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# **Redefining an Alliance: Greek-US relations, 1974-1980**

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PhD History  
The University of Edinburgh

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## Declaration

This thesis has been composed by me and it is my own work. Additional material has been properly referenced. It has only been submitted for the PhD degree in the University of Edinburgh only.

In Edinburgh

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Athanasios Antonopoulos



## Abstract

In 1974 following the Cyprus Crisis, the bilateral alliance between Greece and the United States entered a new period. The bilateral relations, traditionally close since the emergence of the Cold War, faced a set of challenges. Turkey's invasion of Cyprus and the collapse of the Greek dictatorship, which enjoyed close ties with Washington, gave rise to anti-Americanism in Greek society. Moreover, Washington's inability to contain Turkish aggression frustrated the Greek government. In response to the invasion of Cyprus, Athens announced Greece's withdrawal from NATO with the hope of securing the active involvement of the US and NATO in the Greek-Turkish dispute. These developments required readjustments to Greek-US policies and strategies to overcome obstacles and secure their objectives. Greece's withdrawal from and return to NATO after six years, in October 1980, symbolises best this distinct period of Greek-US cooperation.

The traditional historical narrative states that after 1974 the priorities of successive Greek governments were increasingly directed at managing the country's accession to European Economic Community while developing closer cooperation with the Balkan states. The United States remained another significant ally of Greece. This thesis emphasises that the Greek governments between 1974 and 1980 regarded the United States as the single most important ally for the Greek national security policy. The Greek governments realised that only Washington could assist Greece with both Soviet and Turkish threats. Washington, meanwhile, prioritised retaining close ties with both Greece and Turkey and an eventual re-build of NATO's Southern Flank. What is significant is that President Carter put aside his idealistic declarations made on the campaign trail and adopted fully Ford/Kissinger's approach toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus, i.e. the Eastern Mediterranean. Hence, the thesis underlines the element of continuity between the US administrations in the second half of 1970s.

The thesis makes a significant contribution to Cold War scholarship regarding bilateral relations within the West during the era of détente. Scholars has largely overlooked the US's relationships with Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus even though the Eastern Mediterranean region dominated the foreign policy agendas of both Ford and Carter administrations. This study argues that President Ford's handling of relations with Greece was focused on crisis management rather than crisis solving. More significantly, although unrecognised at the time, President Carter's relations with Greece were a significant success. Ford and Carter responded to the Eastern Mediterranean questions in ways that reflect significant continuities in their approaches. Ford and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger developed the concept of a 'balanced approach' towards Athens and Ankara in political, economic, and military terms that aimed at ensuring close ties with both. Carter followed the same policy concept. Carter succeeded in seeing Greece's return to full NATO membership while resisting being dragged into the centre of Greek-NATO negotiations. During these years the Greek government also scored significant successes. Greek pressure ensured that Washington devoted equal attention to Greece and Turkey, a much more powerful regional power. Similarly, Greece received significant US economic aid while Turkey faced a strict US arms embargo. By 1980, however, the implications of the Iranian Revolution and the end of détente mandated that Turkey had to take precedence over Greece in the US's policy considerations.

## Lay Summary

This thesis focuses on bilateral relations and cooperation between the Greek and US governments from 1974 to 1980. The 1974 Cyprus Crisis between Greece and Turkey impacted Greek domestic and foreign policies on multiple-levels. First, it led to the collapse of a seven-year long dictatorship. The Greek junta had enjoyed close cooperation with the United States and in the aftermath of the political transition anti-American sentiments rose within Greek society. In addition, Turkey, a fellow NATO member, emerged as a perceived threat to Greece. When Turkish forces invaded Cyprus for a second time on 14 August 1974, the Greek government announced its country's withdrawal from NATO and a review of its relations with the United States. Scholarship argues that in the period after 1974, the Greek government placed greater emphasis on cooperation with Western Europe or the Balkans instead of the United States. This thesis challenges this idea by arguing that relations with the United States remained at the core of Greece's national security policies. The Greek governments concluded that only Washington could assist Greece to confront the threat both from Turkey and from the Communist bloc. They sought to establish new strategies that would ensure Washington's support in meeting both of these goals. In turn, Washington was confronted with a conflict between two NATO allies which could escalate into war. Both Athens and Ankara expected the United States to intervene on their behalf which complicated US responses. Both the Ford and the Carter administrations followed a 'balanced approach' towards Athens and Ankara. Their stances towards Athens and Ankara reveal the continuity in terms of foreign policy between the two administrations. The period of tension ended when Greece returned to NATO in 1980. The thesis argues that this development offers evidence for Carter's foreign policy success in the Eastern Mediterranean. Between 1974 and 1980, Greece-US relations were redefined to adapt to the new challenges and opportunities that the final years of *détente* presented.

## Acknowledgements

There are many people who I owe gratitude for their advice, guidance and support in the process of completing my PhD. First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Fabian Hilfrich, for his comments on my work as well as his unreserved support for extra-curriculum activities and funding opportunities. I also deeply appreciated Professor Juliet Kaarbo's input in all meetings and her unique perspective and feedback in my approach. A special thanks good to Professor Evanthis Hatzivassilou, who generously discussed with me aspects of my topic, particularly regarding the Greek side. Finally, I would like to thank the American History Group in University of Edinburgh for inviting me to present my work and receiving valuable feedback.

This piece of work is heavily based on archival research, hence its completion would not have been possible without access to US and Greek records. Determining the more pertinent collections to my thesis proved to be a complex process. Therefore, I would like to thank everyone in Gerald Ford Presidential Library in Ann Arbor, MI, the Carter Presidential Library in Atlanta, GA, and the Karamanlis' Foundation in Athens for their assistance and advice. Special mention deserves Dr Christos Anastasiou, archivist in the Karamanlis Archives, for point out to me records, which proved invaluable. I also need to offer my gratitude to Ford Library and various bodies within the University of Edinburgh for their financial assistance that allowed me to complete my thesis.

Finally, this thesis would not have been possible without the support of my family, loved ones and friends. Special thanks go to my parents, Evangelos and Margarita, and my aunt, Erasmia.



## List of Abbreviations

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CKP	Constantine Karamanlis Papers
CSCE	Conference on Cooperation and Security in Europe
DNSA	Digital National Security Archive
DPC	Defence Planning Committee
EAP	Evangelos Averoff Papers
EC	European Communities
EEC	European Economic Community
EP	Ethinki Parataxis (party)
FIR	Flight Information Region
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
JCPL	Jimmy Carter Presidential Library
GRFPL	Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LTDP	Long-Term Defence Program
MC	Military Committee
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
ND	New Democracy (party)
NSA	National Security Advisor
NSC	National Security Council
PASOK	PanHellenic Socialist Movement (party)
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks/Treaty
UN	United Nations
SBA	Sovereign Base Areas (Cyprus)





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## Introduction

On 14 August 1974, the Greek government announced its decision to withdraw from NATO's integrated military structure.<sup>1</sup> While Athens proclaimed its commitment to the Western alliance and its continued participation in the political structure of NATO, in practical terms Greece had abandoned NATO. Greece would remain outside NATO for the next six years. On 22 October 1980, Greece returned as a full NATO member with little change in its previous role and obligations.

Greece's withdrawal from NATO was closely linked to internal and regional developments that took place during the summer of 1974. The seven-year-long Greek dictatorship, which was responsible for the eruption of the Cyprus crisis, fell. This paved the way for a transition to democracy.<sup>2</sup> The return to democracy allowed the expression of anti-American sentiments that had developed due to the US's cooperation with the military regime between 1967 and 1974 and the US's perceived failure to prevent the Turkish actions in Cyprus.<sup>3</sup> In terms of regional relations, Greece and Turkey came close to war. Past tensions and disputes regarding Cyprus and the Aegean Sea were suddenly elevated to potential reasons for war.<sup>4</sup> For successive Greek governments after 1974, Turkey emerged as a threat to national security and territorial sovereignty. When Greece returned to NATO in 1980, none of these factors was changed. These developments indicated that Greek-US relations had entered a new

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<sup>1</sup> Press statement, August 14, 1974, Constantine Svolopoulos, *Κωνσταντίνος Καραμανλής: αρχείο, γεγονότα, και κείμενα* [Constantine Karamanlis: Archive, events and texts (Henceforth *Karamanlis Archive*)](Athens: Kathimerini, 2005), vol.8, 88.

<sup>2</sup> Polyvios Polyviou, *Cyprus: Conflict and Negotiation 1960-1980* (London: Duckworth, 1980), 15

<sup>3</sup> James Edward Miller, *The United States and the Making of Modern Greece* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 204.

<sup>4</sup> Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO Divided, NATO United: The Evolution of an Alliance* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 71-75.

period that lasted approximately until 1981. Both US and Greek records demonstrate that the Greek-NATO relationship itself did not dominate Greek-US relations. However, Athens' withdrawal from and return to NATO integrated military command, symbolised the public demonstration of a distinct period in the foreign and security between Greece and the United States.

This thesis examines whether the Greek withdrawal from NATO represented a broader fundamental change in bilateral Greek-US relations during this six-year-long period. A close look at bilateral relations, particularly the behind-the-scenes contacts and internal considerations of each side, reveals that cooperation between Athens and Washington remained close. The Greek government, as early as the autumn of 1974, realised that the United States remained its best hope for successful defence against its growing security challenges. Cold War considerations meant that their relationship continued to serve both sides' interests and security goals in the Balkans and in the broader Eastern Mediterranean region, as in the past. However, the increased tensions between Athens and Ankara complicated Greek-US bilateral relations. Turkey, as this study discovers, emerged as a factor affecting relations in its own right. The Greek-Turkish disputes led to different and conflicting goals between Athens and Washington. Washington wanted to secure relations with both of its NATO allies, despite their rivalry. The Greek governments aimed at securing US political, economic, and military support against Turkey. This fundamental difference resulted in new US and Greek strategies designed to meet their respective objectives.

This study does not merely address purely bilateral questions, such as the future of the US bases on Greece territory, which has attracted scholarly attention.<sup>5</sup> Such an

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<sup>5</sup> See for example, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, *Οι συμπληγάδες της εξωτερικής πολιτικής: εσωτερικές και εξωτερικές πιέσεις στις ελληνοαμερικανικές διαπραγματεύσεις για της βάσεις, 1974-1985* [The Clashing

approach is incomplete and its conclusions are misleading. The current study reviews and presents the role the US and Greece played in each state's foreign policy considerations within regional and global contexts. Consequently, the study offers an elaborate account of the complexities in international relations in the Eastern Mediterranean during the second half of the 1970s, which has been missing. Existing works on Greek-US cooperation in the 1970s only provide factual representations of the events, mainly through the prism of public policy.<sup>6</sup>

This thesis challenges current views, particularly those put forward in Christos Kassimeris' work on Greek-US relations during the 1970s. In his *Greece and the American Embrace*, the author explores the role of the United States in the formation of Greek foreign policy. While he ultimately rejects this notion, he continues arguing that the Greek governments of the period were 'unwilling to confront her [Greece's] patron [the US]'. Therefore, he argues, the Greek governments of the period did not pursue an ambitious foreign policy aiming at independence from US patronage and guidance. That was not the result of US intervention in the Greek politics but it was the failure of the Greek governments to realise the country's potential and importance for NATO and US considerations and, thus, exploit all opportunities given. Therefore, Kassimeris concludes that 'Greece was not only committed to the western alliance but also served it submissively - with the occasional outburst necessary to ease public opinion'.<sup>7</sup>

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Rocks of Foreign Policy: Domestic and External pressures on the Greek-American negotiations for the bases, 1974-1985] (Athens: Patakis, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> Jon Kofas, *Under the Eagle's Claw: Exceptionalism in Post-war US-Greek Relations* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 135-179.

<sup>7</sup> Christos Kassimeris, *Greece and the American Embrace: Greek Foreign Policy towards Turkey, the US and the Western Alliance* (London: Tauris, 2010), 136.



This thesis challenges this view as a fundamentally narrow one. Kassimeris's background in political science and his primary focus on public statements and views related to bilateral Greek-US cooperation. He overlooks entirely governmental records revealing both sides' behind-the-scenes considerations. By doing so, Kassimeris' work, for all its merits, is missing a vital element in understanding the deeper Greek and US foreign and national security policies. The trail of governmental papers, which for the first time this project accessed, reveal a more accurate chronology of events such as the policy change in relation to the lifting of the US arms embargo. Relevant chapters present the disparity between the public perception and the behind-the-scenes considerations and actions of both the US administrations and Greek governments.

More importantly, insisting on the debate over US intervention is irrelevant. Between 1974 and 1980, there is no evidence of US intervention in Greek politics. Rather, two sovereign states sought to secure their interests within the limitations and opportunities the Cold War bipolarity and regional antagonisms posed and offered. Moreover, characterising the Greek governments' stance toward the United States as an 'outburst' which merely aimed at pacifying the public's sediments, as Kassimeris suggests, overlooks the Greek governments' motivations. The Greek governments between 1974 and 1980, as this thesis demonstrates, capitalised confrontation through the means of pressure tactics and blunt blackmail to attract and ensure Washington's support. Confrontation, though, did not seek to appease anti-American sentiments in Greek society. While responding to the electorate was a necessity for the democratically elected Greek governments, fanning the flames of anti-Americanism endangered a key principle in Greek security policy: cooperation with the West against the Soviet threat. On the contrary, confrontation as a strategy primarily emphasised

behind-the-scenes contacts and actions. One profound example that this study presents is the Greek cooperation with Congress against the US administration in efforts to pass legislation serving Greek interests. This cooperative aspect has been overlooked.

Kassimeris, therefore, confuses the objective fact that the Greek governments depended on their much stronger ally for military, economic and political support with dependence or subversion in diplomatic terms. This thesis argues the exact opposite: the greater role the United States played in the Greek national security considerations after 1974, the more willing the Greek governments were to challenge Washington. It was the only way that Athens could use in order to force the United States closer to the Greek interests. The status quo, which had the United States as a neutral mediator between two close Mediterranean allies, did not serve Greek interests.

Secondly, Kassimeris argues that the ‘Western alliance favoured Turkish interests over those of Greece’.<sup>8</sup> He implies that the leader of the Western camp, the United States, followed a predominately pro-Turkish stance. Kassimeris is not alone in this line of approach. Sotiris Rizas often adopts a similar argument when describing the US attitude towards the Greek-Turkish rivalry.<sup>9</sup> Secretary Kissinger, in particular, is often portrayed as pro-Turkish, given his general emphasis on power politics.<sup>10</sup> President Carter earned a similar reputation following his administration’s choice to seek the repeal of the US embargo on Turkey.<sup>11</sup> Turkey therefore, must have been more important than Greece, given Ankara’s greater contribution in terms of providing

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 225.

<sup>9</sup> Sotiris Rizas, ‘Cold War in the Aegean: Managing a Conflict between Allies: US Policy towards Greece and Turkey in relations with the Aegean Dispute, 1974-1976’, *Cold War History*, Vol.9, No.3, August 2009, 375.

<sup>10</sup> Jussi Hanhimaki, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 485-492.

<sup>11</sup> Chris Ioannides, *Realpolitik in the Eastern Mediterranean: from Kissinger and the Cyprus Crisis to Carter and the Lifting of the Turkish Arms Embargo* (New York: Pella, 2001), 305.

personnel for NATO and its regional significance as a bordering state of the Soviet Union, as Kissinger's own words in his memoirs imply.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, a number of studies portray the US role in the Greek-Turkish dispute as a zero-sum game: Washington sided with Ankara since it did not side with Greek expectations. However, a close examination of the US's internal considerations reveals an entirely different picture.

This thesis demonstrates that the US objected to an either/or policy toward Greece and Turkey. Washington's fundamental policy goal in the aftermath of the Cyprus crisis became the need to safeguard relations with both. Secretary Kissinger for the first time argued about the need for a strictly US neutral posture toward the Greek-Turkish disputes regarding either the future of Cyprus or the Aegean boundaries. In short, this represented the foundation of the balanced approach that this thesis uses to describe US policy between 1974 and 1980. Accordingly, Washington intended to promote a bilateral Greek-Turkish dialogue, acting as an honest intermediary, but not to suggest, let alone to impose, solutions, which ran the danger of dissatisfying both US allies. President Carter respected the balanced approach as a policy. While his strategy differed from Ford and Kissinger's, Carter did not reinvent or change US policy in the Eastern Mediterranean. The balanced approach was fully pursued until his last year in office. This demonstrates another element of the US's policy considerations toward Greece and Turkey between 1974 and 1980.

This balanced approach was closely linked with détente. Hanhimäki argues, 'when détente flourished, transatlantic relations suffered'.<sup>13</sup> In the case of the US

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<sup>12</sup> Henry A. Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (London: Phoenix, 2000), 225.

<sup>13</sup> Jussi M. Hanhimäki, *The Rise and Fall of Détente: American Foreign Policy and the Transformation of the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2013), 62.

approach toward Greece and Turkey, détente entailed greater US sympathy for a regional dispute. As the exclusive US focus on the Soviet Union subsided in the 1970s, Washington allowed more time for accommodating Greece and Turkish requests and expectations, which at their core endangered the collective response to the communist threat. In order to avoid dissatisfying either Athens or Ankara, Washington opted for strict neutrality expecting that in the meantime Greece and Turkey would reach a common understanding on issues affecting their smooth cooperation with their NATO obligations.

By the end of 1970s, the Eastern Mediterranean along with the Southern Europe had returned to stability. The loss of a valued US ally in the Middle East, Iran, and the formal collapse of superpower détente mandated a shift in the focus of the United States from Europe to the Middle East. This change affected the US approach toward Greece. From 1980 onwards, the United States distinguished its approach toward Greece and Turkey based on their different roles in the international system. Greece's role was limited to the Balkans and the Aegean Sea. On the contrary, Turkey became a crucial US ally in the Middle and Near East that could counteract Islamic fundamentalism and Soviet pressures in the periphery.

### **Historiography**

This study fits within a broader body of Cold War historiography. It is in line with the recent drive towards the collective study of allied relationships rather than following traditional approaches that aim at national histories.<sup>14</sup> John Lewis Gaddis argues that

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<sup>14</sup> Odd Arne Westad, 'The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century', in Odd Arne Westad and Melvyn P. Leffler (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), vol. 1, 6.

a bilateral or multilateral approach is the only means available for measuring the influence of allies on superpower decision-making.<sup>15</sup> His view applies well in the case of the Greek-US relationship between 1974 and 1980. Greek objectives aimed not only to influence Washington's approach on matters strictly related to Greece but also to affect the conduct and progress of US-Turkish relations and NATO policies. In response to pressures from Greece, both the Ford and Carter administrations sought to develop strategies to defuse Greek pressures on Washington's foreign policy while limiting the negative implications of non-compliance with the Greek expectations.

Most of the relevant literature relates to studies concerning Greek foreign policy in the 1970s. Relations between Greece and the US occupy a central position, but no study so far has approached the topic bilaterally. The main theme, particularly in earlier studies, has focussed on continuity and change in Greece's approach toward the United States in the political transition of 1974. A core theme in this respect is the question of 'dependence' of the Greek governments on the United States. This builds on the premise that, before 1974, the United States acted as Greece's powerful patron while interfering in Greek domestic affairs and effectively limiting the Greek government's foreign policy decision-making.<sup>16</sup> This thesis, though, considers this debate as no longer relevant in light of recent publications presenting a balanced relationship as early as 1950s onwards.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, 'On Starting All over Again: A Naïve Approach to the Study of the Cold War', in Odd Arne Westad (ed.), *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations and Theory* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 31.

<sup>16</sup> Jon Kofas, *Intervention and Underdevelopment: Greece during the Cold War* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 1989), 51-87.

<sup>17</sup> See Papachelas Alexis, *Ο βιασμός της ελληνικής δημοκρατίας, 1967-1974* [The rape of Greek Democracy, 1967-1974] (Athens: Estia, 1997); Evanthes Hatzivassiliou, *Greece and the Cold War: Frontline state, 1952-1967* (London: Routledge, 2006).

Works that focus on Greek foreign policy and Greek-US relations in the aftermath of the Cyprus Crisis and the restoration of democracy argue emphatically that radical change occurred. Subsequent Greek governments emerged ‘independent’ from US intervention and patronage. This form of ‘independence’, it is argued, was the result of conscious efforts pursued by the Greek governments and the Greek prime minister, Constantine Karamanlis.<sup>18</sup> This interpretation is given to the single most dominant issue involving bilateral US-Greek relations during this period, the negotiations about the US and NATO bases on Greek territory.<sup>19</sup> However, scholars recognise the practical benefits that the US offered to Athens in terms of economic and military assistance. To answer this contradiction, that is, wanting independence from Washington while requesting economic aid, Svolopoulos argues that such dependence was born out of the need to modernise Greek military forces but requesting aid did not undercut Athens’ overall intention to reduce ties with Washington.<sup>20</sup> Scholars underline the Greek government’s intention to reduce its reliance on Washington while recognising the necessities that forced Greece close to the United States.<sup>21</sup> In a period of hostility with Turkey, Greece could not afford to jeopardise its military readiness by rejecting US aid in a climate of Turkish aggression in the Aegean and Cyprus.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Theodore Couloumbis, ‘A New Model of Greek-American Relations: From Dependence to Independence’, in Theodore Couloumbis and John Iatrides (eds.) *Greek American Relations, a critical review* (New York, NY: Pella, 1980), 197; Theodore A. Couloumbis, *Προβλήματα ελληνο-αμερικανικών σχέσεων: πως αντιμετωπίζεται η εξάρτηση* [*Problems in Greek-US relations: how to deal with dependence*] (Athens: Estia, 1978).

<sup>19</sup> John McDonald and Diane Bendahmane (eds.), *US Bases Overseas: Negotiations with Spain, Greece and the Philippines* (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1990); Mitsotakis, *Greek-US Bases*, 95.

<sup>20</sup> Constantine Svolopoulos, *Η Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική, 1945-1981* [Greek foreign policy, 1945-1981] (Athens: Estia, 2008, 8<sup>th</sup> edition) vol. 2, 217.

<sup>21</sup> Coufoudakis, ‘Greek Foreign Policy since 1974: Quest for Independence’, *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, vol. 6, 1988, 57.

<sup>22</sup> John Iatrides, ‘The United States and Greece in the Twentieth Century’, in Theodore Couloumbis, Theodore Kariotis and Fotini Belliou, *Greece in the Twentieth Century* (London: Frank Cass, 2005), 98.

According to the literature, the best demonstration of the new Greek approach was Karamanlis' decision to apply for full EEC membership in 1975.<sup>23</sup> The Greek application reflected the determination of the political elite to reduce the country's 'dependence on the US'.<sup>24</sup> Membership in the EEC provided necessary links between Greece and the West, a role that NATO previously filled.<sup>25</sup> The EEC therefore appeared as a partial substitute for NATO, given Greece's withdrawal from the Alliance. However, scholars have recognised that, in order to enter the Community, the country's participation in NATO was necessary.<sup>26</sup> The Greek government adopted a careful approach towards the US and the Western Alliance that aimed at serving its overreaching goal of moving closer to Europe.

Recent monographs and articles challenge these views and present a more complex picture. Academics accept earlier statements that the restoration of democracy and the Cyprus Crisis of 1974 directly affected relations between Greece and the US.<sup>27</sup> The changes resulted in the so-called multilateralism of the Greek foreign policy of the 1970s.<sup>28</sup> The Greek decision-makers strived to expand Athens' international cooperation by focusing on EEC membership, utilising détente in pursuing their own Ostpolitik, and maintaining links with NATO and the US.

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<sup>23</sup> Spyros Economides 'Karamanlis and the Europeanisation of Greek Foreign Policy' in Constantine Svolopoulos, Konstantina Botsiou, Evantis Hatzivassiliou (eds.) *Constantine Karamanlis in the Twentieth Century* (Athens: CGK Foundation, 2010), 164.

<sup>24</sup> John Iatrides, 'The US and Greece in the Twentieth Century', in Couloumbis et al. *Greece in the Twentieth Century*, 98.

<sup>25</sup> Theodor Couloumbis, 'A New Model of Greek American Relations: From Dependence to Interdependence', in Couloumbis and Iatrides (eds.), *Greek-American Relations*, 197.

<sup>26</sup> Christos Rozakis, *Τρία Χρόνια Ελληνικής Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής, 1974-1977* [Three Years of Greek Foreign Policy, 1974-1977] (Papazisis: Athens, 1978), 39.

<sup>27</sup> Sotiris Rizas, *Η Ελληνική Πολιτική μετά τον Εμφύλιο: Κοινοβουλευτισμός και δικτατορία*, [Greek Politics after the Civil War] (Athens, 2008), 491.

<sup>28</sup> Eirini Karamouzi 'Telling the Whole Story: America, the EEC and Greece, 1974-1976' in Varsori, Antonio and Migani, Guia (eds.) *Europe in the International Arena during the 1970s: entering a new world* (Brussels and New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2011), 355-374

Hence, under the guidance of Prime Minister Karamanlis Greece opted for closer relations with Western Europe in the form of Greece's participation in the EEC, as a means to secure and strengthen Greek ties with the West.<sup>29</sup> The feeling of abandonment that underpinned Greek security considerations between 1974 and 1980 generated this goal.<sup>30</sup> Studying Greek archives reveals the sense of a lone power confronting two strong foes, the Soviet Union and its satellites and Turkey. Anti-American and anti-NATO sentiments threatened to isolate Greece further from its natural allies, the United States and Europe. The Greek public viewed Greece's Western European allies generally favourably thanks to their condemnation of the Greek dictatorship.<sup>31</sup> European integration counteracted such a threat, since it placed Greece firmly in the core of Western cooperation; Greek participation in the EEC itself also aimed at acting as safeguard for Greece's security challenges.<sup>32</sup> The same goal bolstered Athens' renewed interest in strengthening relations with the Balkan States, particularly Yugoslavia.<sup>33</sup> Recent scholarship, therefore, categorically rejects the notion that the Greek governments intended to lessen their links with the United States.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Kostas Yfantis, "Τέλος Εποχής... Οι ελληνοαμερικανικές σχέσεις και ο Κωνσταντίνος Καραμανλής, 1974-1980 [End of an Era... Greek-American Relations and K. Karamanalis, 1974-1980] in Svolopoulos, Botsiou, Hatzivassiliou (eds.) *Constantine Karamanlis in the twentieth Century*, 534.

<sup>30</sup> Kostas Yfantis, 'Αναζητώντας Επιλογές: Στρατηγικές εξισορρόπησης και συστημική πολιτικότητα' [Seeking Choices: Strategies of Balancing and Systemic Conflict], in Constantine Arvanitopoulos and Marilena Korpa, 30 Χρόνια Ελληνικής Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής, 1974-2004 [30 years of Greek foreign policy, 1974-2004] (Athens: Livani, 2005), 432.

<sup>31</sup> Van Coufoudakis 'The European Economic Community and the 'Freezing' of the Greek association, 1967-1974', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Issue 16, no.2 (1978), 114-131.

<sup>32</sup> Eirini Karamouzi, *Greece's Path towards EEC Membership: The View from Brussels*, 2011, unpublished PhD Thesis LSE, 33.

<sup>33</sup> Lykourgos Kourkouvelas, 'Détente as a Strategy: Greece and the Communist World, 1974-1979', *International History Review*, Vol.35, No.5 (2013), 1053.

<sup>34</sup> Eirini Karamouzi, *Greece, the EEC and the Cold War, 1974-1979: The Second Enlargement*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 19.



The thesis concurs but also expands these views, thanks to its exclusive focus on Greek-US cooperation. While they recognise that the United States remained a central pillar of Greek foreign and security policies, the aforementioned works indicate that relations with the EEC or the Balkan cooperation were of equal importance to relations with Washington for Athens.

This thesis demonstrates that the United States remained the single most important Greek ally between 1974 and 1980. While the Greek governments embraced multilateralism in terms of foreign relations, the United States remained at the epicentre of the Greek national security. As pragmatists, the Greek conservative leaders did not hope to address the uneven balance of power between Greece and Turkey by an unformulated and unstable cooperation in the Balkans or by the sometimes-unsure prospect of participating in the EEC. These were investments for the future. To address both real and perceived challenges, Greece, a committed member of the free world, turned to the United States. Potential disappointments from the responses of certain individuals, such as Kissinger, even in powerful positions, could not undermine the memory of working with powerful presidents and administrations, such as those of Kennedy and Johnson. Moreover, key European actors, such as West Germany, France and Britain, directed Greece to the United States on issues affecting the Greek-Turkish dispute.

Finally, this thesis challenges the notions that Greek accession to the EEC was Athens' principal foreign policy success in the 1970s.<sup>35</sup> Rather, it argues that the Greek governments demonstrated greater success in securing their goals *vis-à-vis* Washington. The reason is a simple one. Diplomacy and strategy played a crucial role

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<sup>35</sup> Svolopoulos, *Greek foreign policy, 1945-1981*] (Athens: Estia, 2008) vol.2, 259.

in Athens' dealings with its powerful ally. On the contrary, as Karamouzi's detailed account shows, diplomacy in the EEC negotiations was not enough. While, the Nine agreed on the necessity of including Greece in the Community for political reasons, the Greek government had to do its homework and demonstrate progress on technical issues to secure a swift accession to the Community.<sup>36</sup> Hence, pressure tactics, Athens' best weapon in its armoury, could most effectively work toward Washington and not Brussels.

The bilateral nature of the thesis allows for a simultaneous assessment of US policy in the Eastern Mediterranean. In pursuing their policy objectives towards Greece and the broader region, as mentioned above, Ford and Carter demonstrated a remarkable similarity and concurrence. Maintaining the delicate equilibrium between Greece and Turkey was a common theme in both presidents' Eastern Mediterranean policies. Hence, this study confirms recent arguments in favour of continuity between the presidencies of Nixon, Ford, and Carter within the broader policies of détente.<sup>37</sup>

This study also address key themes reflected in the existing literature regarding the presidencies of Ford and Carter. When he came to power, Ford focused primarily on domestic politics and emphasised his intention to be remembered as the healer of the nation in the aftermath of the Watergate scandal.<sup>38</sup> Ford's relative inexperience and lack of interest in foreign matters ensured that his Secretary of State and National Security Advisor until 1975, Henry A. Kissinger, enjoyed ample influence in shaping

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<sup>36</sup> Karamouzi, *The Second Enlargement*, 126.

<sup>37</sup> Barbara Zanchetta, *The Transformation of American International Power in the 1970s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 10.

<sup>38</sup> John Robert Green, *The Presidency of Gerald R. Ford* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 193.

US foreign policy.<sup>39</sup> Kissinger's central role in US foreign policy during the summer of 1974 was reflected in his personal handling of the Cyprus Crisis. His dominant presence in handling US policy in the Eastern Mediterranean continued throughout the Ford Presidency.

Concerning the Carter administration, this thesis addresses the debate regarding Carter's handling of US foreign policy between 1977 and 1980. Carter's proclamation of a foreign policy based on moral values and human rights indicated a new approach to the Greek-Turkish dispute. Carter's effectiveness has long divided historians. His supporters point out specific accomplishments, such as the Panama Canal treaties.<sup>40</sup> His critics have charged his administration with failure on a number of policy goals, which can be attributed to a number of factors. Carter's foreign policy inexperience is primarily cited as a significant factor in his administration's failure.<sup>41</sup> The Carter administration is also charged with a lack of orientation that emanated from the president's inability to set clear goals and strategies.<sup>42</sup> Inconsistency is a third reason for Carter's confusing position on a number of foreign policy issues including the US arms embargo on Turkey.<sup>43</sup>

This thesis adopts the most recent line in historiography. This sheds a positive light on the Carter administration's international accomplishments.<sup>44</sup> Addressing the criticism directed at Carter's foreign policy team, this study concludes that Carter had

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<sup>39</sup> Jussi Hanhimaki, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 362.

<sup>40</sup> See Robert S. Strong, *Working in the World: Jimmy Carter and the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

<sup>41</sup> Gaddis Smith, *Morality, Reason and Power: American Diplomacy in the Carter Years* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1986), 245.

<sup>42</sup> Scott Kaufman, *Plans Unraveled: The Foreign Policy of the Carter Administration* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2008), 237.

<sup>43</sup> Ioannides, *Realpolitik in the Mediterranean*, 411.

<sup>44</sup> Daniel Strieff, *Jimmy Carter and the Middle East: The Politics of Presidential Diplomacy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

developed a coherent strategy to deal with Eastern Mediterranean problems. The objective in the region, though, prioritised reducing Greek-Turkish tensions and rebuilding NATO's Southern flank, rather than resolving the Cyprus problem. Any adjustments, such as the repeal of the US arms embargo on Turkey, were in response to Greek and Turkish failures or unwillingness to do their part and promote stability in the Aegean. Finally, Carter's administration witnessed Greece's return to NATO. The US actions were not of primary importance in meeting this goal. However, the US administration ensured that the Greek-Turkish dispute over the terms of Greek reintegration did not contaminate either Greek-US or US-Turkish bilateral relations. In conclusion, the thesis contributes to three main historiographical concerns: Cold War relations, Greek foreign policy, and US foreign policy during the second half of the 1970s.

### **Methodology and Sources**

This thesis' conclusions are only possible through examining Greek and US decision-making simultaneously. A bilateral approach to the study of Greek-US relations during the post war period is missing.<sup>45</sup> Hence, existing studies rely heavily on US records to infer the Greek considerations, for example.<sup>46</sup> On the contrary, this thesis presents both Greek and US considerations on issues of mutual interests. Unfortunately, the Turkish state and Prime Minister records of the period remain classified. Both the Greek and

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<sup>45</sup> See for example Mogens Pelt, *Tying Greece to the West* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanung, 2006); Miller, *Making of Modern Greece*; Hatzivassiliou, *Greece and the Cold War*. Contrary to Miller and Pelt, Hatzivassiliou consults both Greek, US and NATO archives but his focus remains only on the Greek foreign policy.

<sup>46</sup> A prime example of this approach is Sotiris Rizas, *Οι ελληνοτουρκικές σχέσεις και το Αιγαίο, 1973-1976* [The Greek-Turkish relations and the Aegean Sea, 1973-1976] (Athens: Sideris, 2006).

the US records provide detailed insights into the Turkish aims of the period, which is particularly useful. Undoubtedly, the Greek and US sources does not adequately substitute the Turkish sources. Nonetheless, the combined views of the Greek and US ambassador in Ankara and the Greek intelligence sources provide as close as possible look to the internal Turkish government considerations.

Since the focus is on government-to-government contacts, governmental records, thus, are fundamental to this study. The records of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs remain inaccessible but the archive of the Greek Prime Minister of the period, Constantine Karamanlis, provides a significant alternative. Relations with the United States affected key foreign policy questions, including Greece's role in NATO, Greece's relations with Turkey, and the Cyprus problem. The Prime Minister oversaw governmental policy personally and remained informed of all developments. The archive therefore contains many foreign policy documents. These include communications between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and various embassies, such as the Greek Embassies in Washington, Ankara, and Nicosia and the Greek Permanent Representation in NATO. These communications reveal the Greek considerations on numerous issues directly or indirectly affecting Greek-US relations. Similarly, the archive includes internal policy papers for the prime minister's information on relations with the United States, Turkey, and NATO. The Constantine Karamanlis Papers (CKP) on foreign policy issues provide an invaluable source for looking at internal Greek considerations.

An additional valuable source of information comes from the personal archive of the Greek Minister of National Defence of the period, Evangelos Averoff-Tossitza. Limited in comparison to the CKP, the Evangelos Averoff Papers detail the views of

an important minister. While predominately focusing on national defence, the Averoff papers provide significant information on security considerations regarding Greek-US and Greek-NATO relations. Published Greek sources were also consulted. Constantine Svolopoulos has published parts of the CKP including a significant commentary on the contexts surrounding the events. The Greek Foreign Ministry's publication of documents on Greece's accession to the EEC offers an additional glimpse on overlapping issues.

The available sources are broader for the United States. The focus here is placed on records from the Department of State and the National Security Council. Due to the impact of the Cyprus Crisis and Greek-US tensions, relations with Greece often reached the top level in the Ford administration. Hence, President Ford and Secretary Kissinger both closely monitored most aspects related to Greece. The records in the Ford presidential library provide an important insight into their decision-making. The recently declassified 'Kissinger-Scowcroft West Wing Office Files, 1969-1977' for the first time provide additional information regarding the handling of Cyprus Crisis between July and November 1974 as currently narrated. Online records, such as the Digital National Security Archive (DNSA), Kissinger's Transcripts, and memoranda of conversations published on-line at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library represent another easily available source. Given the sensitivity of the issues involving Greece, such as NATO defence planning and considerations for Greek-US bases negotiations, a number of records remain classified. The Karamanlis Papers provide greater information on these issues. The relevant documents have been carefully chosen due to potentially sensitive information regarding military

capabilities and structures. The thesis does not focus on technical or military details but on the purely political considerations surrounding the US bases in Greece.

For the Carter administration, sources are significantly more limited than for Ford's. The Jimmy Carter Presidential Library has declassified a number of records, particularly from NSC staff. Brzezinski's material provides important insights on the administration's approach towards Greece. The records, however, lack detailed internal information in comparison to the Ford records. The recently published volume XXI of Foreign Relations of the United States publication focusing on Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus is a valuable addition to available materials. Finally, Department of State telegrams up to 1979 fill in any gaps, such as Vance's considerations and policy objectives that originated from the Department of State and not the White House.

Personal accounts and the memoirs of the protagonists also provide important information. One of the most significant contributions to Greek foreign policy comes from the late Director General of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Angelos Vlachos.<sup>47</sup> His memoir emphasises his last days in public service during the crucial transitional period while offering an interesting perspective on the internal conflicts that occurred within the national unity government. The Greek Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the period, Dimitrios Bitsios and Georgios Rallis, also recount their experiences in handling the country's external affairs. The career diplomat Bitsios remains particularly careful in his testimony on Greek-US cooperation revealing mainly his considerations towards the US actors rather than the intricacies of the

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<sup>47</sup> Vlachos Angelos, *Αποφοίτηση 1974: 25 Ιουλίου – 17 Νοεμβρίου* [Graduation 1974: 25 July – 17 November] (Athens: Oceanida, 2001)

decision-making process.<sup>48</sup> Nonetheless, at times he reveals his personal considerations regarding the US actions, which complements the official records. Rallis emphasises the months leading to his becoming Prime Minister in 1980, following Karamanlis' election to the Presidency of the Republic, and his short period in office.<sup>49</sup> Rallis oversaw Greece's return to NATO and provides an insightful account of his party's consideration regarding this decision. Another noteworthy contribution comes from a senior Greek Ambassador, Vyron Theodoropoulos, who served in the Greek Foreign Ministry, NATO, and the EEC. In a published interview, Ambassador Theodoropoulos recounts and reveals the Greek government's considerations regarding NATO within the broader context of superpower détente.<sup>50</sup> Greek memoirs, however, are generally scarce and there is the tendency to focus on either Greek negotiations to enter the EEC or purely domestic developments,<sup>51</sup> for which the Karamanlis' governments sought credit as a significant success.

There is a significant difference on the US side. Although primary sources leave no room for doubt that relations with Greece dominated the Ford and Carter administrations, personal accounts have devoted little attention to the Eastern Mediterranean. Kissinger provides more information than most on the Cyprus Crisis and subsequent relations with Greece. However, his intention primarily lies on justifying his own actions, and shifting the blame on Athens on a number of factors that contradict the findings of this thesis, as primary sources present the events.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Dimitris Bitsios, *Πέρα από τα σύνορα, 1974-1977* [Beyond the Borders, 1974-1977] (Athens: Estia, 1983 second edition); Dimitris Bitsios, *Φύλλα από ένα ημερολόγιο* [Sheets from a Diary] (Athens: Estia, 1978)

<sup>49</sup> Georgios Rallis *Ωρες Ευθύνης* [Times of Duty] (Athens: Euroecdotiki, 1983).

<sup>50</sup> Vyron Theodoropoulos, *Διαδρομές, Ο Βύρον Θεοδωρόπουλος αφηγείται στην Ινώ Αφεντούλη* [Paths, Vyron Theodoropoulos narrates to Ino Afendouli] (Athens: Potamos, 2005), p.87

<sup>51</sup> Giannis Varvitsiotis, *Όπως τα έζησα, 1961-1981* [My Experience, 1961-1981] (Athens: Livanis, 2012).

<sup>52</sup> Kissinger, *The Years of Renewal*, 235.



The same contradiction emerges in memoirs from the Carter administration.<sup>53</sup> Carter, who spent much of his time during the 1976 campaign and after the election talking about the Cyprus problem, discusses it very little in his *White House Diary*. The former president mainly emphasises the difficulty he faced in trying to balance between the Greek and the Turkish pressures<sup>54</sup> but he does not provide any insights on his considerations regarding the Eastern Mediterranean. Similarly, Secretary Vance singles out his personally appointed counsellor to the Department of State, Mathew Nimetz.<sup>55</sup> Nimetz oversaw the administration's policy towards the Cyprus problem and served as a crucial link with the Greek government – issues that Vance entirely overlooks in his memoirs.

## Thesis Structure

This thesis is organised chronologically with each chapter covering a distinct theme in Greek-US relations. The chapters follow the emergence of new considerations and implications as well as the new ways that Athens and Washington used to deal with them. The thesis analyses the emergence, consolidation, and end of the US concept of the balanced approach as well as the Greek strategy of confrontation.

The first chapter presents the implications of the Cyprus Crisis for Greek-US relations. Starting with the governmental change of 23 July 1974 in Greece, the chapter focuses on Greek-US cooperation during the efforts to defuse the crisis and the impact of the second Turkish invasion of Cyprus. The chapter closes on following the Greek

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<sup>53</sup> See for example, Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983).

<sup>54</sup> Jimmy Carter, *White House Diary* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010), 51.

<sup>55</sup> Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 43.

general elections of November 1974 and the December referendum on the form of government. The newly elected government was able to design a comprehensive concept of foreign policy, rather simply concentrating on the Cyprus dispute. The period, thus, acts as a bridge between past expectations and new considerations amid the ongoing Cyprus crisis. It also saw the origins of the new approach that Athens and Washington would pursue in the following years. The Greek government prioritised efforts to push the United States on its side against Turkey, while the US administration emphasised a strictly balanced approach between the two.

The second chapter focuses on the new Greek strategy toward the United States. Close relations with the United States remained the principal Greek policy for containing both the Turkish and communist threats. However, Athens remained suspicious of the US stance in the event of a Turkish attack against Greece. Hence, a new strategy was also necessary to safeguard Greek sovereignty. The Greek government confronted the US administration in an attempt to push Washington closer to Greek views. The Greek involvement in the Congress-led effort and imposition of the Turkish arms embargo reflected this new strategy. The embargo could contain the Turkish military threat through limiting the readiness of Turkish military forces. On the contrary, the Ford administration opposed the embargo as threatening its balanced approach toward the Greek-Turkish dispute. Despite the White House condemnation, the embargo became a reality. Its partial repeal in October 1975 represented the maximum the US administration could hope for in a Democrat-dominated Congress. Hence, a period when US-Greek relations revolved around the battle between the White House and Capitol Hill ended.

The congressional embargo on Turkey painted the United States as pro-Greek in the eyes of the Turkish government. In response, the US administration aimed at strengthening US-Turkish relations through a new Defence Cooperation Agreement that was particularly beneficial for Ankara. Consequently, chapter three focuses on Athens' efforts to secure a similar treatment for Greece. The Greek government resorted to direct pressure tactics designed to convince Washington to grant Athens a similar agreement. A few months later, the Aegean Crisis of 1976 resulted in another round of confrontation between Athens and Washington. The Greek government expected the United States to prevent the Turkish activities in the Aegean. On the contrary, the US administration aimed at containing the crisis and preventing its escalation. The Aegean Crisis coincided with the last months of Ford administration. The Greek government concluded that Ford's Republican administration had little to offer and limited its ties before the elections.

In the first three chapters the focus is mainly placed on the Greek actions. The Greek government developed an active approach to promote its interests in the United States. However, Ford and Kissinger prioritised containing the deterioration of relations with Greece and managing the Greek-Turkish dispute. Hence, Washington adopted a largely defensive stance, responding to Athens's actions. The election of Jimmy Carter changed this approach.

As chapter four demonstrates, the Greek government welcomed the arrival of a Democrat in the White House. Carter's proclaimed sympathy for Greek views on a range of issues fuelled bilateral Greek-US relations with fresh hopes and expectations. Once installed, Carter ascribed to Kissinger's balanced approach. However, his administration also emphasised the need to progress solutions regarding Cyprus,

Greek-US relations, and US-Turkish relations. Hence, Washington pursued new initiatives in the region. While in strictly defined Greek-US relations these initiatives bore fruit, it failed to do so within the broader scope of the Eastern Mediterranean questions.

As result, the US administration reconsidered its strategy toward the Eastern Mediterranean, as chapter five argues. In March 1978, Carter sought a congressional repeal of the US arms embargo on Turkey. During the 1976 election campaign, Carter had indicated his support for the embargo. Moreover, in the previous months, Carter advocated the need for progress on Cyprus prior to granting additional aid to Turkey. This decision was the result of internal changes in Greece and Turkey. The strategy that Washington had pursued thus far was no longer viable. In the wake of the US effort to repeal the embargo, the Greek government sought to secure maximum benefits for itself. The period closed with a final US act of active involvement in Cyprus a few months later as it promoted a UN sponsored plan for solution in Cyprus.

Carter's final two years in office prioritised efforts to secure Greece's return to NATO's military structure. Chapter six presents the motives behind the eventual transition from Athens's quest for a 'special relationship' with NATO to full reintegration. While the negotiations represented an issue affecting all members of the Alliance, from 1978 onwards they became an integral part of bilateral Greek-US relations. As the Turkish government blocked terms that the Greek government accepted, Athens expected Washington to intervene actively to secure Greece's return. The international climate, however, affected the US position toward Greece and Turkey. The loss of a close ally in the Middle East and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan led to the re-evaluation of Greece and Turkey's significance for the

United States and NATO. Turkey acquired greater regional importance not just for the Eastern Mediterranean but also for the Middle East. The balanced approach therefore ended. By October 1980, Greece was a member of EEC and NATO and expected to play a role in the Balkans. Turkey, meanwhile, was poised to become a significant regional power in the near east following the loss of Iran and because of Soviet pressures in the area.

The thesis concludes that the years between 1974 and 1980 saw the emergence and collapse of a new era in Greek-US relations. The United States remained a significant asset for Greek foreign and security policy. The US support for Greece was much needed in containing the communist threat and deterring Turkish expansionism. Similarly, the successive US administration of the 1970s focused on securing relations with Greece as well as Turkey. Washington did not distinguish between the two, since both were considered pillars of the western security structure. The end of détente involved new priorities and a need for a re-evaluation of this latter point. Moreover, the shift in US policy from Europe to the Middle East in early 1980s significantly affected US-Greek relations.



## Chapter 1

### A Relationship in Transition: The 1974 Cyprus Crisis

Cooperation between the United States and Greece during the period of Greece's national unity government represents a transitional phase which acted as a bridge between old and new approaches and strategies for both states. Upon assuming power in July 1974, Greece's new political leaders turned to their closest Cold War ally, the United States, to defuse the Cyprus Crisis and prevent it from escalating to a war with Turkey. Moreover, in the aftermath of the collapse of the seven-year-long dictatorship, the crisis intensified domestic instability in Greece. Their efforts to communicate with the US Secretary of State, Henry A. Kissinger and to enlist his personal support reflect their conviction that Washington would and should assist Greece in a crisis. Kissinger did not disappoint: he made strong efforts to prevent the escalation of a crisis that endangered the stability of the Western Alliance. However, the Cyprus Crisis, which at its core was nothing more than a dispute between Greece and Turkey, posed new challenges for both the Greek and the US leadership.

The second Turkish invasion of Cyprus and the Greek withdrawal from NATO's military wing led the Ford administration to re-assess its allies' broader consideration. On 14 August 1974, the recently-formed government of Greece issued a brief press statement announcing the withdrawal of its armed forces from NATO's integrated military command. The statement made it clear that Greece intended to participate only in the political organs of the Alliance. This resembled a similar withdrawal by France in 1966 but the comparisons with De Gaulle's action stopped there. The Greek

government and public charged the Alliance with failing both to contain Turkish aggression and to secure on-going negotiations on the future of Cyprus.<sup>1</sup>

Evidently, détente enabled Greece and Turkey to prioritise national interests rather than ‘their collective interests in NATO and Western Europe’, as the Department of State noted.<sup>2</sup> This assumption raised questions about how the United States could respond to. The Ford administration, under Kissinger’s ultimate control, concluded that a strictly defined balanced approach between Greece and Turkey, which both in their views acted in accordance with their national interests, was the best and only way forward.

Similarly, the Turkish activities in Cyprus affected the broader Greek foreign and security considerations. The US response to the resumption of hostilities on 14 August 1974 did not satisfy the Greek government. But Washington’s response was better than any other one. In the following months the Greek leadership recognised that no other European power was willing to engage with Athens’ expectations about Turkey’s aggression. Finally, Moscow and Washington projected a common front regarding Greece and Turkey. Hence, the United States remained the only possible player, who could support the Greek goals. At the same time, it was clear that simply expressing Athens’ requests, as it did before the second Turkish invasion of Cyprus, would not ensure the desired result. The Greek government ought to develop a new strategy to secure US support in its dispute with Turkey. Therefore, this chapter traces the new approaches that both the Greek and US governments developed in the

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<sup>1</sup> John S. Koliopoulos and Thanos M. Veremis, *Greece: the modern sequel, from 1831 to present* (London: Hurst, 2002), 308.

<sup>2</sup> Cyprus WSAG Meeting, August 14, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (37) 8/14/74, Box 9, Kissinger-Scowcroft West Wing Office Files, 1969-1977, National Security Adviser [Hereafter Kissinger-Scowcroft], Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library [hereafter GRFPL]



aftermath of the 1974 events. Their approaches characterised the entire 1974-1980 period.

This chapter focuses on the period between July to November 1974, when the Greek-US relations revolved around managing the Cyprus Crisis. This international crisis involved the broader international community in trying to contain and prevent the escalation of tensions between Greece and Turkey. The crisis-management efforts expended by the broader international community are well beyond the scope of this thesis. This chapter examines the impact that these events had on bilateral Greek-US cooperation. To appreciate the importance of the decision for Greek-US relations fully, it is necessary to examine the events leading up to the decision and the implications arising from the Greek announcement.

The starting point is undoubtedly the formation of a new national unity government in Greece. This replaced military rule which had lasted for seven years. From 23 July 1974 onwards, the US administration dealt with new leadership in Greece, whose members Kissinger and his closest aides hardly knew.<sup>3</sup> The transitional period closed on 17 November 1974, when the Greeks went to the polls to elect a new government. Managing the Cyprus Crisis dominated the cooperation and contacts between the Greek government and the US administration until these elections. After the elections, while the Cyprus Crisis remained a key concern in Greek-US bilateral relations, Athens and Washington also engaged with broader issues in their respective national interests.

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<sup>3</sup> James Miller ‘“The Greek De Gaulle” or “Our Man in Athens”? Karamanlis and the Americans, 1954-1974,’ in Constantine Svolopoulos, Konstantina Botsiou, Evantis Hatzivassiliou (eds.), *Constantine Karamanlis in the twentieth Century* (Athens: CGK Foundation, 2010), 59.

This chapter investigates first, the cooperation between Athens and Washington in the aftermath of the regime change in Greece. It then explores the impact of Greece's partial withdrawal from NATO and how this decision affected Greek-US relations in the short term. This chapter demonstrates that despite the language of the announcement targeting the Alliance as a whole, the decision was specifically aimed at the United States. Finally, the chapter explores the Greek attitude towards the international response to the second Turkish invasion of Cyprus and the Greek withdrawal from NATO. The chapter challenges the view that Greek-US relations fundamentally altered in the aftermath of the Cyprus Crisis.<sup>4</sup> The United States remained Greece's closest ally. Nevertheless, after the general elections of November 1974 the new government was expected to reconsider and re-develop its strategies towards Washington. Past approaches were no longer viable, the relationship had to be redefined. For Greece, this new approach would, under a newly elected government in Athens the following year, develop into a cohesive strategy.

### **Greece in transition: should Washington play a role?**

In Greece, 24 July is celebrated as the day that democracy was restored and is seen as the inauguration of modern politics in Greece. In reality the transition from authoritarian rule towards civilian governance began the previous day. On 23 July 1974 it became clear that neither the military nor their puppet government could deal adequately with a crisis of their own creation.

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<sup>4</sup> Constantine Svolopoulos, *Η Ελληνική εξωτερική πολιτική, 1945-1981* [Greek foreign Policy, 1945-1981], Vol.2 (Estia: Athens, 2004, 8<sup>th</sup> edition), 206.

In 1967, Greek military colonels assumed power by overthrowing the democratic Greek government, days before the scheduled general elections.<sup>5</sup> The regime exercised power directly. Most of the central figures responsible for the coup took key governmental positions, such as prime minister, in the military administration. In 1973, following an internal revolt within the ruling group, the situation changed. While they held power, Brigadier Dimitrios Ioannides and his closest associates acted from the shadows appointing figures loyal to them to act as the government. Their downfall came as result of their own actions which triggered what became known as the 1974 Cyprus Crisis.<sup>6</sup>

On 15 July 1974, top Greek military officials set a plan in motion to intervene in the independent Republic of Cyprus; overthrow the legally elected Greek-Cypriot President of the Republic, Archbishop Makarios III, who had been in power since 1960; and install a regime loyal to them.<sup>7</sup> Their actions resulted in an open dispute, which had the potential to escalate into a war between Greece and Turkey. The reason for this was the complex nature of the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus. Following years of Greek-Cypriot guerrilla fighting against British colonial rule, Cyprus was proclaimed as a republic under the treaties of Zurich and London in 1959.<sup>8</sup> Political power was shared in the new republic between two ethnic communities, the Greek-Cypriot majority and a minority of Turkish-Cypriots.<sup>9</sup> The two communities, although they usually formed separate settlements, were not geographically divided.

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<sup>5</sup> Alexis Papachelas, *Ο βιασμός της ελληνικής δημοκρατίας: Ο αμερικανικός Παράγων, 1947-1967* [The rape of the Greek democracy: the American Factor] (Athens: Estia, 1998), 310.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986 second edn.), 199.

<sup>7</sup> Stauros Phycharis, *Τα παρασκήνια της Αλλαγής: Ιούλιος 1974* [Behind the scenes of the Change: July 1974], special edn. (Athens: To Vima, 2013), 85.

<sup>8</sup> William Mallinson, *Cyprus: A modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 21-30.

<sup>9</sup> Van Coufoudakis, *Cyprus: A Contemporary Problem in Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Modern Greek Studies, University of Minnesota, 2006), 75.

This crucial element complicated later efforts for a solution, based on the two ethnically-based communities, since population exchange would be involved. A separate treaty provided for an international guarantee that safeguarded the status of the republic. Greece, Turkey, and Britain collectively accepted the role of guarantor powers. The Treaty of Guarantee of 1960 played a central role in the 1974 crisis, since Turkey argued that it justified its invasive actions. However, unilateral actions were excluded from the Treaty as was the option of military intervention, given that the Republic of Cyprus had become a member of the United Nations.<sup>10</sup>

Since its proclamation, the Republic of Cyprus has rarely experienced political stability. Conflict between the two ethnic communities was frequent in the early years of the republic. These tensions often involved potential clashes between Athens and Ankara. In response to and to defuse the tense situations, the United States frequently intervened between Athens and Ankara to prevent a direct clash. This caused potential danger for the Alliance's stability since the US, as the leader of the Alliance, sought to restrain the parties. The events of 1964 represent a prime example of the US role in the Greek-Turkish disputes about Cyprus. During this outburst of internal instability and conflict between the two communities, unilateral Turkish intervention seemed possible. That year, President Lyndon B. Johnson warned his Turkish counterpart, in the now infamous Johnson letter, against any possible invasion of the island. The US president argued that, if Moscow retaliated against Ankara as a result of a Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the US would reconsider its obligation to protect Turkey.<sup>11</sup> Johnson's letter probably restrained the Turkish Prime Minister, İsmet İnönü, but

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<sup>10</sup> Angelos Vlachos, *Δέκα Χρόνια Κυπριακού [Ten years of the Cyprus problem]*, 2nd edition (Athens: Estia, 2003), 268.

<sup>11</sup> William L. Cleverand and Martin Bunton, *History of Modern Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013), 266.

harmed US-Turkish relations.<sup>12</sup> However, in 1974, Greek military actions on the island offered Ankara a compelling justification to launch an invasion. Following days of speculation, on 20 July, Turkish forces invaded the northern part of the island.<sup>13</sup> Washington took the view that preventing a war between Greece and Turkey was crucial.<sup>14</sup>

From the early stages of the crisis the US Department of State, including the Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, observed the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean hour after hour as events unfolded.<sup>15</sup> The 1974 Cyprus Crisis coincided with turmoil in the White House over the Watergate scandal. Coming days before Nixon's resignation, the events in Greece coincided with the transition to the Ford administration and has for long fuelled speculation regarding the inability of the United States to play an active role in the prevention and early de-escalation of the crisis.<sup>16</sup> Kissinger in his memoirs agreed with this view, arguing that he was unable to play a constructive role.<sup>17</sup> The Department of State and Kissinger monitored the crisis as closely as they could. Kissinger determined Washington's perspective to relations with Greece to a greater extent than any other secretary of state in the following years. Other US officials, who were deeply involved with efforts to mediate between the guarantor powers, included the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, Arthur A. Hartman, and the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, Joseph J. Sisco. Sisco travelled

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<sup>12</sup> Monteagle Stearns, *Entangled Allies: U.S. Policy Toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus* (New York: Council of Foreign Relations Press, 1992), 37.

<sup>13</sup> Mehmet Ali Birand, *30 sıcak gün* [in Greek *Decision Invasion*] (Athens: Floros, 1984), 124.

<sup>14</sup> Henry A. Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 219.

<sup>15</sup> Sotiris Rizas, *Οι Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες, η δικτατορία των συνταγματαρχών και το Κυπριακό ζήτημα, 1967-1974* [*The United States, the the Colonels' dictatorship and the Cyprus Question, 1967-1974*] (Athens, Patakis, 2002)

<sup>16</sup> Christos Kassimeris, *Greece and the American Embrace: Greek Foreign Policy toward Turkey, the US and the Western Alliance* (New York, NY: Tauris, 2010), 95.

<sup>17</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999), 219.

to the region and shuttled between Athens and Ankara during the early stages of the crisis.<sup>18</sup> His aims were to better facilitate dialogue between the two governments and to push both sides to accept London's invitation for trilateral negotiations.<sup>19</sup> The Department of State immediately set up a 'Cyprus Crisis Task Force' and a 'Washington Special Actions Group' to coordinate the US response.<sup>20</sup> The White House monitored day-to-day developments not only on Cyprus but also in the broader region. Facing criticism about the US administration's on-going handling of the Cyprus Crisis, on 3 August 1974 the Department of State reviewed its procedures for crises management.<sup>21</sup> Nixon's absence from Washington allowed Kissinger to strengthen his grip on US foreign policy decision-making.<sup>22</sup> It was within this context that the US administration observed the unravelling of the Greek dictatorship and the formation of a new civilian government in Greece.

Days, if not hours, following Turkey's successful operation in Cyprus, the Greek government that had acted as the façade of the military army men had virtually disappeared.<sup>23</sup> On 23 July, the main party leaders before 1967 and most senior Greek political figures arrived in the office of the 'president' of the republic, to discuss the formation of a new national unity government. The Greek generals, with the exception

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<sup>18</sup> Phycharis, *Behind the scenes*, 109-178.

<sup>19</sup> James E. Miller, *The United States and the Making of Modern Greece: History and Power: 1950-1974* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 193.

<sup>20</sup> On 15 July, 1974 the first WSAG was conveyed with Kissinger acting as chairman, see Davis, Memorandum for Secretary Kissinger, 'Minutes of the Washington Special Actions Group meeting held on July 15, 1974 to discuss Cyprus, July 16, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (3) 07/15/1974, Box 7, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL, the WSAG continued to meet regularly throughout the crisis; regarding the Task force see, Department of State, Operations Centre Cyprus Task Force, Situation Report 1, July 16 [1974], Cyprus Crisis (4) 07/16/1974, Box 7, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>21</sup> Ingersoll, Memorandum to the Secretary, August 3, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (27) 08/03/1974, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>22</sup> Jussi Hanhimäki, *The Rise and Fall of Détente: American foreign policy and the transformation of the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2013), 357.

<sup>23</sup> Angelos Vlachos, *Αποφοίτηση 1974: 25 Ιουλίου-17 Νοεμβρίου* [Graduation 1974: July 25-November 17] (Athens: Oceanida, 2001), 7.

of Ioannides, were eager to relinquish power.<sup>24</sup> Ioannides' ambiguous position only intensified the uncertainty regarding where the real power lay in the following days, as well as encouraging rumours of a potential new coup.<sup>25</sup>

When he returned to Athens from his self-imposed exile, the experienced former prime minister (1955-1963), Constantine Karamanlis signalled a new chapter in Greece's modern politics.<sup>26</sup> Following deliberations, the formation of a national unity government headed by the two prominent figures of the right and the centre political factions was eventually agreed. The conservative Karamanlis was sworn in as the head of the new government.<sup>27</sup> The centrist George Mavros, central figure of the Central Union party, became Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Evangelos Averoff-Tossitsa, the conservative Minister of National Defence, also joined the government. Political figures belonging to centre-left and right filled the positions around these three in the Greek cabinet.

Throughout these crucial developments, the Greeks invited foreign diplomats from Greece's closest allies, such as France, Britain, and West Germany, to attend the deliberations and secure their countries' recognition as the new legal government of Greece. The only diplomat mentioned by name in all accounts of the events, however, was the US ambassador in Athens, Henry Tasca. Tasca was a central figure since he could transmit Greek pleas for assistance to the United States while facilitating direct

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<sup>24</sup> Evangelos Averoff's later account of the events, in Phycharis, *Behind the scenes*, 222.

<sup>25</sup> Giannis Varvitsiotis, *Όπως τα έζησα*, 1961-1981 [As I experienced them] (Athens: Livanis, 2012), 259.

<sup>26</sup> Christopher Montague Woodhouse, *Karamanlis: The Restorer of Greek Democracy* (Oxford/New York: Clarendon Press, 1982).

<sup>27</sup> Christopher Montague Woodhouse, *The Rise and Fall of the Greek Colonels* (London: Granada, 1985), 157.

contact between Athens and Kissinger. The latter was a preoccupation of the Greek political leaders.<sup>28</sup>

Late on the evening of 23 July, while the senior figures of the Greek pre-dictatorship parties gathered for the second time that day in the office of the 'President of the Republic', Tasca joined them. Tasca received the Greek political leadership's pleas for cooperation and they insisted that only Kissinger, with whom they had already had a telephone call: 'can save the peace and give the democratic government of Greece now assuming power the kind of success they need to get going in the lengthy and difficult process of restoring democratic and representative government in Greece'.<sup>29</sup> The new government in Greece faced some grim challenges. The collapse of the dictatorship did not resolve the Cyprus Crisis. Instead, the Cyprus crisis added additional baggage to the already heavy burden of democratisation that Karamanlis and his government encountered. Following his formal assumption of power, Prime Minister Karamanlis followed the same line towards Washington by arguing in his first meeting with Tasca that, 'Greece faced serious problems indeed and he counted on the aid of its great friend, the US, during the difficult period ahead'.<sup>30</sup>

These vague requests for assistance reflect the Greek almost instinctive choice of turning to the United States for support but they were translated into specific

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<sup>28</sup> Kanellopoulos' account of the events, in Stauros Phycharis, *Τα παρασκήνια της Αλλαγής: Ιούλιος 1974 [Behind the scenes of the Change: July 1974]* (Athens: To Vima, 2013 special edition), 208.

<sup>29</sup> Tasca, tel.489 Athens to SecState, July 23, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (14) 07/23/1974, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Telcon, Mr. Connolopoulos(sic), [in document's description: Kanellopoulos)/Secretary Kissinger, July 23, 6.25p.m., *Cyprus Crisis, The Kissinger Telephone Conversations: A Verbatim Record of U.S. Diplomacy, 1969-1977* United States Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and of State United States Department. 1974. Cyprus Crisis]. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1679101867?accountid=10673>.

<sup>29</sup> Tasca, tel.4967 Athens, July 24, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (16) 7/24/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>30</sup> Tasca, tel.4967 Athens, July 24, 1974, General Subject File: Cyprus Crisis (16) 07/23/1974, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.



expectations. These specific requests reflect a Greek belief that only the US administration could deliver what the new governors of Greece needed. Regarding the Cyprus negotiations, the most pressing concern for the new Greek government emphasised the need for a short delay until the trilateral conference convened in Geneva. After the Turkish invasion of Cyprus on 20 July, Britain and the United States focused on getting Athens and Ankara to agree to the cessation of hostilities on the island and getting the negotiations going at the earliest date.<sup>31</sup> On 22 July, Greece and Turkey agreed to a ceasefire: the three delegations of foreign ministers were expected to meet in Geneva immanently.<sup>32</sup> Considering that the new national unity government had assumed power only hours before, Athens needed more time for Mavros and his team to arrive in Geneva. Both London and Ankara appeared to be unwilling to wait for Greece. To secure this important concession, Athens turned to Washington.

Kissinger immediately demonstrated his full comprehension of the Greek position. In an initial in-depth assessment of the situation in Athens after the collapse of the dictatorship, the US secretary rejected the British-generated idea that James Callaghan, the British Foreign Secretary, and Turan Güneş, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, could meet in Geneva before the Greek representative, Vice President Mavros, arrived. Kissinger, in a telephone call, with the British Ambassador in Washington, Peter Ramsbotham, strongly argued that:

Your ambassador [the UK ambassador in Athens] has told the Greeks that you are prepared to start a conference without them and that reflects U.S.

