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An Assessment of the Partition of Cyprus

CHAIM KAUFMANN
Lehigh University

This paper proposes a standard for evaluation of possible solutions to communal conflicts, including partition, based on protection of human life. A partition should be judged successful only if it costs fewer lives than the expected loss of life under any alternative. Solutions to communal conflicts should also be stable over long periods, eliminating or drastically reducing fears of people in the affected communities that they could become victims of renewed violence. An assessment of the 1974 partition of Cyprus is presented, which finds that its net impact on human life remains uncertain—principally because the partition occurred so quickly after the July 1974 coup by Greek Cypriot ultranationalists that was the main source of fear of very large-scale ethnic cleansing that we cannot know what the new government might have done. What we can confidently say is that, absent partition, deadly communal violence in Cyprus would have continued to recur and that there are grounds, including the behavior of the July coup regime, for guessing that the ultimate cost would more likely have been higher rather than lower than that of partition. Partition has also enforced peace on Cyprus for 32 years, which may have contributed to the improved climate, compared with 30 or 10 years ago, for eventual reunification.

Keywords: Cyprus, Cyprus conflict, Cyprus partition, ethnic conflict, communal conflict, ethnic conflict resolution, communal conflict resolution, partition, counterfactuals

This paper concerns evaluation of communal partitions. It focuses on the August 1974 partition of Cyprus, in part because it has been one of the most strongly condemned and in part because whether or how it can be reversed is now a live issue. A second motive for studying Cyprus is to contribute to improving our theories of ethnic conflict resolution. Under what circumstances should outside powers intervene in ongoing wars to promote partition versus other possible solutions, or exert themselves to stabilize partitions or separations of populations that have already happened?

Cyprus was actually partitioned twice. The first was the outcome of a civil war in 1963–1964. Since the Greek Cypriot community was far stronger than the ethnic Turkish community (77% versus 18% of population in 1960), even taking into account open and covert aid that both received from their respective mainlands, the result was that Turkish Cypriot control was compressed into a number of isolated enclaves amounting to about 5% of the island. Afterward the government of Cyprus was entirely controlled by the Greek community, while the Turkish enclaves developed a parallel administration.

This partition was not stable, however, because it created an intense security dilemma. The Turkish Cypriot enclaves could not defend themselves against determined attack, while many Greek Cypriots saw the autonomous enclaves as potential bases for expansion of Turkish control over even more of Cyprus. Neither

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community could secure itself indefinitely unless either Turkish Cypriots accepted centralized majoritarian rule or Greek Cypriots accepted that government writ would not run in Turkish controlled areas—both non-starters—or one side or the other changed the situation by offensive military action.

The second partition, in August 1974, resulted from the overthrow of the Cypriot government on July 15, 1974, by extreme Greek Cypriot nationalists, with the active support of the military junta then ruling Greece. The coup plotters' aim was *enosis* (union with Greece). The new regime killed hundreds of Greek Cypriot supporters of the previous government, moderates, and leftists during the next five days, but did not immediately threaten or attack Turkish Cypriots.

From July 20 to 22 Turkey invaded Cyprus and seized 3% of the island, linking certain Turkish Cypriot enclaves in the North. Turkey justified this action under the 1959 Treaty of Guarantee, which provided that the Cyprus could not unite with any other country and that any of Britain, Greece, or Turkey could act to prevent this (the treaty also prohibited partition). This was followed by 3 weeks of negotiations that centered on two Turkish autonomy demands. Either would have put about 30% of the island under ethnic Turkish control; one called for a single Turkish canton and would have required substantial population movements, the other for six separated ones, which would not have (Crawshaw 1978:392; Birand 1985).

In the meantime Greek Cypriot forces overran most of the other Turkish enclaves and ethnic cleansing of Turks began. Also, during part of this time there was low-level fighting between Greek and Turkish forces in which Turkish forces made small advances (Birand 1985:62–63, 68–69, 98). After diplomatic negotiations failed, on August 14 Turkish forces went on the offensive again and conquered 37% of Cyprus, effectively partitioning it. 250,000 people became refugees, separating the communities almost completely. The partition and separation of populations remain unchanged nearly 33 years later.

This paper focuses on evaluating the second, full partition of Cyprus in 1974 because it is both more contested and a closer fit for theoretical and policy questions in debate today. Study of the 1964 partition could also be profitable, although if we accept this paper's judgment that it made the situation in Cyprus more dangerous, the important question would be whether it could have been prevented or reversed.

The next section proposes a standard for evaluating solutions to communal conflicts. The following section attempts to evaluate the net effect of the partition of Cyprus on human life. The last section considers possible lessons for Cyprus today.

Standards of Evaluation

All communal partitions have come in for criticism from scholars and others; some have also attracted defenders. There is no agreed standard for evaluating them. But we cannot make intelligent policy without standards for evaluation of outcomes. How do we know a successful partition—or an unsuccessful one—when we see it?

To evaluate any policy choice requires first taking a stance on a normative question: what values should we pursue? I cannot evade that responsibility here: this paper proposes that the standard for evaluating proposed solutions to communal conflicts should be protection of human life. A partition or other solution should be accounted successful if it avoids more deaths than it causes (we must keep in mind here that poverty also kills; proposed solutions should not create or perpetuate widespread extreme poverty). A second, less ambitious standard implied by the focus on human life is that in the long run most people in the affected communities should be able to live their lives, nearly all the time, without fear that they may become victims of ethnic cleansing.

It is not clear whether the August 1974 partition of Cyprus meets the main standard: absent partition communal violence would have continued, but we cannot say certainly whether this would have cost more lives than the partition did. The partition satisfies the second standard by removing fear of ethnic cleansing from the lives of Cypriots ever since. Life-threatening poverty was not a factor in this case.

Fearon (2004:405) objects to a human life standard on the ground that it may sometimes sacrifice justice. In practice this trade-off will rarely be acute because the world's major powers, who are democracies, are not likely to intervene in support of partition unless they can persuade their publics that this will serve both human safety and justice. In the American debate on Darfur that is ongoing in 2007, no one who advocates intervention considers the sides morally equivalent. What we should not do is elevate justice to an equal, competing standard that could condemn whole peoples to danger of death because some of them, or their advocates, demand more power or territory than the international community can offer. Nor should we refuse to stabilize population separations or partitions that have already happened because we do not think that they are fair—not if that would mean condemning both sides to indefinitely continued risk of large-scale violence.

