

General Service Medal with 'Cyprus' Clasp 1st April 1955 – 18th April 1959 amended in 2014 to 24th December 1959

Qualifying Period – Army Four months (120 days) service with a unit stationed in Cyprus, need not be continuous. Amended in 2014 to 90 days.

Cyprus Uprising

History

The Cyprus dispute is an ongoing conflict on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus between the population of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, as well as between their respective states, the (internationally recognised) Greek Cypriot-controlled Republic of Cyprus and the (recognised only by Turkey) Turkish Cypriot-controlled Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

Initially, with the annexation of the island by the British Empire from the Ottoman Empire, the "Cyprus dispute" was identified as the conflict between the people of Cyprus and the British Crown regarding the Cypriots' demand for self determination. The dispute, however, was finally shifted from a colonial dispute to an ethnic dispute between the Turkish and the Greek islanders. The international complications of the dispute stretch far beyond the boundaries of the island of Cyprus itself and involve the guarantor powers (Turkey, Greece, and the United Kingdom alike), along with the United States, the United Nations and the European Union.

With the 1974 Cypriot coup d'état's installment of a pro-Enosis (the union of Cyprus and Greece) president and the responding Turkish invasion that same year, Turkey occupied the northern part of the internationally recognised Republic of Cyprus, and later upon those territories the Turkish Cypriot community unilaterally declared independence forming the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), a sovereign entity that lacks international recognition with the exception of Turkey with which TRNC enjoys full diplomatic relations.

As a result of the two communities and the guarantor countries committing themselves to finding a peaceful solution to the dispute, the United Nations maintain a buffer zone (the "Green Line") to avoid any further intercommunal tensions and hostilities. This zone separates the Greek Cypriot-controlled south from the Turkish Cypriot-controlled north. Recent years have seen warming of relations between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, with officially renewed reunification talks beginning in early 2014.

Historical Background Prior to 1960

The island of Cyprus was first inhabited in 9000 BC with the arrival of farming societies who built round houses with floors of terazzo. Cities were first built during the Bronze Age and the inhabitants had their own Eteocypriot language until around the 4th century BC. The island was part of the Hittite Empire as part of the Ugarit Kingdom during the late Bronze Age until the arrival of two waves of Greek settlement.

Cyprus experienced an uninterrupted Greek presence on the island dating from the arrival of Mycenaeans around 1100 BC, when the burials began to take the form of long *dromos*. The Greek population of Cyprus survived through multiple conquerors, including Egyptian and Persian rule. In the 4th century BC, Cyprus was conquered by Alexander the Great and then ruled by the Ptolemaic Egypt until 58 BC, when it was incorporated into the Roman Empire. After an interval of Islam Khalifate (643–966), the island returned to Roman rule until the 12th century. After an occupation by the Knights Templar and the rule of Isaac Komnenos, the island in 1192 came under the rule of the Lusignan family, who established the Kingdom of Cyprus. In February 1489 it was seized by the Republic of Venice. Between September 1570 and August 1571 it was conquered by the Ottoman Empire, starting three centuries of Turkish rule over Cyprus.

Starting in the early nineteenth century, ethnic Greeks of the island sought to bring about an end to almost 300 years of Ottoman rule and unite Cyprus with Greece. The United Kingdom took administrative control of the island in 1878, to prevent Ottoman positions from falling under Russian control following the Cyprus Convention, which led to the call for union (*enosis*) to grow louder. Under the terms of the agreement reached between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, the island remained an Ottoman territory.

The Christian Greek-speaking inhabitants of the island welcomed the arrival of the British as a chance to voice their demands for union with Greece.

When the Ottoman Empire entered World War I on the side of the Central Powers, Britain renounced the agreement and all Turkish claims over Cyprus and declared the island a British colony. In 1915, Britain offered Cyprus to Constantine I of Greece on condition that Greece join the war on the side of the British, which he declined.