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<sup>31</sup> John Clarke, ‘“A minor disagreement within the family”’: Henry Kissinger and James Callaghan during the Cyprus Crisis of 1974’ in Catherine Hynes and Sandra Scanlon, *Reform and Renewal: Transatlantic Relations in the 1960s and 1970s* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 158.

<sup>32</sup> “Κατάπαυσις πυρός εις Κύπρον- Συνομιλῖαι εις Γενεύην” [Ceasefire in Cyprus-Talks in Geneva], *To Vima*, July 23.

support. Under no circumstance will we support a conference on Cyprus without the Greeks, and we will have no one there under such conditions. Let us separate two problems; (a) we support a conference on Cyprus with Greek representation; (b) you cannot count on our support for a conference which excludes the Greeks.<sup>33</sup>

Such an action, according to Kissinger, would only intensify the Greek suspicion about a ‘UK-Turk or U.S.-UK-Turk gang-up on Greece’, which potentially could topple the new government.<sup>34</sup> This might appear a minor issue, but for the Greek government now assuming power, gestures of candour from its partners could strengthen its domestic standing. Kissinger’s support for this aspect was indicative of his willingness to cooperate with his new Greek counterparts.

Following these initial contacts, Athens and Washington worked closely during the trilateral negotiations in Geneva. The ‘Geneva talks’, as the negotiations between Britain, Greece, and Turkey, were frequently referred to, lasted from 25 July until 13 August, hours before Turkey resumed operations in the island. These negotiations were in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 353. The Geneva talks were divided into two periods, the first lasting until 1 August and the second lasting from 8 August to 13 August.<sup>35</sup> During both periods, the United States participated as an observer, with Ambassador William B. Buffum attending during the

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<sup>33</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, July 23, 1974, 2.30 p.m., The Cyprus Crisis, Kissinger, Sisco, McCloskey, et.al., Laurie Van Hook and Edward C. Keefer (eds.) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976* (hereafter *FRUS*), volume XXX, Greece; Cyprus; Turkey, 1973-1976 (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2007), doc. 119.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> For an overview of the negotiations see Nicos Christodoulidis, *Τα σχέδια λύσης του Κυπριακού (1948-1978)* [The plans for solution of the Cyprus Problem, (1948-1978)] (Athens: Kastaniotis, 2009), 192-196.

first round and then Under Secretary Arthur A. Hartman in the second. During the talks Kissinger received reports and maintained direct contact with all the parties in Geneva as well as from their respective capitals.

The role that the Greek government foresaw for the US administration during the talks was twofold. Along with the British Foreign Secretary, the Greek Vice President expected that the US representative would mediate with the Turkish representative.<sup>36</sup> Both London and Athens frequently expressed their frustration with the Turkish position and hoped that Kissinger could exhort concessions directly from the Turkish government since the mandate of their delegation was restricted. Güneş was seen as a pragmatist but his views conflicted with Ankara's rigid attitude.<sup>37</sup>

In addition to appeals to Washington for mediation with the Turkish government, the Greek government, or more accurately a faction of the Greek government, considered that the US observers in Geneva should play an additional role relating to internal Greek differences. Karamanlis and his closest aides seemed convinced about the need for the negotiations to continue smoothly. The Greek government, despite the efforts to appear unified, remained divided at the top. Karamanlis and Mavros had different approaches and aims. Vlachos, who for a brief period served under Mavros but then was appointed to the office of prime minister, paints the Greek Foreign Minister in his memoirs as driven by party politics and ever conscious of his political capital.<sup>38</sup> He also appeared to be unwilling to move towards a conciliatory stance.

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<sup>36</sup> Dale, tel. 4915 Geneva to SecState, July 30, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (23), 7/30/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Davies, tel. 1968 Nicosia to SecState, July 29, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (22), 7/29/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Abrams, tel. 4878 Geneva to SecState, July 29, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (22), 7/29/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>37</sup> Dale, tel. 5174 Geneva to SecState, 'for the Secretary from Hartman', August 12, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (35), 8/12/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>38</sup> Vlachos, *Graduation*, 90.

Vlachos' account is hardly objective but on this point it remains in line with those found in the assessments of the US officials and observers in Geneva. Mavros was seen as politician who was prioritising his need to protect his personal standing in Greece by not yielding in his demands but instead working constructively toward a common ground with Ankara.<sup>39</sup> While Vlachos in his memoirs does not hide his low opinion of Mavros, deriving from their mutual antipathy, his portrait of the Greek Foreign Minister coincides with US reports. The US representative's telegrams regarding the day-to-day developments in Geneva argued that Mavros not only lacked the incentive to engage wholeheartedly in the process, he also frequently threatened to abandon the negotiations due to the Turkish hard line.<sup>40</sup> The rest of the Greek delegation as well as the Greek-Cypriot officials attending the process discussed their concerns about Mavros' stance with the US delegation.<sup>41</sup> Athens hoped that the US representative, while having frequent meetings with Mavros, could persuade him to stay and demonstrate a constructive attitude in the negotiations.<sup>42</sup>

The primary expectation of the Greek government throughout the period of the trilateral negotiations, however, was that Kissinger would ensure that the Turks

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<sup>39</sup> Tasca, tel. 5446 Athens to SecState, August 7, 1974, on behalf of Hartman regarding his meeting with PM Karamanlis and VP Mavros, Cyprus Crisis (30), 8/07/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Vlachos, *Graduation*, 66.

<sup>40</sup> Davies, tel. 1932 Nicosia to SecState, July 29, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (22), 7/29/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL, worth noticing Clerides attitude towards the negotiations. While he develops a direct link with Washington, he mentions that 'Mavros is reluctant to identify himself with substantial concessions to Turks which any realist would recognize must be made'; CIA, July 26, 1974, Intelligence Memorandum, Cyprus, Situation Report Number 13, Cyprus Crisis (19), 7/19/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>41</sup> Davis, tel. 2176 Nicosia to SecState, August 5, 1974, quoting Hartman, Cyprus Crisis (28), 8/05/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Abrams, tel. 4810 Geneva to SecState, quoting Buffum, July 26, 1974, Cyprus, Situation Report Number 13, Cyprus Crisis (19) 7/26/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>42</sup> Abrams, tel. 4980 Geneva, July 29, 1974, US representative's meeting with Mavros following UK's request, Cyprus Crisis (22), 7/29/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

observed the ceasefire on Cyprus.<sup>43</sup> Even though the three parties had gathered in Geneva to find a political solution, on Cyprus, the situation between the Turks and the Greek-Cypriots as well as the UN peace-keeping forces, remained fragile. There were conflicting reports daily regarding incidents that violated the ceasefire.<sup>44</sup> These were difficult to verify because of a difficulty in communications. The uncertainty intensified Greek considerations regarding Turkish intension. Athens expected that its powerful ally could ensure that Ankara would draw back its forces to maintain peace and stability. This was clearly a humanitarian request but for the Greek government avoiding fighting on the island was also important for domestic reasons. In their communications with their US counterparts, Greek officials described the impact that the resumption of fighting could have for their nascent government. The government, according to the Minister of National Defence, Averoff-Tossitza, and the Minister to the Prime Minister, George Rallis, insisted that the new regime remained weak and faced a threat to its survival from the Army.<sup>45</sup> It could not afford to appear weak by not standing up to Turkish aggression, as violence against the Greek-Cypriots would be interpreted. Tasca best explained the Greek views, summarising the climate in Athens as deriving from his frequent, if not daily, discussions with top Greek diplomats. In his report to the Department of State, Tasca emphasised that:

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<sup>43</sup> Tasca, tel. 4892 Athens to SecState, July 24, 1974, Cyprus Crisis, (16) 7/24/74 (1), Box8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Dale, tel. 4900 Geneva to SecState, July 29, 1974, Cyprus Crisis, (22) 7/29/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>44</sup> For instance: Central Intelligence Agency, Situation Report 33, July 26, 1974, Cyprus Crisis, (20) 7/27/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL Central Intelligence Agency, Situation Report 35, July 27, 1974, Cyprus Crisis, (20) 7/27/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL, reporting on Turkish military operations.

<sup>45</sup> Department of State, Cyprus Task Force, Situation Report No.22, Situation in Cyprus as of 08:00 (EDT), July 27, 1974, about situation in Athens, Cyprus Crisis (20), 7/27/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Tasca, tel. 5143 Athens, July 29, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (22), 7/29/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Tasca, tel. 5111 Athens, July 27, 1974, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, National Archives.

...the Greek Military continues to be in full control of the Greek situation. They have consented to allow a civilian government under Karamanlis to attempt to govern Greece at the present time. [...] I think we must assume that if the military leaders become convinced that, in fact, Karamanlis has nothing better to offer than the government he replaced, the alternative of a civilian government itself may be fully discredited. In that event we could see a very rapid deterioration of relations between Greece and Turkey as well as the exit of Greece from the Atlantic Alliance.<sup>46</sup>

The 'better to offer' expectation undoubtedly was progress towards a mutually acceptable solution on a diplomatic level that the military regime was unwilling or unable to offer.

To achieve the ceasefire, the Greek government insisted that Washington should use its contacts with the Turkish military and urged the Turkish colonels to adhere to the agreements and UN resolutions against violence, rather than only appealing to their Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit.<sup>47</sup> As the leader of the Alliance, the US political and military establishment had a unique ability to exercise pressure on the Turkish military which Greek relationships with Turkish diplomats and officials could not replace. The government of Greece and Turkey retained direct channels of communication throughout the period.<sup>48</sup> The situation on the island or in the trilateral negotiations did not improve via these contacts.

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<sup>46</sup> Tasca, tel. 4967 Athens to SecState, July 24, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (17), 7/24/74 (2), Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>47</sup> Tasca, tel. 5031 Athens to SecState, July 26, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (19), 7/26/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>48</sup> Kosmadopoulos, tel. 1250/354/1895 Ankara to MFA for the Prime Minister, July 27, 1974, Folder 1B, CKP, CGKF.

The US Secretary of State noted the Greek requests and attempted to extract the strongest possible commitments from the Turks. Kissinger undoubtedly concurred with the Greek view regarding the role and significance of the Turkish military. In conversation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kurt Waldheim, Kissinger discussed Ecevit's limited control over the forces stationed on Cyprus.<sup>49</sup> From the initial stages of the crisis, the US Embassy had been approaching high-ranking Turkish military officials, only to face their objections about getting involved in politics.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, the only available option for the US decision-makers remained cooperation with Ecevit. Kissinger remained in direct contact with Ecevit warning him since the early stages of the negotiations about the negative implications from the collapse of the ceasefire.<sup>51</sup>

The collapse of the formal ceasefire appeared inevitable. The second invasion of Cyprus of 14 August took place while the negotiations in Geneva between the three parties had reached a stalemate. The Turkish forces extended their area of control further to the south, which represented the formal violation of the fragile armistice. Kissinger had devoted his efforts to averting this development. He repeatedly warned Ecevit about the grave implications for US-Turkish relations and possible Soviet involvement should Ankara resume military operations. Tension on Cyprus was evidenced during the days surrounding Nixon's resignation and Gerald R. Ford's assumption of office on 9 August. The occasion of the new president's swearing in offered Kissinger an opportunity to repeat his warnings to the Turkish Prime Minister

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<sup>49</sup> Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation, July 24, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (17), 7/24/74 (2), Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>50</sup> Macomber, tel. 5805 Ankara to SecState, July 24, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (16), 7/24/74 (1), Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>51</sup> Kissinger, tel. 161223 State, July 25, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (18), 7/25/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

about the negative impact on the new president's attitude towards Turkey, should Ankara decide to resume hostilities against the Greek-Cypriots of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) only days after Ford's inauguration to the presidency.<sup>52</sup> As the negotiations in Geneva came closer to collapse, Kissinger intensified his appeals to Ecevit. The US Ambassador in Ankara, William B. Macomber Jr, was instructed to meet with the Turkish Prime Minister on 11 August and hand over a personal message from Kissinger. Reporting about his meeting with Ecevit to the Department of State, Macomber described Ecevit's reaction to Kissinger's personal message.<sup>53</sup> The message containing Kissinger's instructions about Macomber's meeting with Ecevit to the US Embassy in Ankara is missing and probably still classified. Ecevit's response indicates that it contained strong wording against military action on Cyprus. Following the second invasion of Cyprus, Kissinger reminded Ecevit that he had warned him about the implications of such an action, offering another glimpse to what his message warning contained. Under instruction, Macomber repeated Ecevit that Kissinger 'had also told you in all candor that we [the US] could not accept as justifiable the continuation of military action on Cyprus. [...] However, for the United States to play such a role, the military actions on Cyprus must be brought to an immediate halt'.<sup>54</sup>

The evidence suggests that Kissinger acted strongly to try to dissuade the Turkish government from resuming its military operations. A reasonable question is why the Greek government emerged frustrated with Washington after 14 August.

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<sup>52</sup> Kissinger, tel. 175382, August 10, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (33), 8/10/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>53</sup> Macomber, tel.5570 Ankara to SecState, August 11, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (34) 8/11/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>54</sup> Kissinger, tel. 177679 State to US Ankara, August 14, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (37) 8/14/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.



Kissinger in his first message to the Greek premier explicitly condemned the Turkish actions as ‘totally unacceptable’.<sup>55</sup> Karamanlis, in his first reaction regarding the US position, argued that the ‘US interest [in Cyprus] came too late and the US willingness to help came after the event, an event that the United States could have prevented, the Greek people and he felt betrayed [by the US administration].’<sup>56</sup> This approach explained the Greek government’s reasons for criticising the United States.<sup>57</sup> The Greek government undoubtedly expected the US administration to contain Turkey and Kissinger evidently tried to deliver on this expectation. Were the Greeks merely being unreasonable for wanting something that the western superpower could not deliver? This supposition appears to be correct. However, there were two deeper reasons for the Greek reaction. At least initially, there was genuine disappointment. Later, the Greeks continued to insist that the US had failed: this was an obvious attempt to secure US support for their views.<sup>58</sup>

Ambassador Tasca’s indiscretion regarding the dissemination of information and his personal views regarding the next steps towards a solution in Cyprus and the US role in the process intensified the Greek frustrations. Tasca criticised Kissinger’s policy towards the military regime and from March 1974 had been advocating in favour of US support for democratisation.<sup>59</sup> Miller has pointed out the troubled relationship between the ambassador and Kissinger.<sup>60</sup> Tasca developed a close relationship with the new Greek government in the aftermath of the regime change to

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<sup>55</sup> Kissinger, tel. 177680, SecState to US Athens, August 14, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (37) 8/14/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>56</sup> Karamanlis verbal comments to Ambassador Tasca, August 14, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol. 8, 90.

<sup>57</sup> Unofficial leak from the Greek government, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol. 8, 110.

<sup>58</sup> Telegram from the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, Athens, September 11, 1974, *FRUS*, vol. XXX, doc.149.

<sup>59</sup> Miller, *Modern Greece*, 174.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 196.

the extent that he even ignored the instructions of his department. One particular event exemplified this sense of working together. On 25 July, Kissinger sent Tasca guidance about what he should be saying in his discussions with the Greeks, adding that he did ‘not ask that you give the Greeks textually what follows’.<sup>61</sup> However, during a meeting with Karamanlis, Tasca left a note entitled ‘Kissinger’s thinking’ in Greek, which, according to the Greeks, reflected the US position towards the Cyprus Crisis.<sup>62</sup> This incident demonstrated Tasca’s position, which was not limited to sharing only information but also his personal views. Tasca commented in early July on what ways the British Ambassador and he envisaged the US could prevent Turkish activities. Tasca argued that Washington ought to ‘restore a convincing threat of force’ and that US forces had to ‘make it clear in military terms that violations must stop, and the convincing way of doing this is through the appropriate deployment of the U.S. Sixth fleet’.<sup>63</sup> Tasca also evidently discussed these views with Greek officials, who advocated such line of reaction.<sup>64</sup> Such comments placed the US administration in a precarious position, since, back in Washington, Kissinger appeared unwilling to take radical steps to help Greece against Turkey. Tasca, although his opinions carried special weight, was hardly alone in holding such views: European diplomats expressed similar expectations regarding the role the United States could and ought to play in preventing the escalation of tension to comply with UN resolutions.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Kissinger, tel. 161369 State, July 25, 1975, Cyprus Crisis (18) 7/25/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>62</sup> See relevant entry in Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 37; Note, Top Secret, July 26, 1974, Folder 1B, Constantine Karamanlis Papers [Hereafter CKP], Constantine G. Karamanlis Foundation [Hereafter CGKF].

<sup>63</sup> Tasca, tel. 4967, July 24, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (17) 7/24/74 (2), Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>64</sup> Vlachos, *Graduation*, 64.

<sup>65</sup> Bennett, tel. 2579 USUN to SecState, July 26, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (19) 7/26/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Callaghan discussed the possibility of further military operations in Cyprus but

In response, US diplomats stressed Washington's commitment to diplomatic efforts in order to ensure stability on Cyprus. Ambassador William Tapley Bennett, Jr. of the US Mission to the UN stated that the 'US was not about to go to war with Turkey more than the British and French were', as the suggestions for a US use of force implied.<sup>66</sup> Bennett's comment led to a second factor that ensured that Athens and Washington considered their roles differently in the negotiations: their national interests.

### **Kissinger and US policy**

US policy, as Kissinger described in a conversation with Hartman, could be summarised as strictly neutral between Greece and Turkey. Throughout the negotiations, however, Kissinger instructed the US representatives to avoid leaking details about the substance of his communications, or US diplomatic services in general, with the other parties.<sup>67</sup> Kissinger explained his choice of conducting diplomacy with Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus, stating that:

we should tell each party just what is possible with respect to the other party. We can always make adjustments of our own as needed. We must not permit any of the parties to be isolated, nor should we place ourselves in the position of appearing to support one party against the other.<sup>68</sup>

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Hartman refused to explicitly state what the US reaction would be, Dale on behalf of Hartman, tel.5163 Geneva, August 11, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (34) 8/11/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>66</sup> Bennett, tel. 2579 USUN, July 26, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (19) 7/26/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>67</sup> Kissinger, tel. 175383, August 11, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (34) 8/11/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>68</sup> Draft Memorandum of Conversation, Sec Kissinger and Ass Sec Hartman, August 3, 1974, Kissinger Transcripts, Digital National Security Archive.

This approach involved an extreme decree of secrecy. Kissinger wanted to establish a climate of confidence and provide assurances. As Macomber stated to Ecevit, sharing information could humiliate the Turks if it was made public, as a solution imposed on Turkey.<sup>69</sup> In practice, Kissinger's approach precluded Athens from receiving information about his appeals to Ankara. Days before the second invasion of Cyprus, Hartman argued that the US administration needed to share information with Athens to 'show that we don't just deal with Ankara'.<sup>70</sup> Kissinger acted similarly towards Callaghan in Geneva. His preference for dealing with each side separately meant that his actions remained in the background. The insistence of the Greek government on the need for preserving the ceasefire and its view that Washington was passively observing Turkish actions led to a strong Greek reaction. From the Greek point of view, and considering Athens' ignorance of the substance of the US-Turkish communications, the Nixon/Ford administration but primarily Kissinger himself, did nothing to contain Turkish aggression in Cyprus.

Kissinger's stance toward Athens since the regime change in Greece, as presented above, contradicts various studies that argue about his negative attitude towards the new civilian government and the democratisation process in Greece. Kissinger has been portrayed as having abandoned the Greeks and not doing enough to help stabilise the nascent regime.<sup>71</sup> Kissinger also seemed to be concerned that the left would be unleashed after the governmental change in Greece. This further

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<sup>69</sup> Macomber, tel. 6412 to SecState Ankara, August 11, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (34) 8/11/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>70</sup> Abrams, tel. 5192 Geneva to SecState, August 12, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (35) 8/12/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>71</sup> Miller, *Modern Greece*, 197.

increased his displeasure with Greek internal developments on 23-24 July.<sup>72</sup> However, in a conversation where he speculated about the threat from the left, Kissinger also appeared comfortable with the government change, stating that ‘a right-of-centre government’ was a ‘fine’ development for Washington while recognising the domestic benefits the administration would gain from dealing with a democratic government in Greece.<sup>73</sup> Reviewing the appointments to the Greek cabinet, a CIA report noted that the political orientation of the new government remained centre-right.<sup>74</sup> The Greek dictators had demonstrated some effort to follow an autonomous path in foreign policy which was not always in line with the US’s aims and interests.<sup>75</sup> The unpredictable, as the Cyprus Crisis proved, Greek dictators hardly represented Washington’s most loyal and preferable allies. Throughout the dictatorship, the Nixon administration had little to no contact with the self-exiled Karamanlis in Paris.<sup>76</sup>

Finally, Kissinger’s opinion about the ceasefire as well as the broader efforts for a solution revealed his overall approach towards Greece and Turkey. Kissinger was willing to assist with the Greek requests but he was not willing to do so at the expense of US bilateral relations with Turkey. This approach remained the same throughout the Ford administration but also during Jimmy Carter’s presidency. Washington based its policy not just on the Cyprus Crisis but also a range of other Greek-Turkish disputes

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<sup>72</sup> Sotiris Rizas, *The Rise of the Left in Southern Europe: Anglo-American Responses* (London: Pickering & Chatto), 61.

<sup>73</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Henry A. Kissinger, Joseph J. Sisco, Robert McCloskey, et.al., July 23, 1974, 2.30p.m., File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>74</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, Intelligence memorandum, Cyprus July 26, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (19) 7/26/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>75</sup> John Sakkas, ‘The Greek Dictatorship, the USA and the Arabs, 1967-1974’, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, vol. 6, no.3 (December 2004), 257.

<sup>76</sup> Konstantina Maragkou ‘Anglo-American Attitudes towards Karamanlis during the Greek Colonels’ Era, 1967-1974’ in Constantine Svolopoulos, Konstantina Botsiou, Evantis Hatzivassiliou (eds.) *Constantine Karamanlis in the twentieth Century* (Athens: CGK Foundation, 2010), 281.

while keeping a balanced approach towards both Athens and Ankara. The Greeks maintained an expectation that Washington would restrain Turkey which the Greek leaders considered as the aggressor. Their perception of a balanced approach was that the US ought to support them since Greece was the weaker party. This contradiction resulted in disagreements between Athens and Washington which was first expressed in the immediate aftermath of the second invasion of Cyprus.

### **Greece leaves NATO**

In the early hours of 14 August, news of a second wave of Turkish military operations reached Athens. The Greek government announced its decision to withdraw the Greek forces from NATO's military command later that morning. Since NATO primarily represented a military alliance for defence purposes for Greece, the action was a significant step.

In the Greek official press statement, Athens emphasised the Alliance's failure to intervene in order to secure negotiations towards a solution in Cyprus and to provide stability on the island. The action was attributed not only to NATO's stance during the invasion but also to Brussels' rejection of Greek requests for an extraordinary summit of NATO foreign ministers to discuss Cyprus negotiations after the first round of the Geneva talks ended on 30 July.<sup>77</sup> In a later account of the decision, one of Karamanlis' closest aides and Deputy Minister to the Prime Minister, Panagiotis Lambrias, stressed that the decision to leave NATO represented 'the only available option in the then circumstances' for a number of reasons but not least because it satisfied public

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<sup>77</sup> Note regarding the contacts between the Greek government and SYG Luns, Svolopoulos *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 89.

sentiment in Greece.<sup>78</sup> Vlachos' version of the events presents a more calculated decision: the possibility of leaving NATO was discussed on 13 August, before events took place on Cyprus. The former diplomat highlighted that it was in the Greek government's interest to satisfy domestic anti-American and anti-NATO opinions, particularly from the left, while putting pressure on Greece's partners.<sup>79</sup> In the aftermath of the collapse of the dictatorship, anti-Americanism ruled the day in Greek society because of Washington's ties with the previous authoritarian regime and the CIA's alleged involvement in the junta's accession to power.<sup>80</sup> Although recent scholarship has largely discredited arguments about an official US support for the coup, such views remain.<sup>81</sup> Washington's public stance during the Cyprus Crisis intensified these views.<sup>82</sup> The anti-American protests and demonstrations in Athens attracted the US administration's attention, with Kissinger commenting that they were 'unjustified by our record' in his press conference on the fatal shooting of the US Ambassador to Cyprus, Rodger P. Davis, at the US Embassy in Nicosia on 19 August, and the broader Cyprus situation.<sup>83</sup>

Other considerations, which appeared to dominate Greek thinking behind the NATO announcement, focused on the practical benefits from the withdrawal. Leaving the integrated command allowed the Greek government to immediately exercise

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<sup>78</sup> Lambrias' account regarding the withdrawal from NATO, quoted in Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 89.

<sup>79</sup> Vlachos, *Graduation*, 69.

<sup>80</sup> Thomas W. Gallant, *Modern Greece: from the war of independence to the present* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 285.

<sup>81</sup> Louis Klarevas, 'Were the Eagle and the Phoenix birds of a feather? The US and the Greek Coup of 1967,' *Diplomatic History*, vol.30, Issue 3, June 2006, 476.

<sup>82</sup> Konstantina Botsiou, "Anti-Americanism in Greece," in Brandon O'Connor (ed.), *Anti-Americanism: History, Causes, and Themes Volume 3: Comparative Perspectives* (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishing, 2007), 231.

<sup>83</sup> Secretary Kissinger's News Conference of August 19, 1974, *Department of State Bulletin LXXXI*, no.1837, September 9, 1974.

control over its available forces, including those earmarked for NATO purposes.<sup>84</sup> On numerous occasions over the following years, particularly during the efforts to secure a formal relationship reflecting the goal of participating only on the political side of the Alliance, Karamanlis emphasised that withdrawal from NATO represented Greece's only alternative to war with Turkey.<sup>85</sup> Despite his statements, the Greek cabinet frequently discussed the possibility of war with Turkey, a much stronger militarily power.<sup>86</sup> Karamanlis's argument therefore appeared to be a valid consideration. The Greek decision to withdraw from NATO was based on multiple political considerations. In terms of foreign policy, it aimed at placing the Alliance under pressure to act on Athens' side. The United States occupied a significant place within this context.

In their direct talks with US officials, the Greek leaders, particularly Karamanlis, expressed the 'disappointment they felt from the US and western stance' during the Cyprus Crisis as one of the factors causing them to leave the Alliance.<sup>87</sup> The Greek officials also rejected any views that the decision was reversible. Instead, a number of high-ranking officials questioned the future of US military bases in Greece in the aftermath of the withdrawal from NATO.<sup>88</sup> Greek governments in the 1950s and 1960s had granted the US the ability to establish and operate military facilities under bilateral

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<sup>84</sup> Ioannis Valinakis, *Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική, 1949-1988* [Introduction to Greek foreign policy, 1949-1988] (Athens: Paratiritis, 2003, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.), 218.

<sup>85</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'President's [Carter] Meeting with Prime Minister Caramanlis [sic]', London, May 10, 1977, David Zierler, Adam M. Howard (eds.) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980* [hereafter *FRUS*], vol. XXI, Greece; Cyprus; Turkey, (Washington, Government Printing Office: 2014), doc.16 doc. 166.

<sup>86</sup> Ministry of National Defence, brief memorandum of conversation regarding the abilities of the Greek forces, Participants: Prime Minister Karamanlis, Minister of National Defence Averoff, et.al. August, 25, 1974, Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>87</sup> CIA's assessment repeating this exact views, CIA, Report Cyprus, August 14, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (37) 8/14/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>88</sup> Tasca, tel. 5693 US Athens to SecState, August, 14, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (37) 8/14/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; CIA Intelligence Memorandum, August 14, 1974 Cyprus Crisis (37) 8/14/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.



agreements. Greece's withdrawal from NATO did not automatically affect these agreements. Thus, similar statements should recognise the Greek government's efforts to persuade the United States about the sincerity of its decision.

### **The impact on Washington**

There is additional evidence that at least partially the Greek announcement targeted Washington in particular. Following the 14 August decision, the Greek embassy emphasised the domestic reactions against Kissinger's handling of the crisis. The Greek Embassy in Washington, especially after the arrival of a new Ambassador, Menelaos Alexandrakis, observed and assessed the deteriorating relations between Athens and Washington. The Greek diplomatic services focused on Congress, particularly Congressmen of Greek decent as the Greek ambassador noted, taking the lead in criticising Kissinger's ability to guide US foreign policy successfully.<sup>89</sup> Congress and the House Committee on International Relations grilled Kissinger and his undersecretary, Hartman, about their actions and policies in the Cyprus Crisis.<sup>90</sup> The climate, at least in accordance with the Greek information about the closed doors appearances, was strongly critical about the US's top diplomat. Congressional involvement was accompanied by calls for imposing an arms embargo on Turkey. This option went against the administration's policy of balance. The Greek embassy in Washington also noted that the broad criticism and condemnation of Kissinger's policies in response to the Cyprus crisis and the Eastern Mediterranean developments in general had eroded his standing. The best proof of this, according to the Greek

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<sup>89</sup> Nomikos, tel.1230/274[extremely unclear], Washington to MFA, August 16, 1974, Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>90</sup> Nomikos, tel. tel.Φ.125/462/1279, Washington to MFA, August 23, 1974, Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF; Nomikos, tel.1230/1257, Washington to MFA, August 21, 1974, Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF.

diplomats, was President Ford's supportive references to Kissinger in his September 1974 United Nations speech. Ford stressed that, 'It should be emphatically understood that the Secretary of State has my full support and the unquestioned backing of the American people', which he repeated with slightly different wording.<sup>91</sup> The Greek interpretation argued that Ford offered his support publicly because:

[...] Kissinger is considered as the only one responsible for the policy towards the current crisis in the alliance, consequently there has been an increasing criticism against him not only in the media but also in Congress, where members utilise his unfortunate handling of the Cyprus problem in order to push forward their willingness to remove him from office.<sup>92</sup>

The Greek reading of the impact of Athens' decision to withdraw from the Alliance and the prolonged Cyprus crisis emphasised Kissinger's diminished prestige. The Greeks considered their policy had been successful since 'it surprised the US government leading to comprehension and concern about foreign policy and defence issues'.<sup>93</sup> Even if securing Washington's involvement was not the primary aim of the withdrawal, the result led the Greek government to contemplate the impact its stance had on US domestic politics.

Domestic criticism for his actions and a desire to secure Greece's position in the alliance led Kissinger to alter his approach progressively by demonstrating to Athens a genuine understanding of the Greek position. The first step he took to move closer

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<sup>91</sup> Gerald R. Ford, 'Address to the 29th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations' (September 18, 1974). Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=4718>.

<sup>92</sup> Nomikos, tel.1230/275, Washington to MFA, August, 16, 1974, Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

to the Greek government was related to the resumption of negotiations regarding Cyprus. In the immediate aftermath of the second invasion, Kissinger had insisted on the need for Greece and Turkey to begin negotiations immediately.<sup>94</sup> Karamanlis explicitly rejected this suggestion, at least until a ceasefire could be guaranteed and Turkey had demonstrated some good-will actions, such as evacuation of their forces from the city of Famagusta, which is located near the demilitarised zone in the east.<sup>95</sup> Despite the Greek rebuff, Kissinger seemed committed to starting negotiations as means of preventing any further internationalisation of the crisis. In securing this goal, Kissinger contemplated working with the Europeans to persuade Athens to participate in the negotiations.<sup>96</sup> By late September, Kissinger evidently abandoned this aim and accepted Greek assessments of the situation. Following consultations with the Greek leaders, and particularly after Mavros visited New York in September, Kissinger accepted that meaningful talks would have to wait until after the Greek general elections.<sup>97</sup> In a discussion with Ford, Kissinger presented the agreement for delaying negotiations regarding Cyprus until after Greek elections. This was a significant concession to the Greek leadership, according to later conversation between President Ford and his secretary of state.<sup>98</sup>

The US Department of State then emphasised actions aiming at confidence building with Athens. Washington initially developed the approach around personal

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<sup>94</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'The Secretary's meeting with the Cyprus Group', August 24, 1975[sic but date of compilation 8/26/1974], Kissinger transcripts

<sup>95</sup> Karamanlis message to Secretary Kissinger, August 16, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 97.

<sup>96</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, The President, Secretary Kissinger, et.al. August 24, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>97</sup> Memorandum of Conversation 'Secretary's meeting with Foreign Minister George Mavros', September 30, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line

<sup>98</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, October 24, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

contacts with the Greek leadership. Washington acted quickly after 14 August to issue Kissinger's invitation to the Greek Foreign Minister and President Ford's to the Greek Prime Minister to visit Washington for direct talks. Karamanlis rejected both invitations citing the need for him to stay in Athens but also mentioning Kissinger's previous unwillingness to meet with Mavros in early August. In any event, the invitations came too late. However, Mavros's address to the UN General Assembly meeting in September 1974, offered the opportunity for him to have a number of bilateral meetings with Kissinger. In New York, in a tense meeting, Kissinger emphasised his government's support for the national unity government and stressed Washington's interest in Mavros and Karamanlis succeeding in the forthcoming elections.<sup>99</sup> Kissinger argued that he understood the need for the Greek government to court anti-Americanism at least until the elections. He twice said to the Greek Vice President: 'It is not in your interests to have the United States as the villain. I understand what you have to do, but if anti-Americanism becomes the organizing [sic] principle of Greek policy, Papandreou will be the winner. [...] We cannot be the villain in Greek politics. Temporarily is O.K., because we want you to win the election'.<sup>100</sup> Rather than being merely rhetoric to please his Greek counterpart, Kissinger recognised the need for anti-American statements from Athens but he considered them only to be necessary for the short term.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Memorandum of Conversation 'Secretary's meeting with Foreign Minister George Mavros', September 29, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>100</sup> Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation 'Secretary's meeting with Foreign Minister George Mavros', September 24, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>101</sup> Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation, 'Cyprus', Kissinger, Sisco, Hartman, et.al., August 17, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

Kissinger did not abandon his idea for close contact with Karamanlis. Consequently, in early September 1974, he approached the Greek government suggesting the need to establish a direct channel of communication via a special emissary, namely Ambassador William R. Tyler.<sup>102</sup> Once Karamanlis accepted the invitation in principle, Athens and Washington worked closely to coordinate the visit's details, which included the need for absolute secrecy from the public. The mission focused on facilitating a direct link between the two sides, which otherwise could not be achieved, and the open exchange of views based on confidence. It was a trust-building effort, a demonstration in practice that the US Department of State was committed to the Greek requests. Kissinger personally placed great emphasis in ensuring Karamanlis' request for absolute secrecy. The mission was carried out almost completely in secret and has rarely been mentioned, if at all, in the secondary literature. Tyler arrived in Athens in early September and met with Prime Minister Karamanlis.<sup>103</sup>

Finally, Kissinger opted for greater transparency in his involvement with both Athens and Ankara. The best expression of this approach, however, what US Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger described as the honest broker,<sup>104</sup> took place when the three ministers met at the Brussels NATO summit in December 1974. Following the Greek elections, the new Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dimitrios Bitsios, was at last in a position to discuss details regarding Athens' view of the ways forward

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<sup>102</sup> Kissinger, tel. 192485 State to US Greece, September 1, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (55), 9/01/74, Box 9, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Tasca, tel.6325 Athens to SecState, September 2, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (56) 9/1/74, Box 9, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>103</sup> Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, Athens, September 9, 1974, 'Cyprus: First Caramanlis-Tyler Meeting', *FRUS*, vol. XXX, doc.147.

<sup>104</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Henry A. Kissinger, James R. Schlesinger and Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, August 30, 1974, File scanned from the National Security Affairs Memoranda of Conversation Collection at the GRFPL.

and the next steps for the Cyprus negotiations. It is significant that in his report to the Greek Prime Minister, Bitsios accentuated his impression of Kissinger's honesty in conveying the Greek and Turkish views.<sup>105</sup>

Kissinger's actions demonstrated his willingness to cooperate with the Greek government to overcome a difficult period in Greek-US relations. It is unclear what impact and impression that these moves had on the Greek attitude towards the Ford administration. However, another element played a crucial role in the Greek strategy toward Washington in the aftermath of the 14 August developments. This was the Greek interpretation of the positions of two other international actors, namely the European powers and the Soviet Union. The general conclusion in Athens was that no one was willing to condemn Turkish aggression explicitly and side openly with Greece.

### **Alternative Options?**

The partial withdrawal of Greece from NATO was a watershed development in the country's relations with the international community, and the United States in particular. The Greek emphasis on closer cooperation with Western Europe reinforced these relationships. On 22 August, days after its withdrawal from the Alliance, the Greek government requested that the European Economic Community 'unfreeze' the 1961 Association Agreement and funds withheld until 1974. Less than a year later Athens formally applied for full EEC membership.<sup>106</sup> Since, the Europeans did not

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<sup>105</sup> Note, (written in first person singular, i.e. Bitsios), December 11, 1974, Folder 3B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>106</sup> Karamanlis to G. FitzGerald, June 12, 1974, Fotini Tomai (ed.), *Η Συμμετοχή της Ελλάδας στην πορεία προς την ευρωπαϊκή ολοκλήρωση* [Greece's participation in the European Integration process], Vol.2: Από το πάγωμα της συμφωνίας σύνδεσης στην ένταξη στις ευρωπαϊκές κοινότητες, (1968-1981) [From the 'freezing' of the Association Agreement to the accession to the European

want to be seen as an alternative to NATO, however, EEC membership became a second pillar in Greek foreign and security strategies.<sup>107</sup> In the following years the Greek government also focused on closer cooperation with the Balkan communist states.<sup>108</sup> These moves, which also promoted close relationships with the United States and NATO, became known as the Greek multilateral foreign policy in 1970s.<sup>109</sup> However, there was another element in the European response to the Cyprus Crisis in the summer of 1974 which had an immediate effect on the Greek approach. The collective European response as well as the individual main European powers that the Greeks looked to for support, such as Britain, France, and West Germany, made it clear to Athens that none of them was willing to follow Greece's line regarding the Greek-Turkish dispute. The European NATO members were no more willing than Washington to condemn the Turkish actions in Cyprus or offer something more than their sympathy to Athens.

In the immediate aftermath of the second large-scale invasion of Cyprus, the Greek government turned to the British to find a way to prevent further Turkish advances. On 17 August, the Greek government officially requested British air-cover for the naval transportation of a division of the Greek army to Cyprus. Prime Minister Harold Wilson denied this request.<sup>110</sup> Greek disappointment with the British government continued in early 1975: on 15 January, London announced its decision to allow Turkish-Cypriots, who had found refuge in the West British Base, to move to

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Communities] [henceforth: Greece and European Integration] (Athens: Foreign Ministry and Papazisis, 2006), doc.22.

<sup>107</sup> Sotiris Rizas, 'Atlanticism and Europeanism in Greek Foreign and Security Policy in the 1970s', *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 8, No.1 (March 2008), 54.

<sup>108</sup> Kourkouvelas Lykourgos, 'Détente as a Strategy: Greece and the Communist World, 1974-9', *The International History Review*, Vol.35, No.5 (2013), 1057

<sup>109</sup> Eirini Karamouzi, *Greece, the EEC and the Cold War, 1974-1979: The Second enlargement* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 19.

<sup>110</sup> Wilson message to Karamanlis, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 99.

the northern, Turkish-controlled part of Cyprus. The Greek government condemned this decision as contributing towards the division of Cyprus since it ruled out any future exchange of population across the island.<sup>111</sup>

The collective European response also concerned the Greek government. The French government, holding the rotating presidency of the European Council, issued a *démarche* to both Athens and Ankara on behalf of the European Economic Community.<sup>112</sup> The two *démarches* were similar in context but the Greek ambassador who discussed the issue with President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing said they would not restrain Turkish aggression. The French President agreed with the Greek ambassador's views and even implied the possibility of putting some form of economic pressure on Turkey.<sup>113</sup> But by early September, when the Greek Vice President visited Paris, the position of the French government had not changed.<sup>114</sup> The French Foreign Minister, Jean Sauvagnargues argued that the Community had limited means for getting involved in a process towards a Cyprus solution. The French official further noted that the Community was not planning an intervention between Greece and Turkey, at least until 'the involved parties' asked Brussels to do so.<sup>115</sup> European neutrality in Paris was obvious. The former French Prime Minister, Michel Debré, being out of office had the ability to express his views more freely than the French officials. Hence, he underlined that the Community in general followed Washington's lead, rather providing an

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<sup>111</sup> Karamanlis's press statement, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 294.

<sup>112</sup> Andrew Mango, 'Introduction: Turkish Foreign Policy' in Ahmet Evin and Geoffrey Denton (eds.), *Turkey and the European Community* (Oplanden: Leskey u. Budrich, 1990), 98.

<sup>113</sup> Stathatos, Note for the prime minister, August 14, 1974, Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>114</sup> Mavros, Foreign Minister, to Karamanlis, Prime Minister, Paris, September 5, 1974, Greece and European Integration, doc.17.

<sup>115</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Note for the Prime Minister regarding Vice President Mavros' meetings in his visit to Paris (5-6 September 1974) and Bonn (9-10 September 1974), Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF.



alternative approach.<sup>116</sup> Karamanlis had worked with Debré during his first premiership in late 1950s and probably valued his views.<sup>117</sup>

Bonn, Mavros' next stop in his September European tour, made even clearer that the Europeans were not prepared to distance themselves from Washington's approach. During his meeting with Mavros on 9 September 1974, West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt explicitly argued that only the United States could play a constructive role in the Cyprus Crisis.<sup>118</sup> The Greeks concluded following the talks in Bonn, that the only positive element in the West German position was their willingness to exercise pressure on Turkey to demonstrate a concessionary stance but not 'substantial' pressure. This was not further explained. A negative factor in the Greek assessment of West German intentions emphasised Bonn's instance on 'treating Greece and Turkey in a similar manner, despite the latter's violations'.<sup>119</sup>

The responses to the Greek requests in Paris and Bonn were the result of a coordinated effort with Washington. Kissinger was concerned about the possibility that Greek actions would create tensions within the Alliance. He impressed upon his European counterparts the need to maintain a common front towards the Greek government and to avoid any attempts to exploit the Greek government's anti-American sentiments to strengthen their own bilateral relations.<sup>120</sup> In his communication with the West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher,

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<sup>116</sup> Kavalieratos, Letter F4331.4/12/232, August 18, 1974, Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>117</sup> Evathis Hatzivassiliou, *Greece and the Cold War: Frontline State, 1952-1967* (Routledge: London, 2006), 118.

<sup>118</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Note for the Prime Minister regarding Vice President Mavros' meetings in Paris (5-6 September 1974) and Bonn (9-10 September 1974), Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, August 24, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

Kissinger was even more explicit regarding Washington's expectations of its European allies:

I am further disturbed by the encouragement being given by the Greek authorities to a growth in anti-Americanism and anti-NATO feelings. This can only lead to a strengthening of leftist forces in Greece who will not have the same interests in keeping Greece firmly in the Western camp. I am equally concerned that efforts by our European friends to engage in entirely laudable efforts to support the Karamanlis government may be misunderstood by that government as evidence of European support for Karamanlis as counterweight to American support for Turkey. The end result will be a further polarisation of the situation and strengthening within Greece of the extreme left. [...] we welcome moves by our European friends to strengthen their links with Greece and we hope that they will take similar steps to build their ties with the government of Turkey as well. But we hope that such efforts will be accompanied by the expression of a strong cautionary word to the Greek government that they do not believe it is in the interest of the Greek government to encourage anti-American sentiment or any further moves to withdraw from NATO.<sup>121</sup>

Ludlow cites Kissinger's message to Genscher, and the lack of a similar one to his French counterpart, as evidence of closer cooperation between the United States and West Germany, as well as Britain, during the early stages of the Ford presidency. Based on this assessment, Ludlow asserts that France was 'excluded' from what he

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<sup>121</sup> Kissinger, tel. 186668 State to US Bonn, August 24, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (47), 8/24/74, Box 9, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

describes as ‘a pattern of growing consultation and discussion’ among Washington, Bonn, London and Paris, which developed over the following years.<sup>122</sup> The Cyprus crisis is not a suitable case-study for overreaching conclusions regarding transatlantic cooperation. A number of records are still classified or missing. There is sporadic evidence of contacts between Paris and Washington. For instance, during the immediate hours after the second Turkish invasion, Jean Sauvagnargues, the French foreign minister, and Kissinger held a conversation over the phone discussing the text of the French-sponsored UN resolution in response to the collapse of the ceasefire in Cyprus. During the call, the French minister appeared eager to secure Kissinger’s support, who promised to carefully consider the advance copy of the text.<sup>123</sup> Tension between the two capitals, as Ludlow attests, existed. While Kissinger collectively warned the Europeans against capitalising on anti-American sentiments in Greece, he was mainly suspicious of the French government. Briefing Ford on Cyprus, the US secretary of state argued that while it was important to keep Greece in the West: ‘It must not be the French being scavengers riding on an anti-American wave in Greece. I hope the French will cooperate in keeping it [the Cyprus crisis] out of the Security Council’.<sup>124</sup> This was a dominant concern which both Ford and Kissinger raised in respective meetings with the French ambassador to Washington, Jacques Kosciusko-Moritzet.<sup>125</sup> Similar to the advice given to Genscher, Washington urged Paris to

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122 N. Piers Ludlow ‘The Real Years of Europe? U.S.-West European Relations during the Ford Administration’ *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol.15, No.3, Summer 2013, 148.

<sup>123</sup> Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, August 15, 1975, DNSA Collection: Kissinger telephone conversations, 1969-1977, available on-line.

<sup>124</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Ford, Kissinger, August 24, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line

<sup>125</sup> Kissinger, tel. 86675 State to American Embassy Paris, August 24, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (47), 8/24/74, Box 9, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL; Memorandum of Conversation, Ford, Kissinger, Kosciusko-Moritzet, August 24, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

safeguard relations with Turkey too. The contacts continued the following months, with Ford meeting the French Foreign Minister in the margins of the annual UN General Assembly opening.<sup>126</sup>

The Greek government was unaware of these behind-the-scenes transatlantic communications. Moreover, any insignificant differences between Washington and its European allies matter little to Athens. Overall, the Greek government concluded that the Europeans' sympathetic rhetoric was accompanied by a neutral stance between Greece and Turkey in regards to the Cyprus crisis. What concerned the Greeks was that the Europeans' stance could not but indicate their stance in the wider and more substantive Greek-Turkish bilateral differences. Hence, the European powers, either collectively or on an individual basis, could not be considered as an alternative to the United States.

### **Greece and the Soviet Reaction**

The Greek government also considered the Soviet Union's stance.<sup>127</sup> There were two elements related to the role of the Soviet Union from the Greek perspective. Since the eruption of the crisis, Moscow avoided a direct condemnation of the Turkish actions.<sup>128</sup> Throughout the crisis, the Greek government remained convinced that Moscow's intention was to keep the crisis alive since it served as a distraction for the Alliance. On 1 January 1975, the Greek foreign ministry which was assessing the Soviet role in

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<sup>126</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Ford, Kissinger, and Foreign Minister Sauvagnargues, September 28, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>127</sup> Fahir, Armaoglu '1974 Cyprus Crisis and the Soviets' *Foreign Policy* vol.4, no.2-3(1975), 178-183, offers a contemporary to the events assessment of Moscow's view.

<sup>128</sup> Sotiris Rizas, *Τα Βαλκάνια και η Ελλάδα σε Μετάβαση: Από τον Ψυχρό Πόλεμο στην Ύφεση, 1960-1974* [The Balkans and Greece in transition: from Cold War to *détente*, 1960-1974] (Athens: Sideris, 2006), 199.

the crisis noted that ‘there is credible information that Moscow encouraged Turkey’s action.[...] There has also been a reversal in USSR’s stance in our favour, but not to the extent that it would endanger its relations with Turkey’.<sup>129</sup> As the Greek government observed, the Soviet Union’s response to the second invasion of Cyprus was to avoid openly condemning Turkey, opting instead for a vague reference to the need of stability. While this was a consistent Greek assessment of Moscow’s position, the Greek government, during the summer of 1974, also considered the option of approaching Moscow, or more accurately of appearing to accept a Soviet role willingly.

According to Greek calculations, assenting to a Soviet proposal for a solution would persuade the US administration to expedite negotiations by persuading Turkey to demonstrate concessions.<sup>130</sup> Both before and after the 14 August developments, the Greek government intensified its contacts with the Soviet Union. On 8 August, Karamanlis received the Soviet Ambassador for the first time since the collapse of the junta. The atmosphere in the meeting was tense. Karamanlis alleged Moscow’s displeasure with the return to parliamentary democracy in Greece. He also termed the Soviet response to the Turkish invasion of Cyprus as ‘vague and conflicting at times’.<sup>131</sup> The meeting, though, was significant in terms of public relations. Amid the Geneva negotiations and the Soviet Union’s effort to internationalise the dispute, the Greek leader discussed directly with Moscow.

Following the second invasion of Cyprus, the Greek government appeared more receptive of the Soviet interference. On 22 August Moscow unravelled another plan,

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<sup>129</sup> MFA, Note, January, 1, 1975, Folder 4B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>130</sup> MFA, Note about ‘Geneva I (25-30 July 1974)’, October 16, 1976, Folder 1B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>131</sup> Makrantonatos, Note regarding the Prime Minister’s meeting with the Soviet Ambassador, August 8, 1974, Folder 1B, CKP, CGKF.

which in practice provided a greater role for Moscow since it called for the direct involvement of the UN Security Council.<sup>132</sup> In response, the Greek government publicly announced that in principle agreed with Moscow's plan, and the Greek foreign minister welcomed the Soviet initiative.<sup>133</sup>

The Greek communications with the Soviet Union prompted Washington's reaction. The White House realised Greece's intention to use the Soviets as 'blackmail' to side with the Greek positions.<sup>134</sup> In response, Kissinger warned Karamanlis about the implications of the Soviet interference.<sup>135</sup> Karamanlis reacted strongly to Kissinger's letter, underlining that:

he "does not need counsel"- that for 30 years he has been the most firm anti-communist of all political figures in Western Europe. [...] He has been consistently pro-US [...] However, "now instead of helping Karamanlis your are pushing him and his people to the Russians". [...] He does not like the idea of USSR meddling in the area. However, he asked how is he in a position to reject any proposal coming from outside interested parties if 'we receive no help from our Allies?'<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> The full text of the Soviet announcement detailing Moscow's plan for future negotiations, August 22, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 116-7.

<sup>133</sup> Press statement, Greek response to the Soviet Proposal, August 26, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 119.

<sup>134</sup> The White House, Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger Lt. General Scowcroft, August 24, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line

<sup>135</sup> Kissinger letter to Karamanlis, August 25, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 131.

<sup>136</sup> Tasca, tel. 6069 Athens to SecState, August 25, Cyprus Crisis, (48) 8/25/74, Box 9, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

The Greek contacts with Moscow continued with the Greek representatives welcoming the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister in Athens the following month.<sup>137</sup> The United States trusted Karamanlis to maintain a pro-US attitude.<sup>138</sup> The Greek statements and posture toward Moscow, though, complicated the US response to the Crisis. The Greek government's acceptance of the Soviet plan is seen as a failure of *détente* since Kissinger was unable to use his direct channel to Moscow to dissuade any Soviet response.<sup>139</sup> Despite a Soviet effort to capitalise on the crisis, Washington remained determined to maintain *détente* while preventing any Soviet meddling in an inter-Alliance affair. Indicative of the US approach to the Soviet Union is Kissinger's guidance for Ambassador Buffum, the US representative in the first round of talks in Geneva, which instructed him that: 'you should treat the Soviet observer in a manner friendly, tactful, seemingly cooperative but aloof. You should keep him at arm's length and essentially a lap behind the events'.<sup>140</sup> Kissinger's effort to limit Soviet involvement emphasised the need for all the parties involved in the crisis, including the Greek-Cypriots, to reject any formal Soviet role, rather than Washington openly preventing the Soviet involvement.<sup>141</sup>

In addition to the superpower's approach towards *détente* in their relations, another element weighed heavily in Greek decision-making. This was the Greek interpretation of the common approach between Washington and Moscow. The Greek

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<sup>137</sup> Memorandum of Conversation between the Vice President and Foreign Minister, Mavros, and the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Ilitchev, September 15, 1974, Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>138</sup> Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency, August 29, 1974, 'Athens Frustration with the US and the prospects for the Greek Left', *FRUS*, vol. XXX, doc.22.

<sup>139</sup> Effie Pedaliu "'A Sea of Confusion": The Mediterranean and Détente, 1969-1974" *Diplomatic History* 33:4 (September 2009), 748.

<sup>140</sup> Kissinger, tel.163995 State to US Geneva, July 28, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (21) 7/28/74, Box 8, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

<sup>141</sup> Kissinger, tel. 180087(extremely unclear tel.no.) State to US Nicosia, August 24, 1974, Cyprus Crisis (47) 8/24/74, Box 9, Kissinger-Scowcroft, GRFPL.

government focused on Kissinger's visit in Moscow and the Vladivostok summit on Arms Control on November 1974 noting the joint US-Soviet Communiqué that crafted a balanced approach calling for a 'just settlement' in accordance with the UN resolutions.<sup>142</sup> Following conversations with the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, the Greek Ambassador in Moscow voiced his concerns about the Soviet stance. The ambassador pointed out that the Soviet officials implied support for the US approach towards the crisis which, according to the ambassador, 'could reveal a common Soviet-American understanding regarding Cyprus, negative for our aims'. The Greek Ambassador also noted the paradox that the Soviets 'while trying to get involved in the settlement of the Middle East, in the case of Cyprus they adopt the same approach with the 9 [EEC countries], who express their sympathy to us [Athens] but they point [our request] to Washington'.<sup>143</sup> In his discussion with the US ambassador, he also argued in favour of the existence of common ground between the superpowers.<sup>144</sup> The Greek ambassador's views reveal that the common European perpetual concern with *détente* continued and questioned whether the superpowers were willing to sacrifice their alliance interests to ease tensions. The Greeks were in fact reasonably suspicious of the common front presented in all corners, which precluded them from trying to play the superpowers against each other. In bilateral discussions, Kissinger and the Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko agreed on a balanced approach to Greece and Turkey as the best way to encourage their efforts towards a solution.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Office of the White House Press Secretary (Vladivostok-USSR), November 24, 1974, scanned from the White House Press Release Unit (Box 4B - Nov. 23-26, 1974) at the GRFPL, available online.

<sup>143</sup> Dimitropoulos, tel.39.1176 Moscow to MFA, November 28, 1974 Folder 3B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>144</sup> Stoforopoulos, tel.39.1181, Moscow to MFA, November 29, 1974, Folder 3B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>145</sup> Memorandum of Conversation 'Salt II, Cyprus' The President, General Secretary Brezhnev et al., November 24, 1974, scanned from the Kissinger Reports on USSR, China, and Middle East Discussions (Box 1 - Nov. 23-24, 1974 - Vladivostok Summit (2)) at the GRFPL.



## Turning Back to Washington

It became clear to Athens that Washington was the only actor that could mediate between Greece and Turkey. By late 1974, the exiled President of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios, was arguing to the Greek government that Washington was the primary player in the Cyprus solution. Makarios, who participated in person in or at least kept informed about meeting where Athens-Nicosia coordinated their approach to the Cyprus negotiations, argued that 'Washington holds the key of Cyprus Solution', as Bitsios conveyed his words.<sup>146</sup> Moreover, while all international players were pointing to the US administration, a supporter of Greek interests emerged in Washington. In parallel with its approaches to the European powers, the Greek government remained fully briefed about the Congressional upheaval in the US and advocated support for Greece on Capitol Hill. Furthermore, the Greek government noted the efforts of a group of congressmen to impose an arms embargo on Turkey.<sup>147</sup> Instead of attempting to persuade other powers to support Greek positions regarding Turkey, the Greek government concluded that working with the US Congress offered better opportunities. By doing so, Athens could potentially influence the US administration's approach towards both Athens and Ankara. Until the November elections, though, the Greek government seemed unable to capitalise on this opportunity.

After the elections and after the referendum of December 1974 regarding the form of the republic, the Greek government developed a more cohesive foreign policy which focused on deterring the Turkish threat while placing the United States at the

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<sup>146</sup> Bitsios, tel. 2ΔΚ 2081 MFA to Nicosia, December 15, 1974, Folder 3B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>147</sup> Nomikos, tel. Φ.230/1249 Washington to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 19, 1974, Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF; Nomikos, tel. Φ.125/462/1279, Washington to MFA, August 23, 1974, Folder 2B, CKP.

centre. However, to achieve this goal, the Greek government realised the need for implementing a new strategy towards Washington. The strategy emphasised siding with Congress against the US administration. This tactic opened a new chapter in Greek-US relations. In the years following the Cyprus Crisis, Greece and the United States would both encounter challenges to the pursuit of their foreign policy goals

## Chapter 2

### Mapping a new strategy: Karamanlis, Ford and the Turkish embargo

In the aftermath of the Cyprus Crisis, both the newly-formed Greek government and the recently-installed Ford administration faced its direct by-products. The Greek government considered it necessary to respond to anti-American sentiments growing in the Greek electorate and acted on its decision to alter the public nature of its relations with the United States and NATO. At the same time, Athens needed to follow policies that deterred Turkish aggression; these emerged as additional security considerations for the Greek government. Similarly, the US administration faced domestic implications resulting from the turbulence happening in the Eastern Mediterranean, namely Congress's enactment of the 1975 arms embargo on Turkey.

The congressional actions dominated bilateral Greek-US relations during 1975. The first calls for the embargo attracted attention in Athens. The imposition of the embargo served the Greek goal of containing the Turkish threat, through limiting Ankara's access to military aid. Hence, the Greek government cooperated with the congressmen that supported the embargo to ensure the success of the legislation. Existing scholarship presents the US arms embargo on Turkey as a missed opportunity for Greece to influence Washington's approach. Commenting on Karamanlis' government's approach toward the embargo and the Greek Lobby, Kassimeris argues that: 'Greece should have adopted a tougher policy, one that would have enabled her

to intervene in US domestic affairs and keep her interests intact. [...] Instead Greece [...] remained a passive witness to a matter that was of direct national concern.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter demonstrates that the Greek government did not remain passive during the congressional drive for the embargo. This perception derives from Athens acting behind the scenes and keeping its involvement in the congressional battle away from the public sphere as much as possible. Siding publicly with Congress against the Ford administration would entail direct confrontation with the White House at a time when Greece needed both US economic and political support vis-à-vis Turkey but also the Communist bloc. The Greek government remained a committed member of the western camp.

For Washington, the arms embargo represented a distinct element in the ongoing battle over the executive's control over foreign policy. The congressional challenges to President Ford were not confined only to issues related to détente but also to the US approach towards its close allies.<sup>2</sup> The congressional action fundamentally undermined Kissinger's balanced approach towards two of the US's allies, Greece and Turkey. Since August 1974 Kissinger had maintained that the United States ought to preserve a balanced approach toward Athens and Ankara in order to secure bilateral ties with both. The arms embargo showed that Washington recognised Ankara as the culprit of the Cyprus Crisis.

This chapter first presents the Greek government's considerations regarding its foreign policy priorities in the aftermath of the events of summer 1974. Turkey had emerged as the dominant perceived threat for Greece, but this concern did not replace

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<sup>1</sup> Christos Kassimeris, *Greece and the American Embrace: Greek foreign policy towards Turkey, the US and the Western Alliance* (London: Tauris Publishers, 2010), 118.

<sup>2</sup> Yanek Mieczkowski, *Gerald Ford and the Challenges of 1970s* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2005), 275.

the menace that Athens felt from the communist bloc. Greek foreign and security strategy sought to include both factors. Secondly, the chapter offers the Greek considerations toward efforts for an imposition of an arms embargo on Turkey. In doing so, the chapter traces the emergence of strong links between the Greek government and its supporters in Congress which formed a distinct factor in Athens' strategy toward Washington the following years. Finally, the chapter considers the reasons why, despite Athens siding with Congress, both the Greek government and the US administration avoided a direct public clash. When the arms embargo on Turkey was partially lifted on October 1975, a period of tense contacts came to a close. The partial repeal did not restore Washington's proclaimed balanced approach toward Athens and Ankara. Nevertheless, it was the best outcome the Ford administration could have achieved. From October 1975 onwards, Secretary Kissinger prioritised other means in securing US goals toward Greece and Turkey.

### **A new government: advantages and limitations**

The elections of late 1974 initiated the end of political transition in Greece. Along with the general elections of November 1974, a referendum regarding the form of government represented a crucial step toward the consolidation of the democratic regime. The process was to be completed in June 1975 when the Greek parliament approved a new constitution.<sup>3</sup> From late 1974, the newly elected government was no longer heir to the dictators but instead possessed an overwhelming popular mandate to govern.

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<sup>3</sup> Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, *Ελληνικός Φιλελευθερισμός: το ριζοσπαστικό ρεύμα, 1932-1979* [Greek Liberalism: The radical wave, 1932-1979] (Athens: Patakis, 2010), 478.

In the elections, Karamanlis' newly founded party Nea Dimokratia (New Democracy- ND) topped the polls with 54.4% of the popular vote and 220 out of 300 seats in the Greek parliament. The result meant that his Greek conservative party could form a government alone. In a party that relied heavily on its leader, the results constituted a personal victory for Karamanlis.<sup>4</sup>

The former vice president in the national unity government, Georgios Mavros assumed the role of the leader of the opposition. Mavros presided over the coalition party Enosis Kentrou and Kinima ton Neon Politikon Dynameon (Centre Union /Movement of the New Political Forces or simply Centre Union/ New Forces-EK/ND) which secured 20.4% of the vote and 60 seats. The remaining seats were distributed between two leftist parties. The newly-founded Panellino Socialistiko Kinima (Panhellenic Socialist Movement-PASOK) of Andreas Papandreou attracted 13.6% of the popular vote. The Enomeni Aristera (United Left), an 'electoral' coalition between the recently legalised communist parties, finished last with 9.5% of the vote. Given the 'reinforced' proportional system of representation favouring the main parties, PASOK and the United Left received 12 and 9 seats respectively.

The strong performance of the New Democracy party in the polls not only reflected the public's support for the new government, it also allowed the formation of a cohesive cabinet. In a county without tradition in coalition governments, this was a crucial advantage in comparison with the national unity government, where the divisions between Mavros and Karamanlis were visible. As the US embassy noted in its projections before the elections: 'a majority government under Karamanlis would

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<sup>4</sup> Richard Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987), 64.

be more favorable [sic] to US and NATO interests than would a coalition, which would be forced to strike a compromise between differing personalities and policy views'.<sup>5</sup>

The first post-1974 Karamanlis government included 'like-minded' figures of the Greek right and centre-right particularly in the realm of foreign policy.<sup>6</sup> Contrary to earlier historiographical arguments regarding Greek foreign policy, which present Karamanlis as had been solely responsible for the country's direction, decision-making was now shared among a circle.<sup>7</sup> The prime minister, the minister of foreign affairs, Dimitrios Bitsios, and the minister of national defence, Evangelos Averoff-Tossitsa (styled as Averoff) coordinated their perspectives, particularly on issues related to relations with the United States. Prominent figures of the Greek bureaucracy and diplomatic service assisted them in their task: Ambassador Ioannis Tzounis served as secretary general of the ministry, Vyron Theodoropoulos, as general director of foreign affairs, and Petros Molyviatis, as director of the office of the prime minister. The Greek ambassador to Washington between 1974 and 1979, Menelaos Alexandrakis, played a significant role in coordinating the Greek strategies towards Washington. His role is often overlooked. Most of the new political and diplomatic figures for Greece had previously worked together during Karamanlis' first premiership in the 1950s and early 1960s. Moreover, all of them had dealt in different capacities with the Cyprus

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<sup>5</sup> Intelligence Memorandum 'The Greek elections' Washington November 5, 1974, Laurie Van Hook and Edward C. Keefer (eds.) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976* (hereafter *FRUS*), volume XXX, Greece; Cyprus; Turkey, 1973-1976 (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2007), doc. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Kyriakos Mitsotakis, *Οι συμπληγάδες της εξωτερικής πολιτικής: Εσωτερικές και διεθνείς πιέσεις στις ελληνοαμερικανικές διαπραγματεύσεις για τις βάσεις, 1974-1985* [The Clashing Rocks of Foreign Policy, Domestic and international pressures in the Greek-US negotiations for the bases, 1974-1985] (Athens: Patakis, 2006), 77.

<sup>7</sup> Hatsivassilou discusses the misperception of Karamanlis as the only actor versus the recent and more accurate description of the 'leading group/circle' in the post-1974 Greek governance, see Hatzivassiliou, *Greek Liberalism*, 479.

Crisis, when it first emerged.<sup>8</sup> There was therefore a significant level of cohesion and common understanding about the Greek national interest and aims.

The Greek government enjoyed an additional advantage along with its newly-found internal cohesion. A referendum on the question of monarchy settled a polarising question in Greek politics: 67% of Greek electorate rejected a proposal to restore the monarchy. The right-wing ND Greek ruling party included in its ranks a number of royalists. The question of monarchy had the potential to create an internal schism in the party. The fair election process and, above all Karamanlis' own neutral stance are considered as factors that prevented any significant internal divisions.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, by late 1974, the new government was able to move to decision-making.

Despite the advantages the Greek government enjoyed, it also faced harsh realities which restricted its room to manoeuvre. Since it was led by a democratic government, the direction of Greek politics needed to reflect the views of the electorate. The statement was particularly true regarding Greek-US relations.