Assessing Cyprus

Evaluating the partition of Cyprus requires assessing historical counterfactuals. The only thing to which we can compare the human cost of partitioning Cyprus must be a counterfactual estimate of the human costs of *not* partitioning Cyprus. For discussion of the uses of historical counterfactuals, both to explain specific cases and to help evaluate generalizations in a particular domain—such as the conditions under which partition might or might not be a preferred solution to communal conflict—see Tetlock and Belkin (1996), Fearon (1991, 1996); and Kaufmann (2007a).

What Would Have Happened if Turkey Had not Partitioned Cyprus?

We should only assess a partition as having saved lives if we are confident of three things. First, that absent the partition, large-scale civil war or ethnic cleansing would almost certainly have occurred quite soon—sooner than any side could have changed the structure of the situation.

Second, that this war would have cost more lives than the partition did.

Third, that there is little reason to believe that even if partition saved lives in the short run, it would somehow nevertheless have cost more lives in the long run. Although we cannot possibly assess all effects of partition over the entire period since 1974, we do not have to be so ambitious; at this point the counterfactual burden shifts to the other side. It is sufficient if we cannot identify a reason to think that, even if avoiding partition would have led to worse results in the short run, it would, by some indirect, negative feedback path, have led to better results in the long run. Further, for the second and third questions—the scale of damage and better or worse history afterwards—we need address only the likely direction of change from the historical record, not its magnitude.

For Cyprus, this translates into three empirical questions: first, if Turkey had not partitioned Cyprus in 1974, would there have been additional rounds of civil war or ethnic cleansing? Second, would these have eventually have killed more people than the partition did? Third, is there reason to believe that even if partition did save lives in the short run, it ended by costing more lives in the long run?

The answer to the first question is almost certainly yes: there would have been more rounds of ethnic cleansing. The answer to the second is uncertain: the historical record of the Cyprus conflict is so polarized that estimates of actual human losses are unreliable. On balance, I think that the expected cost in lives of continued

communal conflict beyond 1974 was likely higher than that of partition, mainly because of how extreme many *enosists* had become by 1974; there may not have been any upper limit to what they might have done. The peacefulness of Cyprus since 1974 meets the third standard.

There are three main reasons to believe that, if not for the August 1974 partition, there would have been additional rounds of ethnic cleansing. The most important of these is the history of the Cyprus conflict up to August 1974.

Many students of Cyprus (Attalides 1979; Papadakis 1995a, 1995b; Joseph 1997; Bryant 2004), and some of communal conflict more broadly (Snyder 2000; Kaufman 2001; Petersen 2002) make arguments that—while not all reliant on the same mechanisms—imply that legacies of promotion of nationalist history can create enduring power structures with an interest in perpetuating such histories as well as mass acceptance of perpetuating practices such as nationalist education, emotionalized language for describing the conflict, official or other public rituals, and other components of popular culture. These do not guarantee continuous high mobilization for further violence, although they can increase the chances of episodic large-scale violence by providing hard-liners with arguments and symbols that remain available to be deployed whenever circumstances reactivate debates about policy toward the "enemy" community.

Such discourses are usually robust in the face of efforts by either local or external actors to reconstruct them, and proved quite robust in both Cypriot communities from several decades before partition until well after 1974. (These structures can be undermined by profound changes in other elements of structure such as revolutionary social or economic transformations or quite long periods of continuous peace. This may be happening in Cyprus now.)

Scholars argue about the depth of communal divisions before Britain took control of Cyprus in 1878. We can say, however, that from 1878, or at the latest 1912, Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism and intercommunal distrust intensified in series of steps or "ratchets." While the deterioration was not continuous, there were no important episodes of improvement. This resulted from both casual and intentional mobilization efforts, the fact that both communities could so easily be seen, or see themselves, as extensions of the respective mainland communities that even imagining a wholly separate Cypriot identity was difficult (Joseph 1997:41–42), structural security dilemmas, and, over time, the entrenchment of the conflict itself in the consciousness of Cypriots. This process proceeded in seven steps:

First, the British allowed the communities to set up separate school systems, both of which imported teachers from the respective mainlands who taught children to see themselves as "Greek" or "Turkish," not "Cypriot"(Attalides 1979:26; Joseph 1997:17, 40). History in each community, from well before the possibility of Cypriot independence came under discussion until today, has represented its own people as consistently heroic and the other as consistently barbaric. Greek Cypriots remember noble struggles against the might of Britain and of Turkey but no reasons for Turkish Cypriot hostility, such as the provocative role of *enosis*; Turkish Cypriots remember a long defensive struggle against a stronger, oppressive, and even exterminationist enemy, but no common experience (Loizos 1988:642–644; Papadakis 1995a, 1995b).

These histories contributed to repetitive violent outbreaks indirectly as well as directly. Papadakis (1995b) points out that histories that claim heroism require attributing to the enemy material strength but moral weakness, for example the common Cypriot saying that "one Greek is worth ten Turks." Such exaggeration and essentialization of military prowess can cause both under-learning of the lessons of past defeats and overestimation of chances in future contests, as happened in Cyprus repeatedly between 1960 and 1974.

In 1912 and in 1931 there were pro-*enosis* riots; by 1931 independence, equated with *enosis*, had become the center of Greek Cypriot social life (Bryant 2004:130).

Turkish Cypriot nationalism started more slowly—most were tolerant of British rule—but accelerated in response to *enosis*, generating a counter-demand for *taksim* (partition) (Crawshaw 1978:42–44; Attalides 1979:2). Over time, increasing mutual distrust and fear was reflected in changing communal settlement patterns. Between 1891 and 1931 the proportion of Cypriot villages that were ethnically mixed declined from 43% to 36%, and then to 18% by independence in 1960 (Patrick 1976:12). Kumar (1997) argues that the impetus for partition, usually comes from the colonial or occupying power, not from local communities. That is not what happened in Cyprus.

Second, the Greek Orthodox Church, the dominant force in Greek Cypriot society, promoted *enosis* as the only path to independence from Britain. The central figure was Archbishop Makarios III (elevated 1950), *ethnarch* of the Greek community and from independence onward President of the Republic. In 1950, the Church organized an *enosist* petition that 96% of Greek Cypriots signed; potential abstainers were denounced in advance as traitors (Crouzet 1973:272–74).

Third, by 1959 colonial experience had not only prevented development of a common Cypriot identity before independence but also undermined its possible development afterward (Attalides 1979:40). The 1955–1959 nationalist rebellion was an entirely ethnic Greek movement centered on a guerrilla and terrorist organization known as EOKA, supported by Makarios and the Church. The rebels targeted colonial officials and, increasingly, Turkish Cypriot civilians. Because the Turkish community was quiescent, the British recruited ethnic Turkish policemen, further polarizing communal relations (Crawshaw 1978:288ff., 293; Borowiec 2000:34–37). Ethnic Turks also formed their own militia known as TMT.

