

Observation no: 159

Country-year: 1973

1. Did the current regime come to power in a military coup?

No.

President Makarios, the ruler of Cyprus in 1973, came to power in a presidential election.

2. Has the country ever experienced a military coup?

No.

Prior to 1973, modern Cyprus operated primarily as a British protectorate. After achieving independence in 1960, the island experience no coups (though there were a series of assassination attempts) until 1974 in which Makarios was replaced in a coup partly orchestrated by the Greek junta.¹

3. Is the country's top leader a former military officer?

No.

President Makarios, a member of the Greek Orthodox clergy, did not have military experience.

4. Is the military officer corps largely closed to those who do not share the leader's ethnic or sectarian background?

Yes.

Though the original constitution dictated a 60:40 split of Greeks and Turks in the military, Makarios advocated for a constitutional amendment for a 90:10 split. In practicality, the officer corps of the Cypriot National Guard was largely restricted to Greek Cypriots.

5. Are there strict ideological requirements for entry into the senior officer corps?

No.

¹ Jan Asmussen, *Cyprus at War: Diplomacy and Conflict During the 1974 Crisis*, (London: IB Tauris, 2008), pg. 17.

I could find no direct evidence of ideological requirements; however, since most of the senior officer corps were Greek army officers, it seems that any significant training of military officers was conducted in Greece where they may have been some political or ideological training. However, I was unable to find any training that was specific to the Cyprus forces or the Greeks in Cyprus.

6. Is party membership required for entry into the senior officer corps?

No.

I could find no evidence of party membership requirements, though senior officers are generally closely linked or from the Greek Army.²

7. Does military training involve extensive political education or ideological indoctrination?

No.

I could find no evidence of extensive political education or ideological indoctrination, though the vast majority of significant training seems to have occurred within Greece and among the Greek military officers—not specific to Cyprus.

8. Has the military been used to repress internal dissent in the last five years?

Yes.

Though I could find no direct evidence of the Cypriot National Guard conducting armed attacks to quell internal dissent after 1967 (in which a general in the Cypriot National Guard led his forces against a Turkish enclave on the island of Cyprus),³ I did find anecdotal evidence suggesting that the Cypriot National Guard often patrolled in Turkish areas and was involved in a series of small infractions with Turks in Cyprus.⁴

9. Has the military been used to govern the country in the last five years?

No.

² "Republic of Cyprus-National Guard Organization," *Global Security*, available at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/cy-army-org.htm> (accessed on 4 May 2015).

³ David Souter, "An island apart: A review of the Cyprus problem." *Third World Quarterly* 6, no. 3 (1984): 657-674.

⁴ Nancy Crawshaw, "Subversion in Cyprus." *The World Today* (1971): 25-32.

Cyprus from 1968-1973 was governed by the civilian-led regime of President Makarios.⁵

10. Is there a paramilitary organization separate from the regular military, used to provide regime or leader security?

Yes.

Makarios had a Tactical Reserve Police, loyal to him, dedicated to defending the regime from domestic threats.⁶

11. Is there an internal intelligence apparatus dedicated to watching the regular military?

Yes.

A portion of the Tactical Reserve Police was dedicated to intelligence collection on all threats, including threats from the regular military, to the Makarios regime.⁷

12. Has a purge of the officer corps occurred in the last five years?

No.

However, Makarios did attempt to purge the Greek national officers from the Cypriot National Guard in early 1974—an action which ultimately precipitated the 1974 coup.⁸

13. Is there an institutionalized forum through which civilian leaders and military officers regularly exchange information?

No.

I could find no evidence of an institutionalized forum.

⁵ Stavros Panteli, *A New History of Cyprus: From the earliest times to the present day*, (London: East-West Publications, 1984).

⁶ Panagiotis Dimitrakis, *Military Intelligence in Cyprus: From the Great War to Middle East Crises*, (London: IB Tauris, 2010).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Asmussen, *Cyprus at War: Diplomacy and Conflict During the 1974 Crisis*.