The anti-American sentiments that spiked in the aftermath of the second Cyprus Crisis remained a dominant force in Greek society. Throughout the period before the elections, there were frequent, particularly in the capital, anti-American and anti-NATO protests and demonstrations.<sup>10</sup> Slogans calling for 'national independence' from American patronage were rampant. As chapter 1 above discussed, these anti-

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<sup>8</sup> See the former ambassadors' contribution on the Cyprus problem, Alexandrakis, Menelaos, Theodoropoulos, Vyron, Lagakos, Evstathios. *Το Κυπριακό: μία ενδοσκόπηση* [The Cyprus Question: an Endoscopy] (Athens: Elliniki Euroekdotiki, 1987), also unique for the Greek sources compilation of biographical information about diplomats and politicians can be found in Fotini Tomai-Constantopoulou (ed.), *Η Συμμετοχή της Ελλάδας στην πορεία προς την Ευρωπαϊκή ολοκλήρωση* [Greece's participation in European Integration], (Athens: Foreign Ministry and Papazisis, 2006), Vol.1 and 2.

<sup>9</sup> Panos Kazakos, *Ανάμεσα σε Κράτος και Αγορά: Οικονομία και οικονομική πολιτική στην μεταπολεμική Ελλάδα, 1944-2000* [Between State and Market: Economy and fiscal policy in post-war Greece, 1944-2000] (Athens: Patakis, 2003), 293.

<sup>10</sup> Mitsotakis, *Foreign Policy and Bases*, 79.



American sentiments reflected a popular belief that the United States was to blame for both the junta, as having supported its imposition, and the Cyprus Crisis by not preventing Turkish actions.

Unsurprisingly, the left espoused anti-American sentiments and sought to capitalise on them. PASOK advocated Greece's complete withdrawal from NATO and the annulment of bilateral agreements with the United States in its founding charter. The Soviet-leaning communist party condemned US imperialism.<sup>11</sup> Mavros, for his part, maintained a moderate approach towards the United States with his party's platform emphasising deepening relations with 'the eastern countries and our northern [communist] neighbours'.<sup>12</sup> Despite his carefully penned message in his last rally before the election, Mavros also intended to court the anti-American vote, as his discussions with Kissinger revealed. The Greek right was not immune in anti-American sentiments either: these were reflected best in the enthusiasm expressed towards Karamanlis' decision to withdraw from NATO.<sup>13</sup>

During the election campaign, Karamanlis also argued in favour of policies aimed at 'national independence, national security and national respect' as he proclaimed his 'trptych' of foreign policy.<sup>14</sup> When it came to specifics, however, Karamanlis maintained a careful outlook. He emphatically stressed that Greece 'belonged to the West' and 'wanted to belong to Europe'<sup>15</sup> but he appeared more

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<sup>11</sup> Ilias Illiou, statement regarding policies, Constantine Svolopoulos, *Κωνσταντίνος Καραμανλής: αρχείο, γεγονότα, και κείμενα* [Constantine Karamanlis: Archive, events and texts Hereafter *Karamanlis*] (Kathimerini: Athens, 2005), vol.8, 211.

<sup>12</sup> Mavros main foreign policy goals, November 12, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 211.

<sup>13</sup> Dimitris Psathas commentary on Karamanlis' speech delivered on September 1, 1974 in Thessaloniki, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 139.

<sup>14</sup> Karamanlis campaign speech in Thessaloniki on October 27, 1974, Vol.8, p.191; Karamanlis Speech in Athens, November 15, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 215.

<sup>15</sup> Karamanlis' speeches in Thessaloniki, August 31, 1974 and October 27, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 138, 191.

comfortable when talking about 'Europe' than the United States. On the campaign trail, Karamanlis frequently referred to his wish, if returned as prime minister, to apply for Greece to join the European Economic Community and, even at this early stage, he argued in favour of the benefits that would come from the accession.<sup>16</sup> When NATO was mentioned, it was within the context of explaining why Greece chose to only partially quit the Alliance and Karamanlis was eager to restate the reasons for the withdrawal. In his foreign policy statements, Karamanlis portrayed Turkey as an aggressive and expansionist power due its actions in Cyprus while he remained committed to a solution in Cyprus that was 'nationally acceptable'.<sup>17</sup>

After the elections, the prime minister, as required, formally presented his government's policies to the Greek Parliament seeking vote of confidence. Karamanlis acknowledged that: 'Geographically, politically and ideologically, Greece belongs to the West'. However, he also reiterated the Greek government's allegations against the United States and NATO regarding their inability and unwillingness to prevent and respond to the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, concluding that:

Greece unquestionably withdrew from NATO's military structure. In order to apply this decision, my government enters the process of practically withdrawing from the military structure and secondly, the review of the agreements regarding the US (military) facilities in Greece.<sup>18</sup>

The Greek government clearly intended to address anti-Americanism and take steps to alter the public element of Greek-US relations. However, the US Embassy remained

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<sup>16</sup> Karamanlis speech in rally in Larissa, November 3, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 200.

<sup>17</sup> Karamanlis' final rally before elections in Athens, November 15, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 215.

<sup>18</sup> Karamanlis government's policy statement in Greek Parliament, December 11, 1974, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 257.

fairly optimistic regarding the climate in Greece towards the United States. Ambassador Kubisch, days after the election, underlined that:

The tide [i.e. the public opinion] has also started to turn in Greece in favor of improved US-Greek relations. It is turning slowly but if we conduct our policies and activities in Greece skilfully, and in prudence and restraint, I look for the tide to move strongly in our favor in 1975. This would obviously be the most favorable context to renegotiate the large number of bilateral agreements we have with Greece and best serve US security and other interests here.<sup>19</sup>

In reality, though, the Greek government's considerations towards relations with NATO and Washington were more complex. The public's anti-Americanism was not the only factor that guided the government's approach to transatlantic relations. In the aftermath of the Cyprus Crisis, cooperation with the United States did not automatically serve Greek security doctrine as it had done in the early stages of the Cold War. Greek perceptions of threat were expanding. The Cyprus Crisis solidified Turkey as a perceived threat to Greek sovereignty and relations with Turkey became an integral element of Greek defence planning.<sup>20</sup> In Cyprus, Turkey resorted to the use of power to resolve a bilateral and international dispute. Athens meanwhile questioned Turkish approach regarding the means of settling other aspects of Greco-Turkish disagreements.

### **How far and how close?**

In the aftermath of events in Cyprus, the Greek government began to consider its options regarding its relations with NATO and the United States within the context of

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<sup>19</sup> Kubisch, tel. 8323 From US Athens to Sec State, November 20, 1974, Greece- State Department telegrams- To SECSTATE- NODIS (4), Box 11, Presidential Country files for the Middle East and South East Asia, Gerald R. Ford Library [hereafter GRFPL].

<sup>20</sup> Athanasios Platias, 'Ελληνική Αμυντική πολιτική μετά το 1974' [Greek defence policy after 1974] in Konstantinos Arvanitopoulos and Marilena Korpa (eds.) *30 Χρόνια Ελληνικής Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής, 1974-2004* [30 Years of Greek Foreign Policy, 1974-2004] (Athens: Livani, 2005), 222; Sotiris Rizas, 'Atlanticism and Europeanism in Greek Foreign and Security Policy in 1970s', *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, vol. 8, No. 1, (March 2008), 56.

the 14 August declaration. As the Minister of National Defence, Evangelos Averoff later emphasised in a letter to the Prime Minister

our participation in the political structure only of the alliance [NATO] has only a symbolic reflection of our commitment to Western World. It does not commit us toward NATO nor NATO toward us either in the event of an attack from the Warsaw Pact nor [provides for involvement] in the preparations toward war.<sup>21</sup>

Before the general elections of November 1974 questions were already raised within the Greek foreign ministry regarding the meaning of the announcement in terms of policy goals and within broader Greek foreign policy considerations. In October 1974, after the initial impact of the Cyprus Crisis, the Greek diplomatic bureaucracy urged a policy review that would clarify whether the Greek government intended to break links with NATO and remove the US bases from Greece entirely or, as the creator of the document questioned, whether: ‘we are using both these issues as a demonstration of our displeasure [with NATO/US] to exercise pressure on both the allies and especially on the Americans in order to improve our negotiating position against Turkey?’<sup>22</sup> The author of the document presented both options. A radical approach against the Western Alliance entailed a dramatic shift in Greece’s foreign policy. Such a shift, the author noted, did not serve Greece’s intention to join the European Economic Community, since: ‘the Nine do not see any distinction between the Common Market and NATO. The Europeans might disagree on all other issues with the Americans, but on issues of defence their considerations coincide with the United States, given that Western Europe’s survival depends on US nuclear protection.’ Athens’ radical approach against

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<sup>21</sup> Averoff, Brief Commentary on Greece’s Withdrawal from NATO- The Views of the Minister of National Defence, January 6, 1975 Folder 67B, Constantine Karamanlis Papers [hereafter CKP], Constantine G. Karamanlis Foundation [hereafter CGKF].

<sup>22</sup> No creator name, Note, October 16, 1974 Folder 20B, CKP, CGKF.

NATO and the United States might affect the Cyprus negotiations, since both sides of the Atlantic could emerge with less interest in Greek views. There is no reply to the classified top secret document. But based on subsequent developments, the Greek government opted for the latter option in order to meet its foreign and security policy goals. Within these considerations the Cyprus problem, as a dispute between Athens and Ankara, occupied a central position in Greek foreign and security policy.

Before the elections Greece had opposed meaningful negotiations, as Mavros and Kissinger had agreed, and the deadlock remained after the elections. A major milestone was achieved in the margins of the 1974 NATO foreign ministers' council in Brussels. In December the Greek foreign minister, the Turkish foreign minister, and the US secretary of state, acting a mediator, agreed on the next steps regarding negotiations conducted primarily between the two communities, the Greek-Cypriots and the Turkish-Cypriots.<sup>23</sup> However, in early 1975, the optimism surrounding these talks already proved to be unfounded. The differences regarding significant aspects of the solution, such as the future territorial size of each community, re-emerged.<sup>24</sup> The proclamation of the 'Turkish Federated State of Cyprus' on 13 February 1975 represented another fundamental setback. The Greek government denounced the action as a sign of Turkish intransigence.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, the Greek government was concerned about the impact the Cyprus problem had on a second Greek-Turkish difference, the issue of the Aegean.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Bitsios, Note regarding his meeting in NATO Brussels December 1974 summit, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 269.

<sup>24</sup> Press statement regarding the conclusion of the intercommunal negotiations regarding Cyprus, January 28, 1975, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 305.

<sup>25</sup> Karamanlis Public statement, February 13, 1975, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 312.

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Meeting of February 14, 1974 in Athens between the Greek government (Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of National Defense, Deputy Minister of FA, Ambassadors Tzounis, Molyviatis, Metaxas) and Cypriot government (Chair of Cypriot Parliament, Klirides, Vice-Chair of Cypriot Parliament, Papadopoulos, Minister of FA

The Aegean dispute, in fact, preceded the Cyprus Crisis, although the latter dominated the international stage and Greek foreign policy in 1974. The dispute involved Greek and Turkish maritime and air space boundaries and each state's rights to the Aegean continental seabed and shelf. At the heart of the dispute laid the Greek and Turkish protracted stance in formalising their respective rights.<sup>27</sup> When time came, they did so amid a climate of crisis. Ankara stated that it did not recognise the accepted boundary arrangements in the common maritime front with Greece. The dispute had originated in October 1973 when Ankara declared its national continental shelf as being west of the Greek islands. Turkey claimed its continental shelf overlapped that which was considered Greek.<sup>28</sup> Following the Cyprus Crisis, the dispute extended to include differences regarding air traffic control and each nation's air space over the Aegean Sea. The Turkish government on 2 August 1974 issued NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) 714, requiring all aircraft approaching the Aegean median line to report their position and flight plan to the Turkish air control authorities.<sup>29</sup> The Turkish action represented the manifestation of the Turkish challenge against the FIR (Flight Information Region) arrangements between the two sides of the Aegean. As purely a matter of convenience Athens and Ankara agreed in 1952, when the International Civil Aviation Organisation was established, that the Athens FIR included most of the Aegean, while the Istanbul FIR included the remaining area and above the Anatolian

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Christofides, former Minister of FA, Kyprianoy, and Cypriot Ambassador in Athens, Kranidiotis), Folder 4B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>27</sup> Christos Rozakis, *Τρία χρόνια ελληνικής εξωτερικής πολιτικής, 1974-1977* [Three years of Greek foreign policy, 1974-1977] (Athens: Papazisis, 1978), 83.

<sup>28</sup> Andrew Wilson, 'The Aegean Dispute', *Adelphi Paper No.155* (International Institute of Strategic Studies: London, 1979/1980), 5, it offers one of the most comprehensive and brief descriptions of the dispute as well as its legal aspects.

<sup>29</sup> S. Victor Papacosma 'Greece and NATO' in Lawrence S. Kaplan, Robert W. Clawson and Raimondo Luraghi (eds.) *NATO and the Mediterranean* (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1985), 202.

coast. The FIR arrangements did not determine the official boundaries of the Greek and the Turkish Airspace. When the Greek government issued a similar NOTAM, 1157, it created a particularly complex and unsafe environment for international flights. The issue reappeared during the process for Greece's reintegration into NATO.

The Aegean dispute referred to Greek and Turkish differences over the maritime boundaries. The revisions of the international Law of the Sea theoretically allowed Greece to extend its territorial waters around the Greek islands. This development significantly reduced international waters in the Aegean by giving Greece a claim of up to 63.9% of the Aegean Sea.<sup>30</sup> In July 1974, a Turkish government official proclaimed that any Greek action towards extending its territorial waters a *casus belli*.<sup>31</sup>

Separate but related to the Aegean issue was another irritant in Greek-Turkish relations. When the Greek government, in response to the Cyprus Crisis, decided to post armed forces on the major Aegean islands, the Turkish government reacted.<sup>32</sup> Ankara charged Greece with acting in violation of their peace treaties, such as the Lausanne treaty of 1923.<sup>33</sup>

The Aegean dispute concerned Karamanlis and his aides, particularly since intelligence information from Turkey indicated that Ankara prioritised it over the Cyprus problem but also because of nationalist tone emerging in Ankara.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Sotiris Rizas, *Οι Ελληνοτουρκικές σχέσεις και το Αιγαίο, 1973-1976* [The Greek-Turkish relations and the Aegean, 1973-1976], (I.Sideris: Athens, 2006), 11.

<sup>31</sup> Ioannis Valinakis, *Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική εξωτερική πολιτική* [Introduction to the Greek Foreign Policy 1949-1988], (Thessaloniki: Paratiritis 1989, 4<sup>th</sup> edition 2003), 209.

<sup>32</sup> Averoff, Letter to the Prime Minister re 'Some basic observations and suggestions regarding the Greek defense problem', AP ΠΠ.40279, May 9<sup>th</sup> 1975, File 27, Evangelos Averoff Papers [Hereafter EAP], CGKF.

<sup>33</sup> Richard C. Company, Jr *Turkey and the United States: The Arms Embargo Period* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1986), 27.

<sup>34</sup> Report of Intelligence, 14.01.1975, folder 4B, CKP, CGKF; Averoff, Handwritten Letter to Deputy Minister of National Defense, AP ΠΠ: 40178, April 2, 1975, File 27, EAP, CGKF.

Washington also concluded that the tensions over the Aegean represented a significant threat to stability in the region. The US administration concluded that, although neither side aimed at escalating the tensions, a standstill ‘could easily bring them into an unwanted and explosive confrontation’.<sup>35</sup>

The Turkish threat added to existing Greek Cold War considerations without replacing them. Athens never questioned that the Warsaw Pact countries posed a principal threat to Greece despite the broader climate of détente.<sup>36</sup> The defence minister best expressed Greek security considerations regarding the ‘national threat’. In a letter to Karamanlis, Averoff claimed that:

Personally, I think it most likely that Moscow will not move against the West. However, this is a possibility rather than a probability. Therefore, based on the above-mentioned reasons [Turkey] and for the well-established [Cold War] considerations, we do not face, as many believe, a defence problem only from the East but also from the North.<sup>37</sup>

The preparation for the Greek premier’s participation in the Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), scheduled for the summer of 1975, offered an opportunity for the Greek diplomatic services to review Greek objectives for the summit. The Greek considerations emphasised Athens’s concerns about the international situation in the Middle East, the impact that the 1973 economic crisis had inflicted on the defence capabilities of the West vis-à-vis the Soviet bloc, and negotiations for the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) and the Mutual and

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<sup>35</sup> Clift, Memorandum for Secretary Kissinger, April 5, 1975, Greece 1975 (1) WH, Country File, Box9, NSC Europe, Canada and Ocean Affairs Staff Files [hereafter NSC Staff Files], National Security Adviser [Hereafter NSA], GRFPL

<sup>36</sup> Averoff, Brief Commentary on Greece’s Withdrawal from NATO- The Views of the Minister of National Defence, January 6, 1975 Folder 67B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>37</sup> Averoff, Handwritten Letter to Chief of Staffs AP ΠΠ: 40031, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1975, File 27, EAP, CGKF.



Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR).<sup>38</sup> Their concerns mirrored Western European's concerns about the CSCE and aspects of superpower *détente*.<sup>39</sup>

The Greek government therefore proceeded carefully towards re-visiting its approach towards the United States and NATO. Cold War realities ensured the relevance of NATO for Greek foreign policy. Moreover, the United States, and Kissinger personally, had been the only power willing to mediate in the Greek-Turkish dispute. Undoubtedly, Washington's balanced approach did not satisfy Greek aims, but it remained the only offer available.

Hence, after the elections and despite public proclamations, the Greek decision-makers privately appeared less eager to formalise the country's withdrawal from the military arm of NATO. In its first cabinet meeting for 1975, the government underlined that:

We do not aim outright at withdrawing from the military structure, but rather we aim at securing a satisfactory solution of the Cyprus [problem]. Therefore, we should conduct the forthcoming negotiations carefully but we should not try to accelerate their pace.<sup>40</sup>

The US administration noted Greece's cautious attitude towards the Alliance. Amid the broader strategy of repairing relations with Greece, the Department of State insisted on allowing ample time to the Greek government to clarify its position. Coordinating the administration's approach towards the Greek withdrawal with the US

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<sup>38</sup> Theodoropoulos, Collection of Notes for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, May 8, 1975, Folder 22B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>39</sup> Sarah B. Snyder, 'The United States, Western Europe, and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1972-1975,' in Matthias Schulz and Thomas Schwartz (eds.), *The Strained Alliance: U.S.-European Relations from Nixon to Carter* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 274.

<sup>40</sup> Prime Minister's Office, Cabinet Meeting at the Coordination Ministry on January 4, 1975, Folder 10B, CKP, CGKF.

Mission in NATO, the United States Deputy Secretary of State, Robert S. Ingersoll, highlighted that:

Our approach to these negotiations would be to encourage Greece ultimately to resume the fullest possible role in NATO, at the same time seeking to avoid backing Greece prematurely into a corner that would make it formalize, under pressure, a low degree of participation, closing the door on further integration into NATO.<sup>41</sup>

Other NATO members agreed that slow progress was necessary. They expected Athens to present its view of the future relationship with the Alliance first before NATO would take any steps regarding Greece's decision.<sup>42</sup>

The Greek records do not explain the link that Karamanlis and his close associates envisaged for the Alliance in relation to the Cyprus negotiations. The Greeks most likely considered the indirect pressures that NATO members exercised on both Greece and Turkey as beneficial towards solving the most significant crisis in the Alliance's history. This approach explains the preoccupation of the Greek minister, Bitsios, to determine the mood in the Alliance towards Greece in the December of 1974 North Atlantic Council in Brussels. Bitsios mentioned to the prime minister, *inter alia*, that:

the climate within the Alliance has substantially improved for Greece, partially because of the positive impression and satisfaction that our rapid and constructive political developments have made and partially because it became clear that we support solution for Cyprus through negotiations.<sup>43</sup>

Before any final decisions were made, the Greek government carefully studied its options. Important questions remained unanswered about the future role of Greek

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<sup>41</sup> Ingersoll, tel. from the Department of State to the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Embassy in Greece, Washington, March 15, 1975, *FRUS*, vol.XXX, doc.38.

<sup>42</sup> Briefing item, Future of NATO-Greek security relationship, January 17, 1975, Greece 1975 (1) WH, Country File, Box9, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>43</sup> Bitsios, Note for Karamanlis, December 11, 1974, Folder 3B, CKP, CGKF.

forces in NATO. The overall conclusion in the internal reviews demonstrated that NATO remained a significant factor for Greek security not only because of the Warsaw Pact but also because of Turkish aggression from both political and military perspectives. The Council of National Defence, i.e. the chiefs of staff, were collectively asked to report on the optimal relationship between NATO and the Greek forces after the announcement of the withdrawal the Alliance's integrated military command. The author of the report insisted, based on the Alliance's structure, the need for maintaining the closest possible relations between Athens and Brussels. While withdrawing Greek forces from the integrated command during a period of peace, as the Greek government had announced, benefited the Greek defence planning and capabilities against Turkey, downgrading Greek participation in the Alliance's committees further undermined the benefits of the decision. The French model did not serve Greek interests, since it was a 'national necessity compulsion' that the country maintain the closest possible relations with NATO as participants in the Defence Planning Committee (DPC) and the Military Committee (MC).<sup>44</sup> The justification for this approach reflects the military's consideration from a purely defence planning approach of the importance for NATO and relations with the West to Greek security. Participating in the organs of the Alliance would not only allow Greece to observe and alter, given the power of a veto, any decision affecting the future planning of the Alliance, it also offered purely diplomatic benefits given the ability to threaten blocking a decision and prevent and avert 'the Turkish intention against us'. This implied a greater role in the Alliance. The lesser role the Greek government played in

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<sup>44</sup> Kanadreas, report on NATO political and military structure, received by Averoff, August 7, 1975, File 27, EAP, CGKF

Western defence planning, the greater significance Turkey attracted, which would eventually diminish Western assistance in political and military terms to Greece.<sup>45</sup>

The reports regarding the country's role and participation in NATO raised another aspect, that is, the economic aid that Greece was entitled to a member of the Alliance. If the Greek role diminished, so would the aid destined for Greece, particularly from the US. This was an important consideration since improving military capabilities not only benefited Greek standing against the communist threat, but also bolstered Greek capabilities in general. Since the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the Greek government had undertaken an extensive renewal programme for its armed forces that aimed to address the deficit that it had compared to the capabilities demonstrated by Turkey. To achieve that, the Greek minister of national defence noted, required significant funds.<sup>46</sup>

Athens followed a similar careful approach towards the second issue that Karamanlis raised in December 1974, i.e. the re-negotiations of the agreements establishing and governing US military facilities in Greece. The US bases in Greece represented the most visible element of Greek-US cooperation and Washington's presence in Greece. The bases, which had long drawn the public's resentment, became the most obvious target of anti-American protests which demanded their removal.<sup>47</sup> Despite public demand for re-drafting the agreements covering the operation of the bases, the Greek government proceeded cautiously. The importance of the 16 October paper is reflected in the Greek negotiation strategy toward the US bases. The Greek

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<sup>45</sup> Armpouzis, Report on Greek Withdrawal from NATO (Suggested relationship between Greece and NATO) AP IIP.: 40485/17-9-75, September, 27, 1975, File 27, EAP, CGKF;

<sup>46</sup> Averoff, Minister's views regarding the five-year programs of armaments, September 4, 1974, Folder 67B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>47</sup> Sotiris Rizas, 'Atlantism and Europeanism in Greek Foreign and Security Policy in 1970s', *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, vol. 8, No. 1, March 2008, 62.

government not only rejected its radical approach for the removal of the bases, but as the author of that document suggested, the Greek side would secure the maximum benefit from retaining the bases, if the focus was placed on re-negotiating the legal framework of these agreements and used as an opportunity to remove unwanted provisions.<sup>48</sup>

In 1975, the broader consensus within the Greek government was that the existing bases agreements' provisions benefited the US rather than Greece. The agreements had been signed during the early stages of the Cold War immediately after Greece's inclusion in NATO. Scholarship suggests that the then Greek governments 'invited' Washington to establish these facilities since Athens considered them to be an additional security guarantee that represented a tangible commitment from Washington to protect Greek territorial integrity.<sup>49</sup> During the following decades, the agreements had developed into a convoluted web of legislation and some provisions came to be considered as out-dated.<sup>50</sup> The 1956 provisions restricting the jurisdiction of the Greek courts over US military personnel offenders represented a profound example of these provisions. During the internal review, Greek Foreign Ministry personnel characterised them as 'offensive to national sovereignty'.<sup>51</sup>

Moreover, the Greek cabinet concluded that the US bases had three distinct categories: those serving US interests only, others serving mainly US but also Greek

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<sup>48</sup> No creator name, Note, October 16, 1974 Folder 20B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>49</sup> Evanthes Hatzivassiliou, *Greece and the Cold War: Front Line State, 1952-1967* (London: Routledge, 2006), 33.

<sup>50</sup> Dimitris Bitsios, *Πέρα από τα σύνορα, 1974-1977 [Beyond the borders, 1974-1977]* (Estia: Athens, 1983 second edition), 209.

<sup>51</sup> Actions of Subcommittee on legal standing of the US military forces in Greece, 13.10.1975, Folder19B, CKP, CGKF.

interests, and facilities closely related to Greek defence. Accordingly, the Greek cabinet agreed that:

We should aim at maintaining those [facilities] falling into the last category, while dissolving those in the first category. Regarding the rest we should consider whether to request economic repayments in exchange for their presence.<sup>52</sup>

Averoff substantiated the claim that some of the US bases, along with NATO, remained an important element for the Greek security doctrine. The Minister of National Defence noted that NATO forces stationed in Greece had nuclear weapons, which, as he implied, were stored in the US bases. The presence of the weapons implied that the alliance would defend Greece in the event of war. Secondly, the weapons acted as deterrent against a Soviet attack. These two factors echoed similar views that the first Karamanlis government espoused for the acceptance of tactical weapons.<sup>53</sup> However, following the events in Cyprus, Averoff advanced an additional reason. That was the possibility that the weapons could be transferred to Turkey, a development 'that had so many implications that need no explanation'.<sup>54</sup> It was crucial, therefore, for the Greek government to ensure that some of the US bases remained in Greece. Finally, the Greek government had clearly noticed the economic benefits that the US bases offered, particularly to the local economies, and sought to maximise them.<sup>55</sup>

Despite the importance of the US bases, the Greek government recognised the need to satisfy the public's opposition to the US bases. Defence Minister Averoff

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<sup>52</sup> Note of Cabinet Meeting in the Ministry of Coordination, January 4, 1975, Folder 10B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>53</sup> Hazivassiliou, *Greece and the Cold War*, 94.

<sup>54</sup> Averoff, Brief Commentary on Greece's Withdrawal from NATO- The Views of the Minister of National Defence, January 6, 1975 Folder 67B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>55</sup> Actions of Subcommittee on legal standing of the US military forces in Greece, October 13, 1975, Folder19B, CKP, CGKF.

reported his conversation with US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence, Burckold, stating that:

...the dissolution of the Ellinko base has a significant psychological impact given its position [i.e. proximity to Athens]. (In response my counterpart and the Ambassador underlined the technical difficulties[...] and also noted that a number of changes could take place, such as not to raise the American flag, to withdraw the American guard, and a Greek commander to head the base, etc. [...])

Regarding the Souda base I mentioned that [...] there were too many take-offs that intercepted our own aircraft but also many [members of the public?] concluded that the appearance of heavy transporting aircraft during the Greek-Turkish tension [summer 1974] was intended to supply the Turkish forces.<sup>56</sup>

The re-negotiation of the US bases clearly sought to appease the public's anti-American feelings. The White House also noted that the Greek approach aimed at 'diminishing the more visible aspects of the US presence [...]'.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, Averoff's statement and the view from Washington regarding the Greek incentives undermine Mitsotakis' strong statement against the influence of the public sediments in Karamanlis' decision-making regarding the future of the US bases in the country.<sup>58</sup> Even if it did not constitute the main preoccupation, anti-American feelings needed to be considered and responses were needed for them. A democratically elected government had to act this way.

By October 1975, the Greek government crystallised its main demands regarding the US bases. Apart from some purely technical considerations regarding the function, location, and accessibility of the bases, the Greek stipulations emphasised that:

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<sup>56</sup> Averoff, Memorandum of Conversation between the Minister of National Defence with Assistant Secretary Burckold, AP IIP.:40093, February 19, 1975, File27, EAP, CGKF.

<sup>57</sup> Report(Unclear), Averoff Optimistic on NATO-US, Greece1975(1) Box9, NSC, GRFPL.

<sup>58</sup> Mitsotakis, *Foreign Policy and Bases*, 82.

A Greek commander should control all remaining [in operation] US bases, circumscribe arranged preferential treatment of the US personnel and ensure that the US servicemen in the bases face the same benefits and obligations as personnel from any other [NATO] countries.<sup>59</sup>

This strong element of the need for greater national control over the US facilities can be seen as a response to the Greek public's anti-American allegations. Negotiations commenced in autumn 1975 between high-ranking military officials from both sides.<sup>60</sup> These negotiations remained on a technical level even though the Greek government and the US administration both observed them closely. The specifics of the negotiations did not rise to the ministerial level of bilateral contacts and cooperation between the two sides. On that level, the dominant issues remained the Cyprus negotiations and, progressively, the Aegean dispute.

Based on the above considerations, the Greek government considered that the United States should play an active role in the Greek-Turkish dispute. However, Athens questioned the Ford administration's willingness to exercise pressure on Ankara. The US bases or Greece's commitment to NATO represented opportunities for Athens to put pressure on Washington, as a number of records indicate. However, this kind of 'pressure' as the Greek Permanent Representative in NATO, Ambassador Vyron Theodoropoulos, noted, was high risk and the end result was questionable.<sup>61</sup> The experienced ambassador warned about the danger that the Greek threats of leaving the alliance, might result in a rigid US and NATO stance against Greece and move them closer to Turkey. While the Greek government considered its options and the

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<sup>59</sup> Decision of October 30<sup>th</sup> 1975 Meeting, November 4, 1975, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>60</sup> for a detailed account from the US perspective see John W. McDonald, Jr. and Diane Bendahmane (eds.) *U.S. Bases Overseas: Negotiations with Spain, Greece, and the Philippines* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990).

<sup>61</sup> Theodoropoulos, letter Délégation permanente de la Grèce, Brussels to MFA, November 14, 1974, Folder 20B, CKP, CGKF.



best strategy to secure US support for Greek interests, a new factor emerged. That was the US Congress and the efforts of a group of congressmen to impose an arms embargo on Turkey. The Greek government not only noted their proposals for particularly harsh legislation on Turkey's access to US military aid. It also noted the sympathetic language towards Greece that its proponents used. But the US administration vehemently opposed the development. The arms embargo portrayed the United States as accepting the view that the Turkish government was the culprit of the Cyprus Crisis. Hence, Athens decided to utilise and further develop its links with Congress in order to offset and undermine the administration's arguments effectively.

### **Congress and the embargo on Turkey**

Since the initial stages of the congressional upheaval against the Department of State and Kissinger's personal handling of the Cyprus Crisis, the Greek Embassy ensured that its foreign ministry, and in some cases, its prime minister were kept well informed about developments on Capitol Hill. The potential imposition of an arms embargo on Turkey offered significant benefits to Greece. Following the Cyprus Crisis, the modernisation and expansion of the Greek military forces became a necessity so the Greek government extended requests for additional aid to its western allies. Considering the need for purchases to be paid for in hard currency, the various US aid programmes for grant credits, low interest loans, and free assistance support represented significant sources for alleviating the financial burden on the Greek budget.<sup>62</sup> By extension, the same conditions also applied to Turkey and its resources,

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<sup>62</sup> Minister of National Defence describes best the impact on the Greek budget in the immediate aftermath of the regime change in Averoff, Folder 2B, CKP, CGKF

so any limitation on Ankara's access to US assistance of military equipment and articles indirectly benefited the Greek position.

Therefore, at a time when all Greek allies and foes, as chapter one above argued, pointed to Washington for mediation in the dispute and the Ford administration avoided taking sides, Athens realised that there was a factor in Washington which slanted US policy towards Greece. It was an opportunity that the Greek government, particularly after the elections, sought to exploit.

The driving force behind the embargo on Turkey was the Greek Lobby. The term refers to the Greek diaspora in the US and its organisations, the largest being the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), and congressmen of Greek descent.<sup>63</sup> There is evidence of direct contacts and cooperation between the Greek government and lobby organisations, in reference to the US embargo on Turkey.<sup>64</sup> Primarily, though, the Greek government worked closely with congressmen who advocated support for Greek interests including the Turkish embargo and greater economic support for Greece. Therefore, to avoid confusion, the term 'Greek Lobby' is not used in this context, but the focus is placed on 'congressmen who supported Greece'. The Greek government's relationship with 'our friends' congressmen' as the Greek government frequently referred to them became an integral tool of the Greek strategy towards both the Ford and Carter administrations at least until 1979.

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<sup>63</sup> Chris Ioannides, *Realpolitik in the Eastern Mediterranean: From Kissinger and the Cyprus Crisis to Carter and the Lifting of the Turkish Arms Embargo* (Pella: New York, 2001), 49; on the role of Greek-American activism see George Kaloudis, 'The Influence of the Greek Diaspora on Greece and the United States', *International Journal on World Peace*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (2008), 40.

<sup>64</sup> Van Coufoudakis 'The Reverse Influence Phenomenon: The Impact of the Greek-American Lobby on the Foreign Policy of Greece' in Dimitri C. Conostas and Athanassios G. Platias (ed.) *Diasporas in World Politics: The Greeks in Comparative Perspective* (Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1993), 57.

The drive for the imposition of the embargo should undoubtedly be seen in conjunction with the clash between the executive and legislative branches of US government in the aftermath of the Vietnam War.<sup>65</sup> Contemporaries saw the Turkish embargo as part of ‘the most serious foreign policy crisis’ Kissinger faced at this time ‘in Washington’ and the commitment to imposing the embargo would indicate whether Congress intended to play ‘a larger, more forceful role in foreign policy’.<sup>66</sup> In addition to this, the embargo on Turkey followed a long tradition of congressional challenges to Kissinger’s support of and cooperation with Greek dictators.<sup>67</sup>

As early as 1971, the House subcommittee on Europe under Benjamin Rosenthal had questioned continued US military aid to Greece and Spain based on their lack of democratic governments.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, in the spring of 1974, the Congressional Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movement presented the findings of a recent Study Mission on Greece, reporting that current US policies endangered future relations with Greece.<sup>69</sup> This was when calls for the imposition of a military aid cut-off first emerged.<sup>70</sup> After the second invasion of Cyprus and Greece’s withdrawal from NATO, arguments regarding the need to support the newly restored Greek democracy and secure Greek-US ties continued.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> R. A. Melanson, *American Foreign Policy since the Vietnam War: The Search for Consensus from Nixon to Clinton* (Armonk, N.Y: M.E. Sharpe, 2000).

<sup>66</sup> Comments by Robert Pastor and Richard Levine on Eagleton’s amendment, quoted in R. D. Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 201.

<sup>67</sup> James Edward Miller, *United States and the making of Modern Greece: History and Power, 1950-1974* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 167.

<sup>68</sup> Theodor Couloumbis, ...71 ...74: *Οι σημειώσεις ενός πανεπιστημιακού* [...71..74: An Academic’s Notes] (Athens: Patakis, 2002), 15, also in detail the author’s testimonies before the subcommittee, 25.

<sup>69</sup> Mogens Pelt, *Tying Greece to the West* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 2006), 340.

<sup>70</sup> In terms of the Greek literature, the best and most detailed account of the Turkish embargo and the legislative process can be found in P. Theodorakopoulos, *Το Κογκρέσο στην διαμόρφωση της Αμερικανικής Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής: Ο ρόλος του στην περίπτωση της Ελλάδας* [The Congress and the shaping of the American Foreign Policy: its role in the Case of Greece] (Athens: Sideris, 1996).

<sup>71</sup> Rep. J. Elberg, ‘The Problem of Cyprus’ (August 20, 1974), Congressional Record, H29432; Rep. Sikes, ‘Where were we when Greece needed help?’ Congressional Record (August 21, 1974), H29720;

On 19 September 1974, Congress took the most decisive step towards legislating against US military assistance to Turkey. Representative Benjamin Rosenthal (D-NY) introduced an amendment to the House Joint Resolution (H. J. Res.) 1131 regarding a Continuing Appropriation Resolution for the ongoing fiscal year. Rosenthal's amendment explicitly required, if approved, that Turkey would be barred from receiving any existing provisions of military and economic aid and any military equipment deliveries until all parties involved in the Cyprus Crisis agreed on the future of the Turkish forces stationed there.

The Ford administration was vehemently opposed to the prospect of the embargo on the basis of harming US-Turkish relations.<sup>72</sup> In the following weeks Kissinger approached both the House and the Senate hoping to arrive at a compromise. President Ford meanwhile vetoed H. J. Res. 1131, which included Rosenthal's amendment. Despite the presidential veto, the pressure on the administration was mounting. The White House had to reach an agreement with Congress that secured the financing of the federal government. Negotiations were necessary to agree on a Continuing Resolution within the necessary timeframe that allowed the government to meet its obligations. The administration was not ready to give in easily; neither was Congress. In the following weeks, the House enacted a similar resolution only for President Ford to veto it.<sup>73</sup> Time was running out and the administration had to accept a third similar resolution which as the previous two included provisions against arms aid and deliveries to Turkey. On 17 October 1974, President Ford signed H. J. Res. 1167,

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Rep. Brademas (IN), 'Personal Statement' Congressional Record (August 22,1974) Extension Remarks, 30167

<sup>72</sup> Mieczkowski, *Gerald Ford*, 276.

<sup>73</sup> Theodorakopoulos, *Congress*, 127.

which became PL93-448. Among its other provisions, this called for the cut-off of US arms being sent to Turkey from 10 December onwards.

The US mid-term elections of November 1974 caused a profound effect on Ford's relationship with Congress which was more than evidenced in the case of the Turkish embargo. The Democrats solidified their control of the House reaching a total of 290 seats, i.e. the two-thirds majority required to overrule the president's veto. The new class of congressmen also brought in individuals that placed a stronger focus on human rights and congressional empowerment.<sup>74</sup> These congressmen prioritised their perception of the role of Congress emerging as unmanageable by the Democratic Party leaders. Their willingness to defy their leadership was demonstrated best in the case of the Turkish embargo from January 1975 onwards. Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield (D-MT) opposed the embargo action as a simplistic approach to a complex issue.<sup>75</sup> His opposition achieved little. Before the new congressmen arrived, the administration scored a last-minute victory. The 10 December deadline for the imposition of the embargo was extended for approximately two months. After this time, the embargo was to become a reality unless the administration secured visible progress towards a settlement in Cyprus.

Due to the lack of progress on Cyprus and the inauguration of the new Congress, Kissinger's efforts for an additional extension failed. On 5 February the Turkish arms embargo became a reality. Between February and October 1975, the embargo had its most severe form. It prohibited all US military assistance to Turkey until a solution

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<sup>74</sup> Johnson, *Congress*, 205; Barbara Keys, 'Congress, Kissinger and the Origins of Human Rights Diplomacy', *Diplomatic History*, Vol.34, No.5 (November, 2010), 826.

<sup>75</sup> Jonson, *Congress*, 200.

was reached regarding the Turkish forces on the island or there was clear evidence for progress in the negotiations for a solution to the Cyprus question.<sup>76</sup>

The Ford administration opposed the Turkish arms embargo as being counter-productive.<sup>77</sup> Ford and Kissinger became personally involved in efforts to prevent, then amend and repeal the legislation. They frequently met with leaders of the Greek American community, the Greek Lobby, congressmen interested in the issue, and the both parties' congressional leaders. The administration developed a central theme which Ford and Kissinger advocated in these meetings. Their argument was based on the premise that the embargo 'hurt' the Greek and Turkish governments equally.<sup>78</sup> The administration stressed its unconditional support for the new democratic government in Greece and Prime Minister Karamanlis.<sup>79</sup> However, the Cyprus question represented a major threat for the Greek domestic stability and Greek-Turkish relations<sup>80</sup> and prolonging the dispute only endangered Karamanlis' government's prospects. The embargo, moreover, prevented progress in the negotiations since the Turkish government was not prepared to make significant concessions before the

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<sup>76</sup> The embargo was based on the amendment (x) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

<sup>77</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, Lt General Scowcroft, September 25, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>78</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Bipartisan Congressional Leadership meeting, and others, December 11, 1974, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line; Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, VP Rockefeller, Bipartisan Leadership, February 3, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>79</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, Congressional Leadership, February 20, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>80</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, VP Rockefeller, Bipartisan Leadership, February 3, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line; Memorandum of Conversation President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, Bipartisan Leadership, February 6, 1975, Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, VP Rockefeller, Bipartisan Leadership, February 3, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

legislation was lifted.<sup>81</sup> The administration insisted that the embargo, rather than supporting the Greek government, in fact weakened its future standing.

The emphasis on the embargo's negative impact on the Greek government was considered a factor that could force the supporters of the embargo to reconsider their adamant position. Some of the most prominent congressmen who supported Greek interests in congress had been vocal about the need to preserve stability in Greece as the best way of preserving bilateral relations. Senator Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), leading figure of the Greek Lobby, explicitly expressed the group's concern about relations with Greece during a meeting with Ford and Kissinger stating that:

The other concern is Greece. Kissinger seems to assume that Greece will always be there. [...] So I think we should move in a way which does not antagonize Greece.<sup>82</sup>

This was not an isolated example; the Greek Lobby and congressmen in general frequently referred to their concerns about US-Greek relations in their meetings with the administration.

A secondary argument in such meetings was the negative implications the embargo was having on Turkey and US-Turkish relations. The White House highlighted the profound impact that the embargo had on Turkey's relations with the United States, the West, and NATO.<sup>83</sup> Ankara's reactions in the summer of 1975 acted

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<sup>81</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger with Congressman B.S. Rosenthal, Congressman John Brademas, Congressman Paul S. Sarbanes, June, 19, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>82</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, Congressmen, June 19, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>83</sup> Clift, Action Memorandum to Kissinger, February 28, 1975, about proposed President's meeting with AHEPA, Folder Greece 1975 WH (1), Box9, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL; Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, Congressman Lee Hamilton, Congressman Charles W. Whalen, Congressman Paul. S. Sarbanes, and others, June 23, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line.

as a testament to the US administration's warnings regarding relations with Turkey. Stating that without access to US aid it was no longer willing to accommodate the US facilities, the Turkish government shut down the 26 US bases in Turkey, allowing only the NATO base in Incirlik to continue to operate.<sup>84</sup> Simultaneously the Turkish government announced its intention to review its bilateral military agreements with the United States.<sup>85</sup> Following the July 16 Turkish decision to shut the bases down, Ford and Kissinger moved quickly to exploit the fate of the US bases in Turkey as reason for supporting the effort to amend the embargo legislation.<sup>86</sup>

The Greek government was well aware of the administration's moves and followed all public statements closely.<sup>87</sup> The Greek embassy emphasised the US administration's efforts to portray Athens as not seriously interested in maintaining the embargo. Rather than remaining in private, discussions about such statements also became public. The Greek government reacted by issuing a public denial which clarified its position and condemned the rumours that were originating in Washington.<sup>88</sup> In private talks with the US administration, the Greek government also expressed its frustration over and underlined its 'surprise and justifiable disappointment' by the administration's efforts to resume arms deliveries to Turkey

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<sup>84</sup> Ayşe Gul Altınay and Amy Holms, 'Opposition to the U.S. Military Presence in Turkey in the Context of the Iraq War' in Catherine Lutz (ed.), *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts* (London: Pluto Press, 2009), 274.

<sup>85</sup> Amy Austin Holms, *Social Unrest and American Bases in Turkey and Germany Since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 186.

<sup>86</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford and Secretary Kissinger, May, 12, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line; Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, VP, Rockefeller, Secretary Kissinger, Bipartisan leadership, June 6, 1975, Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, VP Rockefeller, Bipartisan Leadership, February 3, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line; Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Republican Leadership, July, 10, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line

<sup>87</sup> see for example, Alexandrakis, tel.AII.236 February 5, 1975 Washington to MFA, Folder 11B, CKP, CGKF; Alexandrakis, tel.AII.238 February 5, 1975 Washington to MFA, Folder 11B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>88</sup> Greek government, Public statement, December 12, 1975, Folder 11B, CKP, CGKF



without prior attempts to obtain Turkish concessions on either Greek-Turkish issues or Cyprus.<sup>89</sup> The Greek government decided to intervene actively and confront the administration's assurances that the embargo was not working.

Immediately after the imposition of the embargo, and while the administration embarked on the effort to repeal the legislation, the Greek government instructed the Greek embassy to ensure that 'friendly congressmen' were well aware of Athens' views and considerations.<sup>90</sup> The Greek argument insisted that the repeal of the embargo could only 'encourage Turkey's uncooperative stance [and] prevent any Greek and Cypriot efforts for settlement of the issue. [...] On a political level, the resumption of aid would give Turkey the green light to undertake acts of aggression in the Aegean [...]'.<sup>91</sup> Foreign Minister Bitsios met with Congressman Rosenthal in Paris and reiterated the Greek views in person. Bitsios stressed the unproductive Turkish position in the negotiations. He also noted, according to a telegram he sent to Ambassador Alexandrakis, that:

I stated [to Rosenthal] that there are some signs of Turkish bending and hints on behalf of the new Turkish government towards the beginning of Greek-Turkish dialogue. I attributed this Turkish stance to:

- Turkey is beginning to feel the moral isolation that is the result of its own policies and the use of violence and threats
- The embargo has begun to produce tangible results affecting the readiness of the Turkish military forces.<sup>92</sup>

A meeting between the Greek foreign minister and the congressional representative members of the Greek Lobby came amidst an effort for the repeal of the embargo. In

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<sup>89</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI792 to Washington, July 12, 1975, Folder 11B, CKP, CGKF; Alexandrakis, tel. AΣ313 to MFA, July 14, 1975, Folder 11B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>90</sup> Bitsios, tel. Φ.3161.24A/84-85ΔΙΣ/695ΔΙΣ MFA to Washington, February 21, 1975, Folder 11B, CKP, CGKF, note that on February 20, Kissinger argued that Greek government interested to put Cyprus issue behind.

<sup>91</sup> Bitsios, tel. Φ.3161.24A/84-85ΔΙΣ/695ΔΙΣ MFA to Washington, February 21, 1975, Folder 11B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>92</sup> Bitsios, YOI-387 MFA to Washington, April, 21, 1975, Folder 4B, CKP, CGKF

late March, Senate's Foreign Relations Committee endorsed a bill giving the president the ability to repeal the embargo if he considered it to be beneficial for the progress of the negotiations.<sup>93</sup> The bill reached the Senate floor and was approved by a majority of one vote on 19 May 1975. The next step was to bring the legislation to the House.

The Greek government recognised the extent of the administration's effort to repeal the legislation and intervened to a greater extent than before. This time, Greek actions were obvious. The administration not only could no longer ignore the Greeks. Ford raised the issue directly with Karamanlis at a meeting in Helsinki in July: both leaders were attending the 1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Having discussed issues of international cooperation, Ford moved to Eastern Mediterranean developments. The conversation soon focussed on the embargo and Ford said:

I am sure you know, Mr. Prime Minister, that I am extremely disappointed by the vote in the Congress last week. I had personally put my prestige on the line. I saw 325 Members of the House. I was convinced and I am convinced that a continuation of the embargo is a handicap to a Cyprus solution, undermines NATO, is no help to Greece, and involves the closing of U.S. bases which are deeply connected with U.S. national security. [...] But we lost. [...] Frankly I must tell you, Mr. Prime Minister, there were people in your Embassy who were actively opposing my efforts to obtain House action. A letter was sent by your Embassy (the President shows the letter) saying that Administration statements were in error. [...] we want to help solve the problem but I must tell you in a friendly and firm way that I do not believe the activities of your Embassy were the proper way for your Government to act.<sup>94</sup>

It is unclear, based on either the US or the Greek records, what letter Ford was referring to, nor are there details about any consultation between the Greek Embassy and the

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<sup>93</sup> Theodorakopoulos, *Congress*, 137.

<sup>94</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Karamanlis, Bitsios, Ford, Kissinger, Helsinki July 30, 1975, FRUS, vol. XXX, doc. 51.

Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs about it. Nonetheless Karamanlis acknowledged it, explaining:

As Prime Minister of the Greek Government I had knowledge of the statement. All during this time I have tried not to take a position although I have been under extreme pressure from the press in Athens to state publicly that the Greek Government is against lifting the embargo. In spite of this pressure I resisted but when I was informed by Members of your Congress that the impression was being given that the Greek Government favored lifting the embargo, I was obliged to issue a denial because if it was believed in Greece that I favoured the lifting of the embargo there would be strong public opposition to me in Greece.<sup>95</sup>

The alleged letter might have inflamed the climate in the House of Representatives. It seems an exaggeration that the administration's coordinated action to pass legislation through the House, which the Senate had already supported, failed because of a letter from the Greek premier.<sup>96</sup> The letter that Ford presented to Karamanlis represented the actions of the Greek Embassy that the US administration resented. The significant element in embargo is the direct confrontation between the two leaders. During the previous period the Greek government had preferred to operate behind the scenes; this time decided to risk a confrontation. Scholarship has so far overlooked Karamanlis' position and cooperation with Congress. The Turkish embargo has received ample attention in works related to Greek foreign policy and in congressional challenges to US executive authority. An embargo on a NATO member that lasted more than three years has attracted academic interest. However, while there are extensive references to its attempt to change its relations with Washington, the Karamanlis government's efforts to capitalise on the embargo, a central element in Athens' new strategy, are not

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> For details about the Mansfield amendment see Theodorakopoulos, *Congress*, 138; Christos Kassimeris, 'The Inconsistency of United States Policy in the Aftermath of the Cyprus Invasion: The Turkish Arms Embargo and its Termination', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 26 (2008), 104.

mentioned in the literature.<sup>97</sup> Studies have furthermore charged the Karamanlis government with passivity and an inability to exploit congressional actions in its favour.<sup>98</sup>

The Greek records reveal that, as Kassimeris suggests, the Greek government fully exploited and sided with the efforts of the congressmen who were advocating for the imposition of an arms embargo on Turkey. Moreover, the relationship with the supporters of the legislation constituted a central element in the Greek strategy towards the US administrations and lasted well until 1979.

It is clear that the Greek government, in order to ensure that Turkish power and military advantages were kept in check while it was in a process of re-building its military capabilities, worked closely with Congress. The choice reflected a conscious decision to undermine the Ford administration's Eastern Mediterranean policy. In parallel, Athens retained close contacts within the administration. The Greek government did not question the political benefits that cooperation with Washington offered in a period when Greek foreign policy faced major challenges. The Greek government considered that Kissinger could play the role of mediator to Ankara. This in turn offered the administration a tool to persuade the Greeks that the embargo challenged their interests but also potentially blackmailed Athens in order to prevent its cooperation with Congress. It was a risk.

### **White House as an indispensable ally**

The Greek government demonstrated much cynicism towards Washington in its attempt to promote best its interpretation of Greek national interests. For Athens,

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<sup>97</sup> Jon Kofas, *Under the Eagles Claw's: Exceptionalism in Post-war US-Greek Relations* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 140.

<sup>98</sup> Kassimeris, *The American Embrace*, 118.

persuading the Ford administration to mediate on both issues that were at the core of the Greek-Turkish dispute, i.e. Cyprus and the Aegean, constituted a necessity, as mentioned above. The US administration maintained a similar position. Coordinating its actions with Athens and Ankara represented the only way towards progress in Cyprus. Progress on Cyprus might ensure that the embargo on Turkey would be short-lived. The administration specifically hoped that the Greek government could persuade the president of the Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios, to adopt and demonstrate a constructive approach to the negotiations.<sup>99</sup> Both Greece and the US, regardless of their confrontation over the embargo, remained committed to continuing their close bilateral cooperation.

The Greek and Cypriot governments considered Washington as an indispensable mediator with Turkey. Both Athens and Nicosia considered that Kissinger could communicate their proposals to Ankara and ensure their consideration by the Turkish government.<sup>100</sup> The Greek government therefore considered the US administration to be the main go-between to their Turkish counterparts regarding the next steps in the process for a solution in Cyprus.<sup>101</sup> Kissinger and his assistant secretary, Arthur Hartman, shuttled between Brussels, Athens, and Ankara aiming at agreeing on a mutually acceptable starting point on Cyprus. The Greek objective emphasised the need for a new ‘forum of negotiations’ this time in New York under the auspices of

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<sup>99</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, Schecter (reporter, Time Magazine), September 5, 1974, the relevant discussion to Karamanlis after Schecter left, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line; Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford and Secretary Kissinger, January 20, 1975, File scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at GRFPL, available on-line

<sup>100</sup> MFA, Meeting between the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of National Defense et.al. and the Cypriot government’s representatives: Speaker of the Parliament, Vice Speaker of the Parliament, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, et.al., February 14, 1975, Folder4B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>101</sup> MFA, Note Meeting Bitsios with Ambassador Kubisch, January, 3, 1975, Folder4B, CKP, CGKF

the UN general secretary.<sup>102</sup> The Greek intention was for the Turkish government to agree on a specific proposal in order to initiate the negotiations. The difficulties were apparent, particularly since the Turkish government had collapsed.

It was not just the Cyprus negotiations for which the Greek government valued the US administration's assistance. Athens considered the administration's contribution to the Aegean dispute as equally significant. The Greek cabinet concluded that the best way forward regarding the Aegean dispute was through international arbitration. Athens formally suggested to Ankara that their next step in settling the dispute was through the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague.<sup>103</sup> In accordance with the Court's charter, the two sides needed to agree to subject their dispute to the court's consideration and abide by its decision. Athens considered that Washington's explicit support of Greek moves and US pressure on Ankara to agree to the proposals would prevent an outright rejection from Ankara. Consequently, the Greek government requested that the US administration 'make a supportive demarche in Ankara' after the Greek proposal was submitted.<sup>104</sup> Kissinger, despite misgivings, argued that:

...even though introduction of the Aegean issue at this stage may take Ankara's focus off the Cyprus question as we go into the pre-February 5th period [embargo deadline] I believe that it would be misunderstood in Athens if we did not make a supportive demarche in Ankara. Moreover, we do favor any step which might contribute toward a peaceful resolution of the Aegean.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Bitsios, tel.AΣ1972 MFA to various posts, March 11, 1975, Folder4B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>103</sup> Prime Minister's Office, Cabinet Meeting at the Coordination Ministry on January 4, 1975, Folder 10B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>104</sup> Tel.018433,27.01.1975, Turkey-State Department Telegrams-From State Nodis (3), Box34, Presidential, GRFPL

<sup>105</sup> Kissinger, tel.018433 State to Ankara, January 27, 1975, Turkey-State Department Telegrams-From State Nodis (3), Box34, Presidential Country Files for the Middle East and South Asia, GRFPL.

This invitation for the US administration to be at the core of the Greek-Turkish disputes offered Washington an opportunity to advocate the negative implications for Greek interests from the impositions and preservation of the embargo. After February 1975, when Congress officially imposed the legislation, and following failed attempts to repeal or ease the provisions of the legislation, the administration altered its course of action. Repeatedly, the administration argued that its limited influence in Ankara was a result of the aid cut-off.<sup>106</sup> While visiting Athens in March, the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs stated that:

Kissinger's impression is that, regardless of the resumption of aid transfer to Turkey, US-Turkish relations have deteriorated in a permanent way as a result of the embargo, while the US Secretary considers this development as a bad omen for the Greek-Turkish relations as well.<sup>107</sup>

Ford followed a similar train of thought when he met Karamanlis for the first time in the margins of the heads of state 1975 NATO summit in Brussels. While the emphasis of the summit was on broader challenges the alliance faced, the leader of the Alliance and the Greek premier discussed bilateral questions in detail. Coming before a major effort in the House to repeal of embargo, the issue occupied a significant role in the more than one-hour long meeting between Ford and Karamanlis. Talking about the prospects for a Cyprus settlement and the role of the United States in the process, Ford used the opportunity to underscore the implications of the embargo. He argued that:

We feel that that action has been harmful to our ability to get concessions from the Turks. If we were able to reverse the action in the Senate, it is possible we will be able to change views in the House. It is my feeling that if Congress retains the limitation [embargo] our influence will be lessened.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Department of State, Briefing paper for HAK, September 1975, re Kissinger-Bitsios bilateral meeting during UNGA, Greece 1975 (5) WH, Country File, Box 9, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Greek: Prime Minister Karamanlis, Foreign Minister Bitsios, Ambassador Tzounis, Ambassador Molyviatis, US: The President, Secretary Kissinger, Lieutenant

In addition to the political support that the Greek government expected from the administration, Karamanlis and his ministers counted on practical support from the western superpower. One of the first actions of the Karamanlis government in January 1975 was to request the official resumption of US aid delivery to Greece which the military regime had denied.<sup>109</sup> The Greek government appeared interested in various types of US military and economic assistance for the on-going fiscal year, i.e. 1975. The Greek military submitted to the US ‘a list of equipment amounting to \$800 million, many items of which it wishes to obtain expeditiously from existing USG inventory’.<sup>110</sup> The Greek government also requested the financing for capital equipment, raw materials, and agricultural products through the Import-Export Bank and Commodity Credit Corporation as well as the US influence and support to Greek requests for loans from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).<sup>111</sup> The US government supported these Greek requests in the main.<sup>112</sup> The administration, as the secretary of state stated, considered that granting US aid to Greece would positively affect other aspects of their bilateral relationship. Such an example was in the negotiations concerning the US bases in Greece, as Kissinger stated to Ford:

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General Scowcroft, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Hartman, Brussels, May 29, 1975, file scanned from Memoranda of Conversation Collection at the GRFPL, available on-line.

<sup>109</sup> Valinakis, *Introduction*, 277.

<sup>110</sup> Springsteen, Memorandum for Lt. General Scowcroft, April 16, 1975, Greece, 1975(4) WH, Box9, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL; MFA, Note about US military aid as credit sales, November 21, 1974, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>111</sup> Springsteen, Memorandum for Lt. General Scowcroft, April 16, 1975, Greece, 1975(4) WH, Box9, Country File, NSC Europe, Canada and Ocean Affairs, Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL; MFA, Note of conversation between Greek official (signature only-unclear) with Ambassador Kubisch, March 11, 1975, Folder 4B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>112</sup> MFA, Note on meeting between Bitsios and Ambassador Kubisch, January, 15, 1975, Folder 4B, CKP, CGKF; Memorandum of Conversation, Bitsios and Kissinger, March 7, 1975, Folder 4B, Folder 4B, CKP, CGKF



Approval of a program that meets Greek requirements would have favorable impact on the base negotiations and facilities and the efforts to encourage Greece to return to full participation in NATO.<sup>113</sup>

Greece's participation in NATO justified the administration's decision to approve aid for it in September 1975 for the following fiscal year.<sup>114</sup> However, there was a significant difference between the amount that the administration intended to request Congress to approve for Greece and Greek expectations. The gap between the \$86 million in aid, either purchases or grant aid, that Washington suggested for 1976 was nowhere near the \$800 to \$850 million in grant aid that the Greek government requested.<sup>115</sup> The Greek government, close to the deadline for the congressional consideration of the aid provisions, stressed the significance it attached to it.<sup>116</sup>

The US administration again hinted at the implications arising from the embargo in this area. Assistant Secretary Hartman and Under Secretary Sisco both argued on separate occasions to their Greek counterparts along the lines that 'the issue of grants is under consideration but this issue is linked with the aid embargo on Turkey and our strategy towards Congress'.<sup>117</sup>

The US ambassador in Greece maintained the same line in his response to the repeated requests for clarification regarding the intended aid request that the US administration would put forward to Congress for Greece.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Memorandum for the President, 'US Economic and Military assistance for Greece', April 29 1975, Greece 1975 (4) WH, Country File, box9, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL

<sup>114</sup> Security Assistance Program-Greece, No date [probably September 1975], Greece 1975(5) WH, Box9, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>115</sup> Memorandum for the President, 'US Economic and Military assistance for Greece', April 29 1975, Greece 1975 (4) WH, Country File, box9, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL

<sup>116</sup> Prime Minister's office, Memorandum of Conversation between PM and the US Ambassador, March 31, 1975, Folder 4B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>117</sup> Memorandum of Conversation between Greek and US delegations, April 24, 1975, Folder 4B, CKP, CGKF, Alexandrakis, Tel. ΑΣ233 Washington to MFA, May 13, 1975, Folder 5B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>118</sup> Prime Minister office, Memorandum of conversation between the PM and the US Ambassador, March 31, 1975, Folder 4B, CKP, CGKF; Prime Minister's office, Note on follow-up conversation between PM and US Ambassador, April 7, 1975, Folder 4B, CKP, CGKF.

As the possibility of a partial repeal of the embargo became obvious, the US administration opted for vague statements regarding the US levels of economic and military aid. The US considerations ran along the lines that Athens could react strongly should the US appear to be approving the Greek request before the Congressional vote thereby interpreting the US stance as a bargaining chip. The White House instructed that: ‘until the embargo is lifted we want to avoid specifying what economic and military assistance we are prepared to provide to Greece’.<sup>119</sup> Kissinger was also prepared to argue that ‘once the embargo is lifted we will be in a position to provide economic and grant military assistance’.<sup>120</sup> The White House carefully considered another parameter regarding the public linkage of the two assistance programmes. The US Ambassador to Greece, Jack Kubisch, warned that ‘we should avoid giving any indication about our intentions until after Congress settles the Turkish military assistance problem’.<sup>121</sup> The conclusion drawn in Athens was that the US administration aimed to influence Congress and that would cause a strong reaction in Athens. All these parameters demonstrated the complexity of the relations between the Greek and the US governments.

### **The partial repeal of the embargo**

In October 1975, following a renewed and intense effort from the opponents of the embargo, the House approved a partial repeal of the arms embargo on Turkey. The provisions of the law were diluted but the embargo remained in place barring that Turkey continued not to qualify for free US aid. The government of Turkey would,

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<sup>119</sup> Briefing Paper, Greece-Bilateral Talks during UNGA, September 1975, (Objectives), Greece (5) WH, Box9, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFL.

<sup>120</sup> *ibid*, Talking points.

<sup>121</sup> Briefing Item, US Ambassador’s comments on Aid Mission to Greece, Greece 1975 (6) WH, Box9, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFL.

however, be able to access Foreign Military Sales credits as well as to purchase weapons in the free market.

The new law, though, provided significant benefits for Greece. The statute that amended the embargo's terms referred explicitly to the need for restraint from Ankara. More importantly, it mandated the president to work with the government of Greece 'to determine the most urgent needs of Greece for economic and military assistance'.<sup>122</sup> The following months, the US administration submitted its military assistance requests for Greece which were largely satisfactory to the Greek government. Finally, the partial repeal of the embargo required that the White House report to Congress every sixty days the steps taken to resolve the Cyprus problem. The provision entailed a continued US interest on the negotiation process.

In a testament of the United States's continued involvement in the Cyprus negotiations, Kissinger played a central role in the effort to reach an agreement regarding the next steps on Cyprus between the Greek Foreign Minister, Dimitri Bitsios and the Turkish Foreign Minister, İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil, in the December NATO ministerial meeting. In Brussels, the two ministers agreed on the 'Brussels Protocol', an informal roadmap about a process for the Cyprus negotiations. The agreement described the next steps for the Cyprus negotiations, emphasising both the role of United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim and the need for constructive dialogue both between the two Cypriot communities and the two capitals.<sup>123</sup>

The partial repeal of the embargo closed a period when the US administration focused its attention on its Eastern Mediterranean policy. During his last year in office, Ford's administration turned to alternative options to secure its bilateral relations with

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<sup>122</sup> Public Law 94-104, 94<sup>th</sup> Congress, October 6, 1975.

<sup>123</sup> Memorandum-Top Secret, Brussels December 12, 1975, Folder 5B, CKP, CGKF.

Turkey, rather than fighting the battle to remove the embargo fully. Similarly, the Greek government remained in close contact with the supporters of the embargo in Congress. Athens did not lose sight of the important role they had played and continued to play in Greece's interest in securing greater economic and military support from Washington.

The embargo, placed within the broader context of Greek-US relations in the aftermath of the events of 1974, reflects a substantial change in Greek strategy towards the United States. The United States remained the closest ally that Athens had and the Greek government evidently believed that the United States could play a significant role in Greek security. The Greek government's threat perception considered both the communist aggression and Turkish expansionism in the Aegean as danger for the country's sovereignty. In military terms, a sufficient Greek response to these threats necessitated both NATO's support in the event of a Warsaw Pact attack and US/NATO economic assistance for the modernisation of Greek military capabilities. In political terms, the United States could play an even greater role in the Greek-Turkish disputes. As chapter one demonstrated, only the US administration was ultimately willing to act as mediator between the Greek and Turkish governments. Moreover, from the Greek standpoint the Ford administration was in a potential position to persuade Ankara to concede on both the Cyprus negotiations and the Aegean dispute.

However, the Greek government also realised that merely expressing its request to Washington did not guarantee a satisfactory conclusion. The second invasion of Cyprus played a crucial role in this respect. Despite the US administration's assurances, the Turkish government expanded its occupation zone in Cyprus. Consequently the Greek government sought to ensure that Turkish power was checked

through other means. The congressional drive for the arms embargo offered this particular opportunity since it denied Ankara a significant source of military and economic aid. The Greek government's support of congressional upheaval amounted to an indirect conflict with the Ford administration. The indirect confrontation, though, did not seek to pacify anti-American sentiments in Greece: it was aimed at de facto forcing US foreign policy into opposition with Turkey. Hence, the Greek government primarily acted behind the scenes.