After 1878 there were few political figures or movements that commanded support in both communities and after 1959 none. AKEL, the Cypriot communist party, was virtually all Greek after 1957 as were trade unions after 1959 (Attalides 1979:48–49, 110–112). In the 1960 election, no party fielded candidates for both Greek and Turkish seats (Jarstad 2001:165). The Turkish community did not participate in subsequent elections. Most of the first cabinet were EOKA leaders (Markides 1977:69). Neither the new government nor important elites in either community made efforts to promote a pan-Cypriot identity.

Fourth, Greek Cypriot nationalists never accepted the legitimacy of the new republic's constitution because it provided for power-sharing and prohibited both *enosis* and *taksim*, while they considered that EOKA's defeat of 30,000 occupation troops entitled then to *enosis* and, ideally, reduction of ethnic Turkish presence on the island (Markides 1977:26, 36). Makarios was heavily criticized for signing the agreement; he defended himself by declaring that he considered the agreement only a device to gain independence, not binding on Cypriots afterward (Crawshaw 1978:354–355; Clerides 1989:80–81).

The *sine qua non* of a power-sharing constitution is a minority veto (Lijphart 1990; Jarstad 2001:57, 60). Cyprus's constitution provided this both directly and indirectly, by overweighted Turkish representation in certain institutions. Either the (Greek) president or the (Turkish) vice-president could veto legislation in certain areas; in certain others, separate communal chambers would make law. Turkish Cypriots were to get 30% of legislative seats, 30% of civil service jobs, 40% of positions in a small army, and 30% in the police and gendarmerie (the four treaties are reproduced in Salih 2004:307–321; see also Jarstad 2001:136).

None of it functioned—except one provision that permitted Greece and Turkey each to maintain several hundred troops on the island, who became the trainers and commanders of the nationalist militias in both communities. Disputes over civil service posts, taxes, municipal government, and foreign policy paralyzed the legislature; communal disputes prevented formation of an integrated army (Kyle 1984:9; Markides 1998). In November 1963, Makarios, with the support of virtually all Greek Cypriot factions, presented the Turkish community with a set of

demands that would have abolished all of the power-sharing elements in the constitution, in effect tearing it up (Laipson 1993); Polyviou (1980:28–34) blames the Turkish side for the breakdown.

While the republic was collapsing, both communities had been preparing for war. Greek Cypriot leaders prepared to enforce *enosis* on the Turkish community (the "Akritas Plan"); independent militias also formed in both communities (Loizos 1976:19; Patrick 1976:35; Clerides 1989:207–220). War broke out in December 1963. Turkey threatened to invade but was deterred by a stiff warning from the United States: President Lyndon Johnson threatened to withdraw U.S. protection against the Soviet Union (Johnson letter, Hart 1990:163–166). The war continued until August 1964 when it was ended by a brief intervention by Turkish air power.

Fifth, the 1963–1964 fighting created a semipermanent situation intermediate between peace and war. The Cypriot government became wholly Greek, but controlled only 95% of the island. Armed, separated, blockaded enclaves controlled by Turkish Cypriots made up the rest. A majority of ethnic Turks lived in Turkish-controlled areas, while perhaps 50,000 remained in government-controlled areas (Loizos 1976:21; Borowiec 2000:65). By 1970 only 8% of Cypriot villages were still even nominally counted as mixed, but most of these had actually segregated themselves ethnically into two sections (Patrick 1976:8, 12). U.N. peacekeepers were deployed in March 1964 but could not prevent further rounds of fighting; they still remain.

In November 1967, following a military coup in Greece, General George Grivas led the (all Greek) Cypriot National Guard in attacks on ethnic Turkish villages; Turkey again threatened to invade. This crisis was short-lived because the United States brokered an agreement that stopped the fighting, kept Turkey out, and required the removal from Cyprus of both Greek and Turkish troops over the Treaty of Alliance limits (Greece was then about 10,000 over its treaty limit of 950 and Turkey some hundreds over its limit of 650; Hart 1990:42, 60, 85–86, 72 fn. 43, 92–93).

Sixth, the 1963–1964 and 1967 conflicts produced two contradictory developments in Greek Cypriot politics that had the effect of making it next to impossible to prevent further violent outbreaks. In 1964 Makarios authorized formation of a Cypriot National Guard in place of the bi-communal army that was never built. As the Guard was commanded by extreme nationalists such as Grivas together with officers of the Greek Army, this meant that the strongest coercive force in the Greek Cypriot community was not only not controlled by the government but usable against it (Patrick 1976:66; Markides 1977:83). In November 1967 Makarios begged U.S. help in disarming the Guard but was denied (Hart 1990:92).

By 1968 Makarios was persuaded that *enosis* had to be abandoned as impractical in the face of Turkish military superiority: "A solution, by necessity, must be sought within the limits of what is feasible, which does not always coincide with what is desirable" (Patrick 1976:145); Papadakis (1995a) says that many Greek Cypriots came to the same realization. The blockades were loosened. Intercommunal negotiations were held, but failed over the Turkish side's demand for complete autonomy of municipal administrations (Attalides 1979:100–101). Some elements of Greek Cypriot politics between 1967 and 1974, however, suggest that the lesson did not take deep root. In June 1967 the Cypriot House of Representatives unanimously passed a resolution declaring that the *enosis* struggle would continue regardless of "adverse circumstances" (Papadakis 1995a; Jarstad 2001:157).

Seventh, after 1970 *enosist* sentiment, together with interference by the junta in Greece, grew beyond levels that Greek Cypriot society could contain. Makarios was never able to explain persuasively enough why *enosis*, which had been the core of the national idea for so long, should be downgraded from a reality almost in grasp to a mere dream for some indefinite future. As a result, a split opened between moderates and die-hard nationalists that could not be closed.

Grivas returned in 1971 and a new, illegal, nationalist force known as EOKA-B was formed. EOKA-B drew much of its support from the police, National Guard,

and former members of both. By 1972 the only armed force that Makarios could count on was a new paramilitary presidential guard that he established himself (Markides 1977:114–118, 162–163). According to Markides (1977:97–108), most traditional intellectuals, teachers, and returned graduates of Greek universities supported *enosis*, while it was opposed by most of the business community as well as by AKEL and other leftists. EOKA-B waged a propaganda and terror campaign for *enosis* and against Makarios—he survived assassination attempts in 1970 and 1973 (Crawshaw 1978:381, 387)—that was effective enough that it became dangerous not to espouse *enosis*. From 1970 onward Makarios felt compelled to deliver a number of pro-*enosis* speeches, for example: "Cyprus is a Greek island. It was Greek from the dawn of history and it shall remain Greek forever .... We shall preserve it as an undivided Greek island until we hand it over to mother Greece" (March 14, 1971, quoted in Patrick 1976:174–175; Attalides 1979:126–127; Borowiec 2000:77).

