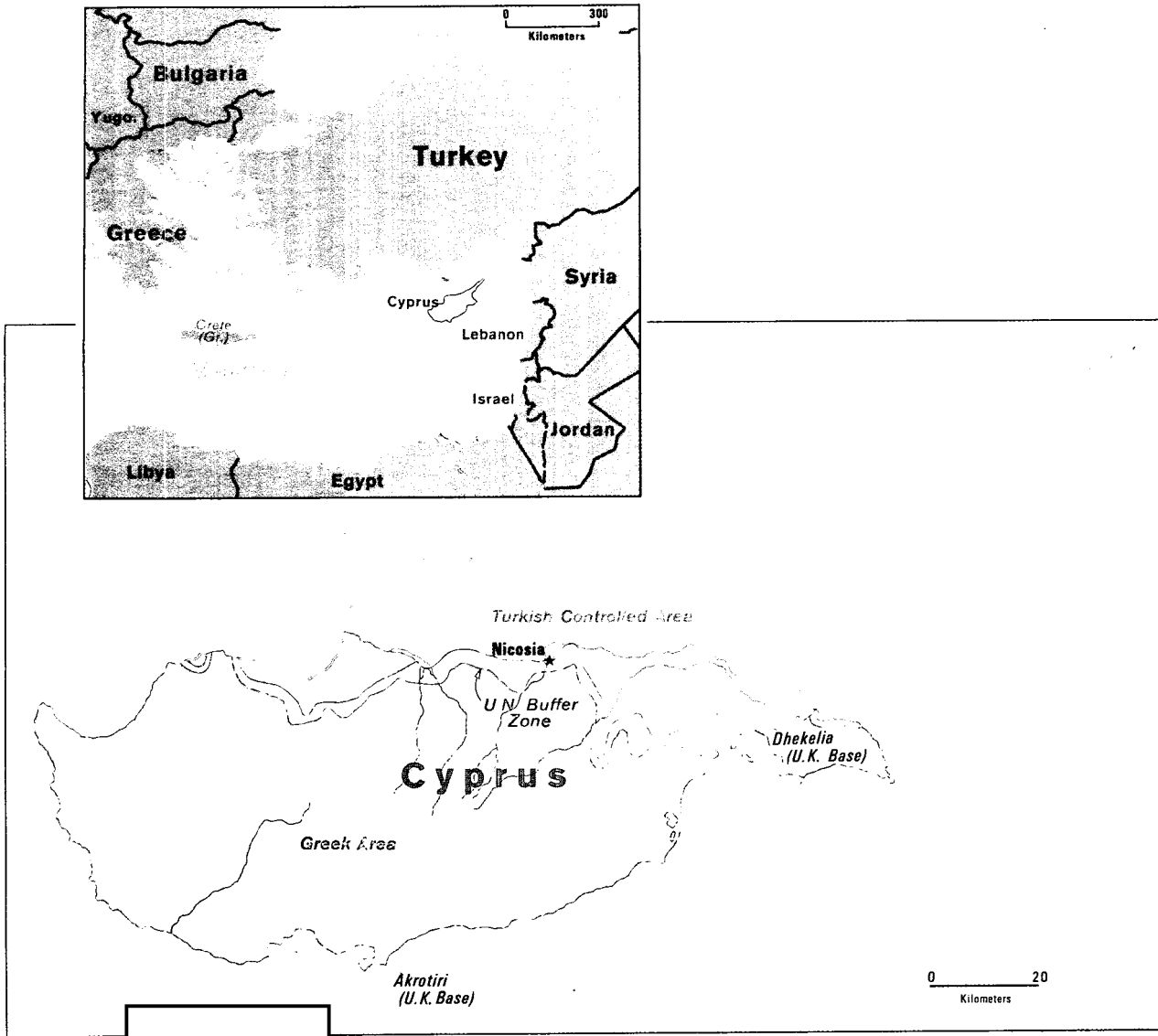
Background

The Cyprus problem has been the bane of successive Greek governments since the 1950s when Cyprus was a British colony and Greek Cypriots, with the diplomatic backing of Greece, were fighting for self-determination—which initially meant *enosis* (union) with Greece and later independence. The Turkish Cypriots generally supported the British, but later, with the encouragement of Turkey, they began to agitate for *taksim* (partition) or at minimum a biregional federation. Negotiations among Britain, Greece, and Turkey led to a compromise, and Cyprus became an independent state in 1960. 