The US arms embargo challenged the balanced approach that Kissinger had been advocating since the Cyprus Crisis. The arms embargo on Turkey materialised the US condemnation of the Turkish actions in Cyprus. All Turkish governments maintained that Ankara's decision was fully justified, since it was in response to the Greek violations of the treaties.<sup>124</sup>

The Greek government succeeded in its first round of confrontation with the US administration. The arms embargo was imposed and lasted under its strictest provisions until October 1975. While congressmen supportive of the Greek played the central role in the imposition of the embargo, Athens's stance helped in securing votes in favour of the legislation. Eventually, the embargo was partially lifted allowing Turkey to access economic aid and military sales under specific provisions. However, the Greek government and its supporters in Congress were successful. The embargo remained as constant irritant in US-Turkish relations and continued to impose practical difficulties for the Turkish government. It was not long before the US administration would attempt to restore its balanced-approach strategy in Eastern Mediterranean. In 1976, the US administration focused on concluding a new US-Turkish Defence

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<sup>124</sup> Campany, *Turkey and the United States*, 55.

Cooperation Agreement with generous economic assistance for Ankara, at least from Athens's point of view. The US actions prompted another round of confrontation with Greece. The Greek government moved quickly, aiming at ensuring that Washington offered the same treatment to Athens.

## Chapter 3

### Practicing Confrontation: The DCAs and Aegean Crises

In 1976, the last year of President Ford's in office, two issues dominated Greek-US relations. The first concerned the new Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) between Athens and Washington regarding a new legal framework and new provisions for the US bases in Greece. The process was in line with the Greek government's announcements of August and December 1974 regarding the future of the US bases. The Greek government aimed at satisfying the Greek public's sentiments against the bases and remove controversial provisions benefiting the United States. In early 1976, Athens and Washington were close to signing the new agreement.

In March 1976, days before the conclusion of another round of Greek-US negotiations and a possible preliminary agreement between the two sides, the process took an unexpected turn. Washington and Ankara announced a new legal framework for the US bases on Turkish soil. The provisions of the US-Turkish Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) differed from the agreement that Washington had been negotiating with Athens. Moreover, its publicised element emphasised the provision of significant economic assistance to Turkey for the duration of the agreement, which the Greek agreement lacked. The Greek government interpreted that both elements favoured significantly Ankara. Hence, the Greek government sought and secured the US administration's commitment that any future Greek-US defence agreement would be comparable to the one agreed with Turkey.

The second issue that affected Greek-US relations came months later. In the summer of 1976, the Turkish government conducted underwater oil research in areas

near and within Greek territory. In Athens' view, the US administration failed to respond to these Turkish provocations adequately. The 1976 events mirrored the similar tensions of June 1974, and created additional instability in the region. The United States sought to contain the crisis between Athens and Ankara, maintaining a neutral position. The Greek effort to secure Washington's non-critical stance against Ankara failed. Athens turned to the UN, aiming at a resolution condemning the Turkish activities in the Aegean. In New York, the Greek delegation suspected the United States of working against the Greek aims.

The Greek response to the US-Turkish DCA and the Aegean Crisis of 1976 have been studied intensively, at least from the Greek perspective. Regarding the Turkish DCA, the dominant interpretation/narrative portrays its provisions as Kissinger's effort to circumvent the congressional Turkish arms embargo, in an apparent intention to protect the Turkish interests.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, scholars interpret Washington's position during the Aegean Crisis of 1976 as another demonstration of Kissinger's pro-Turkish stance.<sup>2</sup> This chapter does not intend to re-tell the same story.

This chapter demonstrates that Secretary Kissinger's interpretation of a balanced approach toward Greece and Turkey guided his actions toward both the US-Turkish DCA and the Aegean crisis. As chapter two highlighted, the partial repeal of the embargo continued to provide significantly more funds for Greece in comparison to Turkey. Hence, not only did the very existence of the embargo painted Ankara as the culprit of the Cyprus crisis, it also favoured Greece in practical terms. Secondly, as in the Cyprus crisis, the Aegean crisis represented a long-standing and complex

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<sup>1</sup> Constantine Svolopoulos, *Ελληνική Εξωτερική Πολιτική, 1945-1981* [Greek Foreign Policy, 1945-1981] (Athens: Estia, 2000, 8<sup>th</sup> edition), vol.2, 214.

<sup>2</sup> Sotiris Rizas, 'Managing a Conflict between Allies: United States Policy towards Greece and Turkey in Relation to the Aegean dispute, 1974-76', *Cold War History*, vol.9, No.3 (2009), 381.



dispute, which at its core was the interpretation of purely legal arrangements. Therefore, the US intervention, according to Kissinger, ought to exclude Washington's preference for either party. This strategy could ensure US and Western links with both NATO allies.

By contrast, the Greek expectations reflected the Greek view of the US role in the Greek-Turkish dispute and Athens' different interpretation of the balanced approach. The Greek government considered the US embargo on Turkey as progressively restoring the balance of power between the stronger Turkish forces and the weaker Greek forces. Secondly, the Greek government expected the United States to prevent Turkish actions threatening of Greek sovereignty. The different interpretations created tension between Athens and Washington.

This chapter presents first the Greek-US negotiations about a new agreement for the US bases. It details both sides' goals and considerations regarding the developments. The Greek records of the bases negotiations provide an important insight in the bilateral contacts, which is missing considering the declassification status of the US records.

Secondly, the chapter focuses on the 1976 Aegean crisis and its impact on Greek-US cooperation. The focus is placed on UN proceedings, which currently eludes scholarship. The chapter in particular underlines Kissinger's efforts to ensure a common Western front toward Athens and Ankara, as demonstration of both allies' significance for the alliance. Finally, the chapter provides an overview of the Greek approach toward the Ford administration, which is currently missing. Based on the events of 1976 the Greek government concluded its inability to influence Ford and Kissinger to adopt a position favourable to Athens. Hence, during the 1976 election

year, the Greek government emphasised the need to limit its links with the Republican administration hoping for a new Democratic administration with a more favourable agenda on issues of Greek interest.

### **Greek negotiations, Turkish agreement**

In early 1976, the negotiations between the Greek government and the US administration regarding the US bases in Greek territory led to tension between Athens and Washington. The confrontation was not a product of disagreements related to Greek-US negotiations. Athens and Washington clashed instead over what the Greek government considered to be a surprise announcement of a new US-Turkish Defence Cooperation Agreement.

As mentioned above, when the Greek Prime Minister presented his government's policies, he referred to new arrangements about the US bases in Greece. Karamanlis underlined the need for bilateral negotiations regarding the number of bases and their future status that ought to reflect present-day realities and needs. The negotiations began officially in February 1975 and, as the Greek press statement hinted, these aimed at reviewing and updating the legal framework and the scope of the bases' operations and activities.<sup>3</sup> Ambassador Petros Kalogeras, of the Greek Foreign Ministry, headed the Greek negotiating team, while the US delegation was headed by the minister counsellor in American Embassy in Athens, Monteagle Stearns. During the following year, the two delegations convened frequently in both Athens and Washington, while sub-committees worked in parallel on specific subjects.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Press Statement regarding the negotiation process regarding the US bases, no date, Folder 19B, Constantine Karamanlis Papers [hereafter CKP], Constantine G. Karamanlis Foundation [hereafter CGKF].

<sup>4</sup> The relevant US records remain classified. The Karamanlis Papers provide an insight to the negotiations and the specific, purely technical negotiations, although they are far from complete. It is

The two sides followed different tactics to secure their goals regarding the US bases. The US administration insisted on maintaining 'home porting' rights for the Sixth Fleet ships stationed in Greece when necessary only to accept the abolishment of this provision in exchange for other privileges.<sup>5</sup> The Greek government, meanwhile, insisted on limiting the number of bases while emphasising the need for greater national control and involvement over the US activities taking place on them, which was its key aim.<sup>6</sup>

By the first quarter of 1976, the two delegations had achieved significant progress. Athens and Washington appeared ready to conclude a preliminary agreement. More importantly, Athens and Washington agreed on the form of the new agreement which required concessions from both sides. The Greek government requested an 'umbrella agreement' or a 'framework agreement' which, according to the Greek terminology, covered overall aspects of the military facilities.<sup>7</sup> Specific issues related to the bases, such as telecommunications or the responsibilities of the Greek base commanders, to name a few, were to be dealt with in annexes attached to the 'umbrella agreement'. This legal aspect was important for the Greek government. Separating the main provisions and the legal framework of the new bases' agreement from purely technical and military-sensitive issues allowed the Greek government to fulfil its constitutional obligations regarding the ratification of the agreement.<sup>8</sup> As the

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a conscious decision not to provide explicit details of the agreements here given this thesis' focus on the political and diplomatic aspects of the negotiations rather than technical details.

<sup>5</sup> Memorandum from A. Denis Clift of the National Security Council Staff to Secretary of State Kissinger Washington, April 3, 1975, Laurie Van Hook and Edward C. Keefer (eds.) *Foreign Relations of United States* [hereafter *FRUS*], vol. XXX, Greece; Cyprus; Turkey, 1973-1976 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2007), doc. 41.

<sup>6</sup> Kalogeras, Agenda for the third phase of the negotiations, October 17, 1975, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>7</sup> Memorandum from A. Denis Clift of the National Security Council Staff to Secretary of State Kissinger Washington, February 26, 1976, *FRUS*, vol. XXX, doc. 60.

<sup>8</sup> Kalogeras, Note re ratification requirements, March 5, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

head of the legal service in the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted, the new Greek constitution mandated that in any agreement providing for the presence of foreign military forces in the Greek territory required parliamentary approval, as did the specific issues related with the legal provisions, such as taxation of the products on the US bases.<sup>9</sup> This approach, according to the Greek negotiating team, allowed for a relatively accelerated process since the two sides could sign the main provision while the negotiations of more controversial issues could continue.<sup>10</sup> Once agreed, these texts could then be attached to the main agreement without the need for parliamentary ratification. The Greek government and the Greek Foreign Minister personally had been insisting on the need to expedite the negotiations and conclude the agreements 'as soon as possible'.<sup>11</sup>

This approach seemed the most suitable for the Greeks but the US administration had its reservations.<sup>12</sup> The constitutional requirements regarding an 'umbrella agreement' exceeded the President's executive power and required congressional ratification. The process was not the simple one that the Greeks had envisaged.

When the Greek representative raised the issue of the Greek ratification process, Stearns and Ambassador Kubisch counter-argued that congressional approval depended on Greece meeting obligations under US law that required that the Greek

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<sup>9</sup> Oikonomidis, Note re the ratification process of the Greek-US arrangements and agreements currently under negotiation, March 4, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF;

<sup>10</sup> Memorandum From A/ Denis Clift of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft), 'US-Greek Bases Negotiations-Status Report' Washington, February 26, 1976, *FRUS*, vol.XXX, doc.60.

<sup>11</sup> Kubisch, tel. 2007 Athens, US Embassy Athens to SecState, March 3, 1976, Greece- State Department Telegrams (12) To SECSTATE-NODIS, Presidential Country files for the Middle East and South East Asia, Gerald R. Ford Library [hereafter GRFL].

<sup>12</sup> Kalogeras, Recommendations regarding the third phase of the Greek-US negotiations, October 17, 1975, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

government earmarked a minimum level of forces to NATO for the protection of special armaments, probably implying nuclear weapons, that were to be stored in the bases.<sup>13</sup> In US terminology, these forces were called ‘units identified as directly supporting special weapons’ and called for an explicit number and type of forces to be assigned for them. This requirement was problematic for Greece since it had withdrawn from the Alliance’s integrated command. The Greek government accepted the requirement and presented the forces that Athens intended to provide with the hope of a positive response from Washington and a conclusion for the issue.<sup>14</sup>

It was not an easy decision for the Greek government. The Greek Minister of National Defence agreed reluctantly, since the earmarked units belonged to country’s most modern forces.<sup>15</sup> The national control over all Greek forces was at the core of the Greek withdrawal from NATO’s military command. Therefore, the Greek government clearly considered the decision as a great sacrifice within the broader Greek defence strategy towards Turkey, which remained unclear what the Alliance’s response would be in the event of a Greek-Turkish war. It was for this reason that the Greek government underlined that in the event of Greece facing an attack not covered by NATO’s treaty, these forces were to return to national control immediately.

The Greek proposals however were insufficient and did not meet the minimum congressional requirement.<sup>16</sup> The US administration displayed flexibility however and

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<sup>13</sup> Kalogeras, Note about meeting between General Director of Greek Foreign Ministry and the US ambassador and the head of the US delegation, February 16, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>14</sup> Kalogeras, Note re earmarking, March 2, 1976, File 29(a), Evangelos Averoff Papers [hereafter EAP], CGKF.

<sup>15</sup> Kalogeras, Note re Averoff views, February 18, 1976, File 29(a), EAP, CGKF.

<sup>16</sup> Kalogeras, Note [regarding meeting with Ambassador Kubisch and Stearns], March 12, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

accepted the Greek proposals for the time being.<sup>17</sup> Based on their conciliatory stance, it is clear that both sides wanted to reach an agreement.

Having overcome a major milestone, Athens and Washington appeared to be closer to concluding the bases agreement. In mid-March the NSC reported to President Karamanlis' satisfaction with the US position. A US source quoted Karamanlis as praising 'the U.S. for its "better understanding than anyone could expect" of Athens' positions on NATO membership and U.S. bases in Greece, and added that the U.S. presence in Europe is vital to European security.'<sup>18</sup> The climate was clearly favourable. In late March the Greek delegation for the US-Greek bases negotiations arrived at Washington for a final overview of the agreements.<sup>19</sup> Shortly afterwards, the two sides intended to formally conclude the 'umbrella' agreement.

The two sides had come a long way and appeared to have settled crucial issues, which had legal, political and domestic implications for both sides. The negotiations, particularly during the final stretch, made clear both Athens' and Washington's limitations. For the United States, having demonstrated flexibility, the final agreement during the Washington talks was very much a foregone conclusion. However, along the path towards a conclusion, new developments opened another round of tough negotiations.

While the Greek delegation was in the United States, the US administration informed the Greek Embassy about the conclusion of the US-Turkish Defence

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Scowcroft, Memorandum for the President, March 18, 1976, Presidential Daily Briefings 3/18/76, Box 13, NSA White House Situation Room, Presidential Daily Briefings, 1974-77, GRFPL.

<sup>19</sup> Dimitris Bitsios, *Πέρα από τα σύνορα, 1974-1977 [Beyond the borders, 1974-1977]*, (Athens: Estia, 1983, second edition), 210.

Cooperation Agreement.<sup>20</sup> The message to Ambassador Alexandrakis came mere hours before the public announcement. The most striking and controversial provision of the US-Turkish agreement was the provision for up to \$1 billion in aid to Turkey during the four-year-long period of the agreement, which subsequently became a focal point for the press.<sup>21</sup>

In parallel to the Greek-US negotiations, Washington had been in similar talks regarding the US bases in Turkey but kept the two separate.<sup>22</sup> The Greek Ambassador explained to Foreign Minister Bitsios that, in his view, the agreement was Kissinger's effort to restore US relations with Turkey.<sup>23</sup> This fact probably explained the excessive, in Greece's opinion, provisions of the agreement. The Ford administration had long been concerned about the long-term prospects of US-Turkish relations. The embargo, despite its partial repeal on October 1975, remained in place and undermined the balanced approach between Athens and Ankara that Kissinger had been advocating. The partial repeal had not offered any positive response from Ankara regarding the status of US bases in Turkey which remained closed. In October 1975, Kissinger sent a message to his Turkish counterpart, Foreign Minister Çağlayangil, which reflected the administration's expectations and disappointment, arguing that:

With regard to the Turkish-US security relationship and the status of common defence installations in Turkey I am disappointed and frankly surprised that the National Security Council [of Turkey] did not find a way for these installations to be reactivated on a provisional basis while new arrangements are being negotiated. You will recall that, in his letter to Prime Minister Demirel, President Ford expressed hope that this could be done. Indeed, it was the expectation of the Congress, shared by the

<sup>20</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. 382/E.X., Washington to Ministry of Foreign Affairs [hereafter MFA], March 27, 1976, File 29(a), EAP, CGKF.

<sup>21</sup> 'Ένα δισεκατομμύριο η Τουρκία από την Αμερική [Turkey gets one billion from America]', *To Vima*, March, 27, 1976, 1. 'Η Ελλάδα διέκοψε τις συνομιλίες για τις Βάσεις των Η.Π.Α. [Greece has suspended the negotiations about the USA bases]' *To Vima*, March 30, 1976, 1.

<sup>22</sup> Monteagle Stearns, *Entangled Allies: U.S. Policy Toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus* (New York, NY: Council of Foreign Relations Press, 1992), 42.

<sup>23</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. 392 E.X., Washington to MFA, March 29, 3, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF.

Administration, that after the important step toward lifting the embargo taken by the Congress, it would be possible for the Turkish government to take a reciprocal step in connection with the reactivation of these installations.<sup>24</sup>

The administration concluded that ‘the future of the US-Turkish relations will depend’ on a new agreement regarding the US facilities in Turkey.<sup>25</sup> The focus at the State Department had been on reaching an agreement with the government of Turkey as means of repairing bilateral relations and restoring US accession to the military bases. The pace of the negotiations was rapid: the two sides were ready to sign the new US-Turkish Defence Cooperation Agreement by early 1976. Between 24 and 26 March, Kissinger and Çağlayangil resolved their outstanding issues in Washington.<sup>26</sup> The following day, to Greek astonishment, the agreement was announced.

### **The Greek reaction**

The Greek government reacted strongly by announcing the suspension of negotiations and recalling the Greek delegation to Athens for further consultations.<sup>27</sup> In direct contacts, the Greeks emphasised their surprise about the announcement, but the White House robustly rebuffed their allegations.<sup>28</sup> Kissinger stated to Ambassador

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<sup>24</sup> Ingersoll, tel. 251020 State, 22.10.1975 to Athens, Folder Turkey-State Department Telegrams, From SecState-NODIS(6), Presidential, Box34, GRFPL.

<sup>25</sup> Paper Prepared in Response to National Security Study Memorandum 222, December 15, 1975, *FRUS*, vol. XXX, doc. 56.

<sup>26</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Foreign Minister Caglayangil and Secretary Kissinger, March 24, 1976 doc.240, and Memorandum of Conversation, Foreign Minister Caglayangil and Secretary Kissinger, March 24, 1976, *FRUS*, vol.XXX, doc.242.

<sup>27</sup> The Situation Room, Memorandum for Gen. Scowcroft, Greece ‘suspends’ bases negotiations with US, March 31, 1976, Evening Reports from NSC Staff, Box 12, WH Situation Room, Evening Reports form NSC Staff 1976-1977, GRFPL.

<sup>28</sup> G.C Flynn, [Possibly Briefing Item] Greeks suspend Bases negations with US, March 30, 1976, Greece 1976 (2) WH, Box 9, Country File, NSC Europe, Canada and Ocean Affairs, Staff Files 1974-1977 [hereafter NSC Staff Files], NSA, CRFPL.



Alexandrakis that ‘we have made clear that we were negotiating with Turkey. [...] I cannot accept the proposition that this constitutes anything new’.<sup>29</sup>

The announcement of the US-Turkish agreement placed the Greek government in a particularly sensitive and vulnerable position both regarding its Greek domestic politics and the security doctrine that it had been pursuing. News about the US-Turkish agreement received front-page coverage in Athens’ dailies. The opposition criticised both the US and Karamanlis. The main opposition leader, George Mavros, emphasised the ‘need for a new approach towards the Greek foreign policy and the establishment of a common domestic front’.<sup>30</sup> Unsurprisingly, the left demanded radical change in Greek-US relations. PASOK’s Papandreou called on the Greek government to ‘abandon the illusion that America is a friendly state and that NATO offers any support to our country’.<sup>31</sup> The announcement of the Turkish bases agreement, or DCA, came at a critical juncture for Karamanlis’ pro-Western policies.

In the previous months, Karamanlis’s key foreign policies had faced setbacks. On 29 January 1976 the European Commission issued its Opinion regarding Greece’s application for EEC accession. The Opinion was less forthcoming than the Greek government had anticipated. While the Greek application was welcomed, the Opinion underlined the challenges that the Community would face following Greece’s accession and recommended a pre-accession period.<sup>32</sup> The opposition called for

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<sup>29</sup> Memorandum of conversation, The Secretary and Ambassador Alexandrakis, March 31, 1976, FRUS, vol. XXX, doc.62.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Εγγυήσεις στο Αιγαίο και ανάλογη βοήθεια θα απαιτήσει η Ελλάδα [Greece will demand guarantees in the Aegean and similar aid], April 1, 1976, *To Vima*, 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Eirini Karamouzi, *Greece, the EEC, and the Cold War, 1974-1979: The Second enlargement* (London: Palgrave Macmillan), 46.

abandoning efforts to enter the community.<sup>33</sup> In mid-February, the Greek government submitted its views to Brussels regarding future relations between Greece and NATO which were received with similar highly critical tones by the opposition. It is reasonable to conclude that the Greek government needed a victory which justified its pro-western foreign policy to its domestic audience.

Against this inflamed atmosphere at home, the Greek government maintained a careful stance as it studied the US-Turkish agreement. Karamanlis stressed the need for a 'cautious and calm' response to the events while the government was working on a response to the announcement.<sup>34</sup> Karamanlis publicly stressed his government's intention to utilise political and economic means to restore the balance of power with Turkey while adding that the Greek people 'will not be allowed to face offence and humiliation'.<sup>35</sup> The Greek government needed a strong response to the Agreement to calm domestic reactions. Athens considered the challenges that the agreement presented for Greece in foreign and security policy terms carefully.

The surprise that the Greek government expressed in its initial reaction did not necessarily mean that it was actually surprised by the conclusion of the agreement. Most likely Athens was astonished by the provisions of the US-Turkish DCA. At first glance, Greek resentment accentuated the impressive provisions of US aid for Turkey. Existing scholarship stresses the economic benefits for Turkey and emphasises the long-term commitment of the US administration towards providing aid to Ankara in relation to the US bases. This analysis interprets the action as an indirect effort to

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<sup>33</sup> 'Η Εκτελεστική Επιτροπή της ΕΟΚ εισηγήθηκε αναβολή των συνομιλιών για άμεση ένταξη της Ελλάδος [The Commission recommended postponement of the accession talks with Greece]', *To Vima*, January 30, 1976, 2.

<sup>34</sup> 'Οι Αντιδράσεις στην Ελλάδα [The Greek reactions]', *To Vima*, April 2, 1976, 2.

<sup>35</sup> Bitsios, tel. ΑΣ245, MFA to Washington, April 2, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF.

repeal the embargo.<sup>36</sup> The text the Director of the Office of Greek Affairs in the Department of State, John Day, handed to the Greek Ambassador stated that the US government agreed that it:

shall furnish defense support consisting of grants, credits and loan guarantees [sic] of 1.000.000.000 during the first four years this agreement shall remain in effect.<sup>37</sup>

This amount of military and economic assistance was impressive. As Defence Minister Averoff had argued a year earlier, Greece required significant funds in hard currency, mainly US dollars, for military orders which strained the national budget.<sup>38</sup> The same limitations had been imposed on Turkey and access to this amount of US aid improved Turkish military capabilities dramatically. During the previous months the Greek government had secured significant levels of military and economic assistance for the 1976 fiscal year.<sup>39</sup> The Greek foreign ministry diligently compared this amount to the provisions for Turkey, noting Ankara's inability to access US funds due to the limitations imposed by the embargo.<sup>40</sup> The Greek government considered the arms embargo on Turkey as an opportunity to modernise its armed forces, while the Turkish government was unable to do so. The new agreement though, curtailed this opportunity.

The previous months, both the House and the Senate considered the appropriations requests that reaffirmed the embargo on certain types of US aid to

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<sup>36</sup> Svolopoulos, *Greek Foreign Policy*, 214; Ioannis Valinakis, *Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική εξωτερική πολιτική [Introduction to the Greek Foreign Policy 1949-1988]*, (Thessaloniki: Paratiritis, 1989, 4<sup>th</sup> edition 2003), 278.

<sup>37</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. 382/E.X. Washington to MFA, March 27, 1976, File 29(b) EAP, CGKF.

<sup>38</sup> Averoff, Letter to the Prime Minister re 'Some basic observations and suggestions regarding the Greek defense problem', AP IIP.40279, May 9<sup>th</sup> 1975, File 27, EAP, CGKF

<sup>39</sup> Smith, Justification for Greece, November 11, 1976, Greece 1975 (8) WH, Box 9, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>40</sup> Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Note re US aid to Greece and Turkey FY1976, no date, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

Turkey. The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations suggested that the provisions of the embargo could be extended to 'credit sales' added to the 'grant aid' to Turkey.<sup>41</sup> However, the provisions of military aid or 'security supporting aid', terms which are used interchangeably in the records, for 1976 reveal a crucial element for Greek considerations. Until early March 1976, the Greek government, based on what the relevant committees and both Houses had voted for, expected aid amounting to between \$200 and \$250 million, under various programmes. In contrast, aid for Turkey had amounted to \$155-175 million with a portion between \$25 million to \$50 million affected by the restrictions of the embargo.<sup>42</sup> The announced DCA agreement provided additional funds to Turkey and was linked to the operation of US bases in Turkey. Even if some of its provisions fell into categories that the embargo explicitly prohibited, Ankara expected to receive considerably more aid than Greece in the following years. The Turkish DCA did not provide anything for Turkey immediately. As with the Greek 'umbrella' agreement, the DCA required congressional approval. Greek concern emphasised long-term implications.

Regarding the economic aid for Turkey, the Greek Foreign Ministry noted a detail that Athens considered crucial. The US-Turkish DCA provisions of aid represented 'appropriations' and as such did not require the first stage of debate in Congress, i.e. 'authorization'. In contrast, Greece, since there were no provisions of aid, had to go through a longer congressional process.<sup>43</sup> Given the Greek cooperation with Congress, Athens welcomed maximum congressional involvement. The debates

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<sup>41</sup> Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Note regarding the US aid to Greece and Turkey for FY 1976, for the Prime Minister's office, amongst others, February 3, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>42</sup> Fokas, Note based on Alexandrakis tel. 64/28.2.1976 from Washington re aid to Greece and Turkey, March 3, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF, see in conjunction with Note dated February 19, 1976.

<sup>43</sup> Tzounis, Note for the Prime Minister, March 29, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF.

over US aid in both the House of Representatives and the Senate offered the opportunity for a ‘bargain’ which could reduce or increase the levels of aid that destined for each country. The Turkish DCA eliminated such opportunities regarding the US aid for Turkey.

From this point of view, Karamanlis’s warning that the agreement upset the balance between Greek and the Turkish forces was justified. It was a balance that the Greek government had sought to establish and it contradicted the reality that Greece was receiving greater aid. It was another demonstration that the balance the Greek government envisaged improved capabilities for Greece against Turkey’s perceived military supremacy.

Apart from the profound economic advantages that the new agreement offered to Ankara, Athens focused on the specific differences between the two proposed Agreements. Working groups made up of both legal and military experts in the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Defence meticulously studied the details of the Turkish agreement and compared them with the Greek agreement.

Based on this detailed analysis of the US-Turkish DCA, the Greek government concluded that it offered the Turkish forces benefits far beyond the economic ones. The Greek analysis of the new agreement above all stressed its imbalanced provisions in favour of Turkey. The most profound example was the level of control that Turkey gained over US bases under the new agreement. The Greek analysis stressed the ‘bold emphasis the agreement offered with respect of the Turkish sovereign rights’ over the bases and Turkish control over and involvement in activities of these installations, which was profound based on various provisions.<sup>44</sup> Related to this aspect were the

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<sup>44</sup> Machairitsas and Andrikos, Brief Note (about US-Turkish DCA), April 5, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

provisions regarding the renewal or termination of the agreement and, which, again, based on Greek considerations favoured the Turkish government. Under the DCA, either side maintained the right to request the termination of the agreement or to object to its renewal. Regardless of the fate of the agreement in this case, any sales of military equipment or services which were already agreed to had to be delivered to meet any economic obligations.<sup>45</sup> The Greek experts concluded that such provisions amounted to the ‘institutionalisation of Turkish blackmail’.<sup>46</sup>

The Greek diplomatic services similarly emphasised the benefits for Turkish military personnel which exceeded by far any similar provisions in the Greek agreements as they stood. Turkish involvement in the bases’ activities entailed the need to train relevant personnel. For example, ‘technical operations and related maintenance and activities of the authorized installations shall be carried out jointly by Turkish and United States personnel’.<sup>47</sup> By definition, according to the Greek diplomats who studied the documents, the Turkish personnel, to perform such roles, would require training which in turn would provide for the development of the technical skills of the Turkish personnel.

The Greek Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Tzounis, drew attention to another consideration which Ambassador Kalogeras overlooked: the Turkish military gained the right to ‘fully share’ with the US forces ‘raw data’ collected at the bases.<sup>48</sup> These provisions exemplified what Tzounis had described to

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<sup>45</sup> Machairitsas and Andrikos, Information Note (detailed about US-Turkish DCA), April 5, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>46</sup> Machairitsas and Andrikos, Brief Note (about US-Turkish DCA), April 5, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>47</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. 382/E.X. Washington to MFA, March 27, 1976, which quotes the Turkish DCA as distributed to the Greek embassy by the State Department, File 29, EAP, CGKF.

<sup>48</sup> Machairitsas and Andrikos, Brief Note (about US-Turkish DCA), April 5, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

the prime minister as far broader than anything the Greek government had so far secured in its agreements.<sup>49</sup> Based on the Greek comments, the almost scandalous preferential status that the Turkish government gained over the bases with this agreement was a mystery. Kalogeras discussed the matter at the French Embassy in Athens. His contact, M. Deshors [only mentioned as Monsieur Deshors-next to impossible to find who he was], said that on its part, Quai d'Orsay was equally perplexed about the impact of the US-Turkish Agreement and would investigate the matter in Washington. Based on Kalogeras' note of their conversation, the French diplomats in Washington initially considered as a possible explanation of these provisions that the Ford administration had received Turkish commitment on concessions on Cyprus or the Aegean. After the French raised the issue with the US Department of State, it was clear that no specifics were agreed prior to the conclusion of the US-Turkish DCA between Kissinger and Çağlayangil.<sup>50</sup>

The Greek government therefore faced a complex problem. The Turkish Agreement brought anti-American rhetoric and pressures to the forefront. The Greek government needed a victory that would allow Karamanlis and his aides to pursue and justify their pro-Western foreign policies. On the other hand, the Agreement represented a direct challenge to Greek security doctrine, since it clearly empowered Turkey in multiple ways. The agreement therefore minimised any gains the Greeks had achieved from arms embargo on Turkey and not only in terms of economic aid. It was clear that the Greek government needed a strategy to ensure the same treatment from the United States which would benefit the government both domestically and in terms of security. To secure the Ford Administration's concession in this respect, the

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<sup>49</sup> Tzounis, Note for the Prime Minister, March 29, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>50</sup> Kalogeras, Note, April 8, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF.

Greek government applied pressure by capitalising on the element of surprise in the announcement.

### **Making the most of it!**

The Greek government decided to take advantage of the development and place the US administration in a defensive position. As the US ambassador in Greece, Ambassador Kubisch, noted in meeting at the Department of State, Karamanlis ‘will get more than he expected from the United States a month ago. He is exploiting the situation’.<sup>51</sup>

From the first informal announcement, the Greek government confronted the administration’s decision using harsh rhetoric. In his first message to the Department of State regarding the Turkish agreement, Karamanlis characterised it as ‘upsetting the balance of power between the two countries, which is already in Turkey’s favour, and as such it is possible [for the agreement] to be seen as a hostile act against Greece’.<sup>52</sup> Karamanlis’ choice of words struck a chord with Assistant Secretary Harman, but the Greek Ambassador emphasised the complications the US-Turkish agreement created. In his messages to both President Ford and Vice President Rockefeller, Karamanlis did not repeat the same charges but emphasised that the US-Turkish Agreement caused severe implications for Greece and endangered peace in the region.<sup>53</sup> Karamanlis, thus,

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<sup>51</sup> Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation, The Secretary, Sisco, Hartman, Kubisch, William L. Eagleton (not to be confused with Senator Thomas Eagleton), April 14, 1976, Greece, 1976 (6) WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>52</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI ΔΚ 2529 Foreign Ministry to Washington, March 28, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF; Alexandrakis, tel. 392 E.X., Washington to Athens, March 29, 3, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>53</sup> Karamanlis Message to Ford, April 1, 1976, Constantine Svolopoulos, *Κωνσταντίνος Καραμανλής: αρχείο, γεγονότα, και κείμενα* (Constantine Karamanlis: Archive, events and texts)[hereafter *Karamanlis*] (Kathimerini: Athens, 2005) Vol.9, 179; Bitsios, tel. YOI ΔΚ 2536 MFA to Washington, April 5, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF.



underlined the need that the presidency supported the on-going efforts to defuse the what for the Greeks amounted to a crisis.

Despite the careful tone in the messages to Washington, Karamanlis sent three identical messages to Prime Minister Wilson, Chancellor Schmidt, and President Giscard, where he used strong language. Karamanlis argued that the Agreement made it seem that the US government 'rewards the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and encourages Turkish aggression against Greece' and it created significant implications both domestically and in Greece's international relations.<sup>54</sup> The US administration was fully aware of the Greek moves and the NSA underlined the Greek expectation that the Nine would convey Athens' concerns to the United States.<sup>55</sup>

The Greek government emphasised the impact of the agreement and aimed to secure not just a similar agreement but also a public demonstration that the US remained committed to Greek interests. The Greek government, as it explained to the US administration, was facing a backlash on its pro-West and pro-US foreign policies.<sup>56</sup>

Athens' actions placed the Ford administration in a weak position since it had to respond positively to the Greek requests. The administration aimed to restore relations with Greece, which had been 'strained since the signing of the US-Turkish defense [sic] accord' and hoped that by doing so it would 'remove a major obstacle for the Congress in dealing favorably with the US-Turkish defense agreement'.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Karamanlis Messages to Giscard, Schmidt, Wilson, April 1, 1976, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 179.

<sup>55</sup> Memorandum for Brent Scowcroft, subject 'Reply to PM Karamanlis of Greece', April 5, 1976, Greece 1976 (3) WH, Box 10, Country files, NSC Staff Files, GRFPL.

<sup>56</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI ΔK 2529 Foreign Ministry to Washington, March 28, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>57</sup> Scowcroft, Meeting with Foreign Minister Bitsios of Greece, April 15, 1976, Purpose, Background, Talking Points -The President Has Seen, Greece, 1976 (3) WH, Box 10, country file, NSC Staff for Europe, Canada and Ocean Affairs, Country Files, GRFPL.

While Kissinger, as mentioned above, rejected the Greek allegations about the sudden announcement of the agreement, in practice his conciliatory stance was evident. Since 27 March, when Day and Eagleton from the Greek desk in the Department of State had first presented the Turkish agreement to the Greek Ambassador, Alexandrakis met almost every day with either Hartman or Kissinger to design the appropriate response together. It was agreed at an early stage that the response was to be divided into three elements.

First, Washington conceded on the need for an agreement with Greece that was comparable to the Turkish agreement. While the two negotiating teams were working towards updating the existing agreement in this direction, it was agreed that a public demonstration of the US administration's intention to treat the Greek government in a similar manner to that of Turkey was necessary. Athens and Washington concluded the much publicised 'principles of a new US-Greek security agreement' document that described the main elements of the future agreement. The document described the parity between the Greek and the Turkish agreements particularly in terms of aid. Given the impact of the economic support the US administration offered to Ankara, the Greek government insisted on the need for a similar amount of aid. Washington accepted the Greek request, insisting though on calling the amount of aid 'comparable'.<sup>58</sup> The discussion eventually led to the establishment of the so-called 7:10 ration in the US military and economic aid provided each year to Greece and Turkey.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. 403 E.X., April 1, 1976, Washington to MFA, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>59</sup> A detailed analysis and explanation from his view of this 7:10 ration can be found in Monteagle Stearns, *Entangled Allies: U.S. Policy toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus* (New York: Council of Foreign Relations Press, 1992), 40.

Secondly, the two sides agreed to exchange views about current developments via letters. The Greek Foreign Minister posed specific questions to which Kissinger replied. The two sides worked together on the texts for the exchange. The Greek government insisted that the US letter include a strong reference that condemned any future Turkish acts of aggression in the Aegean.<sup>60</sup> This insistence grew out of a statement Kissinger made to this effect to the Greek ambassador.<sup>61</sup> Kissinger attempted to back away from this view by arguing that it constituted a ‘security treaty’ and thus a complex legal issue but the Greek government remained adamant about its inclusion.<sup>62</sup> The Greek government managed to impose its view but the wording was carefully crafted to demonstrate a balanced approach between Athens and Ankara. The second paragraph in Kissinger’s response to Bitsios’ letter became another much publicised documents and has since been frequently cited. The relevant section reads:

You have asked about our attitude toward the resolution of disputes in Eastern Mediterranean and particularly in the Aegean area. In this regard I should like to reiterate our conviction that these disputes must be settled through peaceful procedures and that each side should avoid provocative actions. We have previously stated our belief that neither side should seek a military solution to these disputes. This remains the United States policy. Therefore the United States will actively and unequivocally oppose either side’s seeking a military solution and will make a major effort to prevent such a course of action.<sup>63</sup>

Kissinger also sent a letter to US Congressman, Lee Hamilton (IN-D), member of the House Committee of Foreign Relations, in which he described the US policy towards Eastern Mediterranean, the reasons for the conclusion of the US-Turkish DCA, while

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<sup>60</sup> Alexandrakis, quoting Bitsios summary of his discussion with Kissinger, tel. 458E.X. Washington to MFA, April 13, 1976, Folder 25B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>61</sup> Memorandum of conversation, The Secretary and Ambassador Alexandrakis, March 31, 1976, *FRUS*, vol.XXX, doc.62.

<sup>62</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI 305, April 3, 1976, MFA to Washington, April 3, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF .

<sup>63</sup> Stearns, *Entangled Allies*, 160.

it emphasised Washington's opposition to the use of military assistance for other than defence purposes.<sup>64</sup> The latter was the key issue upon which Congress based the arms embargo on Turkey. Hamilton was expected to make the letter public. In this letter, Kissinger described the administration's commitment to the interests of Greece and Cyprus.

On 15 April 1976, the Greek Foreign Minister visited Washington and signed the 'principles' agreement, a gesture that added what Hartman described as a dramatic element.<sup>65</sup> This visit was a compromise on Athens' behalf since it had had previously been proposed that the US secretary should visit the Greek capital.

These developments took place less than two weeks and were completed in time for Karamanlis's appearance before his parliament to discuss recent occurrences. On 17 April Karamanlis not only defended his foreign policy, he also confronted the notion that the western powers could 'mistreat Greece and benefit Turkey', particularly highlighting that Congress 'in order to support Cyprus imposed the arms embargo on Turkey'.

Karamanlis' speech in the Greek parliament publicly revealed the broader considerations of the Greek government regarding both the Greek and the Turkish DCAs. In a revealing instance, Karamanlis stressed that:

The argument that thanks to this agreement [Greek DCA] the congressional ratification of the Turkish DCA becomes easier lacks basis. Congress as a sovereign institution retains the ability to reject either the Turkish or even both DCAs if it considers these agreements are incompatible with the American or the Cyprus interests. The Greek government would not oppose to the latter development. If Congress were

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<sup>64</sup> There is no copy available in the US archives but the Greek prime minister retained a copy in his records. See US administration's Letter to Congressman regarding the US-Turkish Agreement, no date, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>65</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Greece: Ambassador Alexandrakis, Mr Tsilis, United States: The Secretary, Under Secretary Sisco, Assistant Secretary Hartman, Country Director Eagleton, April 1, 1976, at 3:45 p.m., Greece 1976 (5) WH, Cpontry File, Box 10, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

to reject both agreements, the condition [benefits] regarding Greece and Turkey would have been the same as before.<sup>66</sup>

The Greek government did not consider the DCAs to be of principal importance unless Turkey was getting better treatment than Greece. This attitude was further demonstrated in the next months. While the negotiating teams resumed their meetings in May 1976, Greek unwillingness to speed up the progress was evident. The delays affected the prospects of the US-Turkish DCA. Congress had made clear by early September that the two had to be ratified together. It should be noted that it was unlikely that the Congress would ratify two long-term agreements in a lame duck year. Immediately preceding the announcement of the DCA, Congress linked its ratification with the conclusion and ratification of a similar agreement for Greece.<sup>67</sup> The link between the two DCAs officially emerged during the hearing of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee in September 1976.<sup>68</sup>

The negotiations about the Greek bases resumed in May and continued in parallel to the developing Aegean Crisis.<sup>69</sup> The Greek representatives insisted that the Greek government remained committed to concluding the agreement.<sup>70</sup> Facing US complaints about intentional Greek delay in concluding the negotiations, the Greek director general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Tzounis, argued that the Greek government 'had given instructions to the Greek chief negotiator to

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<sup>66</sup> Karamanlis statement in the Greek Parliament, April 17, 1976, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol. 9, 199.

<sup>67</sup> Theodorakopoulos, *Congress*, 145.

<sup>68</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. Ap.Ip. AΣ 348, Washington to MFA, September 15, 1976, File 29(a), EAP, CGKF.

<sup>69</sup> Kalogeras, Greek-US negotiations May 4, 1976, Folder 19B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>70</sup> Stauroopoulos, tel.3ΔK2667, MFA, quoting Kalogeras, to New York for Minister Bitsios, September 30, 1976, Folder 22B, CKP, CGKF.

conclude the negotiations by the end of the month'.<sup>71</sup> The Greek team raised a number of technical demands and objected to 'decoupling' the Greek and Turkish agreements which could accelerate the process.<sup>72</sup> The US administration eventually decided that the Greeks had no intention of concluding the negotiations. Shortly afterwards, the Greek spokesperson for the government announced Athens' intention to sign an agreement with the new administration after the US November elections.<sup>73</sup>

Overall, the Greek government appeared satisfied with the handling of the Turkish DCA announcement. In his April 17 statement, the Greek premier emphasised the US vow to condemn any acts of aggression in the Aegean. Karamanlis argued that the US government undertook 'a political and moral obligation - since as you understand it you could not undertake a legal obligation - to protect peace in the Aegean'.<sup>74</sup> Karamanlis presented the US commitment as a victory of his administration.

Karamanlis, though, seemed to be over-optimistic. It must have been hard not to. His Minister of National Defence doubted that the Greek government would be able to 'extract from the United States an agreement guaranteeing the security of Greece's borders in the Aegean'.<sup>75</sup> Even if what Greece had secured from Kissinger was not an explicit 'security guarantee' it came close to it. Before long Athens realised

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<sup>71</sup> Clift, Briefing Item: Greek Base negotiations to adjourn October 4<sup>th</sup>, October 4, 1976, Greece, 1976 (10) WH, Country File, Box 10, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL; Clift, Briefing Item (for the President) Greece-Settling final differences, June 23, 1976, Greece, (4), WH, Country File, Box 10, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>72</sup> Clift, Briefing Item, June 15, 1976, Greece, 1976 (4) WH, Country File, Box 10, NSC Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>73</sup> Briefing Item: Greek Government on Base negotiations, October 4, 1976 (the date of the announcement but not document date), Greece, 1976 (10) WH, Box 10, Country File, Box 10, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>74</sup> Karamanlis statement in the Greek Parliament, April 17, 1976, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol. 9, 199.

<sup>75</sup> Heavily classified doc, no date or creator's name provided, [see doc 12 in the file] US source discussion with Averoff, Greece, 1976 (2), WH, WH, Box 10, Country File, Box 10, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

that the US administration was unwilling to materialise its commitment nor did the wording prevent Ankara from provoking Athens.

### **Tension in the Aegean**

While Athens and the Ankara negotiated with Washington about their respective bilateral agreements, tensions in the Aegean between Greece and Turkey mounted. In early February, both Greek and Turkish naval and air forces conducted military exercises in the Aegean.<sup>76</sup> These exercises took place amid hyperbolic rhetoric, particularly on behalf of the Turkish government, with the Turkish Prime Minister quoted as claiming a significant portion of the Aegean, including the Greek islands as belonging to Turkey.<sup>77</sup> The tension and the public exchanges continued the following months. Athens and Ankara ultimately focused on Turkey's announcement that it would undertake oil research activities in the Aegean Sea in areas near the Greek islands.<sup>78</sup> This resembled a similar research exploration voyage of the Turkish ship *Candarli* that had taken place in 1974. In June of that year, Athens and Ankara came close to war<sup>79</sup> but the Cyprus crisis had overshadowed that dispute.

Between March and August the Turkish government maintained its intention to allow the hydrographic ship *MTA Sismik 1* or *Hora* as it had previously been known, to enter the Aegean.<sup>80</sup> The designated area fell into the zones over which Greece and

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<sup>76</sup> 'Αεροναυτική Αντιπαράταξη στο Βόρειο Αιγαίο: ταυτόχρονα ελληνικά και τουρκικά γυμνάσια την επόμενη εβδομάδα [military line-up in North Aegean: simultaneous Greek Turkish exercises next week]' *To Vima*, February 21, 1976, 1.

<sup>77</sup> 'Ντεμρέλ: Αυτό το τμήμα του Αιγαίου μας ανήκει! [Demirel: this portion of the Aegean belongs to us!]', *To Vima*, February 22, 1976, 1.

<sup>78</sup> Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, 160.

<sup>79</sup> James Edward Miller, *The United States and the Making of Modern Greece: History and Power, 1950-1974* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

<sup>80</sup> Andrew Wilson, 'The Aegean Dispute', *Adelphi Papers* 155, Winter 1979/80, 8.

Turkey disputed sovereign rights, in other words, ‘grey zones’.<sup>81</sup> The dispute involved, as it still does today, the legal interpretation of the Law of the Sea and its definitions of ‘continental shelf’ and ‘territorial seas’ and their extent when concerning neighbouring coastal nations such as Greece and Turkey.<sup>82</sup> Between July and August the focus was placed on the whether the *MTA Sismik 1*, which was conducting research in the Marmara Sea, would continue its declared intention and enter the Aegean. The Turkish vessel conducted three research trips. During the first two, it avoided both Greek territorial waters and the Greek continental shelf. However, on 6 August, during its third voyage, the *MTA Sismik 1* entered the area that the Greek government considered to belong to the Greek continental shelf.<sup>83</sup>

The tension in the Aegean posed a significant problem for both the Greek government and the US administration. Both Athens and Washington considered that the possibility of war resulting from the dispute was high. Since 1975, the NSC had considered that the possibility of the accidental escalation of a crisis constituted a viable war scenario. Athens and Washington might drift into war, not because they were prepared to do so, but because neither side was ready to backtrack. Frequent Greek and Turkish exercises in the Aegean underlined this view further. Given this climate, the NSC repeated its warnings to President Ford in March. The briefing emphasised the unsurprising conclusion that a ‘military engagement’ between Athens

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<sup>81</sup> Petros Siousiouras, Georgios Chrysochou, ‘The Aegean Dispute in the Context of Contemporary Judicial Decisions on Maritime Delimitation’ *Laws*, Vol.3 No.1 (2014), 16, the article provides a discuss on the legal aspects of the dispute.

<sup>82</sup> Christos Rozakis, *Τρία χρόνια ελληνικής εξωτερικής πολιτικής, 1974-1977* [Three years of Greek foreign policy, 1974-1977] (Papazisis: Athens, 1978), 115, Rozakis provides a detailed analysis of the legal and foreign policy aspects related to the issue of continental shelf as pertains to the both mainland and islands from a contemporary to the events point of view.

<sup>83</sup> Melek Firat, *Οι Τουρκοελληνικές Σχέσεις και το Κυπριακό* [Greek-Turkish relations and the Cyprus problem] (Athens: Sideris, 2012), 197.



and Ankara threatened disastrous consequences not only to the parties involved but also to NATO and to US interests.<sup>84</sup>

The Greek government was concerned about Turkish intentions related to Turkish maritime research in Greek territory. From the Greek perspective, Turkey's activity in the Aegean was seen as a step closer to war, and to some extent, proof of Ankara's conscious decision to move in this direction. In early March, at meeting between the Greek Prime Minister, the Minister, the Deputy Minister of National Defence and the Greek military leadership including the General Chief of Staff, and the Chiefs of Army, Navy, and Air Force, the scenarios that could lead to military conflict with Turkey were discussed. Karamanlis emphasised the belief in the Greek government that Turkey 'given the existing tension in our relations, and its significant domestic instability' might be tempted to seek solution in 'external adventures'. If that was the case, Karamanlis asked, what would Ankara possibly do that could lead to war. The Greek Chief of Staff, with the agreement of the rest of the military leaders, argued that if Turkey 'decided to wage war, it would have created the necessary climate of tension through emphasising those issues that Ankara regarded as having a reasonable legal footing such as the demilitarisation of the Eastern Aegean Islands and the exploitation of the continental shelf'. Moreover, the potential that 'Turkish research and drillings in the Aegean seabed could trigger a chain of events, which would lead to war' was explicitly mentioned.<sup>85</sup> He did not provide more details about the link between the research in the seabed and military confrontation but he presented

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<sup>84</sup> Scowcroft, Memorandum for the President 'Troubled Waters in the Aegean', March 23, 1976, Presidential Daily Briefings 3/23/1976, Box 13, NSA White House Situation Room. Presidential Daily Briefings, 1974-1977, GRFPL.

<sup>85</sup> Arboutzis, Memorandum of meeting between the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence Chief of Staff, et.al., March 4, 1976, File 29(a), EAP, CGKF.

the scenario fully in his report to the Greek Prime Minister of 14 February 1976. The referenced record is not available, but the discussion demonstrates the Greek government's preoccupation with the Aegean dispute and Turkey's activities. Turkish activities seemed to fall into a pattern of escalation of tensions designed to resolve problems through force: this resembled Greece's interpretation of Turkey's actions in Cyprus.

### **How to prevent a clash?**

The escalation of tensions was evident. However, both Greece and the United States considered it crucial to avoid a direct confrontation between Greece and Turkey. Both Washington and Athens developed strategies that aimed at defusing the crisis and preventing war. These strategies reflected the fundamental strategies that the Karamanlis government and the Ford administration had so far pursued.

The Greek government put pressure on the United States to restrain Turkey. In a pre-emptive move, since April 1976 Karamanlis had instructed his foreign minister to draw Kissinger's attention to the implications of Turkish activities in the Aegean. Before Bitsios left Athens for Washington to sign the 'principles' agreement, Karamanlis instructed him to outline the implications that a Greco-Turkish war would cause for the Alliance. Bitsios was expected to stress that a war in the Aegean would develop into a more generalised East-West confrontation, emphasising that:

Zhivkov [the Bulgarian leader] confirmed this view in his discussion with the [Greek] prime minister saying that in the event of a Greek-Turkish war, neither Russia nor Bulgaria would remain silent.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Karamanlis' note for Bitsios, April 1976, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 187.

This insistence on the implications of a war with Turkey served both the Greek goal of securing a kind of security guarantee, as discussed above, but also as a reminder of the need for Washington to prevent a war by appealing to Turkey. Following the exchange of letters between Kissinger and Bitsios, the reference to the US opposition of provocative actions offered Athens another tool.<sup>87</sup> The Greek government expected that Washington would condemn Turkey's actions as a threat to peace. Once it became clear that the Turkish ship intended to approach Greek territorial waters, the Greek government turned to the US to prevent this action. Karamanlis expressed his hope 'that the Secretary will prevail upon the Turks to refrain from any "provocation" during the Sismik's voyage'.<sup>88</sup>

The Greek government capitalised on Turkey's decision to establish a new military division, the Aegean Army. The Greek government insisted that this force was aimed against Greece and as such ought to be considered in discussions with US officials.<sup>89</sup> The Greek government internally admitted, however, that the new Turkish division did not really constitute a significant force. The Greek Minister of National Defence suggested that the Greek Foreign Minister, when raising the issue, avoid details regarding the manpower and capabilities of the new division, since it was clear that it did not make up a proper 'fourth' division. Averoff instead proposed that Bitsios should focus on the fact that the Turkish forces were concentrated directly opposite the Greek islands in the Aegean.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Unsigned, [Note] regarding the Hydrographic ship HORA [Sismik] research in the seabed, June 1, 1976, Folder 13B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>88</sup> Cliff, Briefing Item (for the President), June 29, 1976, Greece (4) WH, Box 10, Country file, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>89</sup> Karamanlis' note for Bitsios, April 1976, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 187.

<sup>90</sup> Averoff, letter for Minister of Foreign Affairs, to be transmitted to New York, August 12, 1976, File 29a, EAP, CGKF.

Nonetheless, the Greek government opted to portray Ankara as an expansionist power. Since 1974, Athens had insisted at bilateral meetings with US officials on using this rhetoric to describe Turkish policies. The Greek government took additional steps to attach substance to its allegations. As chapter 2 above showed, the Greek government suggested that Greece and Turkey should submit their differences to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and requested the US administration's mediation to persuade the Turks to do this. The need for international arbitration was reflected in Kissinger's letter. Following the initial acceptance and despite the positive response expressed in Karamanlis' meeting with the new Turkish leader Süleyman Demirel at the 1975 spring NATO summit, the process stagnated. In 1976, the Greek government found another way to engage in a 'peaceful solution' of the differences. On the same day that he presented his views on the Turkish DCA agreement and the new Greek-US 'principles' agreement in the Greek parliament, Karamanlis publicly invited the Turkish government to sign a 'non-aggression' pact.<sup>91</sup> The pact regardless of whether accepted by Ankara or not, undoubtedly served Greek goals. If accepted, the possibility of war could become distant. Its rejection or Turkey's reluctance to accept it, allowed the Greek government to charge Turkey with not being willing to work toward a mutual acceptable solution.<sup>92</sup>

The US administration continued to base its strategy on its balanced approach towards both Greece and Turkey. Kissinger was aware that the wording in his letter to the Greek Foreign Minister could offer the Greek government a sense of security for

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<sup>91</sup> Karamanlis statement in the Greek Parliament, April 17, 1976, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol. 9, 203.

<sup>92</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Foreign Minister Bitsios, Secretary General Tzounis, The Secretary, Assistant Secretary Hartman, May 20, 1976, Greece, 1976 (4) WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFL.

undertaking greater risks. In his final meeting in Washington about the future Greek-US DCA, Kissinger raised the issue of the Aegean. His concern was that the Greek government might declare a 'twelve mile [sic] limit' for its territorial waters, which would cause a reaction from Ankara. By 1976, most states utilised the right that the Law of the Sea offered to expand their territorial waters from six miles to twelve miles. In the case of the Aegean the Greek decision would reduce significantly the percentage of international waters, hence potentially Turkey's access to the Aegen.<sup>93</sup> Faced with Bitsios' insistence that it was Greece's 'sovereign right to make such a declaration', Kissinger sought to ensure that the Greek government would avoid any declaration without consulting its 'friends and allies' and without considering 'all possible consequences'. Bitsios replied ambiguously but generally agreed with Kissinger's statement.<sup>94</sup> Kissinger's intention was clear: having failed to retract his own idea about the security commitment, he aimed to impress upon the Greeks that his letter was not a *carte blanche*. As the tension in the Aegean escalated, Kissinger emphasised both Greek and Turkish responsibilities for avoiding war.<sup>95</sup> The US administration pointed out that 'the US and other friends of Greece had been active trying to avert a crisis and would not automatically rally to Greece's side if it acted impulsively or imprudently'.<sup>96</sup> The administration similarly manoeuvred around Athens's insistence that Ankara's actions constituted provocations.<sup>97</sup> In accordance with its careful planning, the Greek

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<sup>93</sup> Wilson, 'Aegean Dispute', 3.

<sup>94</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, The Secretary, Under Secretary Sisco, Foreign Minister Bitsios, Ambassador Tzounis, et.al. April 15, 1976, Greece, 1976 (6) WH, Box 10, WH, NSC for Europe Canada and Ocean Affairs, Country File, GRFPL.

<sup>95</sup> Binnendijk, Briefing Paper (for the President) Sismik1-confrontation in Athens, August 11, 1976, Greece, 1976 (7), WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFL.

<sup>96</sup> Clift, Briefing Item (for the President): Greece, June 30, 1976, Greece 1976 (6) WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>97</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. A.II. 284, Washington to Foreign Ministry, August 6, 1976, Folder 13B, CKP, CGKF; Alexandrakis, tel. A.II. 624/E.X., Washington to Foreign Ministry, August 11, 1976, Folder 13B, CKP, CGKF.

government insisted that Turkish intentions to conduct research fell into the category of ‘provocative actions’ that the letter of 15 April explicitly condemned. The Greek government also insisted that Kissinger and Bitsios had agreed in bilateral talks that unilateral research exploration activities in the Aegean by Turkey was a provocative action. Hence, the Greek foreign minister request the US involvement to prevent the escalation of the crisis.<sup>98</sup> Kissinger denied this but the Greek Foreign Minister insisted that Kissinger in private, without note-takers present, had privately assured him about this.<sup>99</sup> The US Department of State insisted that merely sailing a ship for research purposes did not violate the Greek territory. Violation could only occur if the Turkish exploration mission ‘physically touched’ the seabed.<sup>100</sup> This view was in accordance with international law. Amid the public’s excitement and in a climate where the possibility of war was both privately and publicly considered, such arguments appeared to be irrelevant. The US administration needed to find a way out from another Greek-Turkish crisis but there was no simple solution. Kissinger, having failed to prevent the escalation of the tensions, focused on crisis management that aimed to limit the impact on the US and NATO’s interests. The balanced approach towards both Greece and Turkey was needed more than ever.

### **Taking the dispute to the UN**

Following the completion of the Turkish vessel’s voyage, the Greek government took recourse to the UN Security Council and the ICJ on 10 August.<sup>101</sup> The action

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<sup>98</sup> Bitsios, letter to Secretary Kissinger August 7, 1976, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 272.

<sup>99</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI 673, MFA to Washington, August 6, 1976, Folder 13B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>100</sup> Sotiris Rizas, *ΟΙ Ελληνοτουρκικές σχέσεις και το Αιγαίο, 1973-1976* [Greek-Turkish relations and the Aegean, 1973-1976] (Athens: Sideris, 2006), 146. Rizas offers a detailed account of the events primarily from the US perspective.

<sup>101</sup> Firat, *Greek-Turkish relations*, 199.

constituted a carefully planned step. The Greek government did not expect that turning to Washington would resolve the dispute. Appealing to the US administration, while emphasising the obligation deriving from Kissinger's letter, was only the first step. It had been clear within the Greek government since July that Greece would turn to the Europeans, NATO, and the Security Council to condemn Turkey's 'provocative actions'.<sup>102</sup> The Greek government also decided to submit the dispute to the ICJ unilaterally in an attempt to persuade the Greek public that it had not spared any effort to avoid war without abandoning any national rights.<sup>103</sup> Athens's primary goal at the UN emphasised the need for a resolution that recalled the Turkish ship and immediately submitted the dispute to the International Court.<sup>104</sup> During the proceedings at the UN, the US continued its efforts to ensure that the dispute was treated in a balanced manner at an international level with neither side leaving New York as an absolute winner or loser.

Greek records reveal rich behind-closed-doors consultations and manoeuvring to achieve a favourable UN SC resolution. The Greek government pressed the Council for a strong condemnation of Turkish actions as a threat to peace and an explicit call for submitting the issue to The Hague. During the consultations, the three European members, since Italy participated as a non-permanent member, wrote a draft resolution that was acceptable to Athens.<sup>105</sup> The Greek government suspected that US diplomats, including Kissinger, blocked this European draft.<sup>106</sup> The US denied the Greek

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<sup>102</sup> Tzounis, Note July 19, 1976, Folder 13B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>103</sup> Rizas, 'Cold War in the Aegean' *Cold War History*, vol.9, No.3, August 2009, 381.

<sup>104</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Unsigned, [Note] regarding the Hydrographic ship HORA [Sismik] research in the seabed, June 1, 1976, Folder 13B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>105</sup> Bennett, tel. 3248 USUN, From US Mission UN to SecState, August 16, 1976, Greece, 1976 (8) WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>106</sup> Bitsios, tel.3161.4B/2163, Per Representative UN to Foreign Ministry, August 16, 1976, Folder 13B, CKP, CGKF.

allegations but the US representative had met with his counterparts from France, Italy, and the UK, tasked with ensuring that the wording of the resolution was also acceptable to Ankara so as to avoid any further escalation of tension.<sup>107</sup> Washington carefully considered Greek intentions and noted, based on Ambassador Kubisch's information that the Greeks were ready to accept 'something less: e.g. an appeal to both sides to suspend operations while resuming direct talk plus an endorsement of the ICJ initiative'.<sup>108</sup> Kissinger, who travelled to the UN, directed US diplomats to work towards a resolution that met both sides' minimum requirements.<sup>109</sup>

Following arduous negotiations, with Karamanlis carefully following and coordinating actions between Athens and New York, the Security Council approved resolution No. 395 on 25 August 1976. The resolution reflected Greece's minimum expectations and the US ambassador for the UN commented that 'the Greeks are clearly delighted with the Security Council outcome'.<sup>110</sup> The Resolution called on Greece and Turkey to engage in direct negotiations but also explicitly mentioned that both Athens and Ankara should take into account 'the contribution that appropriate judicial means, in particular the International Court of Justice, are qualified to make [...]'.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Binnendijk, Briefing Item (for the President): Greek-Turkish dispute in the UN Security Council, No date, Greece, 1976 (8), WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>108</sup> Binnendijk, Briefing Paper (for the President) Sismik at the UN, August 13, 1976, Greece, 1976 (7), WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>109</sup> Binnendijk, Briefing Paper (for the President): Greek-Turkish dispute in the UN Security Council, (No date), Greece, 1976, (8) WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files 1974-1977, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>110</sup> Clift, Briefing Item Greek and Turkey weather storm over the Aegean, August 26, 1976, Greece, 1976 (8) WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Europe, Canada and Ocean Affairs, Staff Files, NSA, GRFL.

<sup>111</sup> UN, Complaint By Greece Against Turkey, Decision of August 25, 1976, UN Resolution 395 [http://www.un.org/en/sc/repertoire/75-80/Chapter%208/75-80\\_08-17-Complaint%20by%20Greece%20against%20Turkey.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/sc/repertoire/75-80/Chapter%208/75-80_08-17-Complaint%20by%20Greece%20against%20Turkey.pdf), accessed October 2016.



The end of the crisis found both Athens and Washington satisfied: war between Greece and Turkey had been avoided. Greece had also secured some of its other goals. Washington has ensured, at an international level, that Greece and Turkey were treated in an even-handed way and that no NATO ally had publicly supported either side. Ankara also took some satisfaction since that the UN Resolution called for bilateral negotiations. The Turkish government favoured approaching the Aegean dispute from a diplomatic and political perspective rather than treating it as purely a legal matter. Former Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit, a fervent critic of Demirel, emphasised this bipartisan commitment to this effect in Turkey, when he met with Kissinger in Washington.<sup>112</sup> Both the Aegean dispute and the controversy over the Greek-Turkish DCA, however, had a profound impact on the Greek government's relationships with Ford and Kissinger.

### **The end of the Ford administration**

To secure Greek interests and dispel its domestic critics, the Greek government fully developed its confrontational strategy. The approach did not aim to harm Greek-US relations. At all stages, the Greek government both in its internal communications and in its contacts with the US administration, noted the need to prevent a public rift with the United States. The Greek government cautioned the Greek-American lobby organisation, AHEPA, against a strong reaction in the United States when the Turkish DCA was announced. The Greek government instructed the Greek assistant foreign minister visiting the US to cooperate with the President of the AHEPA to ensure that the latter's speech 'remains careful and avoids exaggerations in expressing regret

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<sup>112</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'The Secretary's Meeting with Former Prime Minister of Turkey, Bulent Ecevit', July 29, 1976, *FRUS*, vol.XXX, doc.244.

regarding the recent developments'.<sup>113</sup> Once the Greek Minister and the US Secretary concluded the 'principle agreement', the Greek government emphasised the need for a 'celebratory public' announcement of the US response to the Greek concerns.<sup>114</sup> Revealing Greek-US differences in public was a last resort that the Greek government threatened to take if its voice was not heard. When the focus on defusing the Aegean crisis moved to the UN, the Greek foreign minister stated explicitly to the US ambassador, that should the US administration prevent a resolution condemning Turkey, he would denounce Washington's stance in the press.<sup>115</sup> During the UN process, Greek Ambassador Tzounis urged that the US officials' public statements should be 'very carefully drawn and take into account Greek domestic realities and not to cause unfavourable effects on US-Greek relations'.<sup>116</sup>

The Greek-US confrontation emphasised the behind the scenes contacts between the two nations' officials. In the aftermath of the battle for the Turkish embargo, two central players dropped the pretence of any cooperation. Kissinger and Ambassador Alexandrakis did little to hide their sentiments. In their first meeting following the announcement of the Turkish agreement, Kissinger noted 'You have been the chief actor in using pressure to get us to do things'.<sup>117</sup> In his report, Alexandrakis noted Kissinger's references on own his ability to 'control more votes in the Congress than

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<sup>113</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI 306, Foreign Ministry to Permanent Representative in UN, NY, April 3, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF; in the English version the announcement is described as "solemn" but the emphasis remain on the need for a public declaration, Kissinger, tel. 079684, State to American Embassy Athens, April 2, 1976, Greece-State Department Telegrams, From SecState-Nodis (4), Box 11, Presidential Country files for the Middle East and South East Asia, GRFPL.

<sup>114</sup> Bitsios, Letter to Kissinger, April 1, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>115</sup> Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 278.

<sup>116</sup> The situation room, Memo for Gen Scowcroft, August, 14, 1976, Evening Reports from NSC Staff, Box 2, White House Situation Room, Evening Reports from the NSC Staff, 1976-1977.