In November 1973, Colonel Dimitrios Ioannides, an extreme hawk on Cyprus, took over control of the Greek junta. By early 1974, the junta and EOKA-B had determined to overthrow Makarios (Stern 1975:39). The trigger was Makarios's attempt on July 2, 1974, to send home the Greek officers of the National Guard (Fallaci and Shipley 1976:317; Kyle 1984:14). Instead, on July 15 EOKA-B and the National Guard mounted a coup that installed Nicos Sampson, an extreme *enosist*, as President. This was followed by mass killings of Greek Cypriot moderates and leftists, giving the *enosists* a near-monopoly of force in the Greek community.

Popular support among Greek Cypriots for *enosist* action in 1974 is hard to judge. Makarios was reelected in 1968 with 96% of the vote against an *enosist* challenger, while the 1972 election was not contested (Markides 1977:50; Laipson 1993). The number of killings by the coup regime show that there was still important opposition to the *enosists*, although there were suggestions that opinion may have shifted between 1968 and 1974, including the makeup of EOKA-B, Makarios's felt need to make *enosist* speeches, a 1972 attempt by the three bishops of the Cypriot Greek Orthodox church to remove Makarios anyway (Markides 1977:111), and Grivas's funeral in January 1974, which became an *enosist* rally in front of a crowd that included about 20% of Greek Cypriots (Stern 1975:34–37).

What we can say is that by July 1974 the communities on Cyprus had built up histories that provided nearly everyone in both communities a tradition of commitment to incompatible entitlements; a long list of grievances against the other; provided no basis for confidence in restraint by the other community; encouraged many to feel free themselves to ignore commitments that they considered illegitimately imposed; and allowed no space for figures who could appeal to both communities for calm or forbearance.

Enemy images were globalized so far that in crises *all* members of the other community were considered legitimate targets. Loizos (1988:641) reports that Greek Cypriots asked to account for murders of women and children, whether informally or in court, often answered simply, "They were Turks." Sometimes the only acceptable justifications for *not* killing members of the other community were utilitarian. The main argument made against killing the 50 remaining, elderly, ethnic Turks before Greek Forces retreated from a certain village in August 1974 was "Do you suppose that the Turkish army will leave one stone on another, here, if we did that?" (Loizos 1988:645).

The second main reason why, absent partition, additional ethnic cleansing campaigns would likely have occurred was the intensity of security dilemmas in Cyprus during 1964–1974. The vulnerability of particular settlements as well as the potential threat that they could pose to a rival community is a function of their size, their position in relation to other settlements and road networks, physical geography, the overall balance of power between the sides, and other factors such as degree of internal discipline or the lack of it on each side (Kaufmann 2007b).

Assessing all of this is a qualitative task, but it is probably safe to say that the situation on Cyprus was among the worst of those for which we have good records of the geography and the history.

Before 1963, the ethnic Turkish minority had little means of self-defense but had the stronger external ally. The Greek community could not defend itself either if the Turkish military were to intervene (Clerides 1989:196–197).

The 1963–1964 fighting further intensified security dilemmas by establishing a *de facto* partition of Cyprus, but not one that either side could defend. The majority of Turkish Cypriots lived in blockaded enclaves, isolated from each other and all vulnerable to attack, some more than others; the Turkish enclaves were not chosen strategically but were simply the places whose defenses were successful (Patrick 1976:78). In some places there were local accommodations in spite of stricter directives from higher authorities. The boundaries of some enclaves remained ill-defined or contested all the way until 1974 (Patrick 1976:86–88). In theory the enclaves were under tight blockade but in practice weapons and small numbers of fighters were smuggled into many of them.

Given the contested borders of some of the Turkish enclaves from 1964 to 1974, it was relatively easy to provoke incidents that could escalate rapidly (see Figure 1). Grivas used an old dispute about police patrols in a certain village for this purpose in November 1967 (Kyle 1984:13). Further, in a society awash with guns, some of them held by criminals who hoped for opportunities to kill or to loot or by men from the mainlands with no great commitment to the towns that they were "defending," even a handful of individuals without political backing might have been able to start something uncontrollable (Loizos 1988:650–651). Cyprus may have been lucky not to have experienced more rounds of war than it did.

Security dilemma logic accounts for the special importance that both sides attached to the port of Kokkina on the Northwest coast in August 1964, which was the most important route for smuggling in supplies to the Turkish enclaves, with heavy implications for the defensive vulnerabilities of both communities. For this reason Grivas attacked Kokkina in the largest operation yet mounted by the Cypriot National Guard (Kyle 1984:11); Turkey's decision to intervene with air power was

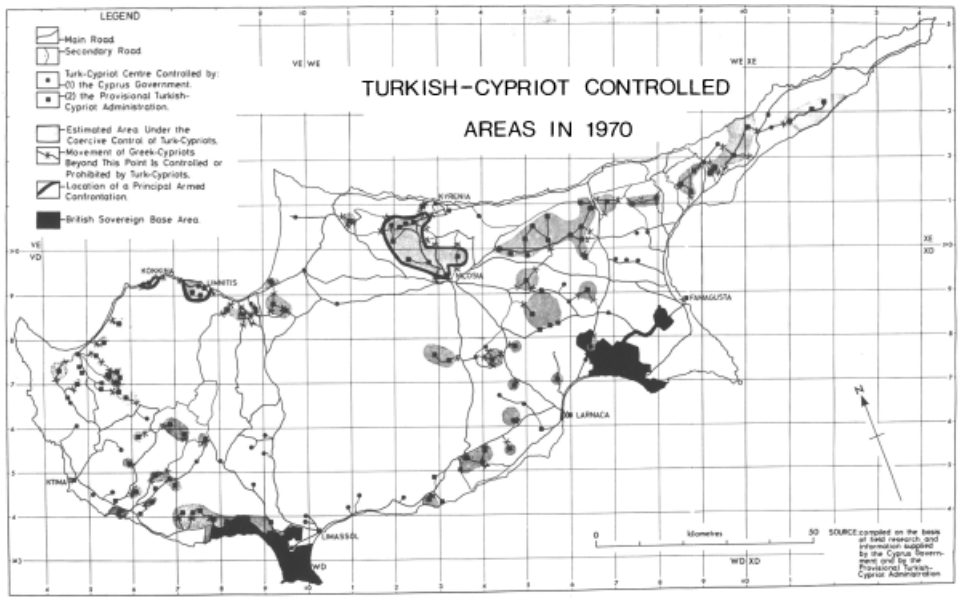

FIG. 1. *Turkish-controlled Enclaves, 1970 (Patrick 1976:81)*

likely based on the same logic. Similarly, when Turkey overran some of the Turkish enclaves in July 1974, the National Guard promptly attacked nearly all the others (Henn 2004:274–291, 311–321).