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Figure 1



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The terms of independence, however, were controversial. The Constitution, drawn up without Cypriot participation, proved unworkable, and the treaties attached to the basic agreement, which were meant to guarantee the island's independence, only enhanced the potential for interference by the treaty signatories. Intercommunal fighting broke out in 1963-64 and again in 1967. On both occasions a Turkish invasion that could have led to war between Greece and Turkey was narrowly averted by US diplomatic intervention. [REDACTED] 25

The problem was brought to a head when Greek Cypriot rightists, backed by the junta in Athens, mounted a coup against President Makarios in 1974, triggering an invasion of Cyprus by Turkey. When the dust settled, Turkish troops had secured some 37 percent of northern Cyprus for the Turkish Cypriots, who constituted less than a fifth of the population. An uneasy truce has existed since then. [REDACTED] 25

The Greek Cypriots have carried their case to international forums, most notably the United Nations, to get Turkish troops out of Cyprus. They have pressed for a federal solution based on a strong central government (which they would expect to dominate) and for guaranteed freedom of movement (which would give them access to agricultural land in northern Cyprus and enable many Greek Cypriot refugees to return to their homes). Turkish Cypriots declared a separate "Turkish Federated State of Cyprus" (TFSC) in 1975, which is not internationally recognized, and have pushed for a biregional state with a decentralized government (which would give them exclusive control over a portion of the island). Talks between the two communities aiming at a negotiated settlement have been held intermittently under UN auspices since 1975.¹ [REDACTED] 25

The Cyprus problem has had a strong impact on Greek domestic politics, and while certainly not the decisive factor, it has contributed to the rise and fall of successive Greek governments. In 1958 criticism of government policy toward Cyprus was responsible in part for the resignation of then Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis, although he returned to office shortly thereafter. In 1967 the Cyprus issue triggered a dispute between King Constantine and George Papandreou, the father of Andreas, that eventually prompted charges and countercharges of plotting against the government; the political turmoil that resulted led to a military coup and seven years of dictatorship. Finally, the ill-conceived actions of the Greek military junta toward Cyprus ultimately led to the junta's own downfall in 1974. [REDACTED] 25

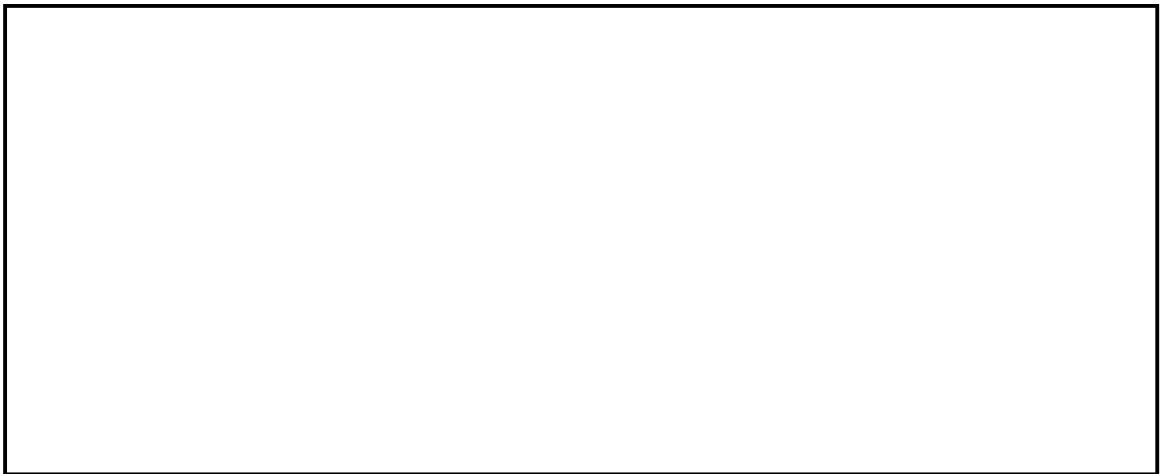
¹ Intercommunal talks have been held since 1968 after the second outbreak of violence on the island. The Turkish Cypriots had withdrawn from the government and into isolated enclaves in 1963 in protest over amendments to the Constitution. [REDACTED] 25