<sup>117</sup> Memorandum of conversations, The Secretary, Under Secretary Sisco, Ambassador Alexandrakis, Washington, March 31, 1976, *FRUS*, volume XXX, doc.62.

I do' as well as the Greek government's opting for 'the Congress way'.<sup>118</sup> The Greek ambassador commented to the Greek Foreign Minister that he sensed a pre-emptive move. Alexandrakis argued that he:

...expressed in a friendly manner these complaints [about Greek relations with Congress and Congressional involvement in Cyprus] had in his mind not only the past but also our [Athens'] future stance during the Congressional hearing about the US-Turkish agreement.<sup>119</sup>

The Greek Embassy, which had extensive contacts with both parties in Washington reported that Kissinger and his aides displayed little interest in Greek sensitivities. While discussing the domestic impact of the Turkish DCA in the Department of State, Alexandrakis commented that:

Sisco [the Under Secretary of State] demonstrated understanding regarding the significant impact in our domestic [politics], however, he did so only after I was forced to emphasise this aspect.<sup>120</sup>

In Athens, the view about Kissinger, who throughout President Ford's tenure represented the central actor in the administration's approach towards Greece, the view was more complex. Although the personal views of the Greek officials are missing, Defence Minister Averoff expressed a sympathetic view about Kissinger's effort to restrain the Turkish activities in the Aegean. In a personal letter to Karamanlis, Averoff noted that:

the Sixth Fleet could direct its ships to inspect various Greek ports in both the Ionian Sea and the Greek mainland. The ships should request permission to visit and disembark personnel to Rhodes and Lesbos, i.e. the two islands that the Turkish press has been claiming [as belonging to the Turkish maritime zone] These requests represented implicitly but in practice confirm Kissinger's commitment to 'rabid and effective' US involvement in the event that Greek sovereign rights in the Aegean are threatened.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Alexandrakis, tel.A.II.404/E.X. Washington to MFA, April 1, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>120</sup> Alexandrakis, tel.392 E.X., Washington to Athens, March 29, 3, 1976, Folder 24B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>121</sup> Dimitrakopoulos, Letter given to the Prime Minister, Minister of National Defence 'Arguments re Sixth Fleet Ships and US Bases', August 5, 1976, File 29, EAP, CGKF.

Similarly, in an expression of political cynicism, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs seemed to condemn the actions of the Congressmen who had supported the embargo.<sup>122</sup> Bitsios criticised the very people who represented a central element in the Greek government's confrontational strategy.

The Greek government made the conscious decision to distance itself from the Ford presidency. This choice was reflected best in Karamanlis' decision to cancel his visit to Washington which was planned for June 1976. The visit of the Greek Prime Minister had been in the making since January when Athens had indicated Karamanlis' personal interest in visiting Washington.<sup>123</sup> The administration and President Ford personally endorsed such an official visit. Ford characterised it as 'good politics here also. Maybe next summer'.<sup>124</sup>

Information about a planned visit, which had not been confirmed, was leaked to the press. During coverage of the Greek reaction to the Turkish DCA, the press argued that Karamanlis had postponed his visit to Washington.<sup>125</sup> However, well into April, after efforts to contain the reaction to the DCA, the trip remained a possibility.<sup>126</sup> The Greek government formally announced the cancelation of the planned visit on 17 May.<sup>127</sup> The Greek government cited as reasons for the cancelation of the visit the

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<sup>122</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Foreign Minister Bitsios, Secretary General Tzounis, The Secretary, Assistant Secretary Hartman et.al., May 20, 1976, Greece, 1976 ((4) WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files 1974-1977, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>123</sup> Clift, Memorandum for Bent Scowcroft, January 29, 1976, note the attached message and comment from Ambassador Kubisch about his discussion with Ambassador Molyviatis, assistant to the prime minister, Greece, 1976 (1) WH, Box 9, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>124</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Ford, Secretary Kissinger, Ambassador Kubisch, October 17, 1975, Greece, 1975 (7) WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files 1974-1977, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>125</sup> 'Κρίση στις σχέσεις Ελλάδος-Αμερικής- Ματαιώνεται το ταξίδι Καραμανλή στις Ηνωμ. Πολιτείες [Greek-US relations in Crisis- Karamanlis' visit to US postponed]', *To Vima*, March 31, 1.

<sup>126</sup> The planning in the White House included the visit, see G. Flynn Memorandum for William Nicholson, April 21, 1976, Greece, 1976 (4) WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>127</sup> Note, Karamanlis discussion with Ambassador Kubisch, May 17, 1976, Folder 30B, CKP, CGKF.

public pressures that such an action would cause against his government.<sup>128</sup> To some extent the decision should be seen as merely another pressure tactic.

The Greek decision brought frustration. Kissinger commented that the Greeks should understand that they ‘were not the only ones to have political problems’.<sup>129</sup> The administration had planned to exploit the visit as a success of its foreign policy, during hard fought election primaries, which had targeted Kissinger as well as the candidate Ford.<sup>130</sup> The White House therefore rejected Karamanlis’s suggestion that the President of the Republic, Constantine Tsatsos, should visit in his place. The administration rejected the substitution for Karamanlis of even the highest-level elected Greek official.<sup>131</sup> Public perception considered Karamanlis as the leading figure and his actions represented an indication of Greek attitudes towards the US. The Greek administration linked its decision to potential domestic criticism as well as strong reaction in the United States by the Greek lobby.<sup>132</sup>

Nonetheless, the Greek government followed a carefully planned approach towards the US administration in an election. While the Greek government cancelled Karamanlis’ visit and dragged the negotiations for the conclusion of the Greek DCA, it did not want to cut all bridges with the Ford Administration. By September the slow progress on the Greek-US Bases negotiations created frustration against Athens, as

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128 Clift, Briefing Item: Greece-US, June 11, 1976, Greece, 1976 (4) WH, Box10, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

<sup>129</sup> Memorandum from the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs(Scowcroft) to President Ford, Washington, May 20, 1976, *FRUS*, volume XXX, doc.65.

<sup>130</sup> Yanek Mieczkowski, *Gerald Ford and the Challenges of the 1970s* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2005), 315.

<sup>131</sup> Memorandum from the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs(Scowcroft) to President Ford, Washington, May 20, 1976, *FRUS*, vol. XXX, doc.65.

<sup>132</sup> Clift, Briefing item: Greece-Karamanlis demurs, May 18, 1976, Greece (4) WH, Box 10, Country File, NSC Staff Files, NSA, GRFPL.

Ambassador Kubisch stressed to the Greek negotiator for the DCA agreement.<sup>133</sup> The following days, the Greek team worked towards some progress in the negotiations. The Greeks' stance appeared to have satisfied their US counterparts, with Ambassador Kubisch noting that the Greek stance, despite the slow progress in the negotiations it was adequate to 'dispel the clouds of suspicion in Washington that the Greek government did not wish the conclusion of the DCA negotiations as soon as possible as possible for political calculations'.<sup>134</sup> Nonetheless, days afterwards the negotiations came to a hold, with the Greek government succeeding in avoiding signing the existing documents, but opting for verbal commitments.<sup>135</sup> Similarly, even after the elections, Averoff rejected any political views behind the Greek decision to delay the signing of the agreement for another three months. Meeting in London after the conclusion of the twentieth meeting of NATO's Nuclear Planning Group, Averoff stressed to the US Secretary of Defence, Donald H. Rumsfeld that in his view the negotiations had proceed smoothly and the delay was due to the Greek wish to see the Turkish agreement applied before any final commitment was made.<sup>136</sup> These views were largely a pretence. The Greek government had decided that it could secure a better deal in negotiations with a Democrat in the White House.

Ford's last year in office coincided with the Greek decision to emphasise confrontation in its relations with the United States. By doing so, the Greek government aimed first to secure an agreement equal to the US-Turkish DCA.

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<sup>133</sup> Stavropoulos, tel. 3ΔK2667, MFA to Permanent Representative NY(to UN), September 30, 1976, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>134</sup> Kalogeras, Note 'on Greek-US negotiations', Athens, October 4, 1976, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>135</sup> Kalogeras, Note 'regarding the last meeting of the negotiation teams before the termination of the current phase of the Greek-US negotiations', October 7, 1976, Athens, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>136</sup> Kabiotis, Memorandum of Conversation, Averoff and Rumsfeld et.al. November 17, 1976, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

Secondly, Athens hoped to persuade Washington to restrain the Turkish activities in the Aegean, which could lead to a Greek-Turkish war. The Greeks largely succeed in their goals. The US administration promised that any future agreement regarding the US bases in Greece would include similar terms to the US-Turkish one. In addition, the US administration publicly denounced acts of aggression in the Aegean Sea. However, Athens failed to move closer Washington to the Greek views regarding the US role in preventing a dispute between Greece and Turkey.

Ford and Kissinger resisted Greek pressures and remained committed to pursuing their strictly defined balanced approach between the two US Allies, i.e. abstaining from siding either side on their bilateral disputes. The US arms embargo had undermined the US administration since on a political level it reinforced the Greek view of the Turkish illegal actions in Cyprus. In practice, the embargo entailed that Greece was receiving significant disproportionate funds than Turkey. The administration viewed the new Turkish DCA as restoring the balance between Greece and Turkey and protecting its bilateral links with both. The goal to offer Ankara something better than Greece failed. The US administration recognised that a future agreement with Greece would also include financial provisions, which in practice meant that both Athens and Ankara were to receive approximately \$1 billion for each country over the next four years.

Similarly, Kissinger managed to avoid a direct involvement of the United States in the 1976 Aegean dispute. The US administration could not prevent escalations of crisis. Rather Washington focused on managing the crisis and limiting the US role in the process. In this respect, Kissinger's efforts were successful. More importantly, the US Secretary ensured that the NATO members who served at the UN Security Council

in 1976, i.e. Britain, France and Italy, maintained the same balanced approach as the United States did. Kissinger strived since the eruption of the Cyprus Crisis to ensure that not only the United States, but the Alliance as well treated both Greece and Turkey equally.<sup>137</sup> Confronted with the US administration's resistance to adopt the Greek views, the Greek government could only hope for the election of Carter in the forthcoming 1976 general election.

The Greek government had been closely monitoring developments in the US Democratic Party. Karamanlis and his government eventually concluded that the possibility of Democratic Candidate Jimmy Carter being elected was more favourable for Greek interests than a victory for Ford. The close focus on the campaign trail persuaded the Greeks that, for a number of reasons, a Democrat in the White House would their aims.

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<sup>137</sup> See chapter 1 above.



## Chapter 4

### Hope on the Horizon: Carter's Election

In November 1976, James Earl 'Jimmy' Carter was elected to the presidency. The American voters chose his message of change and elected him, an 'outsider', to the Presidency.<sup>1</sup> In terms of foreign policy, Carter's declaration that morality and peace would be fundamentals to his decision-making attracted the voting public.<sup>2</sup>

Carter's rhetoric also captivated the international audience. In the case of Greece, his stance on the Cyprus problem and the Greek-Turkish disputes, particularly during the campaign, resonated with both the public and government officials. In the aftermath of his election, there was a widespread expectation in Athens that the new administration would abandon what the Greek government considered to be Kissinger's pro-Turkish approach and turn to a pro-Greek approach.<sup>3</sup> These expectations and the end to the natural uncertainty that surrounds any election fuelled renewed momentum between Greek and US contacts immediately after the November vote. Up until then, for instance, the Greek government had avoided binding decisions in the Greek-US bases negotiations.<sup>4</sup>

Carter arrived in the White House with an ambitious agenda. Zanchetta identifies four key areas, which the administration prioritised. In the Eastern Mediterranean, Washington's involvement in 'high-level diplomatic negotiations reflected' this

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<sup>1</sup> Betty Glad, *An outsider in the White House: Jimmy Carter, his advisors, and the making of American foreign policy* (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 2009), 7.

<sup>2</sup> Scott Kaufman, *Plans Unraveled: The Foreign Policy of the Carter Administration* (DeKalb, IL: North Illinois University Press, 2008), 27.

<sup>3</sup> Dimitris Bitsios, *Πέρα από τα Σύνορα, 1974-1977* [Beyond the Frontiers, 1974-1977] (Athens: Estia, 1983), 232.

<sup>4</sup> See chapter 3 above.

approach.<sup>5</sup> Carter and his foreign policy team emphasised strengthening US bilateral relations with Athens and Ankara, and re-building NATO's Southern flank by helping to ease tensions between Greece and Turkey. The administration's involvement in the Cyprus negotiations served the latter goal. Kaufman's assertion that Carter's foreign policy advisor, Cyrus Vance, 'convinced the presidential nominee, if he won the election, to take steps to solve it' is an exaggeration.<sup>6</sup> The administration approached progress in Cyprus as a vehicle for this overall goal, rather than a priority itself.

Contrary to his rhetoric on the campaign trail, Carter did not intend to re-invent US policy for the region. The administration's goals remained in line with Kissinger's priorities. However, continuity between Carter and Ford/Kissinger in terms of the broader policy objectives, did not exclude change.<sup>7</sup> Regarding the US approach towards Greece and Turkey, the change came in the form of a new strategy. The consensus among the US foreign policy officials was that thus far the successive Turkish governments had failed to do their part to resolve the gridlock that the Cyprus Crisis, the arms embargo, and the tension in the Aegean had created. The new administration emphasised that Ankara needed to demonstrate its willingness for compromise which in turn would benefit the Southern Flank and bilateral US-Turkish relations. Kissinger had abandoned any such efforts since the imposition of the US arms embargo, opting instead to separate bilateral US relations from the conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean.

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<sup>5</sup> Barbara Zanchetta, *The transformation of America International Power in the 1970s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 195.

<sup>6</sup> Kaufman, *Plans Unraveled*, 57.

<sup>7</sup> William Stueck 'Placing Jimmy Carter's Foreign Policy,' in Gary M. Fink and Hugh Davis Graham (eds.), *The Carter Presidency: Policy Choices in the Post-New Deal Era* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 247.

The US approach naturally appealed to the Greek government. Athens noted that the new US administration followed an accommodating approach toward Greece's requests in the Greek-US bases negotiations. As a result, cooperation between Athens and Washington flourished. The Greek strategy of confrontation was put aside and Athens projected a strategy of cooperation. The results were immediate. In less than three months, Athens and Washington concluded the unnecessarily prolonged Defence Cooperation Agreement. But the stalemate in the Eastern Mediterranean remained and before long the new administration concluded that it had to change its strategy.

The chapter focuses on three main themes to demonstrate its findings. First, it presents Greek expectations about the Carter administration, based on his statements before the elections. Scholarship has largely ignored the impact of Carter's campaign on the Greek government. Secondly, the chapter presents the new strategy that the US administration developed for the Eastern Mediterranean. During this period, Washington increasingly approached bilateral relations with Greece within its broader policy toward Turkey and Cyprus. Finally, the chapter analyses the challenges that the US strategy faced in late summer 1977. When Greece entered an election year in early autumn 1977, the US strategy came to a standstill. Progress had to wait until after the Greek elections.

Overall, the chapter concludes that Carter's campaign and his first six months in office saw a positive change in Greek-US cooperation. Kissinger had become a liability for bilateral relations between Athens and Washington. His removal led to closer Greek-US cooperation. But the broader US policy in the Eastern Mediterranean continued to suffer and this eventually called for the reconsideration of the US strategy.

## The Greeks and Carter's candidacy

On November 1976, the US embassy reported to the Department of State the Greek public's and governmental official's reaction to the news of Carter's victory. According to Ambassador Jack Kubisch's report, the Greek public was overwhelmingly enthusiastic about the Democratic nominee's election, wanting to make 'their pleasure known to Americans over Carter's victory'.<sup>8</sup> The Greek press almost overwhelmingly maintained a similar stance. As the Ambassador noted 'the press, with the exception only of the communist papers, continued its positive headlines and editorials [re Carter's victory] (e.g. Leftist, anti-American *Eleftherotypia* 'hope in Athens, anxiety in Ankara').<sup>9</sup> The same day, as expected, the Greek political leaders, including the prime minister and the leader of the principal opposition, congratulated the new president-elect.<sup>10</sup>

The Greek public's enthusiasm for the new President of the United States was undoubtedly a positive development. The Ford administration and particularly Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger were classified as advocates of undemocratic regimes, as the case of the Greek junta had shown.<sup>11</sup> Kissinger was seen as an immoral realist, exemplified best in his opposition to any measures that condemned Turkish actions in Cyprus. Therefore, Papandreou's depiction of Kissinger as the 'the hangman

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<sup>8</sup> Kubisch, tel. 11807 Athens, US embassy to SecState, November 4, 1976, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, National Archives [hereafter NARA].

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Kubisch, tel. 11769 Athens, US embassy to SecState, November 4, 1976, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1976, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>11</sup> Konstantina E. Botsiou "Anti-Americanism in Greece" in Brandon O'Connor (ed.) *Anti-Americanism: History, Causes, and Themes Volume 3: Comparative Perspectives* (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishing, 2007), 231.

of Cyprus' did not surprise but rather reflected sentiments shared by a portion of the Greek electorate.<sup>12</sup>

It was in this climate of strong anti-American sentiments, as previous chapters have described, that the Greek government had closely cooperated with the United States during the previous two and half years. It is reasonable to assume that if Carter's election eased the Greek public's anti-American sentiment then the Greek government could work with the United States more easily. Carter pleased the Greek public because of his message regarding the Cyprus problem on the campaign trail. His statements also appealed to Greek governmental circles which followed his campaign carefully and closely.

During the Democratic primaries, Governor Carter had attacked Kissinger's policy towards the Cyprus Crisis in relation to the announcement of the Turkish DCA. In May 1976, the leading Democratic candidate, according to the Greek embassy, stated:

Secret and personal agreements are not a substitute for a clear commitment to an early statement which gives Cyprus its independence. I feel most distressed that Mr. Kissinger's recent agreement with the Turkish government was not coupled with an agreement which promised a more rapid progress toward a just solution for the Cyprus tragedy. In my judgment, we would be negligent of the moral issues and courting long-range disaster if we fail to couple improvement in relations with Turkey with increased fair progress on the Cyprus issue along the lines I have outlined above.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Constantine Svolopoulos, *Κωνσταντίνος Καραμανλής: αρχείο, γεγονότα, και κείμενα* [Constantine Karamanlis: Archive, events and texts hereafter *Karamanlis*] (Kathimerini: Athens, 2005) Vol.9, 203.

<sup>13</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. ΑΣ1198, 21.06.1976 [sic] Washington to Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs [hereafter MFA], Folder 23B, Constantine Karamanlis Papers [hereafter CKP], Constantine G. Karamanlis Foundation [hereafter CGKF]. However, the telegram on reference informs about Carter's May 21 speech.

After winning the nomination both the presidential candidate and his vice-presidential pick, Senator Walter Mondale frequently referred to the Cyprus issue in a similar fashion. When Carter announced Mondale as his running mate, the Greek embassy in Washington expressed its satisfaction with the choice. Ambassador Alexandrakis highlighted Mondale's actions in Congress, stating that he continuously voted 'in our favour in the debate about the embargo or aid'.<sup>14</sup>

During the campaign, Mondale explicitly denounced Kissinger's policy in the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly before Greek-Americans. On the occasion of the annual convention of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), the leading Greek-American organisation, in Houston, Texas, Carter's running mate drew attention to his voting record in favour of the embargo.<sup>15</sup> Mondale added his expectation 'for the first sign of movement toward a lasting and just peace'.<sup>16</sup> In the same convention, Carter issued a statement criticising the Ford administration, demonstrated concern for the developments in Aegean, and underlined his intention - once in the White House - to prioritise a solution of the Greek-Turkish dispute. Carter's message read:

[...]I want you to know of my deep concern over the existing tension between Greece and Turkey. The US, for many years, has had a major role and responsibility in helping to preserve the security of both Greece and Turkey in the context of the NATO alliance. The US, thus, has made a large contribution to the military postures of both countries. For these reasons the US must help to resolve the difference between our two allies peacefully.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Kountouriotis, tel. 1242, Washington to MFA, July 15, 1976, Folder 23B, CKA, CGKF.

<sup>15</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. AΣ308 Washington to MFA, August 21, 1976, File 23B, CKP, CGKF; Mondale address to AHEPA August 1976 conference quoted in Ioannides, *Realpolitik*, 152

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Chris Ioannides, *Realpolitik in the Eastern Mediterranean: From Kissinger and the Cyprus Crisis to Carter and the lifting of the Turkish Arms Embargo* (New York, NY: Pella, 2001), 151 and partially from Alexandrakis, tel. AΣ.1536, Washington to MFA, August 20, 1976, Folder 23B, CKP, CGKF.

In the same message, which came at the height of the 1976 Aegean Crisis, Governor Carter explicitly supported the Greek desire for international arbitration at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The Democratic candidate expressed his hope that:

they will sit down together to resolve their differences on a just basis with such help from any international organisation they may deem appropriate and useful. Perhaps the International Court of Justice can clarify some of the legal issues involved in the oil rights dispute in the Aegean.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, a policy statement a few weeks later, which was composed after the Democratic candidate's personal meeting with Greek-American leaders, had some harsh words for Ford and Kissinger's actions. The statement noted that:

The policy of the Ford Administration of tilting away from Greece and Cyprus has proved a disaster for NATO and for American security interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. Despite repeated warnings, the administration failed to prevent the 1974 coup against President Makarios engineered by the former military dictatorship in Athens. The Administration failed to prevent or even limit the Turkish invasion that followed. The Administration failed to uphold even the principle or the rule of law in the conduct of our foreign policy [...] Today, more than two years later no progress toward a negotiated solution on Cyprus has been made. [...] The widely reported increase of colonization of Cyprus by Turkish military and civilians should cease. Greek-Cypriot refugees should be allowed to return to their homes. [...]. The United States must pursue a foreign policy based on principle and in accordance with the rule of law.<sup>19</sup>

The statement could have easily originated in Greece. The points regarding the administration's reaction to the coup and the Turkish invasion reflected the Greek public and the government's views about the US role and what the United States should have done. Carter's statements, which were principally directed to Greek

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<sup>18</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. AΣ.1536, Washington to MFA, August 20, 1976, Folder 23B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>19</sup> Carter campaign's policy statement, September 17, 1976 quoted in Ioannides, *Realpolitik in Eastern Mediterranean*, 150. The Greek government noted the statement and a translation is included in the internal paper of Karamanlis' office regarding Carter's statements on Greek-Turkish dispute and Cyprus, file 23B, CKP, CGKF.

American voters, also appealed to Greek governmental circles. Carter decided to address the Greek public himself and agreed to an interview with a Greek daily newspaper, the left-of-centre *Eleftherotypia*. In his interview, Carter further explained his views regarding the Eastern Mediterranean and committed that progress on Cyprus constituted a prerequisite for further military aid to Turkey.<sup>20</sup>

Carter and Mondale's proclamations found their way into the Democratic Party platform as adopted at the Democratic National Convention (DNC) of 1976. Regarding Greece, the Democrats underlined the need to continue supporting the country's 'path of democracy'. Moreover, the party included an explicit reference to the United States' role in the Cyprus problem. The platform stressed that:

we must do all that it is possible, consistent with our interest in a strong NATO in Southern Europe and stability in the Eastern Mediterranean, to encourage a fair statement of the Cyprus issue which continues to extract a human cost.<sup>21</sup>

Ambassador Alexandrakis recognised that the reference to Cyprus appeared vague: this was to balance different factions in the party, as he argued.<sup>22</sup> Nonetheless, the language the Democrats adopted was by far more detailed and closer to the Greek government's views, as Athens policies thus far had demonstrated, than what the Republicans advocated for. The Republican National Convention (RNC) also included a reference to the Cyprus problem in its platform. The Republican platform, though, advocated decreasing Washington's involvement stating:

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<sup>20</sup> Carter interview with Leonardos for *Eleftherotypia* published on October 14, 1976, the original is not available but the main elements of the interview are part of paper compiled for PM Karamanlis regarding Greek-Turkish dispute, see in Folder 23B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>21</sup> Democratic Party Platforms, '1976 Democratic Party Platform', July 12, 1976. Online at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*.  
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29606>.

<sup>22</sup> M. Alexandrakis, tel. AΣ1169 Washington to MFA, June 16, 1976, Folder 23B, CKA, CGKF.



The difficult problem of Cyprus, which separates our friends in Greece and Turkey, should be addressed and resolved by those two countries. The eastern flank of NATO requires restored cooperation there and, eventually, friendly relations between the two countries.<sup>23</sup>

As the weakest party in military terms, the Greek government had been pursuing complicated strategies not only to ensure not only Washington's involvement but also to generate US support for the Greek cause. The public declaration of not intervening had little appeal for the Greek government.

The public statements during the campaign affected Athens' view of Carter. The Greek government, however, had an additional reason to expect that the new president would opt for policies closer to Greek interests. During the campaign the Greek Ambassador met frequently with Carter's top foreign policy advisors. In August, Ambassador Alexandrakis met with Ambassador George Ball, the experienced former Under Secretary of State who had served during the LBJ administration. Ball acted as an advisor to Governor Carter on foreign policy during the campaign.<sup>24</sup> During their meeting, Alexandrakis expressed the Greek government's resentment towards the 'evenhandedness' that had guided Ford's policy towards Greece and Turkey, and the US State Department's 'one-sided support of the Turkish illegalities'.<sup>25</sup> The Greek ambassador, expressing the broader sentiments of the Greek government, identified this as the root cause of the Greek-Turkish dispute. Moreover, the Greek ambassador handed his US contact a paper containing Alexandrakis' personal views about the

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<sup>23</sup> Republican Party Platforms: "Republican Party Platform of 1976", August 18, 1976. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*.  
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25843>.

<sup>24</sup> Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 31.

<sup>25</sup> Alexandrakis, letter A. E. Φ. E.X. 645 from Greek Embassy Washington to MFA, August 18, 1976, Folder 13B, CKP, CGKF

‘Cyprus dispute from the US perspective’.<sup>26</sup> Ball, given that the meeting took place amid efforts to defuse the Greek-Turkish tension in the Aegean, suggested what Carter could say in response to Alexandrakis’ suggestion that a statement from the Democrats could help. The result was clear in Carter’s announcement in August 1976, as quoted above.<sup>27</sup>

The Greek Ambassador also met with Cyrus Vance before and after the election. The two met for the first time on 14 July and talked generally about Greek-US relations. Vance advocated the need for a peaceful solution of Greek-Turkish differences and the need to rebuild NATO’s Southern Flank. It was an opportunity for the Greek Ambassador to underline that while it could have provided leverage, the arms embargo had failed to generate progress on Cyprus due to the US administration’s undermining attitude.<sup>28</sup> Following Carter’s election, Alexandrakis discussed with Vance a purely legislative issue of Greek concern. Pointing out that current arrangements in Congress reflected the Ford administration’s approach and were not indicative of the new administration’s intentions, Vance stated that ‘Greece has a good friend’ in the new president.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, as Carter in his memoirs notes, it was Vance who drew his attention to the need for easing Greek-Turkish tensions.<sup>30</sup>

On 3 December 1976, when President-elect Carter announced Vance as his nominee for Secretary of State, Alexandrakis reminded the Greek Foreign Minister about his meeting with Vance and his views regarding Greek-related issues. The Greek

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<sup>26</sup> Alexandrakis, letter A. E. Φ. E.X. 645 from the Greek Embassy in Washington to MFA, August 18, 1976, Folder 13B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>27</sup> see above Carter’s Statement on the Aegean, August 20, 1976.

<sup>28</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. A.II.3161.4B/1850, Washington to MFA, July 14, 1976, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>29</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. A.II.2255, Washington to MFA, November 15, 1976, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>30</sup> Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1982), 51.

Ambassador noted that Vance had agreed with his views regarding Cyprus and the Aegean issues, particularly concurring on the need for approaching the two matters separately in the efforts for solutions.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, the Greek Ambassador reminded his department that both Ball and Vance had appeared before the House Committee on International Relations during major effort to repeal the embargo in June 1975. In their testimonies, both had been supportive of the embargo in principle. Vance, on his part, had suggested a temporary repeal of the embargo but it had to be explicitly linked to tangible results in the Cyprus negotiations.<sup>32</sup> Vance's interest for the region was consistent. In his policy paper for Carter, Vance included the Greek-Turkish disputes and suggested that the United States act as mediator.<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately he did not include specific details. Overall, Ball's and Vance's meetings with the Greek ambassador underscored the climate of expectation for the Greek government that the Democrats had created. Their stance toward Greece added to already close association between Athens and members of the Democratic Party.

As previous chapters demonstrate, the Greek government since 1974 had developed closer links with Democrats in Washington and more specifically on Capitol Hill. The supporters of Greek interests, most profoundly the arms embargo on Turkey, largely belonged to the Democratic Party. The group of Greek supporters included Representative John Brademas (D-ID), Representative Benjamin Stanley Rosenthal (D-NY), Senator Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), Senator Thomas Eagleton (D-MO), and Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI). As described above, the Greek ambassador,

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<sup>31</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. AP. IIP. AΣ 2514-Washington, December 3, 1976, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>32</sup> Alexandrakis, letter 2223.31/AΣ95, the Greek Embassy in Washington, December 22, 1976, Folder 27, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>33</sup> Vance, *Hard Choices*, Appendix I: Overview of Foreign Policy and Positions, submitted to Carter on October 1976.

operating under the explicit instructions of his government, had actively sought to establish close ties with this group. The Greek Ambassador enjoyed cardinal relations with the Democrats, who created a sense of future positive dealings in the event that a Democrat arrived in the White House after the November elections. As early as May 1976, Democrats advised the Greek government against a close association with the Ford administration. Ambassador Alexandrakis reported to Foreign Minister Bitsios and Prime Minister Karamanlis his brief discussion regarding the prime minister's visit to Washington, planned for mid-1976. The ambassador's telegram stated:

during yesterday's function at the embassy, Mr. Macnamara [sic] after praising the Prime Minister and [his] handling of economic issues added that he considered inadvisable a possible visit by the Prime Minister now. [...] He thinks that President Ford has already lost the November election. Representative Brademas, who was present in the discussion, observed that the current administration could offer nothing to Greece and concurred with Mr. Macnamara's views.<sup>34</sup>

The Ambassador's telegram was intended exclusively for the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister and to be handed to his close aide Ambassador Molyviatis only. It is unclear who Macnamara was. The name's spelling, which is in English in the telegram, is not consistent with the spelling of Robert McNamara, the former US Secretary of Defence. Moreover, McNamara had already become President of the World Bank Group by 1976. Thus it seems unlikely that he attended a reception in the Greek Embassy and discussed Greek-US relations. It should also be noted, though, that Hatzivassiliou uses the exact same spelling, i.e. Macnamara, in reference to the former secretary.<sup>35</sup> This might be an indication that the spelling that Alexandrakis used in his telegram was a widely misspelling within the Greek diplomatic service.

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<sup>34</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. 527/E.X. Washington to MFA, May 15 1976, Folder 30, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>35</sup> Evanthes Hatzivassiliou, *Greece and the Cold War: Frontline State, 1952-1967* (London, Routledge: 2006), 149.

More importantly, the views that Alexandrakis' telegram conveyed may have had an impact on the cancellation of Karamanlis' visit to Washington: formal notice to the Ford administration was given on 17 May,<sup>36</sup> two days after his message. In addition, both before and after the election, Democrats in contact with the Greek ambassador stressed the need for the Greek government to delay any decisions on the Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) until the new administration was formally installed.<sup>37</sup>

Karamanlis, on his part, had some close acquaintance with Democrats. The most profound example was Karamanlis's personal friendship with Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA). Kennedy privately visited Athens on numerous occasions between 1974 and 1976.<sup>38</sup> The US embassy was kept at arm's length during all of these visits. This is best contrasted with the visit of Representative Wayne Hays (D-OH) to Athens in early January 1975. Hays visited all three involved countries in the Cyprus dispute in close coordination with the US administration and the US Embassy reported on his meetings to the State Department.<sup>39</sup> However, when Kennedy, Sarbanes (D-MD) or Brademas (D-IN), all ardent supporters of the Turkish embargo, visited Athens on various occasions, the Embassy struggled to access information about their meetings with the Greek premier and based its reporting on speculation.<sup>40</sup> The last such visit

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<sup>36</sup> Note of meeting between Karamanlis and the US Ambassador, May 17, 1976, Folder 30B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>37</sup> Alexandrakis, letter 2223.31/AΣ95, the Greek Embassy in Washington, December 22, 1976, Folder 27, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>38</sup> Edward Kennedy visited privately Greece on 16 November 1974, on 18 March 1975, and on 8-11 November 1976. In all occasions Karamanlis met Kennedy to hold private discussions about which little is known and the US Embassy had little information about. See, Kubisch, tel. 82444 Athens to SecState, US embassy to SecState November 16, 1974, Greece-State Department, Telegrams to SecState, Box 11, Presidential Country Files for the Middle East and South Asia, GFFPL, also see Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.8, 337, and Vol.9, 320.

<sup>39</sup> Kissinger, Memorandum for the President, January 4, 1975, Presidential Daily Briefings 1/4/75, Box 4, NSA White House Situation Room, Presidential Daily Briefings, 1974-77, GRFPL.

<sup>40</sup> Kissinger, Memorandum for the President, January 17, 1975, Presidential Daily Briefings 1/17/75, Box 4, NSA White House Situation Room, Presidential Daily Briefings, 1974-77, GRFPL.

took place in November 1976, when Kennedy arrived in Athens as a personal guest of Karamanlis.<sup>41</sup> Concerned about the possible implications of his visit just before the US elections Athens coordinated with Kennedy so that he arrived after the US elections. After the visit, Ambassador Alexandrakis followed up with Kennedy, who stated that his intention had been to inform 'his circle about our [Greek] views regarding the restoration of peace in the area'.<sup>42</sup>

The Greek expectations following Carter's victory were clear. Not only the public but also the Greek government anticipated that Carter's election would shift Washington's approach in their favour. It is reasonable to assume that the Greek government anticipated that the new US administration would follow the Greek version of a balanced approach between Athens and Ankara, i.e. favouring Athens, making unnecessary for Athens to apply a confrontational strategy aiming at bringing the United States closer to the Greek interest. Even if that was not the case, Athens anticipated the new Administration would follow a truly balanced approach between Greece and Turkey. As Ambassador Alexandrakis noted the new administration would possibly treat 'two allies [Greece and Turkey] truly equally' moving away from Kissinger's one-sided preference for Turkey.<sup>43</sup> As frequently mentioned, in the Greek government's eyes Kissinger was seen as too close to Turkey.

More telling about the Greek expectations might be a practical observation. The Prime Minister's papers focus exclusively on Carter's campaign and contain no reference to Ford's campaign. Based on the notes and focus that Karamanlis's aides

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<sup>41</sup> Kubisch, tel. 12099 Athens to SecState, November 11, 1976, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1976, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>42</sup> Alexandrakis, letter Φ.2223.31/67/ΑΣ467, the Greek Embassy in Washington to MFA, December 1, 1976, Folder 27, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>43</sup> Alexandrakis, Letter Φ.222.31/69/ΑΣ470, November 30 1976, Folder 27, CKP, CGKF.

made on telegrams and newspapers clippings referring to Carter's vision of foreign policy, Carter made a positive impression on the Greek government. His broader message of morality and his emphasis on human rights matched Karamanlis's own views about the Cyprus and the Aegean problems. The Greeks particularly noted that Carter did not reserve his references to Cyprus to events that targeted Greek-Americans. At the Israeli B'nai B'Brith Convention, for example, the Democratic candidate stated that: 'in Cyprus we let expediency triumph over fairness, and lost both ways'.<sup>44</sup> Since 1974, Karamanlis had regarded the Cyprus Crisis and the US officials' apparent support for the second Turkish invasion as proof of a Turkish expansionist policy and a 'premediated crime'.<sup>45</sup> More important though is the fact that in moral terms, Turkey's abuse of power was profound. As Karamanlis stated in the Greek parliament in 1975:

All international organisations, principally the United Nations, all national governments, and the international press have condemned Turkey. They have pressured and keep pressuring it [Turkey] to restore justice. [...] Nobody ignores that in this case Turkey is the wrongdoer and Cyprus is the victim. [...] Therefore there is not only sympathy about Greece [and its position] but also there is the sense of justice.<sup>46</sup>

Turkey, as the Greek premier had often reiterated had violated the ceasefire on 14 August 1974 and unlawfully resumed military operations on Cyprus, south of the stabilisation zone. The Greek government maintained a similar approach regarding the Turkish claims in the Aegean Sea, with Karamanlis arguing that while the Aegean was

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<sup>44</sup> Kountouriotis, letter Φ.2221/57/ΑΣ1678, The Greek embassy in Washington to MFA, September 15, 1976, Folder 23B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>45</sup> Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, Athens, September 11, 1974, 'Cyprus: Second Karamanlis-Tyler Meeting', Laurie Van Hook and Edward C. Keefer (eds.) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976* [hereafter FRUS], vol. XXX, Greece; Cyprus; Turkey, 1973-1976 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2007), doc.149.

<sup>46</sup> Karamanlis, Speech in the Greek Parliament, October 16, 1975, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 79.

not 'a Greek lake' and Turkey had 'some rights', its broader claims were 'unjustified'.<sup>47</sup> These were highly emotional and moral arguments, which a pragmatist like the Greek leader knew could hardly persuade Kissinger or any world leader. Carter's statements and emphasis on morality, though, echoed these views, and presented him as welcome change to the approach that the Ford administration pursued.

President-elect Carter was fully aware of the impact that his election had made on Greece. Carter almost immediately realised that, with the campaign over, his administration could not assume power while the public had the impression that he favoured Greece over Turkey. He attempted to balance this image. When he appeared before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations after the election, Carter pointed out that 'there was a great deal of celebration in Greece when I was elected and I think the celebration is perhaps unwarranted if it was an assumption that I would lack objectivity' and he stressed the importance of both Turkey and Greece for the United States.<sup>48</sup> A similar stance was adopted by the Presidential nominee for Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, during his confirmation hearings before the Senate. Vance stressed that his interest was in good relations with both Greece and Turkey.<sup>49</sup> Amid a climate of expectation but also concern about pressing problems that US faced in the Eastern Mediterranean, President Carter assumed office on 21 January 1977.

### **Carter in the White House**

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<sup>47</sup> Karamanlis, Speech in the Greek Parliament, April 17, 1976, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 203.

<sup>48</sup> Meeting with President-Elect Carter Briefing before the Committee on Foreign Relations-United States Senate Ninety-Fourth Congress Transition Period on President-Elect Jimmy Carter's Views on Foreign Policy, November 23, 1976, (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1976), 14.

<sup>49</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. AΣ63, Washington to MFA, January 11, 1976, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.



The new President made some new appointments to support foreign policy decision-making for issues relevant to Greece, while others, particularly career diplomats, were promoted. The Greek Embassy tried to decode both the new President's personality and his team.<sup>50</sup> Regarding the new Secretary of State, Alexandrakis noted as positive the different personalities between Kissinger and the incomer.<sup>51</sup>

Cyrus Vance had first-hand experience of the Cyprus problem and its complexities. When a previous crisis had broken out in 1967, President Johnson appointed Vance as his special envoy to act as mediator between Athens and Ankara.<sup>52</sup> Vance's prior engagement with Cyprus was frequently mentioned within the Greek government as a demonstration of his understanding of the complexities related to the problem itself and to broader Greek-Turkish disputes. The new Secretary did not intend to conduct all actions related with Cyprus policy personally. One of those he appointed particularly demonstrated the new administration's broad approach to Eastern Mediterranean.

Vance appointed his law partner Matthew Nimetz as a counsellor to the State Department.<sup>53</sup> Nimetz was to be a 'point person on Cyprus [...] involved in nearly every aspect of U.S. efforts to achieve a settlement between the ethnic Greek and ethnic Turkish communities of Cyprus, both as a direct mediator and as a partner to UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim'.<sup>54</sup> This description overlooks his wider contribution to US policy towards all three countries, that is Greece, Turkey and

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<sup>50</sup> Alexandrakis, letter Φ.2221/455/ΑΣ2554 The Greek Embassy in Washington to Prime Minister's Office, December 7, 1976, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>51</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. AP. ΠΠ. ΑΣ 2523 to MFA, December 4, 1976, Folder 27B', CKP, CGKF.

<sup>52</sup> Nikos Christodoulidis, *Τα Σχέδια Λύσης του Κυπριακού (1948-1978)* [The Plans for the Solution of the Cyprus Problem (1948-1978)] (Athens: Kastaniotis, 2009), 183.

<sup>53</sup> Vance, *Hard Choices*, 43.

<sup>54</sup> Comment on sources, David Zierler and Adam M. Howard (eds.) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980* [hereafter *FRUS*], vol. XXI, Greece; Cyprus; Turkey, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), XIV.

Cyprus. Nimetz later played a significant role in the negotiations for Greece's return to NATO in 1980. As the following chapters demonstrate, Nimetz acted as a crucial main link between the National Security Council and the State Department by coordinating the two bodies' approach towards the Eastern Mediterranean issues. In the NSC his unofficial counterpart was Paul B. Henze, staffer on the National Security Council.

Henze headed the Intelligence Coordination section in the NSC and he also covered Greece, Turkey and Cyprus issues, the Horn of Africa nations, and international broadcasting.<sup>55</sup> Thus, he became increasingly important in Eastern Mediterranean issues. Prior to his NSC appointment, Henze had served as CIA station chief in Turkey. This gave him a significant advantage in understanding the realities in the region. Henze, although now relatively unknown, has drawn Ioannides's attention regarding the NSC's role in the repeal of the embargo. For Ioannides, Henze is the main pro-Turkish figure in the administration.<sup>56</sup> An overview of his approach towards the Eastern Mediterranean reveals that Henze's approach imitated many aspects of Kissinger's notion of a balanced approach towards Greece and Turkey. Henze advocated the need to repair relations with Ankara as the overriding concern for US national interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. When the administration assumed power, despite the problems in US-Greek relations, Athens remained much closer to Washington than did Ankara. Henze should be seen as a pragmatic follower of Kissinger's footsteps.

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<sup>55</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983), Appendix 3.

<sup>56</sup> Ioannides, *Realpolitik in Mediterranean*, 162.

The significance of the positions created for Nimetz and Henze lay elsewhere. The appointments reveal the US administration's new collective approach towards Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus. Considering that the problems that dominated bilateral US relations with its two Mediterranean allies and the interconnected and overlapping elements of the Greek-Turkish disputes, this approach was only logical. Kissinger had followed a similar approach. Every year between 1974 and 1976 a new problem arose in Greek-Turkish relations that required the Secretary of State's personal attention. Kissinger personally dealt with the Cyprus Crisis and its aftermath, led the effort for the repeal of the Turkish embargo, and headed the attempt to appease the Greeks in relation to the Turkish DCA that would defuse the Aegean Crisis. Despite this collective approach at the top, the Department of State followed its 'customary penchant for compartmentalizing [sic] Greek and Turkish affairs' and failed to inform the US delegation in Athens about the gist of the negotiations between Washington and Ankara regarding the Defence Cooperation Agreement.<sup>57</sup> Stearns, in his rather generous portrayal of benevolent omission, overlooks Washington's underlying goal of providing something better than what Greece was getting in terms of aid to balance the impact of the congressional limitation on aid. The undisputed fact, though, remains that during the Ford presidency a collective approach in the Eastern Mediterranean was the result of the need for handling issues at the top level of the Department of State. The Carter administration, in contrast, made the conscious choice to create low-level positions that linked the broader issues and challenges in the region. The issues inevitably disappeared from the top of the agenda but the positions created for

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<sup>57</sup> Monteagle Stearns, *Entangled Allies: U.S. Policy towards Greece, Turkey and Cyprus* (New York: Council of Foreign Relations Press, 1992), 41.

individuals such as Nimitz and Henze ensured that the collective approach towards the Eastern Mediterranean was maintained.

Another appointment in the early days of the new administration also reflected this approach. In early February 1977 Carter personally appointed the distinguished Washington lawyer Clark Clifford to act as his special envoy to the three capitals, Athens, Ankara, and Nicosia to evaluate the situation.<sup>58</sup> Clifford's mission to the region was one of the first foreign policy actions that the Carter administration made.

### **The Clifford Mission**

The need for action regarding bilateral US-Greek and Turkish relations and regarding the Cyprus negotiations was born out of Kissinger's last act. On 18 January, days before the inauguration of the new president, the Ford administration re-submitted the Turkish Defence Cooperation Agreement to Congress, concluded almost year earlier. The incoming administration seemed surprised by the move. In response and through State Department channels, Vance issued a statement to Athens and Ankara clarifying the Carter administration's position. Vance asserted that the Ford administration acted without prior consultation with Carter despite the assurances given against such an action.<sup>59</sup> Consequently, the Carter Administration requested that Congress defer consideration of the US-Turkish DCA, stating the pending administration policy review, as the US administration explained to the Turkish government.<sup>60</sup> The action, nonetheless, caused a reaction from Ankara. At a meeting with the Turkish

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<sup>58</sup> Clark Clifford, *Counsel to the President: a memoir by Clark Clifford and Richard Holbrook* (Random House: New York, 1991 1<sup>st</sup> edition), 625.

<sup>59</sup> Kissinger, tel. 013345 State to Ankara, January 20, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>60</sup> Macomber, tel. 00522 Ankara to SecState, January 24, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

Ambassador in Washington, Vance ‘defended the statement, saying it was the only means to stave off Congressional statements opposing the US-Turkish security relationship’ adding that the new administration ‘intended to complete its policy review of the Eastern Mediterranean in the near future, and then would strive to rebuild Turkish-US friendship’.<sup>61</sup> The dominant view within the Department of State became that the withdrawal of the agreement from Congress raised Ankara’s concern about the new administration’s attitude towards US-Turkish relations.<sup>62</sup> The incident expedited the need for a practical demonstration of the administration’s ‘policy review’ which centred on Clifford’s tour of the Eastern Mediterranean, which headed the effort.

The Clifford Mission emerged as President Carter’s personal initiative to demonstrate his commitment to Eastern Mediterranean problems as he had stated during the campaign. Clifford, a veteran of the Johnson administration, had close personal links with Carter, since he had acted as an advisor to the Democratic candidate.<sup>63</sup> In preparation for his mission to the three capitals, Clifford had substantial assistance from experts on the US policy, particularly Nimetz and Nelson C. Ledsky. Under Kissinger, Ledsky had served as Deputy Director and during Vance’s term was promoted as the Director of the Office of Southern European Affairs.<sup>64</sup>

In public, the mission’s goals included that in Athens and Ankara ‘Mr. Clifford will discuss matters relating to our bilateral relations’ while in Cyprus Clifford would

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<sup>61</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, ‘The Turkish-US Security Relationship and Cyprus’, participant, US: The Secretary-designate, Mr. Christopher et. al. Turkey: Ambassador Esenbel, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.84.

<sup>62</sup> Habib, tel.015033 State, January 22, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>63</sup> Kaufman, *Plans Unraveled*, 21.

<sup>64</sup> Alexandrakis, Letter Φ.2222/St.Dep/4/AΣ160, The Greek embassy Washington to MFA, January 26, 1977, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

try ‘to make an independent assessment of the situation on the island, prospects for early movement toward a negotiated settlement, and how we might be of assistance in this process’.<sup>65</sup> Behind closed doors, the aims of the mission did not significantly differ, but they were more specific. Carter convened one of his first Policy Review Committees for the mission. According to a new practice the new administration introduced, the Policy Review Committee consisted of the Secretaries of State and Defense, the JCS and CIA, and the NSA. They were to present the different views from within each department.<sup>66</sup>

Clifford’s mission offered an opportunity for foreign policy decision-makers to express their views freely at this very early stage and to demonstrate explicitly the US policy and strategy that they considered appropriate for dealing with the Eastern Mediterranean challenges. Based on their views it is clear that in the case of the Eastern Mediterranean Carter’s foreign policy did not struggle to implement a human rights approach as it is argued regarding other issues.<sup>67</sup> The policy that the administration suggested remained pragmatic and in line with Kissinger’s position.

Carter expressed the US’s policy rather crudely, stating, ‘we need the bases in Greece and Turkey’.<sup>68</sup> The president implied what his advisors had been arguing during the campaign that the priority remained to rebuild and secure NATO’s Southern Flank. The focus remained securing relations with Turkey in terms of defence

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<sup>65</sup> Jimmy Carter, ‘President’s Personal Emissary to Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus Designation of Clark M. Clifford’, February 3, 1977. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7466>.

<sup>66</sup> Presidential Review Memorandum/ NSC 5, ‘Cyprus/Aegean’ To The Vice President, The Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defence et.al., *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.4.

<sup>67</sup> Burton I. Kaufman and Scott Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter* (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas, 2006), 46.

<sup>68</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Participants: The President, Clark Clifford, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Matthew Nimetz, Washington, February 15, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.7.

cooperation via ratifying the DCA.<sup>69</sup> Getting Greece back to the Alliance was the eventual long-term goal. Congressional approval of the Turkish DCA depended, however, on the conclusion of the Greek agreement. It was imperative that Clifford persuade the Greek government to resume negotiations at an early stage.<sup>70</sup>

At the same time, the administration needed some progress on Cyprus. Immediately after the election, the supporters of the embargo made clear their intention to hold Carter accountable for his promises on the campaign trail regarding Cyprus. The issue of Cyprus was also central to reducing tensions between Athens and Ankara. The Aegean was another aspect that Clifford discussed but the continuity in terms of policy was clear.

The strategy for achieving the policy goals had a new element. The underlying consensus amongst the participants in the Policy Review Committee was that Turkey constituted the problem.<sup>71</sup> All Turkish governments had so far avoided their share of responsibility for allowing progress in Cyprus. This had served US-Turkish relations. Clifford presented this view most explicitly, arguing that:

Turkey, up to now, had the feeling that the executive branch was sympathetic to its outlook; it felt it could pretty much ignore Congress, not be bound by its action. I have attempted to indicate clearly to the Turkish Ambassador that this is a new deal; that times have changed; that there is a Democratic President and a Democratic majority, and that the Congress and the Administration will move together.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Summary of Conclusion of a Policy Review Committee Meeting 'Cyprus and the Aegean', Washington, February 10, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.6.

<sup>71</sup> Minutes of a Policy Review Committee Meeting 'Cyprus', Washington, February 10, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.5.

<sup>72</sup> Minutes of a Policy Review Committee Meeting 'Cyprus', Washington, February 10, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.5.

His view was very close to the Greek views expressed to members of the new administration on various instances. The Greek Ambassador had recently expressed the same views during an informative meeting that the president's emissary held with all three ambassadors. At this meeting, the Greek Ambassador had underlined the Greek view that it was time Turkey to move closer to the Greek views and respond positive to Athens' appeals. When Clifford asked the Greek ambassador what could have been the 'inducements for the Turks to make concessions [English in the original]', Alexandrakis replied that:

some of the 'inducements' for the Turks to act reasonably and in accordance with their [Turks] real interest would be the presence of an administration for at least 4 years committed to peace and morality, the prospect of its cooperation with Congress and the Turks apprehension that there will be not economic and military assistance in respect to their needs without progress.<sup>73</sup>

When Clifford visited Ankara his message was clear: 'discernible improvement in the Cyprus situation was necessary if the DCA was to be pushed to enactment by the Administration'.<sup>74</sup> The administration's expectations were minimal. As Brzezinski wrote in his summary of conclusions, 'the maximum objective [of the mission] would be to return with enough evidence of Turkish flexibility on Cyprus to induce Congress to move forward with the Turkish DCA'. This goal was rather unrealistic but some 'movement' could be enough at this stage to persuade Congress to maintain the existing level of aid for Turkey.

Pressure from Congress and supporters of the Turkish embargo was significant.

On 31 December Vance met with Senator-elect Sarbanes and Representative

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<sup>73</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. A.II 37EX, Washington to MFA, January 10, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>74</sup> Report by the President's Personal Emissary to Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus (Clifford) to President Carter, Washington March 1, 1977, Attachment: Ankara Report, February 24, 1977, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.8.



Brademas. These two leading figures of the group that supported Greek interests emphasised that the conclusion of the Greek DCA was not enough for the ratification of the Turkish agreement. Progress on Cyprus remained necessary.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, when Clifford secured the Turkish foreign minister's commitment to ensure that the Turkish Cypriot negotiator submit 'concrete and reasonable proposals' in the forthcoming new round of intercommunal negotiations, it was seen as a success.<sup>76</sup> Similarly, in Athens, Clifford secured a commitment for an early resumption of the bases negotiations.<sup>77</sup> The US administration considered Clifford's mission as a success.<sup>78</sup> The mission was also an achievement in relation to bilateral US-Greek relations.

The Greek government welcomed Carter's initiative. The US Ambassador described best the visit noting that it:

...was a huge success. He [Clifford] had a greater and more favorable impact on Greek officials and Greek public opinion than any other single American in the two and half years that I have been Ambassador here.<sup>79</sup>

The Greek Prime Minister emphasised the impact that Carter's victory made stressing that the public's anti-American sentiments were directed at an individual, the former Secretary of State, rather the United States in general.<sup>80</sup> This round of bilateral meetings offered an opportunity for the Greek Prime Minister to express first-hand his views to the new administration and indirectly emphasise what actions the new administration should avoid. For instance the Greeks used the opportunity to remind

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<sup>75</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Participants Vance, Sarbanes, Brademas et.al., Washington December 31, 1976, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.3.

<sup>76</sup> Report by the President's Personal Emissary to Greece, Turkey and Cyprus (Clifford) to President Carter, Washington March 1, 1977, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.8.

<sup>77</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Carter, VP Mondale, Vance, Brzezinski, et.al., Washington March 4, 1977, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.10.

<sup>79</sup> Kubisch, tel. Athens 1656 to State, February 22, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA

<sup>80</sup> Karamanlis discussion with Clifford, February 18, 1977, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 389.

the US administration about the potential implications of an ill-timed repeal of the arms embargo on Turkey.<sup>81</sup> Karamanlis' lengthy congratulatory message to Carter reflected his attempt to present in detail the problems that dominated the region from a Greek perspective.<sup>82</sup> Clifford's visit to Athens offered another opportunity to do this. In talks with the presidential emissary, the Greek Premier reviewed both Greek-US relations and Greek-Turkish relations. Karamanlis emphasised in detail the various aspects of the ongoing problems in the Aegean to stress that war remained a valid possibility.<sup>83</sup>

His presentation made a strong impact on Clifford. Karamanlis' presentation convinced Clifford that the danger was real and the Greek concerns were sincere. As he noted in a follow-up session with Vance after the mission returned to Washington, 'this emotion [inspired by Turkish expansionist policy] coming from the impressive and moderate Caramanlis [sic] had been noteworthy'.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, when discussing the Greek-Turkish disputes with Prime Minister Demirel, during his Ankara visit, Clifford emphasised the Greek incomprehension regarding Turkey's position.<sup>85</sup> The Greek assertion that, following the Clifford Mission, Washington better understood the complexities of the problems appeared justified.<sup>86</sup>

The visit was also an opportunity for the Greek government to demonstrate its accommodative strategy towards the new administration. Following Carter's election,

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<sup>81</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Karamanlis with Clifford, February 18, 1977, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 391.

<sup>82</sup> Karamanlis letter to President Carter, January 17, 1977, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>83</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Karamanlis with Clifford, February 18, 1977, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 391.

<sup>84</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'Report by Clark Clifford on his mission to the Eastern Mediterranean' Participants: The Secretary, Clifford, et.al., Washington March 2, 1977, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.9.

<sup>85</sup> Report by the President's Personal Emissary to Greece, Turkey and Cyprus (Clifford) to President Carter, Washington March 1, 1977, Attachment-Ankara report, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.8.

<sup>86</sup> Averoff, tel. AΣ112 MFA to Washington, February 25, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

the Greek ambassador had warned his government about the view amongst certain – unnamed – circles that ‘now the Greeks would be unmanageable.’<sup>87</sup> Senators close to the Greek Embassy, such as Sarbanes and Kennedy, emphasised that the Greek government should demonstrate its good will without delay and come to the negotiations table, regarding either the country’s position in NATO or Cyprus, with reasonable proposals.<sup>88</sup> The Greek government applied Alexandrakis’ suggestions and promised to work towards the success of the new round of negotiations regarding Cyprus that were happening in Vienna as well as resuming the work of the negotiations teams regarding the DCA occurring approximately on 31 March.<sup>89</sup>

Athens’ approach of demonstrating the Greeks’ conciliatory stance involved the Greek government working behind the scenes to ensure that the Cypriot government received Clifford positively. Washington suspected Makarios’ position as well as his interest in the progress of the negotiations. To ensure a common positive outlook towards Carter, Greek Foreign Minister Bitsios sent a personal message to Makarios which stressed that the Presidential emissary’s mission ‘is the US [effort] to help towards a solution [in Cyprus].’<sup>90</sup> Bitsios’ message implied that the mission represented a substantive effort to achieve a breakthrough in the Cyprus problem: as such it was to the Greek side’s interests, Greeks and Greek-Cypriots together, to ensure its success. Bitsios urged Makarios to develop and present detailed positions on the key issues related to the discussions between the two communities including the territorial aspect,

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<sup>87</sup> Alexandrakis, letter A.E. 2223.31/ΑΣ 495, The Greek Embassy in Washington to MFA, December 22, 1976, Folder 25B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>88</sup> Alexandrakis, letter. Φ2223.31/6/ΑΣ467, The Greek Embassy Washington to MFA, December 1, 1977, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF; Bitsios quoting Alexandrakis message for his meeting with Sarbanes, Rosenthal and Brademas, tel. YOI 25, MFA to Nicosia, January 13, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>89</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Between Clifford and the Greek Foreign Minister, Bitsios, February 18, 1977, Folder 7, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>90</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI 102, MFA to Nicosia, February 14, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

that is the size and the areas of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot zones, the constitutional provisions, and refugees.

Both the Greek government and the US administration appeared to be satisfied with Clifford's mission. The US Department of State formally informed each ambassador about the substance of Clifford's talks in their respective capitals.<sup>91</sup> Based on this information from Washington, the Greek government seemed satisfied with the way that Clifford had conveyed the Greek views to Ankara. In addition, Athens received reports from Ankara and Washington that Clifford had insisted in his meeting with the Turkish officials that the embargo could not be lifted without progress on Cyprus. But moving closer to a solution in Cyprus depended on Turkish concessions.<sup>92</sup> Bitsios appeared more reserved towards Carter. The Greek Foreign Minister noted with satisfaction that the policy 'lines' of the new administration appeared to differ from the previous administration in a positive way for the Greek interests, but he also noted that the overall US policy toward the Eastern Mediterranean remained unclear.<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless, the Greek government in internal discussions appreciated the new President's initiatives for a number of reasons.

### **The Greek view of the mission**

The Greek government immediately considered the Clifford initiative as supportive for advancing solutions relating to Greek-Turkish differences. According to the US officials, the Greeks, as the weakest party in the equation, welcomed US

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<sup>91</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. 71, Washington to MFA, March 3, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF; Alexandrakis, tel.66E.X., Washington to MFA, March 9, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>92</sup> Averoff, tel. AΣ112, MFA to Washington, February 25, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF; Alexandrakis, tel. AΣ 71, Washington to MFA, March 3, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>93</sup> Bitsios, tel. YO1140, MFA to Washington, March 10, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

involvement.<sup>94</sup> The Greek government did not merely express its support for Washington's initiative. Athens undertook concrete steps to secure the mission's success. For instance, since the mission was on the making, the Greek government appealed to the Cypriot President, Archbishop Makarios, to ensure that he too welcomed the Clifford mission.<sup>95</sup>

The Greek appeal to the Cypriot leader of Cyprus followed the advice and suggestions given to the Greek government by its supporters on Capitol Hill. Senator Sarbanes, in particular, reminded Ambassador Alexandrakis about the group's meeting with Vance and his assessment of the US administration's intentions. Sarbanes presented himself as the originator of the idea of dispatching a special envoy in the region. The senator urged the Greek and Greek-Cypriot governments to present detailed proposals about their view regarding the future of negotiations and Cyprus settlement.<sup>96</sup> The Greek government seriously considered Sarbanes' suggestions.

Athens and Nicosia agreed on the need to state to the US officials explicitly that progress towards the ratification of the Turkish DCA or any step towards the repeal of the embargo at this stage would be counterproductive.<sup>97</sup> Archbishop Makarios followed Athens' suggestions and presented a more moderate and conciliatory position when he welcomed Clifford to Nicosia. He had since early February begun to shift his hard-core approach towards the Turkish Cypriot leader in their bilateral meetings. He confirmed to the Greek ambassador that altering the public perception that he was a

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<sup>94</sup> Minutes of a Policy Review Committee Meeting, February 10, 1977, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.5.

<sup>95</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI 25, MFA to Nicosia, January 13, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>96</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI 25, MFA to Nicosia, January 13, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF, note: the same telegram quotes Alexandrakis message regarding his meeting with Sarbanes.

<sup>97</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI-104, MFA to Nicosia, February 15, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF; No creator name [possible Greek MFA for internal use] Note regarding what Makarios' intended to say to Clifford, February 16, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

hard-core negotiator and the main obstacle for progress was his aim.<sup>98</sup> Based on his report to Carter, Makarios' apparently reformed position satisfied Clifford.<sup>99</sup>

The Greek government however was pursuing broader aims than the Cyprus problem. Since the Aegean crisis of the previous summer, the Greek government had strongly emphasised the Aegean dispute as the primary Greek-Turkish point of contention. The Greek premier expressed this view to Carter in their May meeting on the margins of the North Atlantic Council. Karamanlis argued that the Aegean was of more 'direct interest to Greece and more dangerous', thereby indicating that a war between Athens and Ankara might spark over their differences.<sup>100</sup> The Aegean dispute also dominated Karamanlis' meeting with Clifford. As Greek officials had consistently done in the past, Karamanlis portrayed Ankara as an expansionist power. Karamanlis insisted that the Greek state was under constant threat, not only from the communist bloc but also from a fellow NATO ally. The Turkish attitude towards Greece therefore justified the Greek positions in all mutual Greek-US issues. Karamanlis also introduced a new request, an explicit commitment against aggression that would reinforce Kissinger's 1976 commitment against acts of aggression in the Aegean. This request originated from a suggestion made by Ambassador Alexandrakis a few months earlier. Immediately following Carter's victory, the Greek Ambassador in Washington commented on Kissinger's letter of 15 April 1976 regarding US opposition to actions of violence in the Aegean. The Ambassador suggested that 'an attempt to improve that text [Kissinger's letter]' should be made. A stronger US commitment to peace in the

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<sup>98</sup> Dountas, tel. A.Σ. 356 Nicosia to MFA, February 14, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>99</sup> Report by the President's Personal Emissary to Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus (Clifford) to President Carter, Washington March 1, 1977, Attachment: Nicosia Report, February 26, 1977, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.8.

<sup>100</sup> Memorandum of Conversation 'President's meeting with Prime Minister Caramanlis' London, May 10, 1977, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.166.

regions was likely, given ‘the new president’s focus on morality in dealing with international problems’.<sup>101</sup>

Despite the significance of this top-level meeting, the barely half-hour-long discussion did not allow Karamanlis to present Greek views on such a complex issue fully. This is why Clifford’s visit was so significant. When the presidential emissary visited the three capitals, he allowed time for each of the respective political leaders to present their positions fully and in detail. The mission did not break new ground but it initiated a period of dialogue and a renewed US involvement in promoting a solution to the problems that dominated NATO’s Southern Flank.

The Clifford visit achieved its very restricted goals and especially one: the parties involved communicated freely and in detail their views regarding the problems of mutual interests as well as their view of the US role in the process for ameliorating them. As Clifford frequently stated during his bilateral meetings, the mission did not aim at solving or providing any US plan for solving the problems. Within this scope both Washington and Athens appeared satisfied. The Greek government appeared satisfied with Clifford’s talks. The visit’s greatest success, however, at least for Greek-US relations, was Clifford’s warm reception in Athens. For the past two and a half years US high-ranking officials had been virtually unwelcomed in Athens. Kissinger had commented regarding his visits to the region that he could not land in Athens. However, the Greek public received the US official with good grace. The US ambassador described a particularly welcoming atmosphere from both the Greek officials and the Greek public towards Clifford. In his telegram after the visit, Kubisch

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<sup>101</sup> Alexandrakis, Letter Φ.222.31/69/ΑΣ470, The Greek Embassy in Washington to MFA, November 30, 1976, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

contrasted his own experience in Greece, marked with frequent anti-American demonstrations, with the recent reception of Clifford, underlining that:

After two and a half years of living in an environment characterized of hostility, resentment and bitterness against Americans (although progressively less so during the period), it was a personal pleasure for me to see the friendly waves and spontaneous applause as I moved around the city [Athens] with Clifford to our various meeting and visits. The public, press, radio and TV reaction was almost universally favorable and the personal warmth and empathy that marked Clifford's meetings with Prime Minister Caramanlis and other top Greek officials will be an asset for a long time to come.<sup>102</sup>

The visit came as another testament of the beneficial impact of Carter's election on Greek-US relations and the public's feelings had lasted since previous November's election result.

Clifford's understanding of the complexities and the exchange of views did not particularly impress the Greek government however. The Greek diplomatic personnel and the Greek government were growing concerned about US strategies towards the region in the near future. The Greek Ambassador in Nicosia, for example, after a private discussion with Clifford, speculated that the US administration was prepared to retain arms embargo on Turkey as a pressure tactic. In the process, though, Washington also expected Nicosia's cooperation and flexibility.<sup>103</sup> But it was also clear that the US commitment to embargo was not infinite. Foreign Minister Bitsios, when assessing Greek contacts with their US counterparts after the visit, noted that Washington had not clarified its own policy considerations towards the Greek-Turkish dispute and the Cyprus problem. While the thus far expressed views demonstrated a more positive line toward Greece, Bitsios argued to Alexandrakis that the United

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<sup>102</sup> Kubisch, tel.01656, Athens to SecState, February 22, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>103</sup> Dountas, tel. A.Σ.429EX, Nicosia to MFA, February 25, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.