At the same time that Turkish Cypriots were afraid that they could not defend all the isolated enclaves—as 1974 showed they could not—Greek Cypriots perceived the armed Turkish enclaves as militarily strong enough to be useful to invading Turkish forces, and thus a security threat to themselves (Markides 1977:29–30). The events of summer 1974 validated this fear too (O'Malley and Craig 1999:191).

Besides the enclaves, perhaps as many as 50,000 Turkish Cypriots remained in government controlled areas. Their continued presence created an additional source of vulnerability for both sides. These minorities were both completely vulnerable if attacked, even by forces that the Cypriot government could not control—which were always present after 1963—and could become the justifications for a Turkish "rescue offensive."

In addition to real mutual vulnerabilities, many in both communities, especially the more extreme nationalists who had most of the weapons, both overestimated the military strength and offensive intentions of the other community and underestimated enemy military strength and defensive resolve—either at different times or even, incoherently, at the same time. One or both of these misperceptions apparently contributed to Turkish Cypriots' resistance to Greek constitutional demands in 1961–1963, as well as to Greek Cypriot continuation of the 1963–1964 war into its later stages, the November 1967 fighting, and the 1974 coup.

The air raids that stopped the war in 1964 did not prevent 1967 because Grivas and other nationalists were encouraged by the 10,000 Greek troops who had been smuggled onto Cyprus in the meantime (Hart 1990). While Turkey's threat to invade stopped the 1967 campaign, it did not prevent the 1974 coup because Sampson and EOKA-B were encouraged by the even more supportive turn of the Greek junta under Ioannides and also hoped that the United States would again hold off Turkey (O'Malley and Craig 1999:189). With hindsight it is difficult to see what, short of the Turkish Army overrunning two-fifths of Cyprus, could have convinced the *enosists* to give up trying.

The third reason is the expectations of likely victims of additional communal violence and the bases for those expectations. Immediately after the 1974 coup, the new regime broadcast a communiqué promising that "Cyprus will continue to be independent and will respect the rights of other states" (Van Gelder 1974), but given the known *enosist* views of Sampson, Ioannides, their supporters in EOKA-B and the National Guard, and of newspapers controlled by Sampson, no one could have taken this seriously.

Ordinary Turkish Cypriots expected imminent attack (Kennedy 1975:14). For instance, on the day after the coup alone 100 busloads of refugees came in to the Turkish sector of Nicosia from surrounding villages (UPI 1974); it is likely that many more moved on subsequent days and in other parts of the island. Ten thousand people took refuge on a British airbase (Hitchens 1989:106).

The records and reputations of Sampson and Ioannides were so extreme as to justify even apocalyptic fears. Sampson was well known as a prolific murderer of Turks in 1955–1959 and again in 1963–1964; he boasted of it publicly (Markides 1977:175; Hitchens 1989:55). While campaigning for a seat in the House of Representatives in 1970, Sampson advocated "cleansing the island of the stench of the Turks" (personal recollection, Loizos 1988:647). Oberling (1982:160) reports him using the even simpler slogan "Death to the Turks!" He was elected.

Ioannides was just as blood thirsty. According to Makarios, Sampson, and Ioannides, who was then a Greek officer serving in the Cypriot National Guard, came to see him together in 1964. Ioannides proposed: "Beatitude, here's the plan. To attack the Turkish Cypriots suddenly, everywhere on the island. To eliminate them one and all. Stop" (Fallaci and Shipley 1976:318).

There was no actual ethnic cleansing by the Sampson regime before the first Turkish invasion on July 20, which led to the fall from power of both Sampson and the Greek junta on July 22 and 23, respectively (Crawshaw 1978:390). Ethnic cleansing of Turkish Cypriots in Greek-held areas began on July 20.

Crawshaw (1978:389) regards it as uncertain whether the coup regime would have mounted a massive ethnic cleansing campaign if Turkey had not intervened. Hitchens, although generally hostile to Turkish and Turkish Cypriot behavior in the conflict, considers Turkish Cypriot fears in 1974 to have been reasonable (1989:40). Loizos (1981:76–77) argues that absent the initial Turkish invasion that undermined the Sampson and Iaonnides regimes the civil war among Greek Cypriots would likely have continued for months or longer. If that happened, one or more of the Greek sides would have found it politically useful to attack ethnic Turks or would have been unable to restrain some of its adherents from doing so.

What Was the Cost of Partition?

There were three main categories of actual and potential victims of both partition and alternatives to partition: Greek and Turkish Cypriots killed in intercommunal conflict; Turkish and Greek forces, and ethnic Greek civilians, killed in the two Turkish military offensives in 1974 (the initial landings on July 20–22 and the larger partition offensive of August 14–16); and members of both communities killed in intra-communal fighting over policy toward the other community who would not have died if not for the communal conflict.

The two Turkish military offensives in July–August 1974 caused the deaths of as many as 6,000 people: roughly 2,000 Turkish troops and 4,000 Greek soldiers and Greek Cypriots. This is a very heavy toll for an island with a population of about 631,000. Turkish troops also committed rapes and killed women and children. About 250,000 people were made refugees by partition, about 80% of these ethnic Greeks (all estimates of population, killings, kidnappings, arrests, and "disappearances," and refugees are from Kaufmann 2007c).

The partition caused essentially no longer-term threats to human life. Only 14 people have died in communal conflict in Cyprus since 1974, most of whom were Greek Cypriots who entered the UN buffer zone or the Turkish sector as part of protests against the partition; there have been no deaths since 1996. Since the partition neither side has shown any sign of attempting to alter the situation by force, so neither community has been under threat of further ethnic cleansing. Life-threatening extreme poverty was not a factor in Cyprus either before or after 1974.