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In the 20 years since Cypriot independence, relations between Greece and Cyprus have not always been as harmonious as is sometimes assumed. Greek Cypriots felt betrayed by the Greek Government's willingness to accept the agreements that led to Cypriot independence and by the willingness of successive Greek governments to cater to NATO sensitivities at the expense of more substantial support for Cyprus. Relations reached a low during the period of the junta (1967-74) when the vehemently anti-Communist colonels locked horns with the charismatic and independent-minded Makarios. After the fall of the junta, relations improved markedly, although there was a limit to what the Greek Government could do in support of Cyprus and the policies of the two governments continued to differ in important respects. The new Greek Government found itself weak militarily, economically, and politically. It faced a potentially more explosive situation with Turkey over territorial rights in the Aegean. Thus, Athens favored a more conciliatory position on Cyprus than either Makarios or his successor Kyprianou was prepared to accept.

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The Cyprus File

During Kyprianou's visit to Greece shortly after the elections, Papandreou reiterated his campaign pledge to reopen the 1974 Cyprus dossier, but since then he has made only scattered references to the dossier. Papandreou almost certainly recognizes that opening the file is a potentially explosive move. In the first place, it would complicate already delicate relations with the United States. There is a widespread perception among Greeks and Greek Cypriots that the United States was somehow responsible for the anti-Makarios coup and the Turkish invasion that followed. Greeks believe that the United States gave the Greek junta the green light

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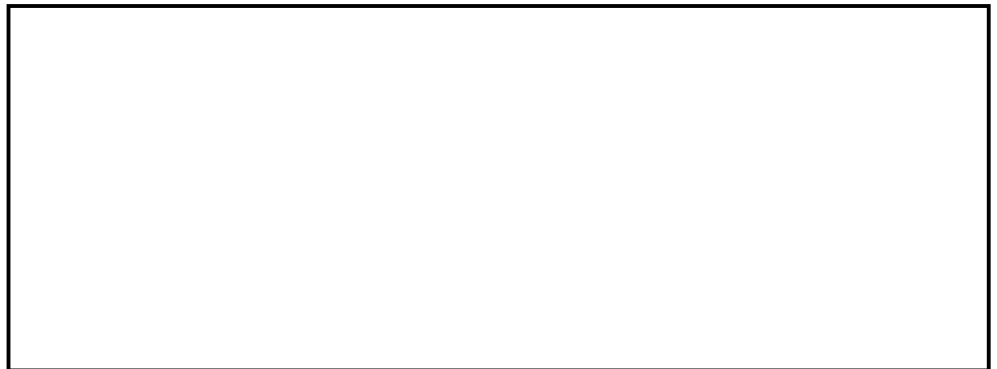
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for its coup plans—or, at minimum, failed to give a red light. Likewise, they believe that US complicity or failure to act was responsible for the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. They cite the stern and successful warnings that the United States sent to Turkey in 1964 and 1967 when Ankara was poised on the verge of a massive offensive on Cyprus. [REDACTED] 25

Papandreou probably is aware that reopening the file could intensify anti-American sentiment in Greece—regardless of what the file shows—and exacerbate bilateral relations at a time when he is carefully calibrating his policies toward the West in an effort to exact favorable aid concessions. Thus, he is likely to move cautiously, although he may try to use the threat to reopen the file as a lever on the United States. [REDACTED] 25

A second and perhaps more compelling reason for Papandreou to play down the Cyprus file is his relationship with the Greek military. The military junta badly bungled its attempt to depose Makarios and was unprepared for the Turkish invasion that followed; hence it was forced to resign in disgrace. Since then, successive Greek governments have refrained from completely purging the armed forces because of the need to rebuild the country's defense capability and reestablish the bruised confidence and prestige of the military. [REDACTED] 25

Papandreou's victory at the polls was a blow to many officers. Military officers are highly suspicious of Papandreou, and although they are content for the moment to remain in the barracks, they will watch his policies closely. They are likely to view any move to reopen the Cyprus file as an attempt to discredit the military. Thus, Papandreou probably will avoid such action because he does not wish either to evoke a military backlash or to damage the credibility of the military while the perceived threat from Turkey is so great. [REDACTED] 25



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Defense Policy Toward Cyprus