States avoided answering crucial questions. In the case of the ‘Aegean Army’ Turkish division, for instance, Bitsios lambasted the US view that, according to Ankara, the new division had limited capabilities. The Greek minister stressed that the US intelligence agencies had the ability to provide answers whether the division had enough operational capabilities to threaten the Greek Islands as the Greeks believed, rather than relying on Ankara’s word. Evidently, Washington had not done so or at least did not share information with Athens.<sup>104</sup> Despite the shortcomings, the Clifford Mission opened a period of intensive progress on three fronts; namely, the Greek Defence Cooperation Agreement, US relations with Turkey, and the Cyprus negotiations. This intense period lasted until the summer of 1977.

Following the Clifford Mission, Washington and Athens focused on two issues, the sixth round of intercommunal negotiations regarding Cyprus in Vienna conducted under the auspices of the UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim between 31 March and 7 April and the resumption of the Greek-US bases negotiations. The US administration had secured its initial goals but the outcome of both negotiations remained questionable.

### **Another failed Cyprus negotiation**

In comparison with previous negotiations between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriot representatives, the significance of the sixth round of negotiations was more important for bilateral US-Greek relations. Progress in the negotiations would affect the future of the Turkish embargo and the Turkish DCA. Hence, the Greek government was not interested in limited and unsubstantial progress, nor was willing to appear as the main

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<sup>104</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI-140, MFA to Washington, March 10, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

obstacle to a successful breakthrough in the intercommunal talks. Similarly, the United States pay the closest attention to talks since Kissinger's efforts to reconcile the two sides' position in 1975.

Already before Clifford's visit, Athens and Nicosia coordinated their positions regarding the forthcoming Vienna negotiations. The Greek ambassador in Nicosia, side conveyed to Karamanlis and Bitsios that Makarios was prepared to demonstrate a conciliatory stance, when Carter's emissary visited the island. Makarios, according to Ambassador Dountas, would announce his acceptance of a bizonal, or bicomunal, federation as form of governance for the future Republic, moving away from his earlier instance on multi-regional federation, a limited return of refugees to the Turkish controlled area, which, he indented to insist, had to be on no more than 25% of the island's territory.<sup>105</sup> It was a promise that Makarios kept when he met Clifford.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, Clifford himself expressed his appreciation for Makarios' stance in subsequent conversation with the Greek ambassador.<sup>107</sup>

Makarios' position, as expressed to Clifford, remained at the core of the Greek Cypriot proposals in the Vienna talks.<sup>108</sup> But the Turkish Cypriot stance and proposals was was disappointing and counter productive, from the Athens' and Nicosia's point of view.<sup>109</sup> he Turkish-Cypriot negotiations put forward additional demands regarding the territorials arrangements between the two communities. Moreover, their proposals

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<sup>105</sup> Dountas, tel. 356 EX, Nicosia to MFA, February 14, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF, and in Summary of the Key points of Makarios presentation to Clifford, February 16, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>106</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Makarios with Clifford, February 24, 1977, FRUS, vol. XXI, doc.32.

<sup>107</sup> Dountas, tel. A.Π. ΑΣ429 EX, Nicosia to MFA, February 25, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>108</sup> See Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cyprus [problem], May 6, 1977 and a longer paper from June 15, 1977, which provide an overall account of the talks that took place in Vienna between 31 March and 7 April 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>109</sup> Papadopoulos, tel. 120/41/284, Vienna to MFA, March 31, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

on the future structure of the Republic envisaged in practice a loose confederation. Hence, the Greek side resented the proposals as unacceptable and contrary to earlier agreements between Makarios and Denktash.<sup>110</sup> The failure of the negotiations was inevitable. Subsequently, the Greek government paid a strong effort to demonstrate beyond doubt both within the White House and on the Capitol Hill that the blame for this disappointing development laid on Ankara.

Around the same period, the US administration intended to request additional aid for Turkey for Fiscal Year 1978 of \$50 million in comparison to the provisions of the previous administration which had offered a total of \$170 million in credit sales. The Greek government, through Ambassador Alexandrakis, questioned the motives of the administration to offer economic assistance to Turkey given the lack of progress in efforts to defuse the Greek-Turkish disputes or the Cyprus problem. In response, Clifford defended his own proposal for the additional aid for Turkey suggesting that it was a middle ground between what Ankara was asking and what Washington was prepared to give as well as means for encouraging the Turkish government to do more for securing a successful outcome on the open issues between Greece and Turkey. Clifford added that regarding the DCA, a key Turkish demand, 'we [the US] should reserve our decision on the DCA. Future developments will determine our decisions.'<sup>111</sup> A day earlier, the US ambassador to Athens, Jack Kubisch, had expressed a similar line underlined that despite conflicting views within the administration, the White House chose not to support the ratification of the Turkish DCA.<sup>112</sup> Both officials implied that Washington, by adopting this stance, remained

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<sup>110</sup> Papadopoulos, tel.120/43/287, Vienna to MFA, April 1, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>111</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. 76 E.X. Washington to MFA, March 17, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>112</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. 75E.X. Washington to MFA, March 17, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

committed to seeing Turkey doing more towards progress in Cyprus. Despite these assurances, the Greek Embassy in Washington warned Athens that the US administration intended to use anything that could be seen as a positive Turkish response in Vienna to pressure Congress to support the amount sought.<sup>113</sup> This was clearly not in Greece's interests and would constitute a dangerous precedent for future considerations of aid to Turkey.

Given this background the Greek government decided to act and expose beyond doubt Ankara's unyielding stance in Vienna. Bitsios instructed Alexandrakis to ensure that the White House understood the substantive reasons for the Greek objections to the Turkish proposals.<sup>114</sup> There was the danger, according to the Greek government, that Washington would try to place the blame for the failure of the negotiations on both the Greek and Turkish Cypriot representatives.<sup>115</sup>

Amid these considerations and actions, there was another element in the Greek strategy that indicated Greek views towards the State Department and the White House. Instead of expressing its concerns to Nelson Ledsky, who as special observer for the United States participated in the proceedings in Vienna, the Greek government chose to maintain a direct channel with the administration through the US Embassy in Athens and the Greek Embassy in Washington. Ledsky was simply not trusted since he had served under Kissinger. In discussion with the Greek Ambassador in Vienna, Ledsky advocated the possibility of Greek-Turkish co-exploitation of the Aegean's resources.<sup>116</sup> This was an unacceptable proposal, even if made unofficially, for the Greek government. Such ideas, as Bitsios commented, could only advance Turkish

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<sup>113</sup> Alexandrakis, tel.76E.X. Washington to MFA, March 17, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>114</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI 188, MFA to Vienna, April 1, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>115</sup> Bitsios, tel. 191, MFA Washington, April 4, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>116</sup> Bitsios, tel.192, MFA to Washington, April 4, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

intransigence on the Aegean dispute. Moreover, Ledsky's views proved in practice the need for close contacts with new members of the Carter administration, such as Nimetz, in order to ensure that 'former aides to Kissinger don't make decisions', as the Greek foreign minister noted.<sup>117</sup> It was another testament of the Greek long-held mistrust for the former Secretary of State. In all aspects related to the negotiations, the Greek emphasis was placed on Clifford who seemed closer to Greek views.<sup>118</sup> It would be a mistake to assume that Clifford unconditionally supported the Greek side. In an overview of the Vienna negotiations with the Greek Ambassador, for instance, Clifford appeared disappointed by both sides' proposals.<sup>119</sup> Nevertheless, Athens considered him as more trusted and unbiased to either since, hence, it was through him that the Greeks wanted Carter to receive their considerations.

Another round of Cyprus negotiations, therefore, achieved very little. The impact of the failure in Vienna was immediate. The administration remained committed on the need for increased aid for Turkey along the lines that Clifford had indicated; but the aid package remained below the annual \$250 million budget that the Turkish DCA provided for.<sup>120</sup> As mentioned before, the Turks remained sceptical of Carter's commitment to US-Turkish relation. However, the Greek strategy appeared also successful, since Congress rejected the administration's suggestions and reduced the provisions for Turkey further. Turkey had not done enough to satisfy the congressional expectations.

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<sup>117</sup> Bitsios, tel. 191, MFA Washington, April 4, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>118</sup> Bitsios, tel. YOI 190, MFA to Vienna, April 4, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>119</sup> Alexandrakis, tel.115E.X., Washington to MFA, April 7, 1977, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>120</sup> Memorandum for the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter, 'Security Assistance for Turkey and Greece', Washington, April 18, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.12.

The incident called for reconsideration of the administration's approach towards Turkey, and by definition, towards the Eastern Mediterranean. Henze from the NSC concluded that:

rather than simply keep listening to the pleadings of those who are Lobbying their own special cause, [the Administration] should generate support for its own position on Greek–Turkish aid and its Eastern Mediterranean strategy. It can put itself in a much stronger position than the previous Administration was. The Administration needs to take the initiative into its own hands instead of continually finding itself responding to Greek Lobby demarches.<sup>121</sup>

The administration did not decide to alter its approach at this state. The focus remained on the second element of the US strategy designed to secure the ratification, at any stage, of the Turkish DCA. That was achieving progress towards the conclusion of the final bases agreement with the Greek government by doing anything necessary.

### **Momentum for the DCA negotiations**

Despite the failure in the Vienna negotiations, the Clifford Mission increased momentum for concluding the Greek-US Defence Cooperation Agreement. During their final meeting in Athens, the Greek foreign minister informed Clifford, acting under explicit instructions from Karamanlis, that the Greek government would be willing to resume negotiations in late March. Also during that meeting, members of the Greek team for the DCA negotiations accompanied Bitsios. Macheritsas, who supported the new head of the Greek delegation, and Spyros Chrisospathis, another high rank official in the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presented in detail the main points of contention between the two teams regarding any future agreement.<sup>122</sup> The

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<sup>121</sup> Henze, Action Memorandum, April 25, 1977, NSA Staff Files, box 1, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library [JCPL].

<sup>122</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Bitsios, Clifford et.al, February 18, 1977, Folder 7B, CKP, CGKF.

move proved to have a beneficial impact on the future negotiations since the US administration was aware of the significance that the Greek government attached to, otherwise insignificant, requests. Moreover, Bitsios emphasised the ‘take-it or leave it’ approach of the US negotiators thus far as an obstacle for the progress of the talks.<sup>123</sup> It was a crucial element that the US administration strove to avoid.

As mentioned in chapter 3 above, the Greek government chose to delay ratification until after the elections, hoping that a new administration could be more receptive to the Greek views. The strategy appeared to be fully justified. The Greek team noted that during the first round of talks that finished on 22 April 1977, the US delegation was ready to accept the central Greek requests including those related purely to technical details as well as with matters of practical Greek control over the bases: this was an essential issue for Athens.<sup>124</sup> The Greek official noted that:

The Americans demonstrate good will for reaching an Agreement that will be satisfactory for both sides. While initially insisting on [us] answering basic questions, [...] they eventually agreed with our approach that the Greek side will not provide explicit answers until the two sides discuss the broader aspects of all issues under negotiations.<sup>125</sup>

On 19 May 1977, the two sides completed the first phase of negotiations and managed to solve, to Greek satisfaction, five out of eight issues that were obstructing progress. Once again the Greek government was impressed with the ‘great deal of flexibility’ that the US side demonstrated, particularly in contrast with the past.<sup>126</sup> On June 1977, the two sides entered into the final phase of the negotiations.

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Chrisospathis, Note for the Minister ‘Negotiations for the conclusion of a new Greek-US Defence Agreement’, April 23, 1977, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>125</sup> Chrisospathis, Note for the Minister ‘Negotiations for the conclusion of a new Greek-US Defence Agreement’, April 20, 1976, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>126</sup> Chrisospathis, Letter 2203.253/1/AS1262, ‘Greek-US Defence Cooperation Agreement’, May 21, 1977, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

Considering the US administration's strategy, the delegation's stance is not surprising. As mentioned above, securing an agreement was necessary to secure the broader challenges involving the Southern Flank of NATO. While agreement at all costs does not appear to have been the US administration's policy, insisting on minor, from the US perspective, issues endangered the broader aims. When the two sides disputed over a few million dollars of additional aid that the Greeks were requesting, for example, Henze stressed that the administration should focus on its long-term interests. Contrary to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) objections about this request, the NSC staffer strongly advised Brzezinski of the need to accept Greek demands. He added that:

if we go on hassling with the Greeks for months about this \$20 million FMS credit [...] we may never bring the DCA negotiations to an end, thus complicating the whole process of getting the Greek-Turkish-Cyprus issues behind us.<sup>127</sup>

Carter was closer to the OMB view but he accepted it on the condition that acquiescing would help to conclude the negotiations.<sup>128</sup>

Progress was rapid in this climate. The two teams agreed on the final open issues on 11 July 1977. To Greek satisfaction, the Greek agreement appeared to be superior to the Turkish one on some minor issues. The Greek government would be able to request that part of the \$700 million that Greece would receive as part of the agreement

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<sup>127</sup> Henze, Action Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski: Additional Military Assistance to Further Greek-US DCA negotiations, May, 31, 1977, box1, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

<sup>128</sup> Memorandum from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (Lance) and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter, Washington, May 26, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.167.



be used for existing purchases, an ability that Ankara lacked.<sup>129</sup> On 18 July the two chief negotiators signed the texts of the final agreements in Athens.

## Challenges and Expectations

The first six months of the Carter administration therefore appeared promising for US-Greek relations. The Cyprus negotiations did not achieve significant progress but Washington hardly had expected them to. Greece and the United States were working closely together on all other issues. In May, Karamanlis and Carter held their first bilateral meeting during the NATO heads of states summit in London. Carter reaffirmed Washington's commitment to relations with both Greece and Turkey. He explained that 'the U.S. feels friendship towards both Greece and Turkey [...] Turkey feels that we favor Greece. We try to show Turkey that we are fair and objective'.<sup>130</sup> This came as no surprise to Karamanlis. But, given the US position on the Greek DCA, the Greek government remained satisfied that Washington under Carter was closer to Greek interests than the Ford administration had been. During this period, therefore, Greece's confrontational strategy was entirely set aside. The Greek government instead sought to demonstrate its willingness to work closely with the new administration. The conclusion of the Greek DCA, however, was the last positive development of 1977.

The conclusion of the DCA was only the first step since the Greek constitution required its parliament's approval for the new Agreement. The Greek ratification would have been a stronger incentive for Congress to debate and approve both DCAs.

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<sup>129</sup> Chrisospathis, Note 'Negotiations for the new Greek-US Defence Agreement' July 11, 1977, Folder 27B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>130</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'President's meeting with Prime Minister Caramanlis', London, May 10, 1977, doc.166, *FRUS*, vol.XXI.

But as the ratification of the Turkish Agreement promised to be lengthy the Turkish government was becoming increasingly impatient.<sup>131</sup> An early action was needed to appease the Turkish concerns.

Turkey meanwhile entered a particularly unstable period which hindered the possibility of any Turkish concessions on Cyprus.<sup>132</sup> During this intense phase of deciding the best solution forward, Henze argued that:

Pressures on Turkey for further progress regarding Cyprus have to be very subtle and every [sic] delicately applied during the electoral period there. Demirel can lose strength if the US appears to be waffling on its approach to Turkey; Ecevit can make short-term gains by blowing the nationalistic horn. The problem is not really Demirel versus Ecevit (either man, in the end, would be a responsible leader who would preserve Turkey's commitment to the Western alliance) but the fact that confusion over an issue as basic as Turkey's relationship with the US could cause the election to come out again a narrow draw—and then we will go through a period of maneuvering to get a government and come up with a weak government in the end. No progress on Cyprus can be made if this occurs and the deadlock will persist. Meanwhile Greece, heading toward election the next year could also end up in a deadlock where government could not make the concessions necessary for a settlement either.<sup>133</sup>

In addition, Cyprus entered a transitional period. On 3 August 1977 Archbishop Makarios died of a heart attack.<sup>134</sup> His death affected the Cyprus negotiations in two ways. First, the discussions between Karamanlis and Clifford reveal Makarios was considered to be the only leader in Cyprus who was able to persuade the Greek Cypriots to agree to harsh but necessary concessions for a final agreement.<sup>135</sup> As they

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<sup>131</sup> The Situation Room, Memorandum for Dr. Brzezinski, September 2, 1977, Box3, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, JCPL.

<sup>132</sup> Richard C. Company, Jr., *Turkey and the United States: The Arms Embargo Period* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1986), 47.

<sup>133</sup> Henze, Action Memorandum: Turkish Aid and Greek Lobby Objections, April 23, 1977, box1, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL

<sup>134</sup> Announcement of Makarios death and Karamanlis statement, August 3, 1977, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 491.

<sup>135</sup> Karamanlis meeting with Clifford, February 18, 1977, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 390.

noted, even his intervention had limits. Secondly, the Cyprus Republic entered a period of succession and no leader could easily replace Makarios.

The need for the election of a new Cypriot leader raised an immediate constitutional question. The Greek-Cypriot leader had been serving as the recognised president of the Republic, not merely as the leader of the Greek Cypriot community. Following his death, the Turkish government and the Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktash, argued that his successor could only represent the Greek Cypriot Community.<sup>136</sup> Within the Cyprus negotiations, the status of the two communities had been a thorny issue. Moreover, Denktash himself sought to capitalise on Makarios' demise, stating the intention of the Turkish Community to declare the 'Turkish Federal State of Cyprus' as fully independent.<sup>137</sup> Regarding the timing of the next round of negotiations, the Turkish-Cypriot leader stated his unwillingness to participate in meaningful negotiations regarding the future of Cyprus, at least not before the February 1978 presidential elections on the island.<sup>138</sup>

In addition to instability in Cyprus, the US expectation for rapid progress faced another challenge, this time from internal developments in Greece. In September 1977 the Greek government announced its decision to call for general elections a year earlier than constitutionally obliged. The Greek press interpreted the government's decision to call for early elections as a demonstration of Karamanlis' intention to take decisive steps on crucial and domestically controversial foreign policy questions.<sup>139</sup> These

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<sup>136</sup> The Situation Room for Bill Hyland, August 9, 1977, Box 3, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, JCPL.

<sup>137</sup> The Situation Room, Memorandum for Dr. Brzezinski, August 25, 1977, box3, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, JCPL.

<sup>138</sup> The Situation Room, Memorandum for Dr. Brzezinski, August 24, 1977, box 3, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, JCPL.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

issues were often referred to as ‘national issues’, including the Greek-Turkish dispute over the Aegean, the Cyprus problem, and Greek accession to the Common Market.<sup>140</sup> The Greek Prime Minister, Constantine Karamanlis, both in his statement to the cabinet and his formal letter to the Greek Head of State, President Constantine Tsatsos, requesting the dissolution of parliament used similar language to justify the call for early elections. In both cases, Karamanlis underlined that the next year, 1978, the Greek government was required to decide on the Cyprus settlement, Greek-Turkish relations and Greek accession to the EEC but to do so, any government required a ‘recent popular mandate and consequently [domestic] support’.<sup>141</sup>

Despite the setback that another election cycle in Greece created for the broader US strategy towards the Eastern Mediterranean, there were also rays of hope. The US analysis of information coming from Athens indicated that the new Greek government, most likely under Karamanlis, would probably ratify the US-Greek DCA. Moreover, after the Greek elections, Washington expected Athens to respond positively to Turkish actions regarding the Cyprus negotiations. This was a crucial issue since, the Turkish government was committed to demonstrating its good will, in the form of troop reductions, and a new set of proposals after the Greek elections.<sup>142</sup> Hence, the November 20 elections in Greece became a point for great expectations for all parties involved.

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<sup>140</sup> ‘G. N. Drosos ‘Γιατί γίνονται οι εκλογές; Τι Κρύβεται πίσω από την επίσπευσή τους κατά δώδεκα ολόκληρους μήνες. [Why elections? What is hidden behind the decision to call elections twelve months early]’ *Kathimerini*, September 25, 1977, 5.

<sup>141</sup> Karamanlis statement to Cabinet and Karamanlis letter to the President of the Republic, September 20, 1977, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 506.

<sup>142</sup> Henze, Memorandum for the Dr Brzezinski, Evening Report, October 12, 1977, Box 5, Brzezinski Material: Staff Evening Reports Files, JCPL; Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, Weekly Report, October 13, 1977, Box 5, Brzezinski Material: Staff Evening Reports Files, JCPL.

Carter's election to the presidency profoundly benefited Greek-US relations. Karamanlis and his closest aides followed the US 1976 presidential election campaign closely. Based on Carter's rhetoric and statements coming from some of his closest advisors, Athens anticipated that the Democratic candidate would follow the Greek interpretation of a balanced approach, i.e. favouring Greece over Turkey.

Once in office, Carter followed Ford/Kissinger's policy toward the Eastern Mediterranean. The new administration opted for allaying Turkish fears of an alleged US pro-Greece stance. Nonetheless, the Carter administration's attitude toward the Greek-US DCA negotiations and the Cyprus problem satisfied the Greek government. Washington proved more receptive to the Greek requests regarding the US bases. To Greek satisfaction, Washington emphasised the need for Turkish initiatives on Cyprus to a greater extent than the previous Republican administration had done so far. Hence, during the first six months of the new administration in office, Athens's bet on Carter appeared justified. Despite the positive atmosphere in Greek-US relations, the broader US goals in the Eastern Mediterranean suffered. The Turkish suspicion about Carter remained. Similarly, progress on Cyprus, which constituted a prerequisite for congressional action on the US-Turkish DCA, was lacking. The US administration envisaged greater progress on these issues after the Greek elections. Unfortunately, for Washington, the internal developments in both Greece and Turkey proved these expectations unfounded.



## Chapter 5

### Changing Course: Repealing the Turkish Embargo

In 1978, at least publicly, one issue dominated Greek-US relations: Carter's decision to seek the repeal of the arms embargo on Turkey. The decision was taken without any profound progress having occurred in the Cyprus negotiations. It therefore contradicted the president's declarations while campaigning.

The repeal of the Turkish embargo is mostly seen as the result of Carter's conversion to Kissinger's *realpolitik* and power politics.<sup>1</sup> Carter chose relations with Turkey, a significant regional power, over his own moral assertion of the need for a solution in Cyprus. The repeal of the embargo appears to be in line with a broader change in Carter's foreign policy, a shift towards prioritising geopolitics, in this case relations with Turkey, which occurred at the same time.<sup>2</sup> The frequent changes in US policy under Carter have been central to criticism about the president's effectiveness. A lack of central direction led to policy inconsistencies and an ultimate failure of his foreign policy goals.<sup>3</sup> In reality, though, the decision to repeal the Turkish embargo represents a distinct case and the motives behind it are different from what existing works argue.

Carter, as argued in the previous chapter, never contested the necessity for balanced relations with both Greek and Turkey, at least after being elected to the presidency. In the months prior to the repeal of the embargo, Washington remained

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<sup>1</sup> Chris Ioannides, *Realpolitik in the Eastern Mediterranean: From Kissinger and the Cyprus Crisis to Carter and the lifting of the Turkish Arms Embargo* (New York: Pella, 2001), 305.

<sup>2</sup> Barbara Zanchetta, *The Transformation of American International Power in 1970s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 220.

<sup>3</sup> Scott Kaufman, *Plans Unraveled: The Foreign Policy of the Carter Administration* (DeKalb, IL: North Illinois University Press, 2008), 55.

committed to rebuilding the Southern flank of NATO through strengthening US defence relations with both Athens and Ankara. Securing both Greek and Turkish cooperation on Cyprus would ease Congress' opposition. In the aftermath of the Greek elections of November 1977 and Ecevit's return to power in December 1978, both Athens and Ankara prioritised strictly defined domestic calculations. Forces outside the US administration's control, therefore, entailed that the collective approach toward the Eastern Mediterranean, as described before, did not meet the US goals. Repealing the embargo emerged as the best available option for securing relations with Turkey, which had been a central policy goal.

Washington meanwhile attempted to mollify Greece by aiming to comply with Greek requests related to the repeal of the embargo. Carter's drive for the repeal of the embargo represented his ultimate acceptance of Kissinger's view that the arms cut-off legislation was harmful for the broader US policy. At the same time, Carter introduced a new element: acceptance of the Greek views regarding the lifting of the embargo as legitimate concerns.

The Greek strategy towards the United States also shifted during this period. Greece returned to confrontation as a means of securing benefits following the repeal of the embargo. While Athens did not reject working with the US administration, the diplomatic services underlined that, if the embargo was repealed, Congress represented the best vehicle for achieving all Greek requests. Hence, Athens turned to congressmen supporting Greek interests, who opposed the lifting of the embargo. In comparison with 1975, though, Greek cooperation with Congress proved to be less successful for reasons presented below.



To understand the changes in US and Greek approaches during 1978, this chapter gives priority to an assessment of the Greek general elections of 1977. The results caused a profound re-evaluation of the Greek foreign policy objectives, resulting in a new Greek government looking increasingly inwards. Next, it is crucial to consider Vance's mission of January 1978 in the region that aimed to break the Cyprus stalemate. Based on the course of events, it was the last effort to secure the success of the US strategy, as the previous chapter presents. After Vance's visit in the region, the US administration concluded that the repeal of the embargo was a necessary part of a package designed to appease Ankara. The chapter concludes that both the Greek government and the US administration reverted to previous strategies. On one hand, the Greek responses of 1978 reflected a new Greek approach towards the US that demonstrated a complete return to Greece's pressure tactics of the past. These continued well into 1980. On the other hand, the US opted for modest goals prioritising US bilateral relations with Ankara and Athens over efforts to ease the tensions in Eastern Mediterranean and assisting Greece and Turkey to move closer to a Cyprus solution.

### **The Greek elections of 1977**

The US administration's strategy towards the Eastern Mediterranean faced its first setback in the autumn of 1977. The Greek elections did not result in an expected overwhelming success for Karamanlis. Before the Greek elections, the US plan to secure and restore relations with Greece and Turkey was complex but promising. The US declared its willingness to approve the Turkish 1976 DCA which the Demirel government had negotiated. The Turkish government was under pressure from the

Turkish military to see the agreement implemented, which provided vital resources.<sup>4</sup> However, pressure for action on the Turkish DCA was also growing in Washington. The US administration received reports that the longer the United States delayed the DCA's ratification, the more the Turkish military's loyalty and commitment to the Western Alliance dwindled.<sup>5</sup>

The congressional ratification of the Turkish agreement depended, as it was frequently stressed, on the need for some positive progress during the intercommunal negotiations on Cyprus. This, in turn, depended primarily on Turkey, as the strongest power on the ground and the one with ultimate control over the Turkish Cypriot community. In October 1977, the Turkish government assured Washington of its willingness to make good will gestures in the form of reductions to the number of troops stationed on Cyprus.<sup>6</sup> The Turkish compromise, however, depended on the Greek government's greater involvement in negotiating process. Ankara recognised that this development would only be politically possible for the Greek government after the elections there.<sup>7</sup> Hopefully Karamanlis, seen as genuinely interested for progress, would retain power.

The US administration concluded that an expectation of a Karamanlis victory was reasonable.<sup>8</sup> The US Embassy's Chargé d'Affaires ad interim, Hawthorne Q.

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<sup>4</sup> The Situation Room, Memorandum for Dr Brzezinski, Evening notes, September 2, 1977, Box 3, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library [hereafter JCPL].

<sup>5</sup> The Situation Room, Memorandum for Dr Brzezinski, Noon notes, September 2, 1977, Box 3, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, JCPL.

<sup>6</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, Memorandum for the President, October 20, 1977 Box 4, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, JCPL.

<sup>7</sup> Z. Brzezinski, Memorandum for the President, November 3, 1977, Box 4, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, JCPL.

<sup>8</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'President's Meeting with Clark Clifford on Greece-Turkey-Cyprus Problem', Participants The President, Clark Clifford, Secretary Vance, et.al., Washington, November 4, 1977, David Zierler, Adam M. Howard (eds.) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980* [hereafter *FRUS*], vol. XXI, Greece; Cyprus; Turkey, (Washington, Government Printing Office: 2014), doc.16

Mills, argued that had Karamanlis emerged with another strong majority in the elections, it would have allowed him to respond readily to any Turkish concessionary stance and gestures towards settling the Aegean and Cyprus problems.<sup>9</sup> The view was corroborated by the position that the Greek Foreign Minister, Dimitrios Bitsios, adopted in his meeting with Cyrus Vance, and the Presidential Emissary, Clark Clifford, on the margins of the UN annual General Assembly opening. Bitsios indicated, without undertaking any explicit commitment that after the 20 November elections the Greek government would undertake initiatives on issues of mutual Greek-US interests such as the formal Greek ratification of the DCA.<sup>10</sup>

The White House was convinced that the Greek government would most likely ratify the US-Greek DCA after the elections. A day before the elections, Brzezinski commented to Carter that:

Caramanlis is likely to interpret his expected electoral victory on Sunday as enhancing his freedom of motion. State still cannot tell whether he will launch bold initiatives to resolve the Aegean dispute with the Turks, but it does seem likely, particularly if his party secures nearly 50 percent of the vote, that he will sign the DCA. He may even return Greece to more nearly full military participation in NATO. These changes would be all the more likely, as has been rumored, Foreign Minister Bitsios is replaced at this key position soon after the election.<sup>11</sup>

The ratification of the Greek DCA would mean that the US administration could ask Congress to ratify both agreements together thus avoiding a humiliating rejection of

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<sup>9</sup> Mills, tel. 10185 Athens to SecState, November 2, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, National Archives [hereafter NARA].

<sup>10</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'The Secretary's Meeting with the Greek Foreign Minister Bitsios', Participants- Greece Foreign Minister Bitsios, Ambassador Alexandrakis, United States Secretary Vance, Undersecretary Habib, Matthew Nimetz et.al., New York, September 29, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc. 169; Memorandum of Conversation, Secretary's Clifford's Meeting with Greek Foreign Minister Bitsios', New York, October 3, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.170.

<sup>11</sup> Brzezinski, Memorandum for the President 'Information Items', November 19, 1977, box4, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, JCPL.

the Turkish DCA which pro-Greek congressmen opposed.<sup>12</sup> Progress in Cyprus could further silence any opposition to the Turkish agreement.

The elections results, however, demonstrated that Greece had entered a new period. As widely expected, Karamanlis and his Nea Democratia Party (New Democracy) remained the biggest party securing 42% of the popular vote and a comfortable majority of 171 of the 300-seat parliament.<sup>13</sup> But in comparison with the 1974 elections, Karamanlis saw his party's power weakened by approximately 12% of the popular vote. The socialist party, PASOK, a fervent critic of the government's policies,<sup>14</sup> emerged as the second largest party in the Greek parliament and the main opposition. PASOK significantly improved its performance since the previous elections, securing 93 seats. PASOK and its leader, Andreas Papandreu, are considered to be the real winners of the elections since the 1977 election gains paved the way for the party's landslide victory in 1981.<sup>15</sup> The moderate Union of the Democratic Centre, formerly known as Alliance of Centre Union and New Forces, lost a significant portion of votes and finished third. The UDC party generally favoured pro-Western policies, particularly as far as accession to the EEC was concerned, even though it opposed Greece's return to NATO's military wing.<sup>16</sup>

PASOK's performance in the polls had a profound impact on Karamanlis. Based on the Greek officials' reports to their US counterparts, PASOK's success was

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<sup>12</sup> Memorandum of Conference, 'Memorandum of Conference with Senators Sarbanes & Eagleton and Congressmen Brademas and Rosenthal', Washington, October 13, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.14.

<sup>13</sup> Takis Papas, *Making Party democracy in Greece*, (Basingstoke New York, NY: MacMillan: 1999), 59.

<sup>14</sup> see earlier chapters.

<sup>15</sup> Yiannis Voulgaris, *Η Ελλάδα της μεταπολίτευσης 1974-1990: Σταθερή Δημοκρατία, Σημαδεμένη από τη μεταπολεμική ιστορία* [Greece of Metapolifsi 1974-1990: Stable democracy, marked by the post-war history] (Athens: Themelio, 2008, fourth edition), 93.

<sup>16</sup> Mills, tel.10237 Athens to SecState, November 9, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, National Archives.

attributable to its anti-American and anti-West stance.<sup>17</sup> The US administration maintained that the Greek government had ignored how PASOK's economic message had resonated with voters.<sup>18</sup> After 1974 the Greek economy faced a number of challenges, such as low rate of competitiveness, which the Greek government struggled to address.<sup>19</sup> But it was also true that PASOK complemented its socialist programme regarding the economy with a foreign policy rhetoric that included strong nationalism.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to preaching anti-Americanism regarding the bilateral Greek-Turkish disputes, Papandreou objected to any efforts for a mutually acceptable solution between Athens and Ankara on the basis that such a solution represented a loss of Greek sovereign rights.<sup>21</sup> This position contradicted directly with Karamanlis' relatively moderate approach towards the Greek-Turkish dispute. Cornerstone to Papandreou's approach towards Turkey was the Greek intention to submit the dispute to the International Court of Justice and Karamanlis' suggestion for a non-aggression pact with Turkey.<sup>22</sup> The Greek electorate evidently approved of these approaches and placed Papandreou's party as the main opposition.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'The Secretary's Meeting with Greek Foreign Minister Papaligouras' Brussels, December 8, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.172.

<sup>18</sup> Christopher, tel.014708 State, to SecState, Janury 19, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>19</sup> Panos Kazakos, *Ανάμεσα σε Κράτος και Αγορά: Οικονομία και Οικονομική πολιτική στην Μεταπολεμική Ελλάδα, 1944-2000* [Between State and Market: Economy and fiscal policy in the post-war Greece, 1944-2000] (Athens: Patakis, 2010, 9<sup>th</sup> edition), 294-334.

<sup>20</sup> Angelos Elefantis, 'PASOK and the Elections of 1977: The Rise of the Populist Movement', in Howard R. Penniman (ed.) *Greece at the Polls: The National Elections of 1974 and 1977*, (Washington and London: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1981), p. 115.

<sup>21</sup> April 17, 1976, *Επίσημα πρακτικά των συνεδριάσεων της Βουλής* [Greek Parliament's Record] (Vouli ton Ellinon: Athens, 1976), vol.4 Period between 18/3/1976 to 3/5/1976, 4502.

<sup>22</sup> See chapter 3 above.

<sup>23</sup> Richard Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece: The Search for Legitimacy* (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1987), 75.

It was not only PASOK that saw an increase in its poll numbers. At least partially thanks to nationalistic sentiments, for the first time in the post-war period, the Greek right emerged divided. A small nationalistic party, the National Front Party (Ethike Parataxis EP), secured approximately 7% of the popular vote. The party consisted of monarchist and extreme right elements and appealed particularly to the supporters of the former dictatorship. In terms of foreign policy, the EP position remains ambiguous. The party supported a quick and full return to NATO and accession to the European Economic Community (EEC).<sup>24</sup> Ultra-right-wing voters, such as military officers, most likely to be found among EP supporters, supported a full return to NATO. These circles, by US estimate, though, conspired against Karamanlis.<sup>25</sup> The position of the extreme right on the remaining foreign policy questions that the Greek government confronted, oddly, most resembled PASOK's stance. It was also documented that anti-American sentiments were frequent in both left and extreme right demonstrations.<sup>26</sup> In the aftermath of the elections, therefore, the Greek government faced challenges on a strong nationalistic basis from both the left and the right. The impact of these pressures remains unclear on its conduct of foreign policy; however, the impact on domestic policies might offer an indication.

After the 1977 elections, Karamanlis' party faced a crisis regarding its political orientation: it had to choose between transforming into a modern centre-right party or attempting to retain its dominance as the expression of the traditional right.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>25</sup> Brzezinski, Memorandum for the President, August 27, 1977, Box 3, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, JCPL.

<sup>26</sup> Konstantina E. Botsiou, 'Anti-Americanism in Greece', in Brandon O'Connor (ed.), *Anti-Americanism: History, Causes, and Themes*, Volume 3: *Comparative Perspectives* (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishing, 2007), 232.

<sup>27</sup> Richard Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece: The Search for Legitimacy* (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1987), 158.

Domestically, this dichotomy was expressed best on the issue of social and welfare policies. Hatzivassiliou points out that the Nea Democratia party never submitted its own fully detailed law proposal regarding the establishment of a Greek National Health Service to the Parliament. The Greek conservatives worried that the new institution would alienate a traditional electoral pool of voters, private general practitioners.<sup>28</sup> These doctors objected to the establishment of a national health service on competition grounds. These traditional voters would not defect to PASOK, which advocated similar social policies, but the pressure from the right was an obvious concern of Karamanlis' party. Similar considerations most likely prevailed regarding foreign policy issues.

The US administration attempted to interpret the elections results and their impact on both the terms of Greek-US cooperation and Washington's broader Eastern Mediterranean strategy. Regarding the strictly defined US interests in Greece, the US Embassy appeared cautiously optimistic. Reporting to the State Department Mills<sup>29</sup> depicted a rather positive picture regarding the United States within in the Greece foreign policy. He emphasised that in terms of the right/left division of the political spectrum, the Right continued to represent 50% of the popular vote. Mills' reporting argued that the results delivered a strong hit to Karamanlis, but he also underlined his

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<sup>28</sup> Evathes Hatzivassiliou, *Ελληνικός Φιλελευθερισμός: Το ριζοσπαστικό ρεύμα, 1932-1979* [Greek Liberalism: the radical wave, 1932-1979] (Athens: Patakis, 2010), 539.

<sup>29</sup> Mills headed the US Embassy in Athens from July 1977 until March 1978, pending the appointment of a new US Ambassador to Greece. Carter chose William E. Schauffele and the Senate held a hearing for his ratification. However, during the hearings Schauffele commented on the Aegean dispute stressing the 'unusual arrangements' of the past as the core of the dispute. The Greek government considered his views as controversial and close to the Turkish argument regarding the Turkish rights in the Aegean. As result, although the Senate approved his appointment, the Greek government objected his accreditation as US Ambassador to Greece. The problem was finally resolved with the appointment of Ambassador Robert J. McCloskey, who arrived in Athens in March 1978. For more information about the incident see: Memorandum of Conversation, Bitsios and Vance, Svoloopoulos, Karamanlis, vol.9, 484 and footnote no.2 in doc169, *FRUS*, vol.XXI.

assessment that overall the pro-West, pro-NATO, and pro-US political forces continued to dominate the Greek political stage and attracted half of the electorate. In his election result assessment telegram, Mills stated that:

if [Karamanlis] is willing to buck Papandreou's verbal fireworks, he can still pursue his own program with relative freedom. And while this situation can be generally satisfactory for our interests over the short term, he probably will not move dramatically or quickly on questions of concern to the U.S. Over the longer term, for those seeking comfort, conservatives in Greece got just under 50% of the popular vote, to which can be added most of UDC's 12% and Mitsotakis 1%. That interpretation is reassuring for American interests since these forces are essentially supporters of NATO, of the U.S. presence here and of Greek entry into the European Community. And the elections seemed to endorse Karamanlis' relatively moderate hand.<sup>30</sup>

The US embassy maintained the same positive attitude when it reviewed the new cabinet and particularly the ministers handling foreign policy issues. The US Embassy in Athens underlined the sense of continuity between the previous and the current Karamanlis government based on the undeniable fact that Karamanlis himself retained ultimate control over foreign policy decision-making, particularly on issues of interest to Washington.<sup>31</sup> An important ministry, the National Defence, remained in the hands of Evangelos Averoff, a generally respected politician in Washington and largely considered as western-oriented and an advocate of Greece's return to NATO.<sup>32</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs changed hands, with career diplomat Dimitris Bitsios retiring from active service. The new minister, Panayiotis Papaligouras, had previously served as a minister of coordination largely involved in the EEC

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<sup>30</sup> Mills, tel. 10584 Athens to SecState, November 21, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>31</sup> Mills, tel. 10812 Athens to SecState, November 29, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid*; About the administration's view of Averoff see Christine Dodson, Memorandum for Denis Clift, March 1, 1978, including attached memorandum from Tarnoff Peter, Department of State, to D. Clift, February 28, 1978, terming Averoff as "good friend of the United States" recommending meeting with Vice President, Box 1, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.



negotiations. Hence, according to Mills estimates, his appointment represented Karamanlis' greater focus on concluding the Greek accession negotiations at an early stage. Overall, Mills assessed the attitude of the newly appointed or returning figures towards cooperation with the West or the US. He described the two deputy ministers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Zaimis and Andrianopoulos, as pro-Western additions who generally maintained a positive attitude towards the US.<sup>33</sup> The general conclusion was that Karamanlis's new government would continue his previous cautious policies. A question, though, remained unanswered. That was how much different from the recent past would be Karamanlis' stance on the open issues in the Eastern Mediterranean, such as the Cyprus negotiations and the Aegean dispute. In its assessment of the new government, the US Embassy commented that:

Surely the hardest message to read is the one the elections delivered to Karamanlis' foreign policy. With the exception of the Greek entry to the European Community—which was endorsed by most of the electorate—foreign policy issues did not play an important role in these elections. [...] it is harder to tell what impact the elections will have on other foreign policy decisions:

--On Turkey, Karamanlis' appeal to the electorate was as a guarantor of peace [...]

--On the United States everybody was critical of US policy in the area. Papandreou promised a break in the close Greek-American alliance. Karamanlis clearly preferred not to talk about the issue but when he did he either criticized us [the US], as in the New York Times interview, or resorted to the conservatives' argument that Greece had no choice but to continue its ties to the West and to the United States.;

On NATO, with the exception of far right, nobody advocated a quick return to the military side of the alliance. Papandreou plumped for a total withdrawal. Karamanlis only continued his line of that Greece would return to NATO when the Cyprus problem was resolved and meanwhile could negotiate a special status in the alliance.

It is hard to see from the foregoing how Karamanlis would feel that the elections gave him a mandate for any abrupt change in his foreign policy

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<sup>33</sup> Mills, tel. 10812 Athens to SecState, November 29, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA; Mills, tel. 10901 Athens to SecState, December 2, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

course. Rather, he will use his majority to protect his past cautious policies.<sup>34</sup>

At the White House, the NSC also considered the challenges that the results posed for US expectations regarding progress in the Eastern Mediterranean after the elections.

Regarding the outcome of the Greek elections, Henze commented to Brzezinski that:

Karamanlis did less well than anyone (including himself) thought likely and Papandreou did much better. This is unfortunate because Karamanlis called these elections a year early to strengthen his own position to deal with the tough foreign policy issues that have to be faced re Cyprus Turkey and the U.S. over the next year or two. He emerges weaker now than he was before. He will have to make up for his weakness by taking greater risks if the foreign policy deadlock is to be broken. The Turks may have to be even more forthcoming than they have contemplated, to keep things moving – and we will have to be more persistent and more clever about bringing pressure on both Turks and Greeks.<sup>35</sup>

A few weeks later, during the NATO Foreign Ministers's summit of December 1977, the US administration discovered that the Greek government was not willing to take a 'risk' instead resorting to a particularly cautious approach. The Brussels' Summit offered the opportunity for talks between the US Secretary of State, the newly appointed Greek Foreign Minister, and the Turkish Foreign Minister. At this meeting with his counterparts, Papaliguras demonstrated the Greek government's backtracking from earlier positions.

On Cyprus, which affected the basis of the US plan in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Greek government rejected any intention to be further involved in any negotiations. The Greek Foreign Minister, in bilateral meetings with both the US Secretary and the

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<sup>34</sup> Mills, US Embassy Athens, tel. 10811, Athens to SecState, November 19, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>35</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, November 21, 1977, Box 1, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL, underline in the original.

Turkish Foreign Minister, excluded any possibility for a greater role for Greece in the negotiations.<sup>36</sup> The Turkish Foreign Minister highlighted his government's disappointment with the Greek position when he met with Vance.<sup>37</sup> Ankara had anticipated Athens's agreement for moving closer to having all four-members participating in the negotiations, that is, the two sovereign governments and the two Cypriot communities. Çağlayangil, in view of the Greek refusal, pressed Vance for quick progress on the ratification of the Turkish DCA. However, Vance was aware of the challenges ahead if action on the Turkish DCA was not accompanied by progress in Cyprus.

Next, the Greek government appeared to be unwilling to commit to the ratification of the DCA. Following persistent and direct questions from Vance, the Greek Minister did not provide clarification on the timing of the ratification. Papaligouras mentioned that the Greek government wanted more discussion on the Greek DCA with the US officials, at a top political or ambassadorial level and at a later date, preferably after the Christmas recess.<sup>38</sup> He suggested that 'the DCA's [sic] should not go forward until Cyprus question was solved and acknowledged that Greece did not really need DCA unless Turkish DCA were implemented'.<sup>39</sup>

In December 1977 the Greek government inserted a new element regarding the ratification of the Greek DCA. During the Brussels meeting with Vance, Ambassador

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<sup>36</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'The Secretary's Meeting with Greek Foreign Minister Papaligouras' Brussels, December 8, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.172.

<sup>37</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'The Secretary's Meeting with Greek Foreign Minister Papaligouras' Brussels, December 8, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.172.

<sup>38</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, 'The Secretary's Meeting with Çağlayangil' Brussels, December 8, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.104.

<sup>39</sup> Christopher, tel. 294934 State to USMISSION USUN New York, December 10, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA. Please note that there are two versions of the meeting which are both quoted in this chapter. One is the above telegram and the other is the Memorandum of conversation published in *FRUS*. Both are summaries of the meeting but Christopher's telegram is at times more detailed.

Vyron Theodoropoulos, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and previously Permanent Representative to NATO, interjected and explicitly referred to the link between the new Greek-NATO agreement and the ratification of the US-Greek DCA. Theodoropoulos stated that: ‘since DCA was concluded within NATO framework clarification of Greece’s position in Alliance and response to GOG proposals should be concomitant of further action on the DCA’.<sup>40</sup> In the previous months, the Greek government had submitted its proposals regarding the ‘special relationship’ with the Alliance that the Greek government sought to secure.

A few days later, the Greek Prime Minister, when presenting his new government’s programme in the Greek parliament, re-emphasised the need for a new agreement regarding the country’s status in NATO. Karamanlis underlined the need for a special arrangement which was based on three principles: ‘the control of its national forces in period of peace, NATO’s support in the event of a war, and finally the continuous reminding of the Alliance of the need for a solution in Cyprus as a prerequisite for Greece’s return to its earlier [full] participation’. He did not link the DCA to NATO. On the issue of the DCA, he stressed the benefits of the agreement for Greece but added that: ‘the time of the final ratification and the starting date of the new DCA will be set once all factors related to the issue have been considered’.<sup>41</sup> His emphasis in public on reaching an agreement with the Alliance revealed the Greek government’s new goal.

Based on the Greek statements both in Brussels and in Athens the US administration completed its assessment of the Greek intentions. The dominant

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Karamanlis’ statement in Parliament about his government’s policy, between December 14 and 15, 1977, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.10, 69.

interpretation was that the elections results had shocked Karamanlis, who evidently chose to proceed cautiously on foreign policy issues, primarily bilateral Greek-Turkish issues as well as bilateral Greek-US issues. These issues, the US administration noted, were considered as detrimental to Papandreou's electoral victory and Karamanlis intended to limit possible criticism of his actions.<sup>42</sup> In this climate the US administration orchestrated a new initiative during the following months, aiming at progress on its approach that appeared to have stagnated.

### **Vance in the region**

In January 1977, Secretary Vance led an effort to revitalise the US approach in the region. The need for a new US mission to the region had been circulated in the White House since the previous October.<sup>43</sup> In Athens, the Department of State intended to emphasise two issues: the DCA and, above all, Cyprus.

Regarding the DCA, Vance was expected to bring up the time of its ratification thereby securing a commitment for its conclusion. In his meeting with Karamanlis on 21 January, the Greek premier unsurprisingly linked the ratification of the DCA agreement with progress towards an agreement between Greece and NATO stating that:

[The DCA] is related to NATO, because the existence of the military facilities is only conceivable within a NATO framework. That is another reason for which he [Karamanlis] asks for US support for the normalisation of the Greek-NATO relations. If we were to withdraw [entirely] from NATO, there would be no framework covering the DCA.

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<sup>42</sup> Christopher, tel. 014708 State to SecState, Janury 19, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>43</sup> Memorandum From Paul B. Henze of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski), 'Review with Clark Clifford of Recent Development in Greece-Turkey-Cyprus Situation', Washington, October 15, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.15.

Therefore, this [the relationship with NATO] is the reason for the delay of the ratification and not the government's unwillingness [to sign it].<sup>44</sup>

In accordance with the US's decided approach, Vance advocated for Greece's conclusion of an agreement with NATO. Hearing Karamanlis' arguments, Vance suggested bringing the NATO negotiations forward while ratifying the DCA. Karamanlis rejected this suggestion stating that NATO membership established the legitimacy of the agreement and implied that the formal clarification of Greece's armed forces status in the Alliance needed to precede the agreement about the US bases in Greek territory.<sup>45</sup>

The Greek version of the Karamanlis-Vance meeting included an additional issue, which, according to Karamanlis, contributed to the Greek government's reluctance to ratify the DCA. This was about the benefits deriving from the ratification of the Greek DCA for the Turkish DCA. During the discussion Karamanlis stated that:

the ratification of the Greek DCA will bring closer the ratification of the Turkish DCA. This will take place at a time when we believe that the economic provisions of both DCAs should be dropped.<sup>46</sup>

This was a strong reference and, while Karamanlis had mentioned Greek opposition to financial provisions in the form of military aid for both host countries of the US facilities in the past, it was the first time that he explicitly stated the intention to block the ratification of the Turkish DCA. It was not the first time that Karamanlis had hinted at this position. When presenting the conclusion of the 'principles agreement' on April

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<sup>44</sup> Summary of Conversation between Prime Minister Karamanlis and Secretary of State Vance, January 21, 1978, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.10, 92-99. Please note that the change between first plural and third person singular is in the original.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid; Vance account of the discussion without significant difference but less detailed can be found in: Vance, tel.017349 State to White House, January 23, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>46</sup> Summary of Conversation between Prime Minister Karamanlis and Secretary of State Vance, January 21, 1978, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.10, p.92-99.

1976, he made similar remarks.<sup>47</sup> But it was the first time that he overtly stated the Greek willingness to block the ratification of the DCA. The Greek government had previously suggested that the reason for avoiding the ratification of the DCA was its inclination to see the Turkish DCA implemented first. Vance responded by stating that the economic provisions for Greece, Turkey, and the Philippines, with which the US were also negotiating a similar agreement about their bases there at the same time, constituted an integral part of these agreements. The economic provisions therefore could not be dropped. The discussion at this point did not proceed further.

The secretary of state also raised the issue of Cyprus. This was a central point in his meeting with Karamanlis and was aimed at ensuring 'greater Greek involvement in the efforts to restart and sustain the Cyprus negotiations'.<sup>48</sup> Greek involvement remained necessary, considering that Makarios' successor was generally seen as weak and lacking in political skill.

Contrary to Papaligouras' obvious opposition to any meaningful Greek involvement, the Greek Prime Minister demonstrated a moderate stance. Karamanlis agreed in principle to a bilateral Greek-Turkish summit in the near future as means of starting the process of settling the bilateral dispute. Vance commented positively on his meeting with Karamanlis. The US Secretary closed his report to Carter arguing noting that:

[Karamanlis] is clearly dedicated to a United Europe in close association with the U.S. I think he is a true friend whom we should support in his efforts to find peaceful solution to his country's differences with Turkey and his determination to help rebuild a solid and stable democratic regime in Greece.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> see chapter 3.

<sup>48</sup> Christopher, tel. 014708 State, to SecState, January 19, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>49</sup> Vance, tel. 17349 State, Sec State to White House, January 21, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

When Vance visited Ankara, however, the climate was very different. Vance commented that in Ankara he ‘found an activist government [...] Ecevit wants to improve Turkish-US relations, but there is still a strong feeling that US policy over the years has been marked by a strong Greek bias’.<sup>50</sup> The disparity between Athens and Ankara was clear. Vance’s arrival in Turkey on 5 January coincided with recent domestic developments. The Demirel government had collapsed in late 1977 resulting in Ecevit’s return to the centre of the Turkish political stage to form a government.<sup>51</sup>

The initial US response to the developments in Turkey was positive. In the NSC, Paul B. Henze argued that: ‘if he [Ecevit] makes it through the vote of confidence process next week, we are in for an entirely positive and productive period in our relations with this part of the world’.<sup>52</sup> The optimism within the White House about the prospects for US-Turkish relations during Ecevit’s premiership would further strengthen after he won the vote of confidence on 17 January.<sup>53</sup> Ecevit demonstrated, through his contacts with the US Embassy in Ankara, his eagerness for direct discussions with Washington at the highest level possible which the administration interpreted as a positive sign for bilateral US-Turkish relations.<sup>54</sup> The White House believed that Ecevit’s return to power could facilitate positive action on

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<sup>50</sup> Christopher quoting Vance, tel. 017298 State, Sec State to White House, January 22, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>51</sup> for the domestic instability in Turkey see: Richard C Company, Jr., *Turkey and the United States: The Arms Embargo Period* (New York, NY: Praeger Publishers, 1986), 43.

<sup>52</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, no date available on the document but it seems that it deals with developments of January 13, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

<sup>53</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, no date available on the document but it seems that it deals with developments of January 17, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material National Security Affairs, JCPL.

<sup>54</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, January 11, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material National Security Affairs, JCPL; Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, January 16, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material National Security Affairs, JCPL.



Cyprus.<sup>55</sup> The returning Turkish premier appeared to be on board with the previous agreements between Washington and Ankara. Henze claimed to Brzezinski that ‘Turkey is pulling 500 more troops out of Cyprus tomorrow. Ecevit and Karamanlis have agreed to a summit later this spring. The Turks are now well on their way to accomplishing what you urged Esenbel to do when you saw him last fall: move and get the Greeks on the defensive’.<sup>56</sup> Even though in this version Henze referred to a discussion between the NSA and Ambassador Esenbel, the Turkish position followed the previous talks between Vance and Çağlayangil. The US sought to capitalise on Ecevit’s return. He was seen, both by the Greek government and by the US administration as the politician who could facilitate progress on Cyprus since he was the Turkish leader who had invaded Cyprus. Since 1974, when Ecevit’s led coalition government collapsed, his absence from power was considered as a reason for the lack of progress in the Cyprus negotiations. Firat explicitly describes the challenges that Ecevit’s successor, Demirel, faced. Demirel could not agree to a compromise that gave up territory in Cyprus, which Ecevit had won, without facing a domestic backlash.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, Kissinger during his visit to Ankara 1975 concluded that Ecevit did not oppose a solution in Cyprus. But, according to the US secretary of state, Ecevit wished to settle himself the Cyprus problem, when he returned to power, not before.<sup>58</sup> Would the returning Turkish prime minister be as willing to secure progress in Cyprus three years later? Carter administration clearly hoped so.

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<sup>55</sup> Henze, Note for Brzezinski, and draft Memorandum for President on behalf of Brzezinski, January 19, 1978, Box 2, Horn/Special, Staff Material National Security Affairs, JCPL.

<sup>56</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, January 24, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material NSA, JCPL.

<sup>57</sup> Melek Firat, *Οι Τουρκο-ελληνικές σχέσεις και το Κυπριακό* [The Turkish-Greek relations and the Cyprus problem] (Athens: Sideris, 2012), 216.

<sup>58</sup> Memorandum From the President’s Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft) to President Ford, March 11, 1975, *FRUS*, vol.XXX, doc.219.

With Ecevit back in power, the US administration expected positive progress on bilateral US-Turkish relations. In the US administration, and particularly between the NSC, the Department of Defence and the Department of State, there was a common agreement on the need for action on the Turkish DCA alone. As Henze described, the development, which had significant backing, would result in ‘thawing the frozen posture that the Greeks have forced upon us for so long. [...] Cy Vance’s talks with Ecevit tomorrow should bring things along nicely’.<sup>59</sup> The administration’s expectations of Ecevit were overoptimistic: when meeting with Vance, the returning Turkish prime minister revealed some significant new demands.

During his stay in Ankara, Vance and Ecevit discussed both the Turkish DCA and embargo. Ecevit expressed the view that the existing US-Turkish agreement, which had been concluded by the Demirel government, was no longer sufficient. Ecevit insisted that the agreement had to be ‘supplemented by economic assistance’. The Turkish premier also indicated the need for additional economic aid, other than the aid given for military purchases. The provision regarding the level of military aid under the DCA for the following four years did not meet Turkish needs, since:

first was an increase in the armaments of the countries surrounding Turkey (most of which were supplied by the US he said). Second, the depreciation of the dollar and the rapidly rising cost of arms have eroded the value of the DCA. And third, the Turkish contribution to the mutual defence relationship envisaged in the DCA was immeasurably larger than the contribution of the US. He acknowledged that rewriting might be difficult and take too much time.<sup>60</sup>

According to Ecevit, the concluded DCA needed review. In his response, Vance explained and emphasised that opening up the DCA in an attempt to alter its provisions

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<sup>59</sup> Henze Note for Brzezinski, January 19, 1977, Box 1, Horn/Special, Staff Material NSA, JCPL.

<sup>60</sup> Vance, tel. 017298 State, January 22, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

would lead to further delays in its ratification as well as allowing for less attractive changes that might be imposed by Congress.<sup>61</sup> As an example, Vance described Congress' discomfort with the long-term agreements, such as the 1976 Turkish DCA which had a four-year duration.

The US administration understood the broader implications that Ecevit's renegotiation request would have on its Eastern Mediterranean policy. The Greeks, who had just raised the issue of omitting the economic benefits of the agreements entirely, would most certainly request modifications for their agreement as well, given that Karamanlis had referred to the need for comparable levels of assistance between Greece and Turkey as a means of securing the power balance in the Aegean.<sup>62</sup> Turkish and Greek renegotiation would create a vicious circle around the DCA negotiations, which would upset the administration's goal of a relatively timely conclusion of the ratification process.

More importantly, Ecevit referred explicitly to the arms embargo which remained in place. He thought that the embargo ought to be 'the first order of business', not the ratification of the DCA.<sup>63</sup> Vance, who expected the Ecevit to raise the issue, did not respond to this comment. More importantly Vance's briefing did not include a possible response on the issue of the embargo but emphasised the US administration's willingness to ratify the DCA.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Telegram From the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State, Ankara, January 23, 1978, 0800Z, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc. 107.

<sup>62</sup> Memorandum of Conversation between Karamanlis and Vance, January 21, 1978, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.10, 93.

<sup>63</sup> Christopher quoting Vance, tel. 017298 State to White House, January 22, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>64</sup> Christopher, tel. 014709 State to SecState to White House, January 19, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

The discussions in Ankara alarmed the White House and Henze urged Brzezinski to take action.<sup>65</sup> In Washington there was broad agreement, including between Vance and Brown, that the administration should discourage Ecevit from insisting on the need for a renegotiation of the existing agreement. Following on from the process it had been involved in the previous year, the administration took action to bring the process of ratifying the Turkish DCA alone at the earliest possible convenience.<sup>66</sup> The need to proceed on the agreement as quickly as possible emerged as the crucial factor in the administration's planning: it was felt that time was running out. This approach came in direct contrast to Karamanlis' caution. Karamanlis had not altered his attitude towards bilateral US-Greek or Greek-Turkish relations. His favour for gradual developments required time which the administration did not have or considered that it did not have. Matthew Nimetz, counsellor of the Department of State and deeply involved in the Eastern Mediterranean, argued about the need for quick progress following a visit to Ankara. Henze quoted Nimetz as saying in the biweekly interagency Greece-Turkey-Cyprus meeting in the State Department that: 'time is short and there is a very good chance that Ecevit will take decisive anti-US steps if the administration does not move on the DCA soon'.<sup>67</sup> Nimetz held a similar position on the issue in his meeting with the leadership of the congressional Greek Lobby two days earlier. Considering that the administration should have dissuaded the Democrats'

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<sup>65</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, January 22, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material SA, JCPL.

<sup>66</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, February 3, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material NSA, JCPL.

<sup>67</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, March 3, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material NSA, JCPL.

opposition to the Turkish DCA ratification, his stance in the discussion with them should not be taken at face value.<sup>68</sup>

Cold War considerations intensified the sense of urgency and the conviction within the administration that time was limited. In the White House, but also within the Departments of State and Defense, concern was growing about Ecevit's commitment to the Western Alliance. In addition to his statement to Vance about the priority of the repeal of the arms embargo, Ecevit also indicated that Turkey might drop out of NATO if the embargo remained in place.<sup>69</sup> The Secretary of Defence, Harold Brown, in a letter of 18 January 1978, cautioned Carter that: 'we are running a substantial risk the longer the DCA is delayed the more likely become (sic) Turkish actions which as a practical matter will nullify their participation in the Alliance'.<sup>70</sup> Reports from Ankara persuaded the NSC that without any basic initiative on the DCA Turkey would embark on a process of moving away from the Western bloc.<sup>71</sup> Ambassador Spiers in Ankara stated his 'strong recommendation that you [Vance] and the President decide to move firmly in support of early congressional endorsement of the Turkish DCA, in hearings during the next month'. He continued his comments which were based on his various meetings:

I believe that our relations with Turkey will be irreversibly damaged if we do not make this move. This country is more important to us than Greece or Cyprus, although I do not think that we should let it become an either/or choice. [...] Ecevit has given us a time limit. If we don't move on the DCA by the time of the NATO summit, Turkey will make a major assessment of its interests and alignments in this world.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Memorandum from Counselor of the Department of State (Nimetz) to Secretary Vance, March 1, 1978, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc. 110

<sup>69</sup> William Halle, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 19774-2000* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 161.

<sup>70</sup> Memorandum from Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter, January 18, 1978, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc. 106.

<sup>71</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, February 24, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material NSA, JCPL.

<sup>72</sup> Spiers, tel. 1443 Ankara to SecState, February 24, 1978, Box 2, Horn/Special, Staff Material NSA, JCPL.

The forthcoming NATO summit in Washington represented a crucial point since the administration feared that the Turkish prime minister, who held the rotating presidency of the Alliance of that year, would not participate.<sup>73</sup> This development would have both publicly and internally questioned the Alliance's cohesion.

Washington was also becoming increasingly concerned with the state of the Soviet-Turkish relations. While Turkey's relations with the West appeared strained, Ankara seemed eager to develop links, mainly economic, with Moscow. To secure relations with the Soviet Union, Ecevit stressed that Turkey should not 'during the period of détente, be provocative to the Soviet Union'.<sup>74</sup> He elaborated this argument explicitly mentioning that US and NATO observation installations should be included in a SALT II agreement, so as to comply with what he said Soviet leaders told him were provocations. President Carter prioritised the conclusion of another Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) with Moscow before the initial SALT I expire on October 1977.<sup>75</sup> The administration's initiative raised concerns among the Western European allies.<sup>76</sup> On its part, the Greek government, meanwhile, appeared seriously concerned about the proposed reductions.<sup>77</sup> Hence, the Turkish attitude toward SALT might have pleased the US administration. But Ecevit's stance also caused concern in Washington.

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<sup>73</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, February 24, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material NSA, JCPL.

<sup>74</sup> Christopher, tel.017298 State to White House, January 22, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>75</sup> Gaddis Smith, *Morality, Reason and Power: American Diplomacy in the Carter Years* (Toronto: Collins Publishers, 1986), 77.

<sup>76</sup> Brian J. Auten, *Carter's conversion: The hardening of American defense policy* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008), 252.

<sup>77</sup> The Situation Room, Memorandum for Dr Brzezinski, December 6, 1977, Box 4, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily Report File, JCPL.

The administration carefully considered Ecevit's statements. The White House interpreted Moscow's actions as 'a clever foot in the door' in Turkey.<sup>78</sup> Henze also stated that 'in the short-term we can probably rely on basic Turkish suspicions to ensure that they do not jeopardize themselves, but in the longer term these relations bear watching'.<sup>79</sup> The Turkish-Soviet links played a role in the administration's decision to repeal the embargo but it is not clear that the administration was especially concerned about the specific Soviet-Turkish links before the announcement of the repeal of the embargo. The US administration had been concerned about the status of US-Turkish relations. In accordance with the policy that Carter had pursued since he had come to power, US relations with Greece and Turkey remained significantly unbalanced. The administration was running out of time to bring Ankara closer to Washington. It needed an impressive action to make this happen. The repeal of the US arms embargo appeared most suitable.

### **The decision to repeal the embargo**

On 21 March 1978, Vance presented Carter with his, Brown's, and National Security Advisor Brzezinski's recommendations on how to deal with the Turkish issue. In this policy paper, Vance presented two extremes, named as a 'full DCA package' and a 'No movement on a Turkish program' respectively, and a middle-ground third option, named as a 'modified package for Turkey', which the advisors termed as a position that could be 'defended as balanced, fair and responsive to the current situation'.<sup>80</sup> The

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<sup>78</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, March 3, 1978, Box 2, Horn/Special, Staff NSA, JCPL.

<sup>79</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, April, 18, 1978, Box 2, Horn/Special, Staff Material SA, JCPL.