Other, non-life-threatening costs of partition include further poisoning of Greek–Turkish relations (given the trend toward increasing Turkish military superiority it would be hard to make the case that risk of war was higher after 1974 than before). Also, creation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) complicated Turkey's hopes of EU accession, although it is not clear how important this has been compared with other barriers such as human rights, concerns about absorbing a large low-income economy, and possibly prejudice.

What Would Have Been the Cost of Not Partitioning Cyprus?

Communal conflict deaths suffered before the August 1974 partition cannot directly predict the consequences of not partitioning Cyprus, but they are informative about the likelihood and possible scale of further rounds of civil war or ethnic cleansing absent partition.

There were five major rounds of communal violence before the Turkish partition offensive of August 14–16, 1974: the nationalist rebellion of 1955–1959; the 1963–1964 civil war; the abortive ethnic cleansing campaign in November 1967; the July 15, 1974, coup; and ethnic cleansing in non-Turkish held areas between July 20 and

August 15, 1974. The last two are worth separating because the identities of the victims were almost completely disjoint.

Deaths in the Cyprus communal conflict before August 14, 1974, were probably about 3,000, or about half the toll of partition itself. These included:

- Between 500 and 600 in the 1955–1959 rebellion (both communities and British troops).
- A handful between 1960 and December 1963.
- Between 600 and 1,000 in the 1963–1964 civil war (both communities).
- About 70 in low-level violence between August 1964 and November 1967
- 23 in November 1967.
- An uncertain number, perhaps several tens, between November 1967 and July 1974.
- More than 500 between July 15 and 19, 1974 (all or nearly ethnic Greeks). As noted above, Loizos (1981) argues that absent the Turkish invasion the civil war among Greek Cypriots would have continued and would have cost many more lives.
- About 1,000 Turkish Cypriot victims of ethnic cleansing in non-Turkish held areas between July 20 and August 15, 1974. These attacks began the day of the initial Turkish invasion, but quickly petered out once the second, larger offensive got under way. They may have been motivated by some combination of revenge, felt need to eliminate unfriendly pockets that could have assisted further Turkish military advances, and hope of deterring further Turkish advances by demonstrating Greek Cypriot power to retaliate. In September and October 1974 the Cypriot government released more than 3,000 Turkish Cypriot prisoners (Oberling 1982:187); we cannot know whether, absent the second Turkish offensive that made tens of thousands of Greek Cypriots hostages in Turkish controlled territory, some of these prisoners might have been killed.

This ethnic cleansing campaign may also, however, have been just the expectable next development after the coup regime destroyed its ethnic Greek enemies. Even after Sampson and the Athens junta had fallen, EOKA-B and the National Guard remained the only important armed forces in the Greek Cypriot community. This outcome may have been overdetermined. The important implications are that in the poisoned communal environment of Cyprus in 1974 many types of stimuli were capable of starting new rounds of ethnic cleansing, and that a limited Turkish invasion could not deter or prevent ethnic cleansing. Only partition and population exchange was sufficient to stop ethnic cleansing entirely.

Prepartition violence included murders of children, massacres, torture of some victims, and use of napalm by the Turkish air force in 1964. There were about 68,000 refugees that we can count: about 6,000 during the independence struggle, 25,000 in 1963–1964, and 37,000 Turkish Cypriot refugees from ethnic cleansing in Southern Cyprus in July–August 1974.

Even though the counterfactuals posed by the partition of Cyprus involve relatively short time spans and a manageable number of actors whose preferences and perceptions are fairly well known, two factors—the multiplicity of scenarios that must be considered and the very uncertain casualty data—prevent us from stating with high confidence whether or not the August 1974 partition saved lives.

We can, however, confidently predict that there would have been more rounds of communal conflict and ethnic cleansing. If these had been similar in scale to previous outbreaks, the overall toll over the medium term would have been less than that of partition. By 1974, however, the *enosist* leadership and at least some of its supporters had become more extreme than ever, and after eliminating most of their key opponents in the July coup they were more powerful than ever. There is

reason to believe that if they had been allowed to continue what they were doing during July–August 1974 they might well have killed on a scale unprecedented in Cypriot history, or if blocked by some means short of partition, would have done so at a later opportunity. We should consider significant the fact that the initial Turkish invasion on July 20, 1974, sparked immediate large-scale ethnic cleansing of Turkish Cypriots even though the killers should have realized that their actions ran a risk of increasing the likelihood of larger scale Turkish military, as actually happened three weeks into this ethnic cleansing campaign. Turkish documents suggest that there were prior plans for a partition offensive, but it is not clear even now whether these would have been carried out regardless of Greek behavior after July 20 (Birand 1985). Greek Cypriot nationalists could not have known at the time whether or not they were provoking additional Turkish escalation.

Finally, we should ask whether the counterfactual of *not* partitioning Cyprus in August 1974 is plausible given what we know of the actors' goals, capabilities, and beliefs. If partition was certain—if the alternative of *not* partitioning Cyprus was not available—then the question of whether partition saved lives *in Cyprus* loses much of its meaning. The Cyprus case might still, however, help us draw lessons about general conditions under which communal partitions might save lives (Fearon 1996:41, 55, 61–64; Tetlock and Belkin 1996:23–25).

Probably, however, this counterfactual should be judged realistic. The two most obvious ways that Turkish intervention to reverse the July 1974 Cypriot coup might have been avoided are Turkish self-restraint and deterrence by the United States. Whether Turkey could have restrained itself involves questions of internal Turkish politics too complex to resolve here (see Birand 1985:1–6; Hale 1994).

Deterrence by the U.S. was certainly possible. Elements of the Sixth Fleet, including the aircraft carrier *Forrestal*, were available and would have been sufficient. The fleet was not used, for either or both of two reasons: Secretary of State Henry Kissinger thought Turkey more valuable to NATO than Greece; and blocking Turkish action could have led to Turkey's temporary or permanent departure from the alliance (after 1974 Greece did withdraw its forces from NATO command for several years). In addition, the U.S. government was distracted in late July 1974; the collapse of Richard Nixon's presidency was consuming all of Nixon's time and some of Kissinger's (Woodward and Bernstein 1976). Different domestic circumstances or a Secretary of State who held different judgments could have reversed the U.S. choice. As discussed, the United States handled Turkish invasion threats in 1964 and in 1967 quite differently. There was also a division of opinion in 1974 between the administration and Congress; after partition the U.S. imposed an arms embargo on Turkey that lasted until 1978 (Kennedy 1975:30; Borowiec 2000:111).

Could Peace Have Been Maintained Without Partition?

Critics of the partition of Cyprus make at least five distinct arguments against it. Some of these arguments contradict each other, but that is irrelevant to the validity of any one of them.