Since Papandreou's election, there has been considerable Turkish, Greek, and Cypriot press speculation that a change in Greece's defense policy is imminent. The speculation gained some currency following the visit of Cypriot Minister of Interior and Defense Veniamin to Athens early last November—less than a month after the Greek elections—and Papandreou's comment to the press that Cyprus would be included in Greece's "defense shield." There is little hard evidence, however, to suggest a substantial shift in Greek defense policy toward Cyprus, and there are many compelling arguments against such a move. [redacted]

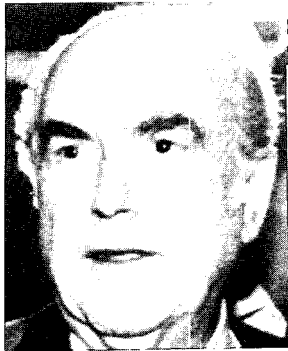
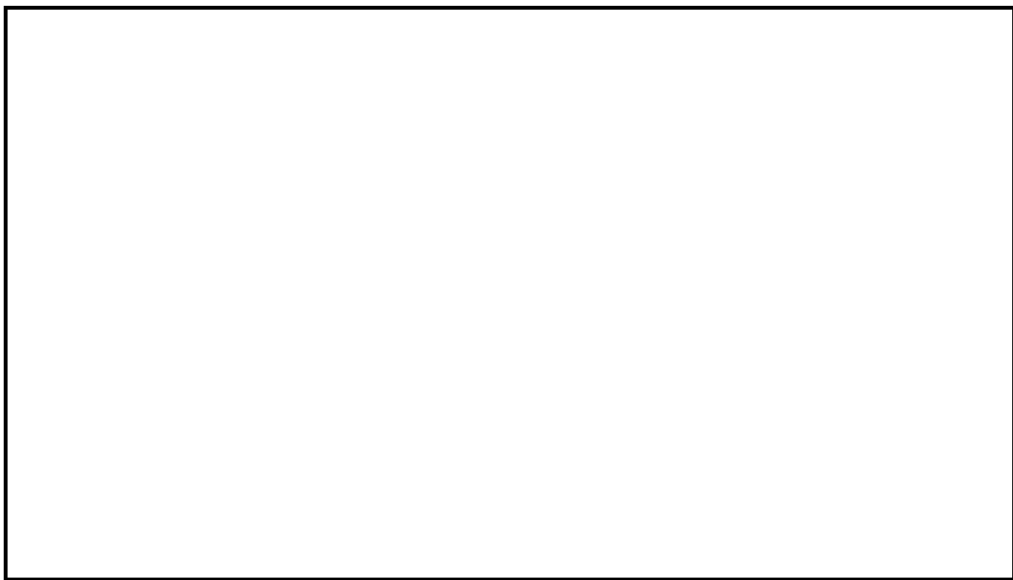


Figure 2. Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou

Under a treaty signed when Cyprus became independent in 1960, Greece was permitted to station 950 men on Cyprus, and Turkey was allowed a force of 650 men. The infiltration of soldiers and weapons from the mainland, however, became a common practice on both sides in the 1960s and early 1970s. Greek Cypriots initially welcomed the influx of Greek troops, but after 1967, as relations between the junta and Makarios deteriorated, the presence of Greek troops became more of a threat than a comfort. [redacted]

In addition, Greek Army officers controlled the Cypriot National Guard (CNG), an extra-constitutional force established in 1964 to replace the all but defunct Cypriot Army. Key posts were filled by officers from the mainland, and the commander of the CNG (a Greek) reported directly to Athens, bypassing Cypriot Government channels. Makarios recognized the threat posed by Greek control of the CNG, and he tried unsuccessfully on several occasions to reassert Greek Cypriot control. It was Greek officers of the CNG who led the abortive coup against him in 1974. [redacted]