<sup>80</sup> Memorandum from Secretary of State Vance to President Carter, 'Greek-Turkish Military Assistance' Washington March 21, 1978, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc. 20.

policy proposal officially moved the discussion from the efforts for the ratification of the Greek and Turkish DCAs to a drive for a congressional repeal of the Turkish arms embargo. In a victory for Ecevit's requests, the authors of the document suggested that the Turkish DCA 'will be promptly renegotiated'. Other provisions included amending the Foreign Assistance Law to remove the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) cash purchases ceiling, allowing third country transfers, and enabling military planning with Turkish officials. The proposal suggested maintaining the Turkish military assistance level of fiscal year 1979 at \$175 million in FMS without grant military aid and amended the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of the same year to include an additional \$50 million security supporting loan, provided that Turkey concluded an stabilisation agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The administration also suggested an increase, in comparison to what they had already projected, in Greek military assistance to \$140 million FMS credits. Finally, should Congress require it, Vance conceded to the idea of providing a presidential determination for Turkish credit purchases aimed at NATO-related purposes as well as maintaining the submission of presidential reports regarding the state of process towards a Cyprus settlement. The pros and cons of this particular policy suggestion were presented in a well-balanced way. The benefits emphasised satisfying the Turkish government, and Ecevit personally, who could score a domestic victory by getting the US to agree on renegotiating the Demirel – and – Kissinger concluded DCA. Washington was not the only one preoccupied with Ecevit's domestic standing, so was the Athens too. The Greek government appreciated Ecevit return as much, since he was considered as a 'serious interlocutor', in comparison to Demirel, and a political



figure, who could advance process forward for a solution of the bilateral Greek-Turkish problems, as Karamanlis confided to Vance.<sup>81</sup>

The US administration anticipated opposition to the proposed lifting of the embargo to be fierce from the Greece's supporters in Congress as well as from Greece and Cyprus. Its best argument for Congress emphasised the benefits that would come from a Democratic administration renegotiating a long-term and expensive military commitment.

Unfortunately, no available records describe the administration's departure from considering the Greek and Turkish DCAs as centrepieces of its Eastern Mediterranean policy in its efforts to repeal the arms embargo. However, it is reasonable to assume that Carter approved the collective policy that his principal foreign policy decision-makers suggested.

The US administration did not decide on the repeal of the embargo lightly. It is significant that as late as February 1978, Secretaries Vance and Brown remained committed to the ratification of the Turkish DCA and did not mention the repeal of the embargo as an alternative.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, in early March 1978 internal communication within the NSC emphasised the best strategy to secure congressional ratification of the Turkish DCA separately from the Greek DCA.<sup>83</sup>

Secretary Vance remained committed to the initial goal that the administration set; namely, improving stability in Southern Flank through reducing tensions between

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<sup>81</sup> Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to The Department of State, Athens January 23, 1978, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc. 173; for Karamanlis' comments on Demirel see Telegram from the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, Athens, February 11, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc. 164.

<sup>82</sup>, Memorandum from Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter, January 18, 1978, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc. 106; P.B.Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, February 2, 1978, Box2,

<sup>83</sup> Frank Moore, Memorandum for the President 'Turkish DCA- Legislative strategy' March 4, 1978, Box 2, Horn/Special, Staff Material National Security Affairs, JCPL.

Athens and Ankara. As result of Vance's tour of the region, both Karamanlis and Ecevit agreed on the need for a bilateral meeting which aimed at making progress on the Aegean dispute. The summit took place in Switzerland at Montreux on 10 and 11 March. While the initial talks for a unilateral action regarding Turkey began in early March, Vance remained adamant on the need to delay any binding decisions until the completion of the summit.<sup>84</sup> His motives are not clear. He may have hoped for significant progress in easing the potential congressional pressure on the US administration. It is also possible that Vance suspected that Athens and Ankara might be less willing to talk if the administration made its intentions regarding the embargo public at an early stage. The Montreux summit, although it represented a significant symbolic gesture, in practice produced few, if any, concrete results. Greece and Turkey retained their positions. Indicative of the limited progress was the press statement after the conclusion of the talks, which merely reported on the initiation of a bilateral dialogue at a top level.<sup>85</sup>

Following this last attempt, Carter approved the third choice in Vance's memorandum. Within a week the US Embassy in Athens formally communicated his decision to Karamanlis' government.

### **Reacting to the news from Washington**

The Greek reaction to the US decision to seek the repeal of the embargo was gradual.

The Greek government initially appeared calm about the news from Washington.

Following the 31 March 1978 meeting the US Ambassador commented that:

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<sup>84</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, March 8, 1978, Box 2, Horn/Special, Staff Material National Security Affairs, JCPL.

<sup>85</sup> Press Statement regarding Montreux Summit, March 12, 1978, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.10, 143.

‘Averoff’s reaction was not as strong as it could have been. We do not think we should take much comfort from this [reaction], however, until we hear from Karamanlis and until the implications of what we said sink in’.<sup>86</sup> Despite the ambassador’s cautious tone, the White House internally concluded that the Greeks were taking the decision to lift the embargo quite well.<sup>87</sup> The initial Greek reaction as expressed by Averoff, however, should be attributed mainly to a lack of surprise.

Since early 1978, the Greek government was aware of the mood in Washington regarding US relations with Turkey and growing opposition to the arms embargo. In February 1978, Averoff, the Greek Minister of National Defence and highly esteemed pro-US politician, visited the United States in a private capacity. Despite the nature of the visit, Averoff, met with high-ranking officials of the Carter administration, such as Vance, and leading figures of the group of congressmen who supported Greece, such as Representative Brademas and Senator Sarbanes.<sup>88</sup> Following his return from the US, Averoff submitted a detailed account of his meetings along with his personal considerations and conclusions regarding the future intentions of the US administration on issues of mutual Greek-US interest to Karamanlis. His core observation was that Washington and Ankara were working together and particularly that ‘a part of the Department of State and the Pentagon supported the lifting of the embargo and the ratification of the two DCAs simultaneously’.<sup>89</sup> Averoff speculated

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<sup>86</sup> Cooper, tel.083585 State, quoted message from US Athens to US del. Secretary, March 31, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>87</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, April 5, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material SA, JCPL.

<sup>88</sup> Minister of National Defence, Main Schedule of Minister’s visit to US, no date, File 31, Evangelos Averoff Papers [hereafter EAP], CGKF.

<sup>89</sup> Averoff, Note for the Prime Minister, March 3, 1978, File 32, EAP, CGKF.

that the Administration would take action between March and April 1978 and he noted that the embargo was seen as a priority.

Soon after, similar reports that supported Averoff's considerations reached Athens from the Greek Embassy in Washington. In early March, the Greek Ambassador in Washington, Ambassador Alexandrakis, conveyed to the Greek ministry a conversation between a member of the embassy staff, Mr Tsilas, and an unidentified member of the American Hellenic Institute regarding Greek-Turkish-US relations.<sup>90</sup> The Embassy's source stated that pro-Turkish elements were extending their influence within the Administration while emphasising that there was also growing pressure towards improving US-Turkish relations. This pressure originated not from the State Department, but rather from the Pentagon, the CIA, and the NSC. The same source recalled a story shared by his friends about the Director of the Central Intelligence, Admiral Stansfield M. Turner, who returned to its author a report regarding the reasons for the fortification of the Greek islands, noting that 'this could have been written in the Parthenon'. This anecdotal story, in Alexandrakis' view, reflected pro-Turkish feelings at various top levels, such as CIA, but also within the NSC, identifying by name, Henze and the National Security Advisor, Brzezinski.<sup>91</sup>

A day after the US announcement a telegram from the Greek Embassy in Bonn reached Averoff's desk. It was a follow-up message to communications regarding Assistant Secretary Christopher's visit in Bonn, which are not available. In this telegram, the Greek Ambassador in West Germany reported the unexpectedness, for the Germans as he noted, of Christopher's visit and his preoccupation with Turkey.

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<sup>90</sup> Alexandrakis, letter Φ. 2223.1/13.ΑΣ120, Washington to MFA, March 8 1978, attached memorandum of conversation between Mr. Tsilas and member of American Hellenic institute, File 32, EAP, CGKF.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

Ambassador Frydas noted the absence of, based on his sources, any reference to Greek-Turkish relations or the Cyprus issue, which in his evaluation constituted a warning sign.<sup>92</sup> Therefore, around the time when the US administration informed the Greek government about its intention to repeal, Athens already expected the US move against the arms embargo. There were two new elements, however, that the Greek government was not anticipating.

The US administration focused both on the repeal of the arms embargo and the renegotiation of the Turkish DCA. The US administration's willingness to renegotiate the Greek DCA as well was welcomed but it placed the Greek government on the defensive. As was the case with Kissinger's announcement two years earlier, the Greek government had to fight its way through to secure similar treatment to Turkey.

The Greek government's reaction became stronger, particularly following Karamanlis' return to Athens. On 11 April, in the first meeting with McCloskey after his arrival in Athens, Karamanlis termed the Turkish stance on the Cyprus issue as blackmail and, accordingly, Washington's decision to repeal the embargo as succumbing to this blackmail.<sup>93</sup> On 19 April Karamanlis 'provoked himself angrily' as the US Ambassador commented. In that meeting, according to McCloskey's summary and not a direct quotation, Karamanlis appeared to argue that: 'we had been misled by their [the Turks'] deceit and cunning. [...] Any notion, therefore, that Ankara has an incentive to settle for what is equitable –even though it would be more

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<sup>92</sup> Evangelidis, tel.Φ.120.3/2210, Bonn to MFA, File 32, EAP, CGKF.

<sup>93</sup> MFA, Note about Karamanlis meeting with McCloskey, April 11, 1978, Folder 292B, CKP, CGKF; McCloskey, tel.3008 Athens to SecState, April 11, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

than the status quo ante—was naïve of us and an insult to our intentions’.<sup>94</sup> More importantly, the US administration did not disagree that the Turkish proposals were inadequate and more pressure on the Turks was needed to ‘improve their proposals’.<sup>95</sup> Carter adopted a similar line when Karamanlis raised the issue in their meeting in Washington.<sup>96</sup> Similarly the Greek government found little consolation in the US’s comments about Ecevit’s future stance in the Greek-NATO negotiations. In a meeting with the director general of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ioannis Tzounis, George M. Barbis, political counsellor of the US Embassy, referred to Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher’s meeting with Ecevit. Barbis stated that Christopher and Ecevit did not discuss NATO-related issues, except as broader and general issues at a low diplomatic level. Barbis added that the US in ‘recent talks’ indicated that ‘the Turks should demonstrate a positive stance in the Greek-NATO negotiations’.<sup>97</sup> This vague reference could not possibly persuade Athens that Washington had secured any reciprocal cooperation from Ankara for the repeal of the embargo.

The Greek prime minister’s reaction followed another unsuccessful round of negotiations between the two Cypriot communities. The Greek government hoped that Washington had secured Ankara’s commitment on the context of the proposals, insisting particularly on whether there would be ‘reasonable proposals for the Cyprus solution’<sup>98</sup>. The Ambassador’s reply that there were not specific commitments on

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<sup>94</sup> McCloskey, tel.3309 Athens to SecState, April 19, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA; Unfortunately, there is no record available in the Greek Archives of that meeting.

<sup>95</sup> Henze, Evening Report for Brzezinski, April 21, 1978, Box 6, Horn/Special, Staff Material NSA, JCPL.

<sup>96</sup> Memorandum of Conversation between Karamanlis and Carter, May 31, 1978, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.10, 242.

<sup>97</sup> MFA, April 6, 1978, Note: Meeting between Tzounis and Barbis, File 32, EAP, CGKF.

<sup>98</sup> Averoff, Memorandum of Conversation with Amb. McCloskey, April 3, 1978, Folder 29B, CKP, CGKF.

Ankara's part did not subdue Greek concerns. When the Turkish side submitted its proposals to UN Secretary General Waldheim, the Greek government's critique and fears seemed justified. On 13 April, the Turkish-Cypriot community submitted its proposals to Waldheim. The strong influence that Ankara exerted on the Turkish-Cypriot community accounts for the identification of these proposals as Turkish proposals. As Karamanlis stated to McCloskey, Athens did not know the exact details of the proposals but he 'drew his conclusions from the explanatory note issued publicly by Turkey' according to which it was clear to him that Ankara displayed 'neither seriousness of intention nor interest in fair negotiation'.<sup>99</sup> It soon became known that the Turkish-Cypriot side 'denied accepting full restoration of Greek-Cypriots' human rights, allowing freedom of communication, movement, resettlement and employment, submitting a specific proposal [on the future status of] Famagusta [area] and submitting reasonable proposals regarding the territorial issue [of the two communities]'.<sup>100</sup>

Immediately following this news, the Greek government extensively studied the provisions of the proposed steps in congress. The decision, as in the past, upset Greek planning regarding Turkey, which thus far had managed to stir the US's stance to Athens' favour. The Greek government returned to a strategy of confrontation to secure, as it had done in the past, significant concessions from the US administration. But in 1978 there were a number of new elements in the Greek strategy. The Greek government now emphasised working with both the US administration and Congress

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<sup>99</sup> McCloskey, tel.3174 Athens to SecState, April 19, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, National Archives.

<sup>100</sup> Karamanlis public statement on April, 18, 1978 and editor's analysis and presentation of the Turkish-Cypriot proposals, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.10, p.193.

rather than only with pro-Greek congressmen as it had done in the past. The Greek government appeared to be more pragmatic in its expectations than before.

### **Working with the White House**

The first Greek demand towards the US administration emerged during the first meeting between Ambassador McCloskey and Averoff on 31 March. The Greek minister requested that the US renew their commitment to Greek territorial integrity. Averoff stated that ‘although I don’t believe in the practical value of [security?] guarantees I think it is particularly useful that simultaneously with the announcement (of the repeal of the embargo) there is a repetition or mention of the context of Kissinger’s letter to Bitsios’.<sup>101</sup> The 1976 exchange of letters between the then Secretary of State and the former Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that US policy in the Eastern Mediterranean opposed any act of aggression, implicitly guaranteeing Greece’s sovereignty from Turkish military actions.

The Greek government considered that this request could alleviate the domestic pressures that the US decision created. The opposition, once the administration made its decision public, lashed out against the US policy and the government’s policy.<sup>102</sup> Papandreou argued that the drive for the repeal of the embargo represented an ‘ominous development’ for Greek national interests. The president of the socialist party, PASOK, repeated his almost conspiratorial allegations against both the US administration and Karamanlis’ government.<sup>103</sup> Papandreou linked the

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<sup>101</sup> Averoff, tel. YIO-66 Athens to Embassy Copenhagen, for the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, March 31, 1977, Folder 29B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>102</sup> McCloskey, tel. 3959 Athens to SecState, April 3, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>103</sup> ‘Διάβημα Παπανδρέου [Papandreou’s appeal]’, Kathimerini, April 8, 1978, 1.



Montreux Summit with the repeal of the embargo, stating the Turkish incentives for the bilateral meeting as a testament of Ankara's goodwill in negotiating the Greek-Turkish dispute. In his view, the US president used the development as justification to seek the repeal of the embargo.<sup>104</sup> Regarding the Greek government, the main opposition leader implied naivety on the government's part as well as their suspicious silence on the issue.<sup>105</sup> These allegations represented the domestic context surrounding the Greek government and the difficulties created by the US request for the repeal.

In subsequent meeting with the Ambassador, Averoff elaborated further on the need for some public US actions that benefitted Greece to tone down the critical voices against relations with Washington. Averoff emphasised that:

those preaching the 'anti-Americanism' appear vindicated and have their position strengthened. [...] Those who follow pro-western policy have their position weakened and it is difficult to find agreements [in support of these policies] to present to the public opinion. The power and prestige of the pro-Western politicians remained strong but it would not withstand for long. Should this happen, the consequences for the West, and especially the USA would be detrimental and ,according to us, pro-westerners, bad for Greece as well.<sup>106</sup>

The US Ambassador recognised this fact as crucial for Greeks and consequently urged the Department of State to 'carefully consider including some kind of statement in the announcement about the President's decisions that will alleviate Greek concerns about their security, keeping in mind that it remains in our interest to do what we can to avoid undermining Caramanlis' position'.<sup>107</sup> The Secretary of State, in his testimony to the

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<sup>104</sup> Papandreou's letter to the President of the Republic, April 7, 1978, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.10, 177.

<sup>105</sup> Σφοδρή επίθεση Παπανδρέου κατά Καραμανλή δημιουργεί «νέο κλίμα» [Papandreou's vehement attack against Karamanlis creates a 'new climate'], *Kathimerini*, April 9, 1978, 1.

<sup>106</sup> Averoff, Memorandum of Conversation with US Ambassador, April 2, 1978, File 32, EAP, CGKF.

<sup>107</sup> Cooper quoting McCloskey, tel. 083585 State to Secretary of State, from SecState to USDel Secretary, March 31, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

House Committee on International Relations, reiterated the US position regarding the disputes in the Eastern Mediterranean by insisting that these ought to be settled through peaceful procedures and that each side should neither resort to provocative actions nor seek a military solution, adding that the US ‘would actively and unequivocally’ oppose them.<sup>108</sup> The statement was in line with that which the Greek government had requested. Alexandrakis commented that the verbatim repetition in Congress, presumably because Vance testified under oath, strengthened the previous US commitment against acts of aggression made by Kissinger.<sup>109</sup>

Listening to the Greek requests represented part of the White House’s effort to avoid alienating the Greek government. The repeal of the arms embargo was decided on the basis that it could ensure close US-Turkish cooperation. Nonetheless the US administration wanted to avoid another round of tension with Greece.

To support this goal, the NSC saw the on-going Greek-EEC negotiations as an opportunity to demonstrate Washington’s support for the Greek government. In late June 1978 Henze argued that: ‘in the wake of the lifting of the embargo and of the steps towards normalization of Greek-Turkish relations, Greek movement toward the EEC should proceed smoothly and we should quietly do what we can behind the scenes to encourage this development’.<sup>110</sup> Behind the scenes the US diplomats supported the Greek application in their bilateral meeting with European counterparts.<sup>111</sup> It is unclear

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<sup>108</sup> MFA, Note, Clarification briefing by of Amb. McCloskey, attached McCloskey’s submitted copy of Vance’s statement to be made later that day, File 32, EAP, CGKF; also see Chrysospathis, Note: ‘Lifting of the Turkish Embargo’, April 10, 1978, confirming that statement was made, Folder 29B, CKP, CGKA.

<sup>109</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. AP. IIP. AE198 Washington to MFA, April 6, 1978, 29B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>110</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, July 20, 1978, Box 2, Horn/Special, Staff Material, National Security Affairs, JCPL.

<sup>111</sup> Eirini Karamouzi, *Greece, the EEC and the Cold War, 1974-1979: The Second Enlargement* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 137.

how this backroom US stance could benefit the Greek approach towards the United States, unless it became profound. Henze, though, had raised a critical issue.

In April 1978, in a lengthy letter to Foreign Minister Papaligouras, the Greek Permanent Representative in the EEC attempted an assessment of the US's attitude about Greek efforts for entry to the community. Ambassador Stathatos reluctantly admitted that the US most likely did not support the Greek effort.<sup>112</sup> Until that point, i.e. April 1978, the US administration had appeared unable to communicate its support for the Greek application effectively. Despite Henze's suggestion, it was a difficult task. At a political level, the Nine had agreed on Greece's admission to the EEC. However, as Karamouzi argues, political agreement could not, as the Greek government discovered, substitute the need for progress on a technical level. A number of technical issues, that the Greek government needed to address, delayed progress in 1977. The extent to which Washington could present Athens with its 'good services' in this matter remains unclear, if that was what NSC had indeed implied.

As the US administration appeared to be interested in securing relations with Greek government during the effort for the repeal of the embargo, so did Athens. In another contrast to the Kissinger era, the Greek government pursued its strategy of confrontation carefully. The Greek government hoped to use the US administration to encourage legal provisions that would serve Greek interests. The Greek government enjoyed a close and trusting relationship with Vance that it had not had with Kissinger. Evidence for this comes from the fact that Athens' initial aim included approaching

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<sup>112</sup> Stathatos Permanent Representative in EEC, Brussels April 17, 1978, Fotini Tomai (ed.), *Η Συμμετοχή της Ελλάδας στην πορεία προς την ευρωπαϊκή ολοκλήρωση* [Greece's participation in the European Integration process], Vol.2: *Από το πάγωμα της συμφωνίας σύνδεσης στην ένταξη στις ευρωπαϊκές κοινότητες, (1968-1981)* [From the 'freezing' of the Association Agreement to the accession to the European Communities hereafter: Greece and European Integration] (Athens: Foreign Ministry and Papazisis, 2006), doc.56.

Vance to include some terms on the bill, which intended to repeal the embargo. As Ambassador Alexandrakis admitted, the US administration intended the repeal to improve relations with Ankara, hence, it should have been opposed to attaching any terms on the repeal of the embargo.<sup>113</sup> For Athens, the issue emerged as a way to work with the supporters of the embargo in Congress.

This careful approach towards the Carter administration became obvious during late May. The Greek government remained wary in its reactions as it participated in the North Atlantic Summit of 1978 in Washington. Greek references to the DCA as a part of the Greek-NATO relationship were not merely an effort to delay signing the agreement. The Greek government recognised the need for a relatively early agreement with NATO and attempted to enlist US support. This effort became dominant in the aftermath of the repeal, as the next chapter argues.

While in Washington, Karamanlis accepted an invitation from the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee (HIRC) to an informal event that included, in addition to the members of the committee, the Congressional leadership. The meeting offered the Greek premier the opportunity to express the Greek position regarding the embargo. Hence, on 2 June 1978, Karamanlis stressed the importance that his government attached to the preservation of the embargo, stating that:

Lifting the arms embargo on Turkey would increase that bitterness [felt by the Greek people due to recent US administrations' support of the junta and inaction in the Cyprus crisis], would encourage leftist movement in Greece, and would clearly weaken the present government of Greece.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Alexandrakis, tel.AP. IIP. AΣ 147 E.X. Washington to MFA, July 29, 1978, Folder 32B, CPK, CGKF.

<sup>114</sup> Notes on meeting of Prime Minister of Greece and the House International Relations Committee, June 2, 1978, Washington, D.C., Folder 31B, CKP, CGKF.

On the following day, the Greek prime minister met with Secretary Vance, whose schedule prevented him from attending Karamanlis-Carter talks at the White House. Talking with Vance, Karamanlis eagerly explained the reasons why he had decided to meet with the Congressmen. He stressed that he would prefer not to appear before the HIRC but he could not deny the public invitation that Chairman Zablocki had extended to him.<sup>115</sup> The contradiction with Karamanlis' defiant stance toward Ford three years earlier was profound.<sup>116</sup>

### **Working on Capitol Hill**

Considering the unwillingness of the US administration to comply with the Greek government's requests fully, Athens turned to Congress. As in the past, the Greek Embassy played a pivotal role in circulating Greek expectations on Capitol Hill. It is significant that elements within the administration opposed the embargo and this caused Athens to adjust its approach in comparison with the past. The Greek government hoped that the embargo would remain in place. But it also concluded that the best way forward was to have an alternative plan in the event of the failure of its efforts against the repeal of the embargo.

The Greek government emphasised the need for arrangements that, following the repeal of the embargo, secured equal treatment for Athens and Ankara in respect to US military aid and provisions. This would ensure Congress's pressure on Ankara to deliver a concessionary stance on Cyprus and avoid aggression in the Aegean. In a telegram to Ambassador Alexandrakis, Foreign Minister Rallis restated the Greek

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<sup>115</sup> Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Greece, June 7, 1978, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.177.

<sup>116</sup> see chapter 2.

strategy, which they had clearly discussed previously.<sup>117</sup> The key points emphasised that, if the embargo was lifted, the US legislation ought to reflect that Congress would remain interested and involved in discussions about Cyprus and Greek-Turkish disputes. According to the Greek official, this would be possible if the law provided that Congress were to evaluate the progress made towards a Cyprus solution before each annual consideration and appropriation of aid. Athens wanted to ensure that US aid to both Greece and Turkey would be allocated in consideration of the balance of power between them. Finally, the Greek government desired an explicit commitment that the United States would actively and effectively oppose any use of force or any provocations which could lead to use of action in the Aegean while Washington would continue to encourage progress on Greek-Turkish dispute through peaceful and internationally accepted means. Athens soon discovered that its plan lacked the support of the congressmen who opposed the repeal of the embargo. In late July, Alexandrakis commented on this, stating that:

our goals are not identical but overlapping. Our friends' goal is narrower. It aims at a political victory by maintaining the embargo. Our goal too is maintaining the embargo, but also securing our position in the event of it being repealed.<sup>118</sup>

The Greeks attempted to alter the embargo supporters' approach by appealing directly to Representative Brademas. They argued about the need to secure broader goals for Greece as well as advocating the benefits of avoiding the split within the Democratic Party.<sup>119</sup> However, the Greek rhetoric failed to succeed. During the debate about the

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<sup>117</sup> Rallis, tel. YOI 131, MFA to Washington, personal for the Ambassador, July 28, 1978, 32B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>118</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. ΑΣ 147 E.X. Washington, to MFA, July 29, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>119</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. ΑΣ 153 E.X. Washington, to MFA, August 1, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF; Rallis, tel. YOI-133 MFA to Washington, August 2, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF.

legislation, Athens relied extensively on Republican support as well as the supporters of the repeal of the embargo for gathering support for its proposals and requests of inclusion to the proposed legislation. The Greek requests were seen as ‘realistic’ which indicates that they were the bare minimum that Greece could ask for.<sup>120</sup>

In late July focus was placed on the provisions that would accompany the repeal of the embargo. On 25 July, the Majority Leader, Senator Robert C. Byrd, introduced an amendment to Bill S 3075 regarding specific provisions accompanying the repeal of the embargo. These provisions stated the president must submit a report to Congress every 60 days, ensured that any military aid to Turkey remained in line with the US approach in Eastern Mediterranean, and raised the amount of aid to Greece to \$175 million for the 1978 fiscal year while stressing that the presence of a strong military force in Cyprus was incompatible with respect for the sovereignty of the Cyprus Republic.<sup>121</sup>

According to the Greek ambassador, the amendment was the product of confidential cooperation between the embassy and the staff working for the representatives sitting on the International Relations Committee.<sup>122</sup> The Greek government appeared satisfied with this first step.<sup>123</sup> Further changes towards positions important for Greece were necessary. On 1 August, the House approved a similar amendment, the so-called Seiberling Amendment, which was largely identical

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<sup>120</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. ΑΣ 160 E.X. Washington, to MFA, August 3, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF; Alexandrakis, tel. ΑΣ 162 E.X. Washington, to MFA, August 4, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>121</sup> Panagiotis Theodorakopoulos, *Το Κογκρέσο στην διαμόρφωση της Αμερικανικής Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής: Ο ρόλος του στην περίπτωση της Ελλάδας* [The Congress and the shaping of the American Foreign Policy: its role in the Case of Greece] (Athens: Sideris, 1996), 151.

<sup>122</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. ΑΣ.159 E.X. Washington to MFA, August 3, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CKGF.

<sup>123</sup> Rallis, tel.188, MFA to Washington, July 21, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF; Alexandrakis, tel. ΑΣ.142 E.X. Washington to MFA, July 25, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF.

to the Byrd amendment.<sup>124</sup> Despite the similarities, the two bills presented various differences which were to be resolved in conference committee.

This development prompted the Greek government to intensify their effort to alter the Greek Lobby's uncompromising position. The following day Foreign Minister Rallis instructed the Greek ambassador to approach congressmen, and Brademas personally, pointing out that:

Yesterday's [1 August] vote demonstrates that neither their goals [to vote down the amendment] nor were our aims [for greater pressure on Turkey] fully achieved. Hence, we should fully exploit the last stage, conference [to achieve our goals].<sup>125</sup>

This time the Greek Lobby appeared more willing to negotiate with the administration since its main goal had failed. The Greek government, meanwhile, had to broaden its cooperation with congressmen and minimise its goals. The main goal became the inclusion in the final text of clear references to the preservation of peace in the Aegean and maintaining the balance of military power between Greece and Turkey.<sup>126</sup> In order to achieve these goals the Greek foreign minister concluded that approaching members involved in the conference, both supporters and opponents of the embargo, was necessary. Placed at the forefront was Karamanlis, who contacted the representatives personally while stressing Greek expectations.<sup>127</sup> The Greek Embassy became deeply involved in preparing, with the assistance of its own legal advisors, versions of the amendment whose wording satisfied the Greek interests.<sup>128</sup> The Greek government

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<sup>124</sup> Theodorakopoulos, *Congress*, 153

<sup>125</sup> Rallis, tel.YOI-133 MFA to Washington, August 2, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Rallis, tel. 195 MFA to Washington, August 8, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF; Alexandrakis, tel. AΣ 422 Washington to MFA, August 5, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>128</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. AΣ 162 E.X. Washington to MFA, August 4, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF.



toned down its. Representatives Clement Zablocki and Lee H. Hamilton, both supporters of the repeal, praised the Greek requests as ‘realistic’ and both stated their willingness to support them.<sup>129</sup>

At the same time that the Greek government was trying to secure the Lobby’s support, rumours questioning its position on the issue circulated on Capitol Hill. These rumours emerged at an early stage and Karamanlis addressed them during his visit to Washington. One version claimed that Karamanlis would not make a political issue of the repeal in Greece. On 2 June Karamanlis appeared at the House International Relations Committee and stated that:

First, no one in the American government is authorised to speak for me, and second, that the question would not be whether he would make the repeal of the embargo an issue but that the Greek people would. Lifting the arms embargo could even topple his government and cause him to resign.<sup>130</sup>

Throughout the congressional battle the Greek government tried to capitalise on Karamanlis’ perceived personal importance for the Greek-US relations to persuade Representatives and Senators to support Greek views.<sup>131</sup>

On 1 August 1978, the House approved, by a small margin of 208 to 205, the Wright Amendment, which repealed the embargo. Carter signed the legislation into law on 26 September 1978.<sup>132</sup> The Greek government managed to include the references it sought and was also offered \$35 million in additional aid. Based on the legislation, the president would need to submit a bimonthly report testifying progress

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<sup>129</sup> Alexandrakis, tel. ΑΣ 162 Ε.Χ., Washington to MFA August 4, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF; Alexandrakis, tel. 172 Ε.Χ., Washington to MFA August 8, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF

<sup>130</sup> Notes on meeting of Prime Minister of Greece and the House International Relations Committee, June 2, 1978, Washington, D.C., Folder 31B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>131</sup> Rallis, ΑΕΓ.195, August, 8, 1978, Folder 32B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>132</sup> Theodorakopoulos, *Congress*, 151.

towards a Cyprus solution.<sup>133</sup> Carter, as well as the presidents after him did so but the practice was more titular than being an action of substance.

The effectiveness of the final version of the law that repealed the embargo is disputed. Ioannides stresses its failure since meaningful progress in Cyprus was not secured.<sup>134</sup> Theodorakopoulos, however, focusses on the positive impact that the reference to the balance of power made on the future of US military aid provisions to Greece and Turkey.<sup>135</sup> The Greek records does not provide the Greek government's view. Considering the limitations due to the above-mentioned factors, primarily the uncompromising stance that the supporters of the embargo adopted, the Greek government succeeded in securing benefits for the country in return for the repeal of the arms embargo.

### **The end of collective approach**

The repeal of the embargo did not constitute the last effort for negotiations about Cyprus. Based on the provision of the law, the US president was expected to demonstrate progress towards a Cyprus solution. In the following months the US administration pursued initiatives focusing on breaking the deadlock. After the votes in Congress which secured the repeal of the embargo, the US administration worked closely with the governments of Britain, France, and West Germany, at the time all members of the UN Security Council, to create a 'Framework for a Cyprus Settlement'.<sup>136</sup> The Cypriot Communities, as well as Greece and Turkey, were once

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<sup>133</sup> Ioannides, *Realpolitik*, 397.

<sup>134</sup> Ioannides, *Realpolitik*, 398

<sup>135</sup> Theodorakopoulos, *Congress*, 154.

<sup>136</sup> Nikos Christodoulidis, *Τα Σχέδια Λύσης του Κυπριακού (1948-1978)* [The Plans for the Solution of the Cyprus Problem (1948-1978)] (Athens: Kastaniotis, 2009), 213.

again unwilling to compromise.<sup>137</sup> The Greek-Cypriot side formally rejected the 'Framework' on 14 December 1978.

The rejection of the US-led effort for a formal process toward a settlement in Cyprus represented the end of the US administration's holistic approach towards Eastern Mediterranean. The Cyprus dispute itself was never at the centre of US policy. The President's Emissary to Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus described best the US approach toward Cyprus in his 4 November 1977 meeting with the president. Clifford argued that: 'We still have an interest in Cyprus — but as a matter of fact Cyprus is just one smaller piece on the chessboard — it is Turkey and Greece and our efforts to prevent trouble between them that matter'.<sup>138</sup> Until early 1978, the US administration remained committed to the goal of reducing tensions between Greece and Turkey, particularly in relation to Cyprus, while strengthening bilateral relations with both. The DCAs, particularly the Turkish one, were the bargaining chip. The US Congress, as the administration explained, would ratify the US-Turkish DCA, only if adequate progress toward a Cyprus solution was made. Prime Minister Demirel and the Turkish military establishment appeared eager to secure the DCA, and hence willing to move closer to the Greek positions. However, following the Greek elections and Ecevit's return to power, the value of the DCAs as a US tool to promote concessions was reduced.

During the 1976 and 1977 DCA negotiations, the Greek government sought to secure the same legal framework and a comparable level of military and economic aid

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<sup>137</sup> Intelligence Information Cable Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, November 21, 1978, FRUS, vol. XXI, doc.62.

<sup>138</sup> Memorandum of Conversation 'Summary of the President's Meeting with Clark Clifford on Greece-Turkey-Cyprus Problem', President Jimmy Carter, Clark Clifford Secretary Cyrus Vance, Dr Zbigniew Brzezinski, Matthew Nimetz, Paul B. Henze, Washington, November 4, 1977, FRUS, vol. XXI, doc.16.

as the United States provided to Turkey. The Greek effort was successful. In addition, the US Congress emphasised its intension for a simultaneous approval of both DCAs. The last remaining piece in the process was the parliamentary ratification of the Greek DCA, which was expected to take place strictly along party lines. After the 1977 elections, the Greek government was not prepared to undertake another unpopular step. Hence, the US ratification of the US-Turkish agreement faced its first setback. The US administration was not in a position to guarantee the Turkish DCA in return for progress in Cyprus.

In addition, Ecevit demonstrated little interest in accepting the US-Turkish DCA that his predecessor concluded. With the Turkish economic problems mounting, the returning prime minister sought to exploit relations with the United States to secure much needed economic assistance. Threatening to move away from NATO served his goal of putting pressure on Washington. As relations with Ankara deteriorated, the US administration reversed its approach. The repeal of the US arms embargo represented the short-term solution for moving toward closer US-Turkish relations. A new DCA required lengthy negotiations and a long ratification process.

Ideally, as Karamanlis argued to Vance, a solution in Cyprus could remove complications on all fronts, i.e. US-Turkish, US-Greek and Greek-Turkish relations. However, neither the Greek nor the Turkish government were willing to actively promote a concessionary solution to their respective ethnic communities in Cyprus, as they both feared a backlash at home.

Meanwhile, the Greek government steadily abandoned long-term goals such as settling the Greek-Turkish dispute. Securing Greece's role in the West through the conclusion of the EEC-negotiations and securing a formal agreement with NATO

emerged as the main short-term goals. Rather than a politically controversial return to the Alliance, the Greek government underlined the declared intention since 1975 for a 'special relationship' which had yet to materialise. This goal was consistent with Karamanlis rhetoric thus far, and could shield his government from criticism. The strategy of confrontation aimed at ensuring maximum US support for these goals. This approach became apparent in the aftermath of the repeal of the embargo, when the Greek government focused exclusively on one last issue: settling the terms of Greece's participation in the Alliance. Washington's assistance remained crucial for securing this goal.



## Chapter 6

### The final act: Re-integrating Greece into NATO

One issue dominated US relations with Greece during Carter's final years at the White House: the efforts to restore Greece to NATO's integrated military command. The negotiations for this primarily affected Athens and Brussels. In the summer of 1978, the Greek Chief of General Staff and the Supreme Allied Commander reached a mutually acceptable agreement for guiding Greece back to the Alliance. However, the following October Turkey objected to these arrangements. This development opened the process for further negotiations which lasted until October 1980 when Greece finally returned to NATO.

When the Turkish government voiced its objections, the Greek-NATO negotiations became part of other Greek-Turkish disputes. The Greek government turned to Washington in order to ensure that Ankara dropped its opposition to the plans. Consequently, the NATO negotiations came to the forefront of Greek-US relations to an extent that they had not done before.

The chapter offers a complementary view to existing literature regarding the reasons why the Greek government sought reintegration to NATO. The dominant view emphasises the comparative importance that Turkey gained while Greece was absent from the Alliance's military structure.<sup>1</sup> Domestic reasons, such as the Greek military's general pro-NATO stance, have also been seen as a factor influencing the Greek

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<sup>1</sup> Sotiris Rizas, *Από την Κρίση στην Ύφεση: Ο Κωνσταντίνος Μητσοτάκης και η πολιτική προσέγγισης Ελλάδας-Τουρκίας* [From Crisis to Détente: Constantine Mitsotakis and the policy of Greek-Turkish rapprochement] (Athens: Papazisis, 2003), 60.

decision.<sup>2</sup> Newly available records support and develop these views further. However, the role the Greek government envisaged for Washington and means that Athens employed to meet this goal has never been adequately explored. Existing literature has identified Greek efforts to ensure Washington's involvement by linking the process of the ratification of the US-Greek DCA and the NATO negotiations, which took place in late 1979.<sup>3</sup> As this chapter demonstrates, the Greek government's approach, however, began much earlier, was more broad than merely focusing on the US bases and remained in-line with Athens' confrontational strategy when dealing with the US,

The NATO negotiations coincided with a period of instability in the broader region. The revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan caused the US to reassess its policy for the Eastern Mediterranean. The pressures in the periphery resulted in the end of the balanced approach between Greece and Turkey that Ford and Carter had thus far pursued. For the first time, Washington concluded that it needed to separate its approaches towards Athens and Ankara. The most pronounced demonstration of a new line was the US administration's intention to request a higher level of aid for Turkey, irrespective of the aid requested for Greece.

This chapter focuses first on a brief review of the Greek efforts to secure a 'special relationship' with the Alliance which led to the 1978 proposals. Second, it describes the reasons why the Greek government was eager to conclude an agreement at the earliest possible time despite the Turkish objections. Third, emphasis is placed on the Greek appeals to Washington and the reasons for the failure to shift the US

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<sup>2</sup> Sotiris Rizas 'Atlanticism and Europeanism in Greek foreign and security policy in the 1970s' *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, vol.8, no.1 (March 2008), 62.

<sup>3</sup> Kyriakos Mitsotakis, *Οι συμπληγάδες της εξωτερικής πολιτικής: εσωτερικές και εξωτερικές πιέσεις στις ελληνοαμερικανικές διαπραγματεύσεις για της βάσεις, 1974-1985* [ Domestic and External pressures on the Greek-American negotiations for the bases, 1974-1985] (Athens: Patakis, 2006), 103.



administration toward Greek positions. The chapter concludes that the end of Carter's presidency coincided with the end of an unofficial policy that had long guided Greek-US relations. When it returned to NATO, in terms of bilateral relations with the US, Greece's standing regarding Turkey was different.

### **Fighting for a 'special relationship'**

Chapter 2 above described in detail the implications and significance of Greece's withdrawal from NATO's integrated command. The Greek leadership had been staunchly pro-US and pro-NATO throughout the Cold War and realised that Greece's interests were best served within European and Atlantic structures. The second Turkish invasion of Cyprus of 1974 necessitated action. The government's decision to withdraw from NATO aimed at pacifying the Greek public's anti-American anti-NATO sentiments but also pressing Greece's partners to support the Greek interests. The action represented the prelude of the confrontational strategy that the Greek government fully developed in the following years.

In the immediate aftermath of its withdrawal from NATO, the Greek government formalised its declaration that 'Greece wishes to remain a member only in the political structure of the Alliance'.<sup>4</sup> As Defence Minister Evangelos Averoff noted in early 1975, the declaration itself was meaningless.<sup>5</sup> The Greek government had to answer questions regarding in which organs of NATO the Greek representatives would participate. The Greek government acted on an ad hoc basis by maintaining

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<sup>4</sup> Government's press statement on NATO, August 14, 1974, Constantine Svolopoulos, *Κωνσταντίνος Καραμανλής: αρχείο, γεγονότα, και κείμενα* [Constantine Karamanlis: Archive, events and texts, hereafter *Karamanlis*] (Athens: Kathimerini, 2005) Vol.8, 89.

<sup>5</sup> Averoff, Brief Memorandum, No. 40013, Regarding the Greek Withdrawal from NATO- Minister of National Defence Views for the Prime Minister, January 6, 1975, Folder 67B, Constantine Karamanlis Papers [hereafter CKP], Constantine G. Karamanlis Foundation [hereafter CGKF].

representatives in those structures that the Greek government considered as belonging to the political side of NATO.

Meanwhile, internal questions emerged regarding the form of the Greece-NATO relationship. Greek Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis' initial declaration to the Greek public implied that his government had opted for a French model for its relationship with NATO. Under de Gaulle, the French government had made a distinction between the Western Alliance and NATO in 1967. France pronounced its commitment to the Alliance but rejected participation in NATO's structures.<sup>6</sup> In order to ensure that French forces could cooperate with NATO effectively in the event of East-West confrontation, the French government concluded a number of bilateral agreements guiding different aspects of defence cooperation.

The Greek government had no illusions: Greece was not France. Averoff, in a direct message to Karamanlis, expressed best the internal considerations regarding Greek security doctrine in the aftermath of the 14 August 1974 announcement. The Defence Minister underlined that Greece, unlike France, did not have nuclear capabilities nor did it have anything resembling the French defence industry. Averoff emphasised that: 'France does not share a common border with any country [belonging to] the Warsaw Pact [...] nor does [France] face the absolute negative stance of another member of the Alliance, which is a crucial fact for an Organisation [like NATO] where decisions are taken based on unanimity'.<sup>7</sup> The Greek government therefore rejected the French model as insufficient for Greek interests. The Greek government instead embarked upon effort of attaining a 'special relationship' with NATO.

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<sup>6</sup> Garret Martin, 'The 1967 withdrawal from NATO- a cornerstone of de Gaulle's grand strategy?' *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, Vol.9, No.3, September 2011, 234.

<sup>7</sup> Averoff, Brief Memorandum, No. 40013, Regarding the Greek Withdrawal from NATO- Minister of National Defence Views for the Prime Minister, January 6, 1975, Folder 67B, CKP, CGKF.

In October 1975, Karamanlis publicly described the key points of this new settlement which was based on four factors: Greek control over all Greek forces in periods of peace; full cooperation with the Alliance in the event of general war, i.e. East-West conflict; the need for detailed arrangements to allow cooperation in this event; and, for any action within Greek territory, NATO ought to have the explicit permission of the Greek government.<sup>8</sup> In 1975, the political organ of the Alliance, the Defence Planning Committee (DPC), established the Open Ended Group (OEG) in order to facilitate the dialogue between Greece and NATO concerning Greece's armed forces' status. Any final agreement required the approval of the Military Committee, the Alliance's highest military agency, in which Athens had ceased to participate.

Talks between the two sides were slow. Between 1975 and 1976, based on Greek internal descriptions, the negotiations achieved little. When the Greek government submitted its views regarding the practical aspects of a 'special relationship' in late 1975, NATO reciprocated a few months later in mid-1976.

The effort appeared to attain momentum from 1977 onwards. It is difficult to assess whether the Greek public's enthusiasm for Carter's election had any impact on the Greece-NATO talks. But it is possible that the public's positive reaction to Carter's victory convinced the Greek government that time had come to move closer to the Alliance.<sup>9</sup> After all, as frequently mentioned, in Greek public's consciousness NATO and the United States were identical. On 6 January 1977, when the Greek Ambassador, Menelaos Alexandrakis, met for the first time with the then formal Secretary-designate, Cyrus Vance, he expressed the Greek government's intension to progress

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<sup>8</sup> Karamanlis Speech in Greek parliament, October 16, 1975, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 77.

<sup>9</sup> See chapter4.

the discussions further. In accordance with the summary of the discussion, Alexandrakis referred to:

the Greek Government's intention to submit concrete proposals to the alliance in mid-January that are designed to meet both Greek and Allied defense needs. The Greek government also indicated its willingness to settle rapidly its differences with NATO[...].<sup>10</sup>

However, it was not until late 1977 that the talks accomplished a major breakthrough. By that time, the talks between Athens and Brussels moved from the NATO permanent representative level to direct negotiations on a military level. On 19 December 1977 the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General Alexander Haig, announced to the Chief of Greek General Staff, General Ioannis Davos, that the Alliance had accepted the Greek request for the re-organisation of NATO's Commands that involved Greek forces.

The Eastern Mediterranean commands represented a significant point of contention. Within NATO's structure, Greek and Turkish forces were expected to cooperate and co-ordinate their activities closely. In the Land Forces South-East Europe command (LANDSOUTHEAST), which was based near Izmir, and in the Sixth Allied Tactical Air Force (SIXATAF/6ATAF), which was based in the Greek city of Larissa, the forces of both countries served together.<sup>11</sup> A US General headed each of these commands, while Greek and Turkish deputies served under him. The national forces controlled different geographical areas but shared their relevant

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<sup>10</sup> Tarnoff, Memorandum of Conversation, January 6, 1977, doc.no.162, p.490, David Zierler, Adam M. Howard (eds.) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980* [hereafter *FRUS*], volume XXI, Greece; Cyprus; Turkey (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014).

<sup>11</sup> See Victor Papacosma, 'Greece and NATO' in L. S. Kaplan, R. W. Clawson and Raimondo Luraghi (eds.), *NATO and the Mediterranean* (Delaware: Scholarly Resources, 1985), 204, which offers a detailed account of the development and the arrangements of NATO commands in the Mediterranean.

military information. These arrangements and defence structures could no longer remain the same in the post-1974 period. Having accepted the need for new Commands, General Haig suggested the establishment of two new commands in Mediterranean: the Allied Land Forces South-Central Europe Command (LANDSOUTHCENT) and the Seventh Allied Tactical Air Force (7ATAF).<sup>12</sup>

Perhaps more importantly, the areas under command of the new structures represented another point of contention between the Greek the Allied military representatives. Based on the development of the three different commands relevant to land, naval, and air forces, the followed practice dictated that national forces were responsible for the relevant national territories.<sup>13</sup> While the Greek and Turkish boundaries were undisputed on the ground, maritime and air boundaries were more complex since the eruption of the Aegean dispute.<sup>14</sup> Before August 1974, the Greek naval and air forces were responsible, on behalf of NATO, for the defence of both the Greek and international waters and the corresponding airspace in the Aegean. However, as the Greek-Turkish dispute unfolded, the Turkish Government declared that Ankara no longer recognised the mutual boundaries in and over the Aegean Sea. This created significant obstacles in the effort to reintegrate Greece into the Alliance. Control over the Aegean became a much publicised issue that attracted the Greek public's attention throughout the negotiations.<sup>15</sup> The Greek government declared that

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<sup>12</sup> Note: 'Greek Reintegration to NATO's Integrate Military Command', August 13, 1982, Folder 37B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>13</sup> Lawrence S. Kaplan and Robert W. Clawson, 'NATO and the Mediterranean Powers in Historical Perspective' in Lawrence S. Kaplan, Robert W. Clawson and Raimondo Luraghi (eds.), *NATO and the Mediterranean* (Delaware: Scholarly Resources, 1985), .8

<sup>14</sup> Ioannis Valinakis, *Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική εξωτερική πολιτική [Introduction to the Greek Foreign Policy 1949-1988]*, (Thessaloniki: Paratiritis. 1989, 4<sup>th</sup> edition 2003), 224.

<sup>15</sup> see for example, 'Το καθεστώς του Αιγαίου παραμένει αμετάβλητο [The arrangements over the Aegean remain unchanged]', *Kathimerini*, July 1, 1978, 1.

no part of Greek territory would ever be under Turkish control. The stage was set for more disagreements between Athens and Ankara.

The formula used to deal with these issues was to declare that arrangements were provisional during the negotiations between Haig and Davos. General Haig maintained in his report that this was the case and the details would be settled formally after Greece and NATO reached a formal agreement. This is better understood regarding the new commands that Haig proposed. Although these were yet to be established, Haig argued that the operational zones under Greek control would be officially established after Greece's return.<sup>16</sup> The approach reflected what the Greek government described as returning to the Alliance under a '*status quo ante*'. Settling these issues would also benefit the Greek government in the future. By that time the Greek government would have resumed participation in the Military Committee (MC) so that Athens would be able to reject any undesirable provisions by having resumed its veto powers.

This was not the end of the road: the final decision remained with the NATO's MC. The Haig-Davos negotiations, however, represented a significant milestone. Their talks produced the, so-called from the Greek stand point, 'Haig-Davos agreement', a document listing twelve issues which affected Greece's participation in the Alliance under the new 'special relationship' according to the O.E.G. which the Greek government had advocated for.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See for instance, Papoulias, Letter A.Π. Φ.5000/4/ΑΣ174, The Greek Embassy in Ankara to MFA, January 29, 1979, File 34, Evangelos Averoff Papers [hereafter EAP], CGKF, where Haig's arguments to his Turkish counterparts are presented based on the Greek government's information.

<sup>17</sup> National Defence Command, Information Note for the Chief of Staff, October 14, 1980, Folder 34B, CKP, CGKF. The records in this folder detailed account about the successive plans and the negotiations, which is more complete than anything currently available.

From the Greek government's point of view, the agreement provided the establishment of a 'special relationship' and had rejected the idea of full membership.<sup>18</sup> However, when the US Permanent Representative to NATO, Ambassador William Tapley Bennett Jr, assessed the Haig-Davos conclusions during the MC consideration of the proposals, he arrived in a different conclusion. In October 1978, the US Ambassador in a telegram to the Department of State argued that:

the phraseology (special relationship) is perhaps to a certain extent necessary from a Greek domestic standpoint. However, the relationship as envisioned through the Greek discussions with SACEUR (Haig) is clearly recognised as a standard one, even though there will be new command arrangements.<sup>19</sup>

At least from the US point of view, the Greek government had made some crucial concessions. Indeed, the Greek government accepted in public that it had demonstrated a conciliatory stance during the talks.<sup>20</sup> But Athens remained adamant that the new Greek-NATO arrangements reflected a new 'special relationship' with the alliance.

Despite the Greek support, the Haig-Davos arrangements never came to fruition. On 27 October 1978, the DPC, following Ankara's objections, formally rejected the arrangements. The Turkish government particularly insisted on specifying the exact limits and zones of operational control that each of the new Commands would oversee in areas relevant to the Aegean dispute.<sup>21</sup>

The rejection of the Haig-Davos proposals brought the Greek-NATO negotiations to the centre of Greek-US contacts to an unprecedented level. Previously

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<sup>18</sup> Nikos Simos, 'Σε αποφασιστικό σημείο το θέμα της «ειδικής σχέσεως» με το NATO [ At a crucial point the 'special relationship' with NATO], *Kathimerini*, September 21, 1978, 1.

<sup>19</sup> Bennett, tel. 09107 NATO, October 5, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, National Archives [hereafter NARA].

<sup>20</sup> R. Someritis, 'Με 'τολμηρές πρωτοβουλίες' η ελληνική αντίδραση στα θέματα εμπάργκο-NATO [Greek 'initiatives' in response to the issues of embargo-NATO]', *Kathimerini*, July 31, 1978, 1.

<sup>21</sup> Soumerlis, tel. 3763 Ankara to MFA, November 19, 1978, File 32, EAP, CGKF.

the negotiations had remained at the NATO-Greece level while the Greek government discussed its process with Washington. While the Greek government had presented the successful outcome of Greek-NATO negotiations as a prerequisite for the Greek ratification of the US-Greek DCA since late 1977, Athens did not describe what role, if any, it saw for Washington in the process.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, when Karamanlis met Carter in May 1978, the NATO negotiations did not emerge in their discussion.<sup>23</sup> This changed after October 1978 and the issue dominated Greek-US meetings for the remainder of Carter's presidency, the end of which coincided with Greece's return to the Alliance in October 1980. Confronted with Turkish demands, the Greek government intended to use US influence to curb them. Before looking at the Greek approach towards the United States regarding NATO, however, it is necessary to understand the reasons why the Greek government intensified its efforts to return to the Alliance from 1978 onwards.

### **Greece, Turkey, and NATO**

Internal documents demonstrate that the military agreements between Generals Haig and Davos do not explain Greek motives for the conciliatory stance in the negotiations or Athens' sense of urgency to reach an agreement with the Alliance at an early stage. Based on the chronology of events, the October 1978 rejection of the Haig proposal intensified contacts between Athens and Brussels, in an effort to resolve the stalemate.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> See chapter 5 above.

<sup>23</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, The President, Secretary of State Vance, et.al. with Prime Minister Karamanlis, Foreign Minister Dimitri Bitsios, May 10, 1977, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.166.

<sup>24</sup> MFA, Chronological chart regarding Greek withdrawal-negotiations between Greece-NATO, 1974 to 1980, no date, Folder 34B, CKP, CGKF.



There had been many different interpretations regarding Greek motives for intensifying efforts to secure an agreement with the Alliance. Kassimeris argues that the Greek government realised that the withdrawal did not improve the possibilities of settling either the Aegean or the Cyprus disputes so the Greek government instead focused on re-integrating the country to NATO.<sup>25</sup> The assertion has both merits and shortcomings. The Greek government continued its efforts to reach an agreement with Ankara regarding the Aegean dispute regardless its stance towards NATO. When they met in Montreux in March 1978, Karamanlis and Ecevit agreed on the need for the two sides to continue bilateral talks regarding the Aegean.<sup>26</sup> In accordance with their agreement, the Greek and Turkish General Secretaries of the respective Foreign Ministries, Ambassador Vyron Theodoropoulos and Ambassador Şükrü Elekdağ, met in July and September 1978 and again in February 1979.<sup>27</sup> But in practice, little had been achieved.

At the same time, the Greek government seemed less optimistic that a settlement was close regarding Cyprus. Since 1975, the Greek government had implicitly admitted that the new structure in the country's relations with NATO was not meant to be permanent. When Karamanlis described the form of the 'special relationship' he added that: 'the reasons for our drop out, you [Members of Parliament] know well. They are related with the Cyprus tragedy. As I have already stated Greece will review its role in the Alliance only if there reasons are lifted'.<sup>28</sup> Karamanlis

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<sup>25</sup> Christos Kassimeris, *Greece and the American embrace: Greek foreign policy towards Turkey, the US and the Western Alliance* (London: IB Tauris, 2010), 120.

<sup>26</sup> Press Statement after the conclusion of the Mondreux Summit, *Karamanlis*, Svolopoulos, vol.10, 143.

<sup>27</sup> See Summary of Conversations and press statements in Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.10, 274 and 326, and vol.11, 38.

<sup>28</sup> Karamanlis Speech in Greek parliament, October 16, 1975, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 77.

maintained that this was a significant statement. During his meeting with Clifford two years later, he repeated this statement as his government's policy position regarding relations with NATO.<sup>29</sup> When he met with Carter in Washington on 31 May 1978, Karamanlis explicitly argued that were the Cyprus problem solved Greece would return to full membership.<sup>30</sup> From 1977 on, however, the possibilities for a settlement in Cyprus appeared to be limited.

Following Makarios' death, the Greek government limited its involvement in the negotiations and resisted all US efforts to develop a more proactive approach.<sup>31</sup> Perhaps more telling, regarding the Greek government's stance towards Cyprus, is a practical observation. From 1977 onwards, records related to Cyprus are scarce in the Prime Minister's archive. Until then, Karamanlis had received day-to-day updates of the developments with the Greek Embassy in Nicosia copying relevant telegrams to him. After 1977, this was no longer the case. The lack of records appears in line with the US Embassy's evaluation regarding the Greek government's interest in, influence on, and expectations of the Cyprus question. In February 1979 Ambassador McCloskey commented:

In more recent years the trend towards a more forthright assertion of Cypriot independence has coincided with a GOG [Government of Greece] perspective that the Greek people are tiring of the Cyprus issue, that it will not be readily solved, and that the national interests of Greece are not necessary those of Cyprus. [...] This is further aggravated by the general lack of trust and confidence in President Kyprianou, who is regarded as being out of his depth by most Greek leaders. [...] Another considerable constraint that conditions the nature of Athens' involvement in the Cyprus question is its perception that the GOC [Government of Cyprus] may not be serious looking for a settlement of the issue. Since any settlement would entail some risktaking [sic] and, inevitably, a measure of unpopularity for the government that agreed to (certainly in Athens as well as in Nicosia,

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<sup>29</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Karamanlis and Clifford, February 17-20, 1977, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.9, 389.

<sup>30</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, May 31, 1978, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.10, 243.

<sup>31</sup> See chapter 5 above.

and we suspect possible in Ankara as well) the Cyprus situation has in a way produced its own stalemate.<sup>32</sup>

Considering Karamanlis' proclamation that Greece would return to the Alliance after the Cyprus problem was settled, this view remains valid. The lack of progress forced the Greek government to reconsider its approach. However, it also implies that the Greek withdrawal from NATO had been in vain. That was not the case. In 1974 a strong public reaction was necessary to satisfy the Greek public and put pressure on Athens' allies. But by 1978, Greece's return was necessary: Turkey was benefitting from being the only full member in NATO's Southern Flank.

Karamanlis seemed to be convinced that the longer the Greek government remained outside NATO the more Turkey exploited its role in the Alliance to its benefit and to Greece's detriment.<sup>33</sup> This consideration appeared to be vindicated when the US administration sought to lift the Turkish arms embargo.<sup>34</sup> In later interviews, both Karamanlis and his successor who guided Greece's return to the Alliance in October 1980, Georgios Rallis, emphasised the threat to Greek interests as the pivotal factor for the reintegration.<sup>35</sup> Karamanlis is quoted as arguing that: 'the Greek government faced challenges from the Turkish government's efforts to exploit to its benefit our [Greek] status in the Alliance'.<sup>36</sup> These views were not only an abstract concept. It reflected genuine implications that the Greek government faced within the Alliance at a period when NATO was changing. The most important issue was the

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<sup>32</sup> Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, February 23, 1979, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc. 187.

<sup>33</sup> Rizas, *Crisis to Détente*, 60.

<sup>34</sup> D. Chourchoulis and L. Kourkouvelas, 'Greek Perceptions of NATO during the Cold War', *Southeast and Black Sea Studies*, vol. 12, no. 4, 507.

<sup>35</sup> quoted in Valinakis, *Introduction*, 231.

<sup>36</sup> Svolopoulos, *Foreign Policy*, 207.

Greek role within the Long Term Defence Program (LTDP), which NATO launched during the London North Atlantic Council of May 1977 as a response to the Soviet build-up in Eastern Europe amid the negotiations for further arms reductions.<sup>37</sup>

The view from Washington offers a unique insight into the Turkish intentions regarding Greece's role in the Alliance following the partial withdrawal of 1974. Secretary Vance, in his comment to the US mission to NATO in Brussels, stated that:

We agree with Mission (ref. B, Para. 3) that we cannot accept the severe Turkish limitations on Greek involvement in the LTDP that Ankara wants to impose (ref. A). Turkish attempts to hold virtually all questions of Greece's participation in NATO hostage to the passage of the US-Turkish DCA, if this is indeed Ankara's objective, could in the end prove more embarrassing to Ankara than to us.

Would also distinguish between Greek involvement in the LTDP and full Greek return to NATO's integrated military structure [...] We can afford delay on the later, but we want to move ahead rapidly with the former.<sup>38</sup>

More importantly, the incident offered an opportunity for Vance to evaluate the two Eastern Mediterranean Allies' attitudes towards each other. Vance noted that:

'Ankara, like Athens, quite evidently attaches lower priority to NATO issues than to their narrower national objectives in their disputes with each other and their bilateral problems with the US [...].'<sup>39</sup>

The Greek non-participation in the LTDP undermined a key aim of the Greek government's goals, that is, the ability to respond collectively in the event of Soviet aggression. The Greek foreign ministry stressed that the Turkish objections were based on the Greek withdrawal from the Defence Planning Committee, the Alliance's highest

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<sup>37</sup> Kristina Spohr Readman "Western Europe, the United States and the Genesis of NATO's Dual-track Decision 1977-1979" *Journal of Cold War Studies* vol. 13, no.2 (spring 2011), 39-89.

<sup>38</sup> Vance, Secretary of State to US Mission in NATO, November 29 1977, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1977, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

military structure, and the 'existing lack of clarity in our relations with the Alliance'. While NATO and Greece eventually compromised on Athens' ability to receive information on the LTDP and express its views, the information was restricted to areas of Greek interest and Greek views were not binding.<sup>40</sup> Before the 1978 North Atlantic Council, Turkey projected similar objections and Karamanlis did not participate in the head of states discussion on the issue. These reasons help to explain the Greek insistence on the need to return to the Alliance.

On 27 October 1978, the MC rejected the Haig report and Turkey's role in the negative response became clear. However, there was one positive development for the Greek government: the Greek press, as McCloskey reported, claimed that the remaining members of the alliance had 'rejected' the Turkish views.<sup>41</sup> Although this was not exactly accurate, the NATO statement had indeed included a disclaimer regarding the Turkish position. Turkey had objected to the common position of calling for Greek reintegration before all open issues would be settled. During Christopher's visit the Greek officials had insisted on the need for a majority of NATO members to support Greece's reintegration to override Turkey's objections. This view helped to portray Turkey as isolated in the Alliance and as the sole factor hindering Greece's

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<sup>40</sup> MFA/NATO Desk, 'Long-Term Defence Planning Program', May 9, 1978, Folder 31B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>41</sup> McCloskey, tel.09472 Athens to Sec State, October 30, 1978, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

return. The reason for this approach was probably, although it is not explicitly stated, related to the public view of the negotiations: as the Greek PM stated, Athens could not afford to appear to be begging the Alliance for its return.<sup>42</sup>

The Greek press highlighted the Turkish objections.<sup>43</sup> This element allowed the Greek government to continue working with the rest of the members given that the Turkish reaction was expected. The problem became Turkey rather than NATO's rejection of the Greek request.

### **How to deal with Turkey**

Turkey's objections did not surprise Athens or the Alliance. Days before the final decision was made, the British Political Director in the FCO, Reginald Hibbert, expressed the Allied views best, discussing them with the Greek Ambassador in London:

If we were to be realists, it should be expected that Turkey would take advantage of its position in the negotiations about the Greek intention to establish a 'special relationship' with the alliance in order to promote its long held aspirations [unspecified in the original], and above all, the review of the operational area limits in Aegean, which are related with the Greek-Turkish dispute about the airspace and the territorial self.<sup>44</sup>

The US government expected Ankara's reaction but, more importantly, Washington was also concerned about the implications that the rejection of the Haig-Davos arrangements would pose for US policy in Eastern Mediterranean.

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<sup>42</sup> Note about Karamanlis-Christopher meeting in Athens, October 19, 1978, Folder 51B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>43</sup> 'Αντιδρά φανερά πια η Τουρκία στις σχέσεις Ελλάδος-NATO [Turkey visibly now objects to the Greek-NATO relations]', *Kathimerini*, October 19, 1978, 1.

<sup>44</sup> Roussos, tel. 3100.1/ΑΣ.375 London to MFA, October 11, 1978, File 32, EAP, CGKF.

Immediately after the repeal of the embargo and considering Greek statements regarding the link between the DCA and the NATO negotiations, the US administration concluded that Athens would attempt to drag Washington into the middle of the process. In July 1978, Nimetz, from the Department of State, presenting what the US priorities and strategies ought to be after the repeal of the embargo, noted that:

Karamanlis and the Greek Government appear reconciled to repeal of the embargo, although to deflect opposition, media, and public concern they will continue to criticize our action [...]. Most importantly, the Greeks will seek in the period following the listing of the embargo to achieve several priority political goals: namely, they will expect the United States to pressure the Turks to accommodate Greek conditions for its return to NATO; they will anticipate a more active U.S. role in extracting meaningful Turkish concessions on Cyprus; they will attempt to get U.S. support to their Aegean differences with Turkey [...].<sup>45</sup>

The US administration, however, was unwilling to become involved in another Greek-Turkish dispute. The best indication about the US administration's considerations toward the Greek-Turkish dispute over NATO was offered during the planning of the visit of US Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher in the region. The US administration designed the visit in such a way to prevent the Greek-NATO talks from dominating Christopher's meeting as much as practically possible. When Tapley Bennett Jr., as US Permanent Representative to NATO, suggested that an expert on NATO-related issues be added to Christopher's delegation, Secretary Vance rejected the view arguing that: 'I appreciate the offer to have Collins in Athens during Christopher [sic] visit but we are emphasising the bilateral aspect of the visit as much as possible; avoiding

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<sup>45</sup> Memorandum from the Counselor of the Department of State (Nimetz) to Secretary of State (Vance) and the Deputy Secretary of State (Christopher), July 31, 1978, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc. 22.

detailed negotiations on controversial issues like NATO reintegration [...]'.<sup>46</sup> The first indication about both Turkey's intentions to erect new arrangements and the Greek tough stance against any additional concessions had by then reached the Department of State.<sup>47</sup> Despite the US planning, the progress for securing the Greek-NATO agreement dominated the bilateral meetings.

The Greek approach towards the United States and the discussions with NATO changed when it became evident that Turkey planned to topple the Haig-Davos arrangements. From December 1977 on, the Greek government linked the ratification of the Greek-US DCA with the conclusion of the Greek-NATO agreement. Athens did not describe any particular role for Washington in the process. In the bilateral talks between Karamanlis and Carter, the two leaders discussed bilateral issues as well as issues related with the Eastern Mediterranean. NATO did not top the agenda. Karamanlis reiterated that 'should the Turks [have] accepted a reasonable solution to the Cyprus problem, the next day the embargo would be lifted and we [Greece] would return to NATO'.<sup>48</sup> The discussion instead emphasised the prospects of a Cyprus settlement, the Aegean dispute, and the Carter administration's effort to repeal the embargo.