The first is that Greek–Turkish relationships on Cyprus were basically amicable for four centuries before independence, and even afterwards (Attalides 1979:81ff.). The ghettoization of Turkish Cypriots from 1963 onward was artificial, planned in advance and compelled by the Turkish Cypriot authorities (Attalides 1979:91–92; Clerides 1989:225–227; Borowiec 2000:68). Patrick (1976:78–79), however, found that refugees usually moved only after murders, kidnappings, or harassment by Greek Cypriots in or near their town. After January 1964 Turkish Cypriot leaders recommended evacuations of some vulnerable places but were not always obeyed. There were instances in late 1964 where Turkish Cypriot security forces prevented refugees from returning to return to Greek-held areas, but this had little practical impact because most of the abandoned homes had been damaged or destroyed.

During the reign of terror just after the July 1974 coup, some Greek Cypriots targeted by the nationalists were hidden by Turkish Cypriots (Markides 1977:153). Hitchens (1989:104) reports that Turkish Cypriots hid Greek neighbors during the August 1974 Turkish offensive. Even if, however, there were untapped wells of communal tolerance among both Greek and Turkish Cypriot masses, the fact that we have no stories to tell about nearly or partially successful attempts—or even well publicized but totally failed attempts—to mobilize such constituencies tells us that they cannot have been strong enough to alter the outcomes that actually happened.

A second is that the deterioration of communal relations between 1878 and 1960 was due to British educational and political control policies. There is some merit to this for the period up to the end of World War II; after that point Britain was less concerned with dividing ethnic Greeks from ethnic Turks than with favoring Greek anti-nationalists (mainly the communists) over nationalists (Attalides 1979:5, 9). In any case, by 1960 damage from this source could not be undone.

A third is that the 1960 constitution was negotiated by Britain, Greece, and Turkey, giving authentic Cypriot factions only a rubber-stamping role. The result was unfair to the Greek community and unworkable (Markides 1977:26; Polyviou 1980:21–24; Hitchens 1989:48). Actually, Jarstad (2001:140–141) shows that leaders of both Cypriot communities did influence the mainland governments' positions; the Greek Cypriot delegation included EOKA leaders (Crawshaw 1978:344). More important, the main alternative—a majoritarian constitution—in effect, an *enosist* one—would not have reduced communal conflict. Turkish Cypriots saw no moral superiority for *enosis* over *taksim* and would have appealed to Turkey to help block expansion of Greek Cypriots' rights at their expense.

A fourth is that, as both Sampson and the junta in Athens were out of power by July 23, 1974, there was no need for Turkey to attack a second time in August or to partition the island (Hitchens 1989:102). As discussed earlier, by August ethnic cleansing of Turkish Cypriots was occuring in the Greek-held parts of the island. An extension of this argument is the claim (Markides 1977:155; Fouskas 2001:99, 109ff) that Turkey had long sought an opportunity to partition Cyprus or even to conquer it entirely. Birand (1985:3) does not go this far, but reports that in July 1974 Turkish decision makers were motivated by two fears: large-scale ethnic cleansing by the Sampson regime, and the possibility that Cyprus could become a Greek military base. Long-run Turkish strategic aims may have been important, but cannot have been decisive because Turkey did not threaten or use force at its own convenience—only when Greek Cypriot actions provided opportunities in 1964, 1967, and 1974. Additionally, whether the August partition offensive was motivated by more than purely defensive goals is not relevant to assessing whether on balance it increased or decreased loss of human life.

Finally, some argue that the United States engineered the partition of Cyprus by encouraging the Greek junta and Sampson to think that they could get away with the coup and with *enosis* while actually intending to permit a Turkish invasion. The argument is that the U.S. sought, from 1964 if not earlier, to destroy Cypriot independence because under Makarios Cyprus was neutralist toward the Cold War (Markides 1977:121–130, 148–151; Attalides 1979:150ff.; Hitchens 1989:57ff.; O'Malley and Craig 1999).

U.S. officials did distrust Makarios (Ball 1982:340, 357; Hart 1990:77), and in July–August 1964 briefly supported a "partition-lite" plan devised by special envoy Dean Acheson that would have awarded Cyprus to Greece while allowing Turkey to station troops to protect two enclaves in the North (NSC memos reproduced in Ball 1982:355–357; Hart 1990:182–187). The U.S. was also friendly toward the Greek military coup of 1967. If we accept this explanation, however, the rest of U.S. behavior toward Cyprus, however, would have to be considered incoherent. The "Acheson Plan" was not revived. In 1964, Turkish invasion was blocked by a stiff U.S. warning; U.S. mediation in 1967 had the effect of keeping both Greek and

Turkish troops off Cyprus. The U.S. provided Makarios with accurate warning of the 1970 assassination attempt (O'Malley and Craig 1999:133). The U.S. also consistently made clear to Greece that it considered Turkey a more valuable ally, and in June 1974 warned the Greek junta against a coup in Cyprus, although bureaucratic infighting and delay largely undermined the message (Stern 1975:49–53). In August the U.S. sought to keep Turkish–Cypriot negotiations alive, although the effort was tepid compared with the Johnson letter (Stern 1975:62–64, 67, 73; Loizos 1976:22–23). The net effect of all this was to ensure, as far as the U.S. could decide the outcome, that Cyprus would survive, under the same neutralist regime that the U.S. was supposedly seeking all along to eliminate.

Could Cyprus Have Been Saved in Some Other Way?

Are there other counterfactuals that should be considered for their potential value in assessing the general usefulness of certain possible solutions to communal conflict, even if their plausibility for the specific case of Cyprus in uncertain?

There are at least six: first, could stronger U.S. warnings to the Athens junta have prevented the coup, obviating Turkish intervention? Almost certainly, if all had gone right. One drag on prompt, forceful action was that warnings of possible coups in Cyprus had been popping up frequently for years. One joke circulating in the State Department in early 1974 was that Makarios had survived 300 out of two assassination attempts. When in Spring 1974 the warnings became more insistent, Kissinger did not take a personal interest until June 20 (see Betts 1982 on overload of warning systems). Even then, wrangling among U.S. officials in Athens cost further delay (Stern 1975:41, 45–53). After the coup, the U.S. did not immediately denounce Sampson, an action which some argue could have prevented Turkish intervention; Kissinger's defense was that he was afraid that this might *encourage* Turkey to invade (Stern 1975:59, 77–78; O'Malley and Craig 1999:158). Even if the 1974 partition could have been avoided, however, Cyprus would have remained in danger of future convulsions.