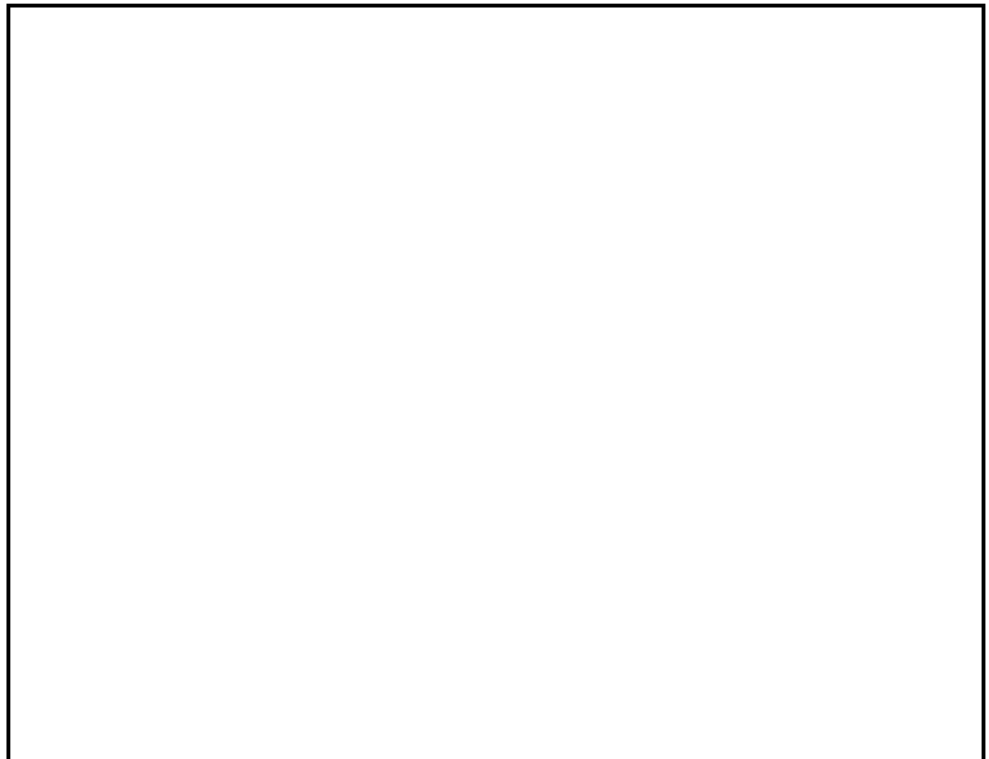


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Mainlanders will continue to play a major role in the CNG, particularly in its higher ranks, for some time. But an infiltration of Greek soldiers to the island or an increase in the number of Greeks serving in the CNG, as Ankara and the Turkish Cypriots are claiming, is unlikely. Such increases would go against the effort of the last seven years to reduce the Greek presence and "Cypriotize" the National Guard, and the Greek Cypriots would be unlikely to countenance them.

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Greece has at least two reasons for not wanting to change the balance of forces on Cyprus. First, any upgrading of Greek Cypriot forces would be matched, and probably surpassed, by a similar improvement on the Turkish side. Second, given the distance between Cyprus and Greece, Athens would have great difficulty defending the island. Both Greek and Cypriot policymakers realize that Cyprus would be among the first casualties of a Greek-Turkish conflict. Thus, Greek resources are much more likely to be used in reinforcing defenses in the Aegean islands and on the mainland. Papandreou's statement that Cyprus is included in Greece's "defense shield" means essentially that the Greek Government will view any Turkish move against Cyprus as aggression against Greece that will be met not only by a military response on the island but possibly even a counterattack against the Turkish mainland.

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Nonetheless, tensions on Cyprus have increased since the election of Papandreou and have been fueled by charges of a military force buildup on both sides. [redacted]



However, rumors of a dramatic and sudden buildup of arms or men appear to be unfounded. For the present, the greatest danger lies in a continuation of the verbal hostility that encourages distrust and makes politicians and military personnel on both sides nervous. The potential for a miscalculation that could lead to conflict, therefore, appears to be growing. [redacted]

Internationalizing the Cyprus Issue

Papandreou will concentrate his "dynamic" support in the area of public relations and diplomacy. In particular, he has promised to back Greek Cypriot efforts to "internationalize" the Cyprus issue. This will involve publicizing the Cyprus issue in international forums, raising the issue in bilateral talks or through special demarches to selected governments, and perhaps pushing for some kind of international conference. [redacted]



Figure 3. Cypriot President Spyros Kyprianou

International recognition is the most effective diplomatic weapon the Greek Cypriots have. The Kyprianou government is the only administration officially recognized by the international community. This has helped the Greek Cypriots to keep the Cyprus issue alive and before the public. They have elicited a series of resolutions from various international organizations—especially the United Nations and the nonaligned movement—reaffirming the sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Cyprus; demanding the withdrawal of Turkish troops; deploring attempts to change the demography of the island through an influx of Turkish settlers from the mainland; and calling for total demilitarization. [redacted]