1918 to 1955

Under British rule in the early 20th century, Cyprus escaped the conflicts and atrocities that went on elsewhere between Greeks and Turks; notably the Greek Genocide, during the Greco-Turkish War, and the 1923 population exchange between Greece and Turkey. Turkish Cypriots consistently opposed the idea of union with Greece.

In 1925 Britain declared Cyprus to be a Crown Colony. In the years that followed, the determination for *enosis* continued. In 1931 this led to open revolution. A riot resulted in the death of six civilians, injuries to others and the burning of the British Government House in Nicosia. In the months that followed, about 2,000 people were convicted of crimes in connection with the struggle for union with Greece. Britain reacted by imposing harsh restrictions. Military reinforcements were dispatched to the island and the constitution suspended. A special "epicourical" (reserve) police force was formed consisting of only Turkish Cypriots, press restrictions instituted and political parties banned. Two bishops and eight other prominent citizens directly implicated in the conflict were exiled. Municipal elections were suspended, and until 1943 all municipal officials were appointed by the government. The governor was to be assisted by an Executive Council, and two years later an Advisory Council was established; both councils consisted only of appointees and were restricted to advising on domestic matters only. In addition, the flying of Greek or Turkish flags or the public display of portraits of Greek or Turkish heroes was forbidden.

The struggle for *enosis* was put on hold during World War II. In 1946, the British government announced plans to invite Cypriots to form a Consultative Assembly to discuss a new constitution. The British also allowed the return of the 1931 exiles. Instead of reacting positively, as expected by the British, the Greek Cypriot military hierarchy reacted angrily because there had been no mention of *enosis*. The Cypriot Orthodox Church had expressed its disapproval, and Greek Cypriots declined the British invitation, stating that *enosis* was their sole political aim. The efforts by Greeks to bring about *enosis* now intensified, helped by active support of the Church of Cyprus, which was the main political voice of the Greek Cypriots at the time. However, it was not the only organisation claiming to speak for the Greek Cypriots. The Church's main opposition came from the Cypriot Communist Party (officially the Progressive Party of the Working People; *Ανορθωτικό Κόμμα Εργαζόμενου Λαού*; or AKEL), which also wholeheartedly supported the Greek national goal of *enosis*. However the British military forces and Colonial administration in Cyprus did not see the pro-Soviet communist party as a viable partner.

By 1954 a number of Turkish mainland institutions were active in the Cyprus issue such as the National Federation of Students, the Committee for the Defence of Turkish rights in Cyprus, the Welfare Organisation of Refugees from Thrace and the Cyprus Turkish Association. Above all, the Turkish trade unions were to prepare the right climate for the main Turkish goal, the division of the island (*taksim*) into Greek and Turkish parts, thus keeping the British military presence and

installations on the island intact. By this time a special Turkish Cypriot paramilitary organisation Turkish Resistance Organisation (TMT) was also established which was to act as a counterbalance to the Greek Cypriot *enosis* fighting organisation of EOKA.

In 1950, Michael Mouskos, Bishop Makarios of Kition (Larnaca), was elevated to Archbishop Makarios III of Cyprus. In his inaugural speech, he vowed not to rest until union with "mother Greece" had been achieved. In Athens, *enosis* was a common topic of conversation, and a Cypriot native, Colonel George Grivas, was becoming known for his strong views on the subject. In anticipation of an armed struggle to achieve *enosis*, Grivas visited Cyprus in July 1951. He discussed his ideas with Makarios but was disappointed by the archbishop's contrasting opinion as he proposed a political struggle rather than an armed revolution against the British. From the beginning, and throughout their relationship, Grivas resented having to share leadership with the archbishop. Makarios, concerned about Grivas's extremism from their very first meeting, preferred to continue diplomatic efforts, particularly efforts to get the United Nations involved. The feelings of uneasiness that arose between them never dissipated. In the end, the two became enemies. In the meantime, in August [Papagos Government] 1954, Greece's UN representative formally requested that self-determination for the people of Cyprus be included on the agenda of the General Assembly's next session. Turkey rejected the idea of the union of Cyprus and Greece. Turkish Cypriot community opposed Greek Cypriot *enosis* movement, as under British rule the Turkish Cypriot minority status and identity were protected. Turkish Cypriot identification with Turkey had grown stronger in response to overt Greek nationalism of Greek Cypriots, and after 1954 the Turkish government had become increasingly involved. In the late summer and early autumn of 1954, the Cyprus problem intensified. On Cyprus the colonial government threatened publishers of seditious literature with up to two years imprisonment. In December the UN General Assembly announced the decision "not to consider the problem further for the time being, because it does not appear appropriate to adopt a resolution on the question of Cyprus." Reaction to the setback at the UN was immediate and violent, resulting in the worst rioting in Cyprus since 1931.