From late 1978, the Greek government reverted to its confrontational strategy to encourage US intervention for lifting Turkish objections. The first expression of the Greek approach towards the US regarding the NATO negotiations and the Turkish objections in particular came in the bilateral meetings during Deputy Secretary of State

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<sup>46</sup> Vance, tel. 258981 State to US Mission in NATO, October 13, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>47</sup> Intelligence Information Cable Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, October 11, 1978, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc182.

<sup>48</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Karamanlis-Carter at the White House, May 31, 1978, Folder 31B, CKP, CGKF.



Warren Christopher's October 1978 visit to Athens. The visit took place while the MC was about to issue its suggestions on the Haig proposals deriving from the Haig-Davos conclusions. The broad expectation was that Turkey would raise objections to the provisions regarding the command and control structures as envisaged by the Haig suggestions.<sup>49</sup> The Greek Minister of National Defence directly addressed the Deputy Secretary about Greek concerns regarding the actions of both the US representatives and the rest of the member states in the MC. Averoff complained about the: 'the U.S. representatives who helped prepare the second Military Committee draft had played a very active and, to Greece, disagreeable role when they tried to accommodate Turkish pressures'.<sup>50</sup> The Greek government insisted that the Haig-Davos plan should be accepted without any further changes. Karamanlis stated to Christopher that: 'if the Turkish objections remain, he will have to recall his proposal [for reintegration, meaning the Haig-Davos conclusions]'.<sup>51</sup> The Greek government insisted that Athens would not accept significant alterations on the Haig suggestions nor would the Greek government accept any additional concessions to Turkey to secure Ankara's approval on behalf of either the Alliance or Greece.<sup>52</sup> The Greek Ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs, Evangelos Averoff-Tossitsa and Georgios Rallis respectively, maintained the same approach but explained the official Greek expectation further.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> McCloskey, tel. 09184 Athens to SecState, October 21, 1978, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>50</sup> Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, Athens, October 21, 1978, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.184.

<sup>51</sup> Note, Memorandum of Conversation (Karamanlis-Christopher), October 19, 1978. Folder 51B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>52</sup> Memorandum of Conversation between Ralls, Averoff and Christopher, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis* vol.9, 363; McCloskey, tel. 09184 Athens to Sec State, October 21, 1978, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>53</sup> Instructions to Ministers Rallis and Averoff, PM Office, October 10, 1978, File 32, EAP, CGKF; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brief Memoranda of Conversation, between the US Undersecretary of State, Christopher, and Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs, E. Averoff-Tositsa and G. Rallis, October 20, 1978, Folder 51B, CKP, CGKF [note: additional info on the original Greek copy than the publish copy of the conversation].

Rallis linked the envisaged provisions of the Haig proposals with the timing of Greece's reintegration to the alliance stating that:

Today the climate [in the relations] is entirely different. There are no anti-American demonstrations and we were even in a position to discuss a special relationship with NATO. Moreover, part of the opposition accepts this development. [...] I am afraid, though, that the pressures toward us during the negotiations with NATO, and in particular within the Military Committee, endanger this ideal atmosphere. It is concluded that we differ in our assessment of the situation based on your yesterday's discussion [with the PM]. You claim that the Turkish demands might be partially accepted in the Military Committee. We insist on the suggestions that General Haig submitted three months ago.<sup>54</sup>

The MC was to convene the following days and the Greek officials expected the Turkish objections. However, the very fact the MC had not yet formally decided on the Haig paper offered an opportunity to the US Deputy Secretary to be vague in his response. Christopher acknowledged the possibility of alterations due to Turkish objections but stipulated that the MC was not the final organ to decide and further negotiations could take place on a political level. He suggested, without stating explicitly, that further negotiations could take place in the Defence Planning Committee or through bilateral contacts between NATO members. Since the MC decision was as 'yet unknown', Christopher continued, saying:

the U.S. had reason to hope Turkey would take a conciliatory approach to remaining problems. [...] Notwithstanding some sympathy for the Greek position, it is essential to find a way to achieve re-integration without prejudicing Aegean political matters. The issue needed quite careful thought. Perhaps [...] command arrangements could be separated from bilateral problems, as he understood Greece and General Haig wanted.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brief Memoranda of Conversation, between the US Undersecretary of State, Christopher, and Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs, E. Averoff-Tositsa and G. Rallis, October 20, 1978, Folder 51B, CKP, CGKF.

<sup>55</sup> McCloskey, tel. 09184 Athens to SecState, October 21, 1978, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

The US administration's view remained that the US Department of State had concluded its negotiations with the introduction of a disclaimer regarding the status of operational control over the Aegean. In other words, Athens and Ankara were to accept that NATO arrangements did not provide any legal precedent regarding boundary questions in the Aegean.<sup>56</sup>

The Greek confrontational approach intensified immediately. Greek pressure towards the US administration strengthened as the Greek government foresaw a danger that the Alliance would treat the Turkish objections as a purely Greek-Turkish dispute that the two had to solve between themselves.<sup>57</sup>

The negotiations continued in the immediate aftermath of the rejection of Haig's report. From January 1979 onwards, the Secretary General of NATO assigned the SACEUR a new 'Fact finding Mission' aiming at bringing the two sides closer. The process was not promising.

While the stalemate continued, the Greek government increased pressure on Washington to ensure that Turkey lifted its objections. During the first six months of 1979, Greek-US relations entered a 'frozen' period which has so far been overlooked. Agreements on the renewal of the Voice of America agreement, a solar observatory agreement, and the new bilateral coordination agreement were paused.<sup>58</sup> The US administration insisted on the need to conclude these agreements, but Athens disagreed. The Greek government argued instead about the need to conclude the

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<sup>56</sup> Bennett, tel. 9107 USNATO to SecState, October 5, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA

<sup>57</sup> Chorafas, tel.53311.1/567/1758 MFA to Greek Permanent Representative to NATO, December 22, 1978, File 32, EAP, CGKF.

<sup>58</sup> McCloskey, tel. 00408 Athens to Sec State, January 15, 1979; McCloskey tel.04835 Athens to Sec State, June 4, 1979; McCloskey, tel.05430 Athens to Sec State, June 20, 1979, all part of 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1979, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

NATO agreement only and showed no interest in the other agreements. The US Embassy attributed the unwillingness of the Greek government to approve these trivial agreements as politically motivated and that direct orders from the top of the Greek government were being followed to demonstrate that Greece ‘cannot be taken for granted as an ally’.<sup>59</sup> The Greek government maintained this position, leading to what the US administration described a ‘freeze’ in bilateral relations.

In October 1979, the administration described that: ‘about six months ago, Karamanlis froze relations with the U.S. with the objective of putting pressure on us to be more responsive to the Greek position’.<sup>60</sup> The Greek records do not reveal a coordinated approach towards Washington aside from the direct and continuous appeals to the US ambassador or the US officials about the need of progress lest Greek be forced to ‘freeze’ the process of attempting to return to the alliance.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, existing scholarship entirely overlooks the ‘freeze’ in Greek-US relations that took place during the first half of 1979. The implications of the Greek stance, though, were significant for Greek-US cooperation. Washington displeasure with Athens became evident in a stormy meeting between the US Ambassador in Athens and the director of the Prime Minister’s political office, Ambassador Petros Molyviatis. During the meeting, Ambassador McCloskey criticised the Greek government for its approach towards Washington saying that: ‘we could not accept being appealed to privately to help Greece’s regional problems while we were being bullied to such an extent

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<sup>59</sup> McCloskey, tel. 02357, Athens to Sec State, March 16, 1979, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA

<sup>60</sup> Memorandum from Robert D. Blackwill of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Aaron), October 1, 1979, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.194.

<sup>61</sup> McCloskey, tel.04001 Athens to Sec State, May 8, 1979, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA; Telegram from Secretary of State Vance to the Department of State, June 1, 1979, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.189; Telegram from the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, June 8, 1979, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.190.

publicly'.<sup>62</sup> It was not only the Greek stance on these agreements that undermined the Greek strategy.

The Greek efforts to force the US administration to the middle of the NATO dispute faced another severe obstacle. The US administration was unwilling to get involved because the Greek threat to abandon the negotiations did not seem credible in 1978. During Christopher's October 1978 visit, the Greeks outlined their intention to abort the negotiations if the MC were to alter the Haig-Davos conclusions radically. These statements were received lukewarmly and the US Ambassador, although he did not dismiss them light-heartedly, also noted that: 'We continue to believe there is some bluster and bluff in their words - the Greeks know as well as we the costs to themselves if they ever had to follow through on these words'.<sup>63</sup>

This view was further supported following an overview of the Greek strategy during the EEC negotiations. The Department of State returned to the theme of 'bluff and bluster' in the Greek strategy when Ambassador McCloskey, as well as Ambassador Bennett from NATO, assessed the Greek strategy towards its partners within the context of the EC negotiations. The Greek Embassy offered a description of the Greek approach emphasising that:

it is worthwhile to review the way the Prime Minister mobilized a relatively weak nation for what he hope would be maximum advantage in negotiating with partners who held most of the cards. In order to bring the Europeans to something close to the Greek position, Karamanlis acted as if he were prepared to smash a centerpiece of his policy, Greek membership in the EC. He blustered, wheedled, and postured. And he and his government did so openly so that the Greek public was engaged in a drama which pitted Greece against the Community on issues where success or failure could easily be measured. [...] on the whole it was a strange performance by the Prime Minister and his advisers as they

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<sup>62</sup> Telegram From the Embassy in Greece to the Department of State, Athens, June 8, 1979, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.190.

<sup>63</sup> McCloskey, tel. 09329 Athens to SecState, October 25, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

threatened their negotiating partners, fuelled the opposition, and begged to be saved from the opposition all at the same time. In the end, Karamanlis did not achieve all his goals and wound up accepting the 'unacceptable'. In fact, it is not clear to us that the Greeks achieved more than they might have attained if they had negotiated in a less hyper fashion. However, Greeks seem to be drawing the opposite conclusion: that these tactics, traditional ones in the Greek armory, were the key to Greek 'success'.<sup>64</sup>

This approach clearly mirrored the Greek approach towards the US in the NATO context and the US administration was not prepared to yield to Greek pressure tactics.

The NSC, more specifically Henze, noted and fully endorsed the Ambassadors' conclusions, adding that

Caramanlis's [sic] tactics in getting Greece into the EEC was a splendid performance, worthy of any politician at his best. The concluding points are important for the U.S. to remember in future dealings with Greece-and they are so often tend to get forgotten as people susceptible to Greek Lobby influences get all worked up about Caramanlis's tactics.<sup>65</sup>

These considerations undermined the Greek efforts to ensure an active US involvement in limiting Turkey's objections. The Greek government concluded that direct confrontation with Washington had limited chances of success in late 1979. The first evidence of an effort for rapprochement with the administration took place following the accreditation of a new Greek Ambassador to the US in 1979. In spring 1979, the Greek government had announced that Ambassador Alexandrakis would return to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while Ambassador Ioannis Tzounis, the Director General of the Ministry, would be arriving in Washington in August 1979. Soon after his arrival, the CIA reported that the Ambassador appeared regretful of the

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<sup>64</sup> McCloskey, tel. 11235 Athens, December 27, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>65</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, December 29, 1978, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, National Security Affairs [hereafter NSA], Jimmy Carter Presidential Library [hereafter JCPL].

Embassy's current choice to develop close links with the Greek Lobby while overlooking the White House. The report stated that:

Tzounis is convinced that the Greek Government has placed too much faith in good relations with the American Congress while allowing relations to deteriorate with the Executive Branch, and particularly the State Department and the White House. [...] In outlining his idea of a new foreign policy approach to the American Government, Tzounis criticized the Greek Government for seeking 'confrontation' with consecutive American Administrations. He felt that the Greek policy in the future should be one of verbal cooperation with the American Administration.<sup>66</sup>

The new ambassador appeared to want to attempt to build bridges with the administration. Alexandrakis' confrontation with the Carter administration never reached the levels of confrontation with Kissinger. However, it is clear that the Greek ambassador had close ties with Greece's supporters in Congress. The new Greek ambassador had close ties with Senator Kennedy, who in November 1979 formally announced his intention to challenge Carter for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination of 1980. Alexandrakis' recall from Washington came at a time when the US administration confronted the Congressional group of supporters of Greece. Any assumptions about the Greek considerations behind Tzounis' dispatch are speculative since there is no relevant documentation in the Prime Minister's archive.

It is important to remember that Tzounis had served as Director General of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs between 1974 and 1979. Consequently, he had actively participated in the foreign policy decision-making towards the US. Criticism was directed at Ambassador Alexandrakis who had cultivated close relations with the Greek Lobby and engaged actively in the Congressional effort against the repeal of the

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<sup>66</sup> Turner, Memorandum from Director of Central Intelligence Turner to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Brzezinski, November 6, 1979, attached Report Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.195.

embargo. However, Alexandrakis operated under Karamanlis' instructions and he reported his actions to the Foreign Ministry and the Prime Minister's office. Incidentally, McCloskey had commented a few months earlier on the structure of the Greek decision-making process, emphasising Karamanlis' control over the foreign policy bureaucrats.<sup>67</sup> It is likely that Athens was aiming to reformulate its previous close association with Congress by opting for closer links with the White House. An additional obstacle, though, emerged for the Greek strategy of confrontation when the US administration reevaluated its broader Middle Eastern policy in the immediate aftermath of the Iranian Revolution.

### **Iran, Turkey, and Greece**

A deteriorating domestic situation in Iran forced the US administration to reconsider its broader foreign policy. In general, President Carter sought to strengthen Washington's ties with its allies.<sup>68</sup> In the case of Greece and Turkey, the US focus had already been on ensuring that bilateral relations remained close with both. The Iranian Revolution caused a profound impact on the US administration's considerations about Turkey and by extension on Greece's requests regarding the NATO negotiations. After all, Turkey and Iran shared more than a common boarder.

Following Ecevit's return to power, the Turkey's domestic situation continued to deteriorate. The country faced severe economic problems, which resulted in high levels of inflation and unemployment and political violence was on the rise.<sup>69</sup> The

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<sup>67</sup> McCloskey, tel. 02049 Athens to Sec State, March 07, 1979, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1979, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA

<sup>68</sup> Kaufman, *Plans Unravelled*, 195.

<sup>69</sup> Richard C. Company, *Turkey and the United States: The Arms Embargo Period* (New York: Praeger, 1986), 48.



domestic instability led the Turkish government to declare martial law as a remedy to civil disturbances.<sup>70</sup> This action proved insufficient to address assassination attacks against journalists and political figures.<sup>71</sup> The similarities with pre-revolutionary Iran were obvious. As the *Economist* noted: ‘there are fears that Turkey could be enveloped in the sort of chaos that overtook Iran’.<sup>72</sup> The magazine continued to raise questions about the implications of the Iran situation to another US and NATO ally in the area.<sup>73</sup>

The US administration shared similar concerns regarding Turkey. In the White House, NSC staffer, Paul B. Henze, provided National Security Advisor, Dr Zbigniew Brzezinski, with a detailed analysis regarding the link between the events in Tehran and the potential contamination of the Turkish domestic situation in December 1978. Henze, who had previously served in the CIA station in Ankara, understood the fundamental differences between Tehran and Ankara in terms of religion, with Iran following Shia Islam and Turkey following Sunni Islam, and institutional structures, particularly in relation to Ankara’s strong secular orientation as result of Atatürk’s reforms and dogma. However, Henze argued that the dangers were similar, adding that the Turks were growing frustrated with the West and their NATO allies:

The calculation of Turkey’s most astute political leaders during this period was that rapid economic development would permit the country to cope with its social and political problems [...] Weak governments, preoccupied since 1974 with Cyprus, Greece and the US Arms embargo, have compounded their economic difficulties by delaying hard decisions and avoiding belt-tightening. The fear that a slow-down in economic growth will cause underlying strains and tensions to reach a breaking point has

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<sup>70</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Br Brzezinski, December 26, 1978, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

<sup>71</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Br Brzezinski, February 2, 1979, regarding the assignation of Turkey’s most prominent Journalist, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL; ‘Turkey: No end to violence’, *Economist*, July 14, 1979, 42.

<sup>72</sup> ‘A Case for first aid: Putting money into Mr Evencit’s Turkey will not solve its problems but it could prevent them getting even worst’ *Economist*, January 13, 1979, 22.

<sup>73</sup> See for example articles such as ‘The Crumbling Triangle’, *Economist* (9 December 1978); ‘Sick Man of Europe Again’, *Economist*, March 17, 1979, 13.

become a nightmare haunting political leadership. [...] But the improvising and the muddling through has almost reached an end. Turkey's leaders abhor accepting a slowdown in economic growth because they fear the social and political consequences; leadership itself is weak because the political process is stalemated. It is this respect that Turkey comes to resemble Iran. The resemblance may be superficial because the details are different and the whole crisis is not systemic—but the dangers may be almost as great.<sup>74</sup>

In response to the Turkish instability and dangers, Henze suggested additional economic support for Turkey and an increase in cooperation between the US military and the Turkish military.<sup>75</sup> Henze also advocated for the need for progress towards a settlement in Cyprus as a means for easing tension in the region. While in December 1978 he accompanied his suggestion with the need for 'sustained pressure on Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus to achieve settlement', a month later his position had changed. Henze then argued that 'we should not attempt to mediate between the two leaders [Ecevit and Karamanlis] but simply to get a discrete dialogue under way between them'.<sup>76</sup> About the NATO negotiations and the Greek attempts to involve Washington, Henze had little to say. But the similarities with the US's position on Cyprus provide an indication about the US administration's considerations.

Ambassador Spiers warned about the danger of US pressure on Ankara to relinquish its opposition to the Greek-NATO agreement. Reporting from Ankara regarding the domestic political instability, the US ambassador warned about the presence of 'groups [in] Turkey, who feel Turkey's best interests would be served if

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<sup>74</sup> Henze, Memorandum to Z. Brzezinski, December 15, 1978, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

<sup>75</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, January 24, 1979, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.; Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, February 22, 1979, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

<sup>76</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, December 15, 1978, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL; Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, January 15, 1979, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

the country opted out of NATO [...]. Many view the acceptance of the U.S. military and economic aid as giving us license to push them in directions contrary to their national interests on Cyprus, Greek reintegration, etc.’<sup>77</sup> These views from the US ambassador came at a critical point. US intelligence services remained concerned about the prospects of the Ecevit government, which, despite earlier statements, was considered primarily pro-Western.<sup>78</sup> It came as no surprise that when the Assistant Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, visited Ankara in May 1979, the bilateral meetings focused on purely bilateral US-Turkish issues.<sup>79</sup>

In parallel to Greek appeals to Washington for intervention and the US considerations regarding the US stance on the Greek-NATO negotiations, the SACEUR continued his efforts to break the impasse between Athens and Ankara. During the first half of 1979, the SACEUR submitted three sets of proposals. The first was rejected by Ankara while Athens rejected the other two.

The US administration did not revisit its decision to get involved in the process until 1980, when the possibility of Karamanlis transitioning to the Presidency of the Republic caused the White House to rethink its approach. The five-year long term of the President of the Greek Republic, Constantine Tsatsos, had come to its end and it was widely speculated that Karamanlis intended to seek the office, which stood above party politics. Before announcing his decision, Karamanlis informed the US administration about his intentions in an effort to expedite progress in the negotiations.

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<sup>77</sup> Telegram From the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State, April 13, 1979, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.133.

<sup>78</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, February 16, 1979, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL; Intelligence Assessment Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, May 24, 1979, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.140

<sup>79</sup> Telegram from the embassy in Turkey to the Department of State, Ankara, May 8, 1978, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc. 138.

The Greek Ambassador conveyed a strictly personal verbal message to Secretary Vance revealing Karamanlis' intention to seek election for Presidency in mid-1980. In his message, Karamanlis underlined the possibility of early elections resulting from the constitutional requirement for a two-thirds majority vote in the Greek Parliament for the successful candidate. The Greek ambassador, as instructed, argued:

One issue is undeniable, that the Prime Minister will not remain in [in position as] a head of government (following these developments), because he will be obliged to either become the President or to withdraw entirely from politics. The Prime Minister is convinced that the Greek reintegration to NATO will become either impossible or highly problematic, if progress does not take place before the aforementioned developments.<sup>80</sup>

To Greek satisfaction, Vance immediately informed Carter of this development while reaffirming the US's commitment to Greece's return to NATO.<sup>81</sup> This did not fundamentally alter the US approach. The White House seriously considered the Greek views and the informal deadline of March 1980 that Athens had set for the conclusion of the reintegration process.<sup>82</sup> General Bernard W. Rogers, Haig's successor in SACEUR, recommended that the United States, along with the rest Allies, advised both Greeks and Turks, through appropriate channels that 'it is vital to Alliance to get Greece reintegrated as soon as possible' and that 'other military and political problems can be faced (and better) once Greece reintegrated'.<sup>83</sup>

Amid the international climate that the Iranian Revolution created, and the suspected implications for Pakistan and the Arab World in general, a successful

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<sup>80</sup> Karamanlis's message to Vance, January 25, 1980, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.11, 383.

<sup>81</sup> Tzounis message to Molyviatis following his talk with Vance, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.11, 384.

<sup>82</sup> Brzezinski, Memorandum for the President, January 29, 1980, Box34, Z. Brzezinski Collection, Subject File, JCPL.

<sup>83</sup> Rogers [SACEUR], through Dr. Brzezinski, Memorandum for the President, January 29, 1980, Box34, Z. Brzezinski Collection, Subject File, JCPL.

conclusion of the Southern Flank issue was appealing.<sup>84</sup> As the stalemate persisted the US administration considered the prospects of a US direct initiative. In line with concerns raised individually within the Department of State, the Policy Review Committee on Greek Reintegration argued that a direct US initiative, successful or not, would endanger relations with both the Greek and the Turkish governments.<sup>85</sup> Washington therefore abandoned any effort to intervene in the negotiations. Athens had to wait until the September 1980 military coup in Turkey to see the Turkish objections lifted. In February 1980, General Rogers presented his final plan for Greek reintegration, to which the Greek government agreed. Demirel's government had declined to do so but the military government appeared more forthcoming and did not veto the plan. The Turkish military's stance towards the Greek reintegration to NATO played an important role in Washington's consideration about the military take-over in Ankara. Considering the commitment of the Turkish military establishment to West and NATO, the coup d'état was assessed as a positive development.<sup>86</sup> An administration that came to power criticising Kissinger's blunt realpolitik could not have echoed his foreign policy approach more. Greek reintegration to NATO was officially approved in October 1980. After six years and two months, Greece returned to the Alliance's military command, with a similar status to the one held before its withdrawal.

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<sup>84</sup> Henze, Memorandum to Z. Brzezinski, February 19, 1980, Box4, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL, note that Brzezinski approved a Working Group meeting.

<sup>85</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Christine Dodson, May 9, 1980, attached Peter Tarnoff, Memorandum for Dr. Z. Brzezinski, May 1, 1980 and the Summary of Conclusions of the PRC, Box5, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.; Vance quoting Spiers' message, tel.256983 State, October 11, 1978, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1979/ Electronic Telegrams 1978, RG 59, General Records of Department of State, NARA.

<sup>86</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, September 12, 1980, Box5, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

## The end of the balanced approach

The Iranian Revolution and its potential implications for Turkey directly affected the US's approach towards Athens and Ankara. The disparity between Greece and Turkey's standing within the Western institutions had been of US concern since the summer of 1978. As scholars have argued, the now infamous statement 'We belong to the West' made by Karamanlis in 1975 undermined any attempt to move away from the Western Alliance.<sup>87</sup> Back then, the US decision-makers had noted Karamanlis rhetoric but emphasised the reality that his statement reflected. The US administration considered that the Greek state and the Greek people had many close historical, cultural, economic, and security ties with Western Europe that prevented Athens from moving away from the West. The Greek economy was a success, since Greece had an excellent international credit rating. The possibility of the Karamanlis' government moving away from its only 'viable option' was distant.<sup>88</sup> On the contrary, Turkey faced different realities, and its relations with the West appeared uncertain. Hence, between 1978 and 1980, the US administration concluded that the 'balanced approach', that had been the dominant doctrine during both Ford and Carter administrations regarding relations with Greece and Turkey, had to be abandoned. Paul Henze for the first time in December 1978 argued about the need to abandon:

the notion, born of the fight to lift the arms embargo and the need to assure the Greek Lobby, that Turkey and Greece must be treated as equals in military aid and in other related ways. 'Equal' military aid for Turkey and Greece is unequal, for Greece, with 10 million people, can never have the strategic weight that Turkey, with 42 million, has. [...] Without demeaning the Greeks we should make our understanding of this fact quietly clear to Turks.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Kofas, *Under the Eagle's Claw: Exceptionalism in Postwar US-Greek Relations* (London, 2003)

<sup>88</sup> Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, August 30, 1978, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.24.

<sup>89</sup> Henze, Memorandum to Z. Brzezinski, December 15, 1978, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

Henze was not alone in this assessment. As events in Iran unravelled, the US administration strongly emphasised the need for US support for Turkey, primarily economic support to stabilise Turkey's internal conditions.<sup>90</sup> The Carter administration planned to raise the issue of Turkey during the Guadeloupe Initiative, with the hope of securing European support for Ankara's outstanding challenges.<sup>91</sup> The Guadeloupe summit aimed at an informal top-level exchange of views between the United States and the main European powers, the United Kingdom, France, and West Germany.<sup>92</sup> Considering Washington's own economic challenges, managing the US deficit had been a dominant factor in US foreign assistance policy.<sup>93</sup> The Europeans, particularly West Germany, and the IMF expected to shoulder the efforts to solve the Turkish economic and political deadlock.<sup>94</sup>

The Iranian crisis intensified these economic considerations, as mentioned above. However, in term of broader US strategy in the region, following the fall of Iran, Turkey, in the words of Paul B. Henze, became a 'test of Soviet behavior in the framework of détente'.<sup>95</sup> After the loss of the US military installation in Iran, Turkey emerged as the most suitable alternative to host intelligence installations, given its proximity to the Soviet Union. However, Ecevit was reluctant to grant consent for the

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<sup>90</sup> Summary of Conclusions of a Policy Review Committee Meeting, Washington, December 28, 1978, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.127.

<sup>91</sup> Summary of Conclusions of a Policy Review Committee, Washington, March 7, 1979, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.131.

<sup>92</sup> Kristina Spohr Readman 'Helmut Schmidt and the Shaping of Western Security in the Late 1970s: the Guadeloupe Summit of 1979' *The international history review* 37, no.1, (2015), 167-192.

<sup>93</sup> Daniel J. Sargent, *A superpower transformed: the remaking of American Foreign Relations in the 1970s*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 273-285.

<sup>94</sup> Summary of Conclusions of a Policy Review Committee Meeting, December 28, 1978, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.127. similar approach was agreed on Summary of Conclusions of a Policy Review Committee, March 7, 1979, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc.131.

<sup>95</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, May 10, 1979, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

relocation.<sup>96</sup> Based on Henze's evaluation, the reason behind the Turkish premier's stance was the fear for continued and further Soviet destabilisation efforts, aimed at distancing Turkey from its allies. As a remedy the NSC staffer emphasised the need for consolidating US-Turkish relations. A prerequisite for achieving this, he asserted, was that the administration paid less attention to the 'Greek Lobby' and recognised that 'Greek government had played games with us on the DCA and we had negotiated with them'. A new security agreement with and congressional approval of aid for Turkey, despite the possible objections from these aforementioned quarters, or in his words 'the petty preoccupations the Greek Lobby has forced upon us', was central in securing relations with Ankara.<sup>97</sup> Indeed, the US administration accelerated the process for the conclusion of a new Defence and Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA) with Ankara. There was a substantial difference with the US administration's past intentions. When the White House decided to shelve the 1976 DCA, the administration underlined the possibility of limiting the duration of the agreement to two years. This would have reduced the congressional opposition generated by its condemnation of lengthy agreements. However, in 1980, the Carter administration concluded an agreement for a duration of five years which was to be renewed annually thereafter.<sup>98</sup> While the new agreement did not provide a specific amount of guaranteed aid as it did in 1976, the Carter administration promised a significant increase in military aid to Ankara. The following years Turkey emerged as the third largest recipient of US aid just behind Israel and Egypt.<sup>99</sup> The US military aid came in addition

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<sup>96</sup> William Hale, *Turkish Foreign policy, 1974-2000* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 163.

<sup>97</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, May 10, 1979, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

<sup>98</sup> Company, *Turkey and the US*, 64.

<sup>99</sup> Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, 165.



to the international package of assistance as had been determined at Guadeloupe in 1979.<sup>100</sup>

The US-Turkish DECA of January 1980 renewed Greek interest in negotiating a similar agreement.<sup>101</sup> The US administration was willing to agree to this. The US-Greek negotiations proceeded, and advanced after the preliminary agreement for Greece's reintegration to NATO. However, in July 1981, the Greek government announced its rejection of the new DECA agreement with the US about the US Bases in Greece, based on the similar US-Turkish Agreement. In his account of this development Prime Minister Rallis stressed the US unwillingness to accept the Greek terms.<sup>102</sup> However, political calculations regarding an unpopular agreement only a few months before the election should not be dismissed as potential reasons, despite the lack of documentation.

Finally, when the Greek and the US representatives met on June 1980, the US delegations dropped the balanced approach in direct talks for the first time. By then, Nimitz had been appointed as Undersecretary of State for International Security Affairs. During his visit to Athens to promote the conclusion of the US-Greek DECA, Nimitz argued that given the turbulence in Turkey's eastern borders the 'balance' had shifted adding that: 'if my friends in Congress pressure me on the issue of balance, I should suggest the reduction of aid for Greece. The Greek position is very strong, while, on the contrary, the Turkish position is very precarious'.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, January 30, 1980, Box3, Horn/Special, Staff Material, SA, JCPL, the memorandum includes in detail the economic aid for Turkey for 1979 and 1980.

<sup>101</sup> Svolopoulos, *Foreign Policy*, 216.

<sup>102</sup> Rallis, Georgios *Ώρες Ευθύνης* (Crucial Hours), (Euroekdotiki;Athens:1983), 225; Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, *Ενάγγελος Αβέρωφ Τσιτσάς 1908-1990, Πολιτική Βιογραφία* [Evangelos Averoff-Tositsas 1908-1990: A Political Biography](Athens: I. Sideris, 2004), 166.

<sup>103</sup> Memorandum of Conversation at the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 23-6-1980 with the US delegation headed by Undersecretary Nimitz, June 23, 1980, Folder 34B, CKP, CGKF.

## Greece's assessment of Carter

Given these considerations, the US administration remained adamantly against any pressure on Ankara to accelerate the Greek return to NATO. The Greek government had reportedly resented the US stance throughout the process. The Greek conservatives around Karamanlis, traditionally pro-US, were disenchanted with the Carter administration. US intelligence sources reported that Karamanlis had stated to his inner circle that the lack of developments in the Greek process towards the Alliance should be attributed to the lack of leadership in Washington.<sup>104</sup> Karamanlis seemed equally critical of the US administration during his visit to Saudi Arabia, saying to Crown Prince Fahd that 'the US commits mistakes and creates problems for us [Greeks, Saudis], because the Americans lack any kind of global policy'.<sup>105</sup>

The Greek government remained committed on returning to NATO under the February 1980 plan for Greek reintegration that General Rogers presented, without further changes. However, until autumn 1980, Demirel's government declined to do so. The military coup of 12 September 1980 under General Kenan Evren offered fresh hopes for lifting Turkish objections to reintegrating Greece.<sup>106</sup> Indeed, the military's stance towards the Greek reintegration to NATO played an important role in Washington's consideration about the military take-over in Ankara. Considering the commitment of the Turkish military establishment to the West and NATO, the coup

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<sup>104</sup> Intelligence Information Cable Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency, May 10, 1979, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.188.

<sup>105</sup> Karamanlis discussion with Prince Fahd, February 1979, Svolopoulos, *Karamanlis*, vol.11, 48.

<sup>106</sup> Bruce R. Kuniholm 'Turkey and NATO' in Lawrence S. Kaplan, Robert W. Clawson, Raimondo Luraghi (eds.) *NATO and the Mediterranean* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1985), 223.

d'état was seen as a positive development.<sup>107</sup> An administration that had come to power criticising Kissinger's *realpolitik* could not have echoed his foreign policy approach more.

Immediately after the military take-over in Turkey, the Greek government 'launched an all out offensive designed to force us to put overwhelming pressure on the Turks', as the NSC staff noted, to secure Ankara's agreement on the final Roger plan at an early date.<sup>108</sup> In his response to the Greek Defence Minister, the US Secretary of Defense, Harold Brown, emphasised that the United States had made clear to the new government in Turkey of the importance Washington's attached to settling the issue promptly.<sup>109</sup> Within a week the Greek Foreign Minister, Constantine Mitsotakis, had informed the US embassy in Greece that the Turkish government consented on the agreed plan to bring Greece back to the Alliance's integrated military command. The Greek reintegration to NATO was officially approved by the Greek parliament on 24 October 1980.<sup>110</sup> After six years and two months, Greece returned to the Alliance's military command, with a similar status to the one held prior to its withdrawal. During the last bilateral meeting between the Greek government and the Carter administration, in the margins of the December 1980 NATO ministerial summit, Mitsotakis thanked the Secretary of State, Edmund S. Muskie, for the support and understanding the United States demonstrated during the process of bringing Greece back to NATO.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Henze, Memorandum for Z. Brzezinski, September 12, 1980, Box5, Horn/Special, Staff Material, NSA, JCPL.

<sup>108</sup> Memorandum From Robert Blackwill of the National Security Council Staff to President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski), September 25, 1980, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.205.

<sup>109</sup> Letter From Secretary of Defense Brown to the Greek Minister of National Defence (Averoff), October 10, 1980, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.208.

<sup>110</sup> Rallis, *Times of duty*, 101.

<sup>111</sup> Telegram from the Department of State to the United States National Military Representative, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, December 14, 1980, *FRUS*, vol.XXI, doc.211.

## **Carter's success amid challenges**

In October 1980, Greece returned to NATO's integrated military structure. The Carter administration, even at this late point of the 1980 election campaign, sought to receive credit for the development.<sup>112</sup> The administration communicated the result of the announcement of the Greek return to NATO to prominent Americans of Greek descent and their organisations. The Carter administration had actually succeeded in achieving its goals. The White House and the Department of State had set as their Eastern Mediterranean objectives when Carter came to power in early 1977 ensuring relations with both Greece and Turkey and securing NATO's Southern flank.<sup>113</sup> Relations between Washington and Ankara seemed strengthened following the repeal of the Turkish arms embargo. The US and Turkish governments had also concluded a Defence and Economic Cooperation Agreement which secured the US bases and military facilities in Turkey.

The US rapprochement with Turkey did not seem to have had an adverse effect on relations with Greece. The Greek government eventually accepted the lifting of the embargo and Washington considered its reaction as moderate given the tensions between Athens and Ankara.<sup>114</sup> Moreover, despite the differences with Turkey, Greece returned to NATO and the Southern flank was re-built.

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<sup>112</sup> See for example Jack Watson, Chief of Staff, to various recipients, October 21, 1980, regarding Greece's reintegration to NATO and the US role; also note invitations sent about briefing in East Room in the White House about Eastern Mediterranean and Greek reintegration to NATO, Anne Wexler and Stephen Aiello, October 25, 1980, White House Central File, Subject file, Countries, box CO.28, JCPL

<sup>113</sup> Report by the President's Personal Emissary to Greece, Turkey and Cyprus (Clifford) to President Carter, March 1, 1977, *FRUS* vol. XXI, doc.8.

<sup>114</sup> Memorandum from the Counselor of the Department of State (Nimetz) to Secretary of State (Vance) and the Deputy Secretary of State (Christopher), July 31, 1978, *FRUS*, vol. XXI, doc. 22.

The Cyprus problem remained unsettled but the US administration could point to its December 1978 initiative, along with Canada and the UK, for a solution within a UN framework. The initiative had failed, however, because of resistance from both communities on Cyprus.<sup>115</sup>

Contrary to other areas of foreign policy, all members of the US administration saw eye-to-eye regarding Washington's policy toward the Eastern Mediterranean triangle. Throughout the previous chapters we have established that minor points of difference did not override the general views that Vance, Brzezinski, and Carter held. Moreover, the Carter administration achieved the US goals in the region first stated back in 1974. Relations with Greece and Turkey could be an example that justifies Nancy Mitchell's view that Carter's foreign policy was successful, but the president did not get the credit he deserved.<sup>116</sup>

By 1980, Greece returned to NATO satisfying a central US goal since 1974. The US administration observed the process from the side-lines. Moreover, it can be argued that the international developments forced the Greek government to seek a return to NATO's integrated military command. Nonetheless, Washington's stance prevented the Greek-Turkish dispute over NATO from impacting directly US bilateral relations with either party. Finally, the administration took steps to stabilise Turkey's commitment to the West at a crucial time for the Middle East. Carter had a lot to be pleased about in Eastern Mediterranean, but the broader Near East was in crisis.

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<sup>115</sup> Christodoulidis, *Plans for Solution*, 234.

<sup>116</sup> Nancy Mitchell, 'The Cold War and Jimmy Carter', in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 66-88. [Online]. *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## Conclusion

In the mid-1970s Southern Europe was in turmoil. In the Iberian Peninsula, the Portuguese and Spanish dictatorships collapsed, paving the path for the establishment of democratic regimes. In Portugal, a NATO member, the Left was on the rise. The surge of the communist forces and the question of the Portuguese overseas territories perpetuated internal anarchy. The country's western orientation appeared at stake.<sup>1</sup> In comparison, the Spanish path to democracy proved to be less radical and less destabilising.<sup>2</sup> The development surprised contemporary foreign policy experts, who anticipated that General Franco's demise would result in an internal power struggle.<sup>3</sup> The presence of strong leftist parties in both Spain and Portugal raised questions about the future political orientation of the nascent democracies. The developments at the western end of the Mediterranean added to existing concerns about Eurocommunism, which was perceived as a threat to the western alliance's cohesion and unity.<sup>4</sup> The most severe challenge to NATO, though, came in the summer of 1974. For the first time in the history of the alliance, two member states, Greece and Turkey, threatened to go into war, over the future of the Republic of Cyprus. The outburst of the 1974 Cyprus crisis triggered a chain of events affecting domestic and international politics.

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1 John Young, *Cold War Europe, 1945-1991: A political History* (London: Arnold 1991, 2nd edition), 183-191.

2 Paul Heywood 'The emergence of new party systems and transitions to democracy: Spain in comparative perspective' in Geoffrey Pridham and Paul G. Lewis (eds.), *Stabilising Fragile Democracies: comparing systems in southern and eastern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1996), 145-166.

3 Angel Vinas 'Spain and NATO: Internal Debate and External Challenges' in John Chipman (ed.) *NATO's Southern Allies: Internal and External Challenged* (London: Routledge, 1988), 141.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas A. Schwartz 'Legacies of détente: a three-way discussion' *Cold War History* Vol.8, No.4, (November, 2008), 522.

Throughout the previous chapters, this thesis presented the crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean through the prism of US-Greek relations.

The Cyprus crisis led to the collapse of the Greek dictatorship, which maintained close ties with Washington. The political change in Greece and the crisis with Turkey directly affected relations with the country's closest ally, the United States. Bilateral relations need re-adjustment to survive. But bilateral Greek-US relations cannot be separated from broader considerations regarding the Cyprus problem and the Greek-Turkish disputes. Hence, the thesis provides an analysis of the broader regional politics.

In 1974, following the Cyprus Crisis, relations between the governments of Greece and the United States entered a new period. Greece's 1974 withdrawal from and 1980 return to NATO symbolised best this new period. In practical terms the Cyprus crisis introduced new challenges to bilateral Greek-US relations and cooperation. These challenges mandated the need for the development of new strategies on both sides as a means to overcome them. By 1980, though, these strategies for a number of reasons were no longer relevant.

The six-year-long period demonstrates elements of both continuity and change regarding the bilateral alliance between Athens and Washington, particularly in regards to Greece's, and to a lesser extent, the US's national security policies. The democratic governments after the collapse of the colonel's junta embraced a multilateral foreign policy that emphasised accession to the European Economic Community and increased Balkan cooperation. Nevertheless, the Greek multilateralism after 1974 did not challenge the dominant role the United States

occupied in Greek foreign relations. Or more accurately, the United States remained the undisputed central pillar of Greek national security.

In the aftermath of the Greek civil war, Cold War considerations regarding the threat from the communist bloc brought Greece and the US closer together. These considerations remained relevant and unchanged in the 1970s. The Greek governments under Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis remained faithful to the principle of the Western alliance. At the same time, Greece retained its significance for the US and NATO security considerations. The era and policies of détente did not aim to end the Cold War. In its core, as Hanhimaki demonstrates, détente was a conservative policy intended to secure the bipolar post-war international system. Despite the greater emphasis on communications, global competition between the two blocs remained.<sup>5</sup> Hence, Greece continued to play its role in the defence planning in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean.

The 1974 Cyprus Crisis, however, changed Greek-US cooperation. Tension between Athens and Ankara was not a new phenomenon. The escalation of tensions throughout the summer of 1974 demonstrated the likelihood of a militarised conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean. This potential clash between two NATO allies required new policies and strategies in both Athens and Washington to deal with it. In order to understand these new strategies that each side developed, it is necessary to proceed focusing separately on the US administrations and the Greek governments. Only a broad review of their respective approaches, and not an issue-by-issue examination, allows a comprehensive summary of Greek-US relations during the second half of 1970s.

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<sup>5</sup> Jussi Hanhimaki, *The Rise and Fall of Détente: American Foreign Policy and the Transformation of the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2013), 149.



In the United States, President Gerald R. Ford and his Secretary of State, Henry A. Kissinger, developed a new approach in response to the challenges the Greek-Turkish dispute caused for US foreign policy. This became an unofficial policy mandating a balanced approach between Greece and Turkey. Kissinger advocated a literal and objective interpretation of a US balanced approach that favoured neither Athens nor Ankara in political or practical terms. It was more than a neutral position on negotiations regarding the Cyprus problem or the Aegean Sea.

In political terms, this approach resulted in Washington's unwillingness to assign blame to either party for the eruption of the Greek-Turkish disputes that were related to Cyprus and the Aegean Sea. The US administration encouraged both sides to discuss their differences and promoted the need for both to demonstrate flexibility. The US administration did not support specific proposals, expecting Athens and Ankara to work constructively on the issues that divided them, such as the future Cyprus settlement and the national boundaries in the Aegean. At the same time, the United States promoted close bilateral relations with both. Close bilateral cooperation between the United States and the Greek and Turkish governments on other areas was a necessity. Obviously the balanced approach disappointed both Athens and Ankara, since Washington could no longer lend its support to either party.

In practical terms, Kissinger's envisaged balanced approach affected the most profound element of US support to its allies: the US economic and military aid under various programmes. From 1974 onwards, the US aimed to provide comparable levels of aid to Athens and Ankara. Undoubtedly, Greece and Turkey had a different role in and contribution to NATO given their different geographical and demographical

characteristics. Nonetheless, Washington attempted to balance the provisions of aid as much as possible.

The congressional-driven embargo on Turkey challenged both the political and practical manifestation of the balanced approach. It is noteworthy that Congress advocated first in favour of an embargo on Turkey in late spring 1974, before the events in Cyprus. The threat came in response to the Turkish government's discredit for an earlier US-Turkish agreement banning poppy cultivation for opium production.<sup>6</sup> However, in the aftermath of the Cyprus crisis the US arms embargo acquired an entirely different meaning. The embargo assigned blame for the on-going crisis on Turkey. It was a condemnation, based on the provisions of the US law, of the second Turkish invasion of Cyprus. No similar action had been taken during the initial eruption of the crisis, indicating that blame was equally shared by Athens and Ankara. The congressional stance against the second invasion of Cyprus replicated Greek charges against Turkey. Hence, the US was painted as pro-Greek. Moreover, in practical terms the embargo denied a significant amount of aid for the crippled Turkish economy and defence budget between 1975 and 1978. This fact in turn indirectly benefited Greece, given the undeclared arms race between Athens and Ankara.

The political implications of the embargo remained despite its partial repeal in October 1975. The generous 1976 Defence Cooperation Agreement between the United States and Turkey aimed to restore the US balanced approach in the region. What the Greek government considered as a favourable US stance to Ankara, Washington considered a fair treatment of an ally, Turkey. Moreover, the 1976 DCA should be seen as a symbolic action. Considering the Democratic majorities in both

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<sup>6</sup> Richard C. Company, Jr., *Turkey and the United States: The Arms Embargo Period* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1986), 25.

Houses and the overwhelming support of the embargo, the possibility of a quick ratification of a new four-year-long agreement during a Republican administration was slim. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the 1976 Turkish-US DCA was never ratified, for a number of reasons, as chapter five above demonstrates. The US-Turkish DCA was Secretary Kissinger's successful effort to reassure his counterparts in Ankara that the White House valued Turkey, regardless of the congressional actions.

When Ford lost the 1976 election, Kissinger's investments in reassuring Ankara of Washington's commitment to US-Turkish ties were no longer valid. Democrats, the driving force behind the arms embargo, now controlled all levels of the federal government. On the campaign trail, the new President, James E. Carter, spent considerable time arguing about his commitment to a solution in Cyprus while attacking Kissinger's policies. This statement in conjunction with his overall emphasis on a moral foreign policy caused concern in Ankara. The Turkish government considered that the possibility of a radically new and pro-Greek US approach to Cyprus was possible, if not probable. From a moral perspective, the Turkish second invasion was unjustifiable. Moreover, Turkish forces continued to occupy a disproportionate size of the island in comparison to the size of the Turkish minority. In reality, though, once in office, Carter closely followed Ford and Kissinger's approach to the crumbling triangle in the eastern Mediterranean. This thesis demonstrates beyond doubt that there was a remarkable degree of continuity between two presidencies which promised to be different. Moreover, the US policy in the Eastern Mediterranean highlights that Carter was a pragmatist since his early days in Washington. He did not convert to realpolitik at a later stage of his presidency, as existing literature argues.

Carter, as Kissinger before him, did not intend to interfere and solve the Cyprus problem. The new administration re-affirmed its commitment to the goals of its predecessor: secure US relations with both Greece and Turkey and prevent the escalation of tensions in the Aegean. The Cyprus problem itself was a small piece in the chessboard, the presidential emissary to the region, Clark Clifford, noted. NATO's cohesion was and remained Washington's principal motive. However, Carter's election brought a new strategy to meet these goals. That was the greater effort than before to secure concessions from Turkey. This was a necessity for a Democratic administration. The Democratic majorities in Congress expected visible progress before legislation beneficial to Ankara could be approved. Carter, unlike Ford, could no longer oppose and confront the House and the Senate.

Hence, from early 1977 Carter with the Clifford mission attempted to break the deadlock in the Eastern Mediterranean. The balanced approach that Kissinger pursued remained at the core of Carter's strategy. The White House, though, made clear to Ankara that neither the DCA could be approved nor the arms embargo could be lifted without progress on the Cyprus negotiations, which depended on Turkish concessions. The emphasis on Turkish concessions satisfied the Greek government, which had been suspicious of Kissinger as essentially pro-Turkish. Carter's new strategy, therefore, opened a window in US-Greek relations that brought Athens and Washington closer, with Athens effectively abandoning its confrontational strategy.

By 1978, the new strategy had failed. However, assigning the blame to Carter is unjustified and overlooks the realities that the US policy-makers faced. Both the Greek and the Turkish governments were not willing to take flexible, unpopular positions on issues elevated to national significance for each. Therefore, the Carter

administration reverted to strengthening bilateral relations with each ally separately, as Kissinger had done.

The US efforts during 1977, though, should not be seen as a time-consuming exercise or as Carter's education to the realities of Eastern Mediterranean. During that time there were signs that the new US approach would yield some results, as yet limited, to satisfy Congress and Carter's own campaign promises. But the lack of strictly observed election cycles in Greece and Turkey, which was complimented with the lack of consistent long-term foreign policy goals, prevented progress. As a new government arrived in Ankara and Karamanlis saw his party's share of vote reduced, both Greece and Turkey rejected ambitious foreign policy goals.

President Carter contributed a new element in Washington's policy making in the Eastern Mediterranean. That was a collective approach to the problems affecting US bilateral relations with Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus. The new president entered office determined to coordinate US policy toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus better. New positions to oversee policy in the three countries of the Eastern Mediterranean were added and included Clark Clifford, who joined the White House as the president's personal emissary to the region, Matthew Nimetz, as special counsellor at the Department of State, and Paul B. Henze, as NSC staffer. These three appointments reflected this collective approach since they were expected to simultaneously focus on all issues affecting US interests in Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus. The approach remained in place until 1980, benefiting greatly US intervention in the region.

Turning to the Greek approach toward the United States after 1974, the thesis successfully challenges two arguments within the historiography. For years, the dichotomy of independence versus dependence to US patronage in the post-junta

period dominated the field. During the past decade, a second theme emerged, partially in response to the earlier debate, which placed Greek-US relations within the so-called Greek multilateral foreign policy of the 1970s. This view accepted the fact that the United States remained a key ally of the Greek governments, but it also asserted that the Greek foreign goals were broadened, emphasising accession to the European Economic Community (EEC) and closer cooperation with the Balkan states. This thesis disputes both views as inadequate to fully describe US-Greek relations.

Starting with the latter, in the aftermath of the Cyprus crisis and the path to democracy, the United States remained the single most important ally regarding the country's national security policy. While the Karamanlis governments intensified efforts to join the EEC and renewed interest in working with the Balkans, Tito's Yugoslavia in particular, Washington remained their first point of contact regarding the two perceived threats to Greek sovereignty – Turkey and the Warsaw Pact. Close association with Washington offered Athens unquestionable advantage in political, economic, and military terms, which no other un- or under-developed relationship could compare to. Hence, the Greek governments between 1974 and 1980 continued to count on the United States in terms of national security. Kassimeris cites that the importance of the United States for Greece was the main reason behind the Greek governments unwillingness to challenge the US towards Athens as well as the broader region. In particular, he argues that a prime example of this Greek stance was Athens' response to the Turkish arms embargo. However, his interpretation of the Greek government's stance on the issue is misleading.

In 1974 the Greek national security doctrine added the possibility of war with Turkey to the threat from the country's northern neighbours. Putting détente aside, the

Greek decision-makers had trust that the United States and NATO would come to Greece's support in the event of a Soviet-led attack. Their stance, though, remained unclear in the event of a Greek-Turkish conflict. Hence, the Greek governments as early as autumn of 1974 concluded that it was necessary to ensure, through means of pressure, confrontation and blackmail, that Washington would side with the Greek efforts to deter the Turkish threat.

This policy goal drove the Greek approach toward the United States and it, inevitably, led to a fundamentally different interpretation of the balanced approach, which Washington pursued. Prime Minister Karamanlis generally supported Kissinger's and then Carter's proclamations for a balanced approach between two close US allies. Athens could not do otherwise, since it appeared a fair and reasonable stance toward two NATO allies. However, Athens advocated a different implementation of this approach. The Greek stance regarding the US aid contributions to Greece and Turkey offers a prime example of this. The Greek governments considered that Greece remained significantly weaker than Turkey, particularly in terms of military power. The Greek governments considered therefore that the US aid should aim to create a balance of power in the Aegean through providing higher aid to Greece. Comparable amount of aid was the next step, after the equilibrium of power was reached. The Ford administration rejected this interpretation. Therefore, the Greek involvement in the fight for the imposition and preservation of the embargo aimed at this particular goal: higher levels of aid for Greece through blocking Turkey's access to military assistance. From this perspective, the partial repeal of the embargo in October 1975 continued to serve Greek interests. They continued to block Ankara accessing free grant aid which Greece received, while the Congress mandated that the

US administration ought to consult with the Greek government on its needs before submitting its proposals for the US provisions of aid to Greece.

The Greek efforts to move both the Ford and Carter administrations closer to Greek positions exceeded the Greek interest in US aid provisions. The Greek efforts concentrated on generating US support for the Greek objectives in Cyprus and, most importantly, in the Aegean Sea. In Cyprus, Athens aimed to ensure that the primary focus was placed on Turkish concessions on the size of the future allocation of Turkish-Cypriot territory. Given both US administrations' unwillingness to side with the Greek views, the US Congress remained a valuable ally. The embargo here took a different meaning. Not only did it condemn Turkey's second invasion of Cyprus, it also put effective pressure on Turkey to deliver on actions on Cyprus. The Greek government emphasised the need for the legislation that would repeal the embargo to include provisions describing the next Turkish steps to access US aid or automatic cuts in the event of further Turkish advances.

Regarding the Aegean, the Greek approach was slightly different. The Greek government wanted to secure an explicit commitment from the United States that it would actively intervene against Turkish military activities against Greece. Following the events in Cyprus, the Greek governments considered as a credible scenario Turkish use of power to solve the territorial dispute. Greece's participation to NATO, regardless of the partial withdrawal, did not allay the Greek fears. Articles 4 and 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which called for consultation regarding the appropriate response in the event of an attack against a member state, did not apply in the event of inter-alliance conflicts. A US informal 'security guarantee' was one way to prevent



and contain Turkish aggression. Ensuring that the United States remained committed against acts of aggression in the Aegean required a constant effort on Athens' behalf.

Secondly, the Greek government, particularly between 1974 and 1977, recognised that the best safeguard against a Greek-Turkish war was a mutually accepted solution of the Aegean dispute through the International Court of Justice. The ruling was not without the danger of limiting Greece's perceived rights in the Aegean but it had the potential to be defensible domestically. The main challenge was the need to persuade Ankara to submit the dispute to The Hague, and Washington again was the only actor who could play that role.

For these reasons, the Greek political leadership concluded that a new approach was needed toward the United States from 1974. The Greek government, including figures such as Averoff, Bitsios, and Theodoropoulos argued in favour of putting pressure on Washington to stand on Greece's side by threatening to abandon NATO or removing US bases or cooperating with Congress, to name the most profound examples. Using pressure tactics or even blackmail, as Hatzivassiliou demonstrates, was not a unique phenomenon in Greek-US relations<sup>7</sup>, let alone in any bilateral relationship. However, from 1974 on, this was Greece's consistent and coordinated strategy, a confrontational strategy, toward the United States. The aim was to force the US to Greece's side through reminding it of Athens' importance for the US and NATO interests or causing domestic implications for US administrations. Scholars have mistaken this approach as a manifestation of Greece moving away from the US. However, the Greek government realised as early as 1974 that the Europeans were not

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<sup>7</sup> Evanthes, Hatzivassiliou, *Greece and the Cold War: Frontline state, 1952-1967* (London: Routledge, 2006), 186.

able and not willing to challenge the US approach in the Eastern Mediterranean or offer an alternative option to Greek national security considerations.

The European allies, and particularly West Germany and France, had a distinct but rather limited role in the Greek-US bilateral relations. As chapters one and three above demonstrated, European actors played a role in Secretary Kissinger's balanced approach. In the aftermath of the Cyprus Crisis, Washington sought to ensure that the Europeans followed its lead and sided with neither Greece nor Turkey. During the first weeks after the crisis and considering Greece's strong rhetoric against Washington, the Ford administration considered it possible that the Europeans might seek to reproach Athens at the expense of the United States. Fostering close relations with Athens could also mean alienating Turkey from the West. The Cyprus crisis came in the aftermath of the disastrous 'Year of Europe' and the on-going differences over détente that exposed tensions between the EEC and the US.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the solidarity from the two sides of the Atlantic was obvious. Not only London and Bonn coordinated their approaches with Washington, so did Paris, which generally expressed greater sympathy for Athens. Hence, the leaders of the western alliance demonstrated unity before this unique crisis that confronted them. The Europeans' balanced approach found its best demonstration in the Greek-EEC accession negotiations, where the need to accommodate Turkey represented an on-going preoccupation not only in Brussels but also in the Nine's capitals.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Daniel Möckli 'Asserting Europe's Distinct Identity: The EC Nine and Kissinger's Year of Europe' in Matthias Schulz and Thomas Alan Schwartz (eds.), *The Strained Alliance: U.S.-European Relations from Nixon to Carter* (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute in London, 2010), 196.

<sup>9</sup> Eirini Karamouzi, *Greece, the EEC and the Cold War, 1974-1979: The Second Enlargement*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 22.

A second successful application of the ‘transatlantic’ balanced approach came during the efforts to defuse the Aegean Crisis of 1976. At the UN Security Council, US diplomats, under Kissinger’s instructions, worked toward a resolution that balanced pressures on both Greek and Turkey. Once again, the US and the Western permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council demonstrated unanimity regarding the Greek-Turkish disagreements.

Considering the role of the European allies, President Carter followed a different approach to that of Ford and Kissinger. The Carter administration made little effort to embrace the Europeans in its attempt to advance progress on the Cyprus negotiations or efforts to promote Greek-Turkish dialogue. Given its role in Cyprus, Britain was one of the stops for both Clifford’s and Vance’s missions in the region. However, the UK government demonstrated little interest in engaging with efforts for a Cyprus solution. Rather, the British appeared more interested in securing financing of their expenditures from the military installation in the two Sovereign Base Areas (UKSBAs) in Cyprus.<sup>10</sup> Regarding the Nine collectively, the White House considered them as a convenient vehicle for easing potential Greek reactions following the repeal of the US embargo on Turkey, but nothing more than that.

As Washington immersed itself in the effort to strengthen the ailing Turkish economy, the European powers, and particularly France and West Germany, received greater attention. The Europeans were expected to support economic assistance for Turkey, in the form of aid packages and low-interest loans either bilaterally or through the IMF. These measures were deemed necessary to combat the ills of the Turkish

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<sup>10</sup> Memorandum of conversation, The Secretary Mr Clark Clifford, et al., Washington, March 2, 1977, in David Zierler, Adam M. Howard (eds.), *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980*, vol. XXI, Greece; Cyprus; Turkey (Washington, Government Printing Office: 2014), doc9.

economy, and particularly high unemployment and chronic economic contraction. These factors posed the threat of replicating the domestic turbulence of Iran, regardless of the role of fundamental Islam. The Western Europeans' expected role regarding the Turkish economy did not alter the general conclusion that the Greek-Turkish dispute was and remained Washington's problem throughout the second half of 1970s.

Finally, there is one issue that should be addressed separately: Greece's withdrawal from NATO. Greece's withdrawal from and return to NATO symbolised deteriorating Greek-US relations. However, the NATO-Greek relations during these six years played little role in bilateral Greek-US contacts at least until 1978, as the previous chapter shows. When Greece returned to NATO as a full member in 1980, the withdrawal of 1974 appeared as a vain action even if, as the Greek government argued, it had prevented war with Turkey. Prior to reintegration into the alliance, the Greek government faced an uphill effort to return under the same terms and conditions, while the reintegration presented a preliminary agreement with detailed arrangements regarding the zones of command with Turkey to be negotiated subsequently. The decision deserves a closer look.

Indeed, as scholars and the leading Greek politicians of the 1970s have argued, after the second invasion of Cyprus, the Greek government needed to take a strong action.<sup>11</sup> The withdrawal from NATO served this purpose. However, it is also true that the Greek government and the Greek bureaucracy did not know what the withdrawal meant. From early 1975 onwards, the withdrawal meant the establishment of a special relationship, which in broad lines entailed greater national control over the armed forces in period of peace between the two blocks. The goal clearly was not achieved

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<sup>11</sup> Hatzivassiliou, Evanthes, *Ευάγγελος Αβέρωφ-Τοσιτσάς: Πολιτική Βιογραφία* [Evangelos Averof Tositsas: Political Biography] (Athens: Sideris, 2004), 155.

with the 1980 agreement for Greece's reintegration to NATO. Hence, it is easy to classify the Greek decision of 1974 as a failure.

This conclusion is false because it is restricted only to the Greek-NATO relationship and overlooks the broader considerations of the Greek government before and after the August 14 announcement. The withdrawal aimed to exert pressure on the NATO allies, above all the United States, to take a stand against Turkey's continuous violations of the ceasefire in Cyprus. After the announcement, first reports showed the significant impact the decision had on Washington, as the Greek Embassy noted with satisfaction. The Greek decision caused a significant effect on the White House. The withdrawal from NATO symbolised the deterioration of Greek-US relations. Over the following years, the efforts for restoring relations by avoiding antagonising the Greek government became a central goal for the US.

More importantly, the decision offered ammunition for Congress against the US administration. Greece had been a traditional close US ally. In 1969, President Nixon had justified the repeal of the US sanctions on the Greek junta on the grounds of securing relations with an important ally.<sup>12</sup> When Greece left NATO, the United States lost an ally. This development justified past warnings in Congress regarding Kissinger's close relations with the Greek dictators. Congress had warned about the deterioration of relations in the event of the restoration of Greek democracy. Between the formation of the Greek civilian government and the second invasion of Cyprus there were no signs of tension between Athens and Washington, regardless of the Greek public's anti-American sentiments. The Greek withdrawal from NATO

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<sup>12</sup> James Edwards Miller, *United States and the making of Modern Greece: History and Power, 1950-1974* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 157.

represented what the press termed as a loss of an ally.<sup>13</sup> Kissinger's congressional opponents easily assigned to him the blame for the development. In response, the Secretary took efforts to move closer to Greece and the Greek government visibly and practically. The restoration of relations weighed heavily on Washington, if Kissinger were to silence his domestic critics. From the aspect of political implications and as a diplomatic tool, the Greek decision was successful. In terms of defence planning, the decisions undoubtedly posed severe challenges, and thus were never fully materialised. The return to NATO confirmed Greece's role while providing the necessary promise for distinct roles for the Greek and Turkish forces in the alliance, a necessity given the on-going tensions between the two states.

Greece's return to the alliance provided a success for Carter administration. The US played a limited role in the process, even though it was a central goal during both the Ford and Carter presidencies to foster Greece's ties with NATO. However, the US success lay elsewhere. The Greek-NATO negotiations developed, as chapter six above demonstrated, another Greek-Turkish dispute. The danger was that this dispute would develop into a point of contention for both Greek-US and US-Turkish relations. The US artfully avoided the danger. Washington made clear its intention not to pressure Turkey beyond the expected encouragements on the grounds of satisfying common allied interests. The US stance displeased Athens but, from autumn 1979 on, the Greek government realised the futility of its approach toward the US and abandoned its confrontational stance. It was Athens' turn to move closer to their US counterparts, particularly following Ambassador Menelaos Alexandrakis' departure

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<sup>13</sup> For a contemporary view, see Adamantia Pollis, 'US foreign policy towards authoritarian regimes in the Mediterranean,' *Millennium: Journal for International Studies* vol. 4, no. 1 (March 1975), 28-51.

from Washington. Hence, in a critical period for Washington cooperation with Ankara and for the US interests in the broader Middle East, the Carter administration avoided another rift in US foreign policy.

Finally, Greek-US relations of the mid-1970s belonged to the era of détente. On the surface, the very eruption and spike of the Cyprus crisis in the summer of 1974 should be seen as a by-product of détente. Greece and Turkey shared a turbulent past despite their participation in NATO. The easing of East-West tensions allowed the Greek and Turkish governments to prioritise strictly defined national and nationalistic goals as means to satisfy their domestic audiences and divert their attention from day-to-day challenges. The tension remained following the Greek transition to democracy. Explosive rhetoric was the norm, although Prime Minister Karamanlis demonstrated a greater degree of restraint than his counterparts in Ankara. However, Washington's handling of the Greek-Turkish dispute was very much a product of détente. Between 1974 and 1980, the US administrations devoted the necessary attention to their junior partners in an effort to defuse their animosity. Moreover, the US administrations accepted the need for treating Greece and Turkey equally in terms of US military aid, despite the two states' different roles and contributions to the Alliance. The approach undermined NATO's capabilities since it undercut Turkish military receipts. When détente formally collapsed, the US, as Paul B. Henze argued, could no longer adhere to this approach.

The re-consideration regarding Greece and Turkey took place within a broader reconsideration of the regional goals of the United States. By 1980, Southern Europe had returned to stability. Spain and Portugal reaffirmed their commitment to western

institutions by applying to enter the EEC.<sup>14</sup> Eurocommunism no longer constituted a viable alternative political and economic model. In the Eastern Mediterranean, while the Cyprus problem remained unsolved, the possibility of a Greek-Turkish confrontation was limited. Moreover, Greece had not only returned to the Alliance, but had also entered the Community. Hence, the western institutions had fully embraced Southern Europe and were projecting a picture of resilience and unity.

This picture contrasted the instability in the Middle and Near East. The Soviet Union increased pressures to the periphery and the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism threatened US interests in the region. Turkey emerged as the only US ally able to assume the role that Iran played in the past. However, Turkey faced its own political crisis stemming from years of economic stagnation. To promote stability inside Turkey, the United States committed generous amount of economic and military aid. Turkey's political and military build-up became a new pillar in Washington's interpretation of US national interest in the Middle East. This new approach also meant that for the first since the end of the second world war Greece and Turkey were expected to play different roles in the region. Greece remained an ally with significance in the Balkans. On the contrary, Turkey's role expanded. While in the past decades Athens and Ankara played a complimentary role in the Eastern Mediterranean, from 1980 onwards the two followed a different destiny. This was the foundation that led Turkey becoming a formidable regional power in recent years.

For all these reasons the years between 1974 and 1980 represent a unique period for Greek-US relations. As this thesis demonstrates, for all the elements of continuity in terms of policy there were significant changes in terms of strategy on

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<sup>14</sup> Loukas Tsoukalis, *The European Community and its Mediterranean Enlargement* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 243.



sides of bilateral Greek-US relations. Approaching the relations bilaterally accurately depicts the depth of Greek-US cooperation and dispels myths and misperceptions.





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