The importance of international forums to the Greek Cypriots has increased as their control over the island has decreased. Successive governments in Athens have supported Greek Cypriot efforts to internationalize the issue, but in varying degrees and often less forcefully than the Greek Cypriots wanted. [redacted]

Papandreou has already shown his willingness to fulfill his pledge of more "dynamic" support in the international sphere and through bilateral diplomatic channels. At NATO's Defense Planning Committee meeting in December 1981, he raised the Cyprus issue along with the Greek demand

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for a security guarantee against Turkey. He has actively publicized his view that Cyprus is an issue involving the occupation of one country by another. Dramatizing the Cyprus problem is a policy Papandreu believes he can pursue with few apparent costs while demonstrating to Greeks and Greek Cypriots the importance he attaches to the problem. [REDACTED] 25

However, this approach could invite a number of unexpected and unwelcome repercussions. In the short term, Papandreu's stance is likely to harden the negotiating position of the Greek Cypriots in the intercommunal talks. After nearly a year of backstage maneuvering, representatives of the two Cypriot communities finally accepted a UN proposal for discussion in November 1981. Without the firm support of all the parties involved, this initiative is likely to fail. So far, the Greek Cypriots and the Athens government have greeted the UN paper with lukewarm enthusiasm and appear ready to press for a General Assembly debate if the initiative does not produce immediate and substantive progress. This would place the problem effectively back at square one. [REDACTED] 25

Publicizing the issue will add to the tension between Greece and Turkey. Since 1976, Ankara and Athens have engaged in bilateral negotiations aimed at solving their outstanding disputes. While Papandreu has said he wants to extend an olive branch to Turkey and has attempted to reassure Turkish officials in private, he has been more belligerent in public and has been unwilling to continue regular high-level negotiations with the Turks on Aegean issues. To the extent that intentions become unclear, there will be an increased danger of conflict. [REDACTED] 25

Perhaps the most troublesome aspect of Papandreu's new diplomatic offensive is his apparent endorsement of an international conference on Cyprus. The Soviets were the first to propose such a conference in August 1974. Presumably the conference would focus on the "external" aspects of a Cyprus settlement—security arrangements and guarantees—while the two communities would be left alone to solve their differences. [REDACTED] 25

The idea of an international conference has had some appeal among Greek Cypriot officials for several reasons. By inference, the removal of Turkish troops would be a prerequisite for negotiations, with demilitarization—including the removal of the British bases on the southern coast of the island—as the ultimate goal. A conference would also enlarge the number of key actors; Greek Cypriots have felt that if they cannot limit the arena to the two communities, they would gain a more favorable hearing in a larger forum. Finally, any conference would probably include members of the UN Security Council, the parties involved in the dispute (Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus), and members of the nonaligned movement. The latter traditionally have favored the Greek Cypriot view. [REDACTED] 25

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Despite its appeal, Greek and Greek Cypriot officials realize an international conference is both impractical and unrealistic. The Turkish Government would almost certainly oppose such a conference; the United States would be against Soviet participation; and neither the Greek Government nor Cypriot officials would be anxious for Soviet involvement in the problem. Papandreu, therefore, is likely to use the notion of an international conference to pressure the West but is not likely to count it among his serious policy options. How actively he will press for a conference will depend primarily on the satisfaction he is able to obtain from the West on other important issues. [REDACTED]

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The Turkish Threat

Since 1974, Greece has thought of Turkey rather than its northern Balkan neighbors as the primary threat to its security. Greece and Turkey have been at odds over territorial rights in the Aegean since the early 1970s, but it was Turkey's 1974 military action in Cyprus that created genuine fear among Greek policymakers. Athens was particularly impressed by the speed and relative ease with which the Turkish Army was able to secure the northern portion of the island. Ankara's establishment of an "Aegean army" along Turkey's Aegean coast increased these fears and led Greece to militarize further its islands off the Turkish mainland in contravention of several international treaties. Since then, Greece has embarked on a costly defense program, which has substantially modernized its military, and it has begun to develop a domestic defense industry. As a result, Greek and Turkish military capabilities have become more evenly balanced. The government currently spends between 5 and 7 percent of its GNP on defense. [REDACTED]

