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NSC BRIEFING

29 August 1956

CYPRUS

- I. The eleven-day unilateral "truce", declared by the Cypriot terrorist underground (EOKA) on 16 August, expired at midnight Monday and terrorist bombings and shootings on Cyprus were immediately resumed.
- A. EOKA's offer of the truce, "to allow Britain to show its good faith", was linked with demands that the British re-open negotiations for a settlement of the Cyprus crisis with exiled Archbishop Makarios no later than 27 August.

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State Dept. review
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- (1) EOKA's truce offer was probably inspired both by British successes in anti-terrorist operations on Cyprus and by the fear that popular support for EOKA was weakening
- (2) Another factor may well have been EOKA's belief that Britain's increased need for Cyprus facilities during the Suez crisis would make the UK more amenable to negotiation.

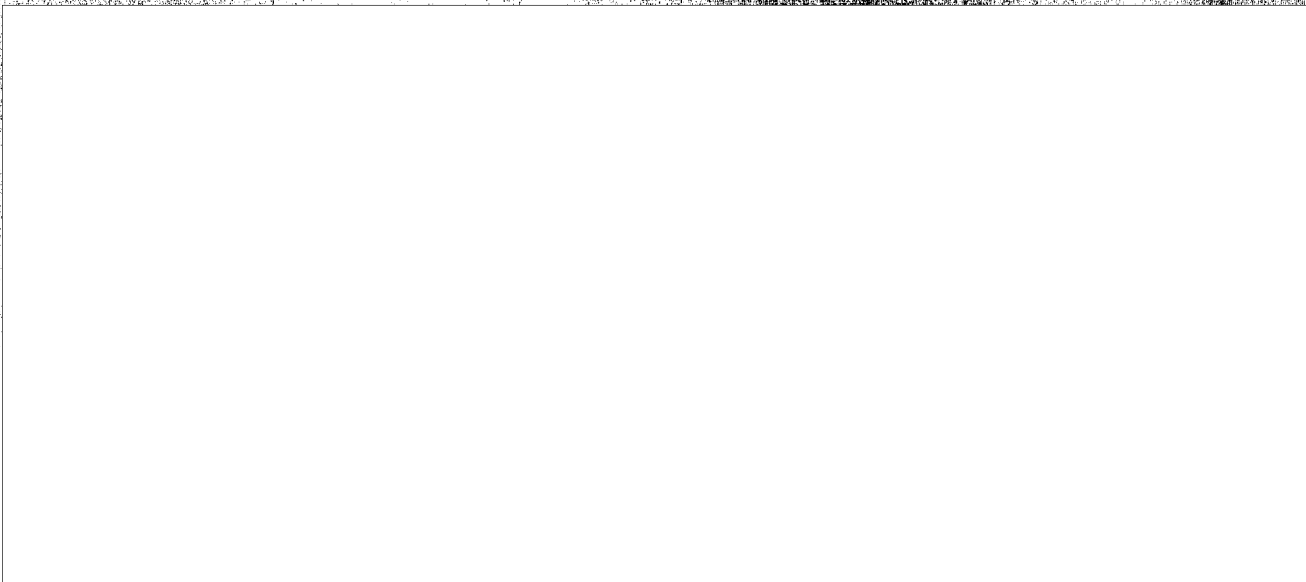
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- B. Instead, Governor-General Harding on Cyprus demanded that the terrorists surrender and either go to Greece or face prosecution if they stay. In a parallel action on 27 August, London claimed that captured Cypriot documents proved the Archbishop to be the actual director of Cypriot terrorist activities and personally "involved in the choice of individual victims for murder".
- II. Thus, the British are trying to discredit Makarios in the eyes of the Cypriot population, in hope that other nationalist leaders will come to the fore.

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C. Meanwhile, some sections of the British press are urging that Archbishop Makarios be tried as a criminal.

III. The Greek government continues to express the hope that Britain and the Cypriots will resume negotiations.

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- A. Athens is pledged to work for self-determination for Cyprus and intends to carry the matter to the UN this autumn.
- B. The life of the present Greek government is at stake over the Cyprus issue, since opposition accusations of inaction on Cyprus are gaining more popular support the longer a solution is postponed.
- C. Almost the entire attention of Prime Minister Karamanlis' regime is concentrated on Cyprus, while vital domestic economic and financial measures are being postponed. This, too, adds to the shakiness of the present government and gives the opposition additional ammunition.

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IV. On the other side of the question, the Turkish view that the status quo must be maintained on Cyprus, primarily for strategic reasons, remains unaltered.

A. Turkish President Bayar, on 24 August, told US Ambassador Warren that, if Athens continues to press for enosis, "lots of unpleasant questions" would arise--such as the question of Turks in Greek Thrace, the transfer of Greeks from Istanbul and the status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchat in Istanbul.

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