We should also ask: what if Cyprus had been partitioned earlier, in 1964 or 1967? It is not clear how much of a rewrite it would take get the U.S. to stand aside in 1964. The general question of how early or late in a communal conflict one should consider partition is important, however. The short answer for Cyprus is that while partition in 1964 would have blocked three rounds of conflict that cost more than 2,000 lives, it might not have been possible to maintain partition as stably or as long. Since an earlier partition would have been preceded by fewer provocations, it might have commanded even less international legitimacy, commanded less firm support within Turkey, and might not have been accepted by Greek Cypriots as irreversible.

Conversely, if Cyprus had been partitioned later—after the events in Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor that strengthened international tolerance for communal partitions—it would likely have commanded more legitimacy, while pressures for reversal would have been dampened. The general point is that the prospective stability of a partition is as important as the emergency it is supposed to solve. Even if Cyprus is not one of them, there could be many cases in which a partition that could stop communal killing momentarily might not be able to restrain violence indefinitely.

A later partition could not, however, have saved additional lives since the actual 1974 partition stopped intercommunal violence in Cyprus entirely. Postponing partition would, however, have meant accepting risks of additional deaths in the civil war among Greek Cypriots or in a large-scale ethnic cleansing campaign mounted by Greek nationalists either in 1974 or later. Rather, since the impetus for a later partition would have been additional communal violence that in fact was prevented by the historical partition, we can say that a later partition would have cost more lives. This counterfactual is meaningful for evaluation of the Cyprus case,

and there may be other partition cases where waiting longer would have been worse. This standard should not, however, be used to assess the general efficacy of communal partitions because it would unfairly tilt the playing field. The generalization that "partitions save lives because they are bound to happen anyway" should be ruled out of court.

Fourth, we could consider a differently designed power sharing agreement. In 1959 Britain, Greece, and Turkey were—within limits—in a position to impose a settlement on Cyprus. But tweaking the details would not have helped; *every* element of power sharing in the constitution failed, because nearly all Greek Cypriots did not accept the legitimacy of power sharing at all. Other cases in which the majority community totally rejects the legitimacy of power sharing, or rejects the practical effects of its operation, are common.

Fifth, what about loose regional autonomy along the lines of the ongoing negotiations today? This would have required a population exchange as large or nearly as large as the one that actually happened in 1974–1975. Greek Cypriot elites of almost all stripes would have been hotly opposed, so implementing autonomy would have required intervention by Turkey or even stronger powers. There may be cases where no form of autonomy can be implemented without an outside military guarantee to the weaker side—although that does not eliminate the possibility that imposed autonomy might operate successfully, eventually allowing downscaling of the military guarantee or even some moves toward political integration.

Finally, what about unfettered majoritarianism, allowing Greek Cypriots complete dominance of the politics of the island? This could have been implemented in 1959 instead of power sharing, or in 1963 when power sharing collapsed. This would have required Britain and the United States to prohibit Turkish interference not only at the start but over time. Majoritarianism would have eliminated most motives for Greek Cypriots to attack Turks. One could hope that over time the attractiveness of *enosis* might have declined along with the feasibility of *taksim*, eventually allowing integration of ethnic Turks into Cypriot politics and even perhaps into a multi-ethnic Cypriot identity. Majoritarian solutions, either without discrimination against the minority, or with discrimination that is not life-threatening, are common all over the world, and usually stable when it is obvious that minority is far too weak to challenge for power (for a dissenting view, see Stroschein 2003). Cyprus's misfortune was the ties of both communities to outside powers much more powerful than Cyprus itself.

Assessment

Because of the number of scenarios that must be considered and, especially, the very uncertain casualty data, we cannot ultimately say that the August 1974 partition saved lives. We can, however, confidently say that there would have been more rounds of communal conflict and ethnic cleansing. There is also reason to believe that there was considerable risk that either the 1974 crisis itself or a later one would have resulted in ethnic cleansing on a scale much greater than the cost of partition.

The long-term aftermath of the partition must be considered a success from the point of view of human safety. From 1955 to August 14, 1974, Cypriot politics were in constant disequilibrium; forces with desires to overturn the existing order found five separate opportunities to do so. Partition, guaranteed by the stronger side, created a stable equilibrium. Despite the lack of reconciliation, all sides understand that the Turkish military garrison in the North could defeat any possible irredentist offensive, and no side has shown evidence of plans to try to disrupt the situation by force. As a result, there have been only 14 deaths in nearly 33 years. If any Cypriot

had been told, at any time between 1959 and 1974, that Cyprus could enjoy such a degree of peace for so long they would have considered it unbelievable.

Can the Partition of Cyprus Be Reversed?

With the benefit of more than thirty years of peace, and subject to certain caveats, possibly yes. Although there are no stories from before 1974 that recount significant efforts to bridge the communal divide, we do have such stories to tell about the 1990s and beyond. Negotiations over reunion of the Republic of Cyprus with the TRNC, albeit as a much looser federation than the 1960 republic, made considerable progress from 1996 onward. By 2002 the sides' proposals were not far apart, and in 2004 both governments agreed on the "Annan Plan" which was submitted to plebiscites in both communities. It passed in Northern Cyprus with a 65% majority, but Cypriot President Papadopoulos—after signing it—campaigned against it, appealing to Greek nationalist emotions, and it was defeated in the South by 76% (Hannay 2005:245). The prospects for eventual reunion of Cyprus, however, still appear fairly bright. Cyprus's accession to the EC in April 2003 gives TRNC leaders, at least, an incentive to continue to seek agreement. Also in 2003, the TRNC lifted restrictions on travel between the two sectors, though not on resettlement. Since then tens of thousands of Cypriots have taken advantage of this privilege with little friction (Hannay 2005:225–226). Some of these people may have begun to develop appreciations of what Cypriots of both communities have in common.

If agreement is reached, there is little reason to fear recreating the security dilemmas that undermined the first Cyprus Republic, as all the proposals on the table include loose autonomy, limiting freedom of settlement to preserve existing ethnic majorities in each zone, and military guarantees for both communities. Probably the greatest danger facing a reunited Cyprus would be if overconfidence in communal amity led to premature relaxation of limits on resettlement, especially of Greek Cypriots returning to the North. This could recreate many of the same political and physical security fears that concerned Turkish Cypriots before 1974, while their reaction and Turkey's could reactivate old Greek Cypriot fears.

Neither before independence nor between 1959 and 1974 was there ever a realistic chance for Greek and Turkish Cypriots to begin to build a shared national identity, but the prospect no longer seems hopeless. It may be that some decades of peace, enforced the only way it could have been—by a large army—was necessary in order to create this chance.

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