EOKA campaign and Creation of TMT, 1955–59

In January 1955, Grivas founded the National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (*Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston* – EOKA). On 1 April 1955, EOKA opened an armed campaign against British rule in a well-coordinated series of attacks on police, military, and other government installations in Nicosia, Famagusta, Larnaca, and Limassol. This resulted in the deaths of 387 British servicemen and personnel^[19] and some Greek Cypriots suspected of collaboration; in 2009, a memorial for the British soldiers killed by Greek Cypriot EOKA during 1955–1959 Cyprus Emergency was erected in Kyrenia, Northern Cyprus. As a result of this a number of Greek Cypriots began to leave the police. This however did not affect the Colonial police force as they had already created the solely Turkish Cypriot (Epicourical) reserve force to fight EOKA paramilitaries. At the same time, it led to tensions between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. In 1957 the Turkish Resistance Organisation (*Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı* TMT), which had already been formed to protect the Turkish Cypriots from EOKA took action. In response to the growing demand for *enosis*, a number of Turkish Cypriots became convinced that the only way to protect their interests and identity of the Turkish Cypriot population in the event of *enosis* would be to divide the island – a policy known as *taksim* ("partition" in Turkish borrowed from (تقسيم) "Taqsīm" in Arabic) – into a Greek sector in the south and a Turkish sector in the north only.

By now the island was on the verge of civil war. Several attempts to present a compromise settlement had failed. Therefore, beginning in December 1958, representatives of Greece and Turkey, the so-called "mother lands" opened discussions of the Cyprus issue. Participants for the first time discussed the concept of an independent Cyprus, i.e., neither *enosis* nor *taksim*. Subsequent talks always headed by the British yielded a so-called compromise agreement supporting independence, laying the foundations of the Republic of Cyprus. The scene then naturally shifted to London, where the Greek and Turkish representatives were joined by representatives of the Greek Cypriots, the Turkish Cypriots (represented by Arch. Makarios and Dr Fazil Kucuk with no significant

decision making power), and the British. The Zurich-London agreements that became the basis for the Cyprus constitution of 1960 were supplemented with three treaties – the Treaty of Establishment, the Treaty of Guarantee, and the Treaty of Alliance. The general tone of the agreements was one of keeping the British sovereign bases and military and monitoring facilities intact. Some Greek Cypriots, especially members of organisations such as EOKA, expressed disappointment because *enosis* had not been attained. In a similar way some Turkish Cypriots especially members of organisations such as TMT expressed their disappointment as they had to postpone their target for *taksim*, however most Cypriots that were not influenced by the three so called guarantor powers (Greece, Turkey, and Britain), welcomed the agreements and set aside their demand for *enosis* and *taksim*. According to the Treaty of Establishment, Britain retained sovereignty over 256 square kilometres, which became the Dhekelia Sovereign Base Area, to the northeast of Larnaca, and the Akrotiri Sovereign Base Area to the southwest of Limassol.

Cyprus achieved independence on 16 August 1960.