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Greece and Turkey began conducting bilateral discussions over rights in the Aegean in 1976. The Aegean dispute covers a range of issues, including airspace, surface, and continental-shelf rights; behind the specific issues are thorny problems of territorial sovereignty and security. To facilitate the talks, previous Greek Governments tended to decouple the Cyprus problem from the issues centered on the Aegean, leaving the Greek Cypriots to negotiate the status of Cyprus while lending them moral and, to some degree, diplomatic and economic support. Little progress was made toward a resolution of differences, but the dialogue helped to reduce tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean. Papandreu, however, says he wants to link progress on the Cyprus issue to progress on the Aegean problem. For the present, he has halted negotiations on the Aegean and thereby introduced new uncertainties into Greek-Turkish relations. [REDACTED]

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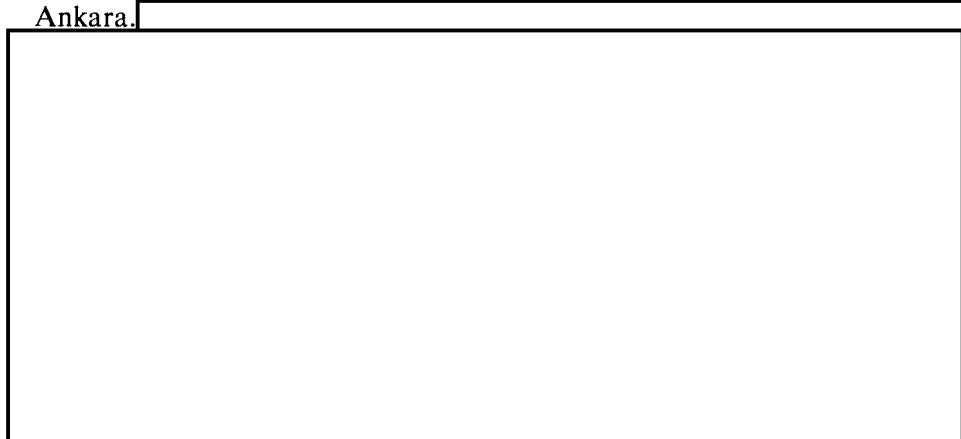
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**Implications for the
United States and
NATO**

Greeks believe that Turkey holds the key to an effective solution on Cyprus and that only the United States and NATO can exact concessions from Ankara. [redacted]



Beyond calling for a broad security guarantee, however, there are few options open to Papandreou on the Cyprus issue. He is highly unlikely, for example, to demand the removal of Turkish troops from Cyprus as a prerequisite to US base negotiations or to continued Greek participation in NATO. Over the longer term, in fact, Cyprus is likely to take a back seat, as it has in the past, to Greece's more vital interests—military aid from the West and the procurement of more modern military equipment. Ultimately, the Athens government also is likely to view Cyprus as less important than the easing of tensions with Turkey on Aegean issues. Finally, Papandreou, who in the past has accused Turkey of manipulating and controlling the Turkish Cypriots, will want to avoid the appearance of negotiating for the Kyprianou government. [redacted]

Although Cyprus is thus likely to figure less prominently in Papandreou's foreign policy than this current rhetoric suggests, there are circumstances in which he could find the issue a convenient tactical tool. If negotiations with NATO and the United States go poorly, he could threaten to break off talks with the United States, demand immediate removal of bases, and/or withdraw from NATO's military wing. As an excuse for such actions, he could point to western unwillingness or inability to guarantee borders in the Eastern Mediterranean and to press Turkey for concessions on Cyprus. This is likely to happen, however, only if Papandreou is unable to obtain satisfactory concessions on what he believes are his more realistic demands, particularly in the area of military assistance. In this sense, the Greek stance on Cyprus would become a kind of barometer of overall Greek-US and Greek-NATO relations. [redacted]

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Only the United States and its allies can satisfy Papandreou's need for economic aid, weapons, and some sort of security guarantee against Turkey. In addition to his own reservations, domestic constraints, mainly the Greek military and conservative President Karamanlis, prevent him from turning to the East for substantial assistance. Likewise, he cannot count on the Arabs, who appreciate his warmth toward the Palestinians but are unlikely to match the aid he currently receives from the United States and his EC partners. This dependence gives Papandreou's Western allies considerable potential leverage on issues such as NATO, the EC, and bilateral relations with the United States, but it will not translate easily into influence on the Cyprus problem.

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