

**A LONG YEAR'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT:
THE CYPRUS REPUBLIC'S PURSUIT OF A 'EUROPEAN' SOLUTION
TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM**

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Section 1

The Republic of Cyprus joined the European Union as full member on May 1, 2004, amid general jubilation among its Greek Cypriot population, as this event confirmed the place of the Republic in the European family of nations and opened up the prospect of increased political influence and enhanced diplomatic clout for the Republic's all-Greek Cypriot government and leading politicians. Many Greek Cypriots believed and hoped that at long last the Republic, in its new role as European power – albeit, a power of minuscule proportions – would be able to secure for itself a better solution to the Cyprus problem than it had been possible any time before.

Greek Cypriots have been unable to accept or put behind them the trauma of the conflict of July-August 1974, when Turkey exploited the military *coup* conducted by Greek Army officers in Cyprus against the President of the Republic Archbishop Makarios and, invoking its rights under a Treaty of Guarantee which had formed part of the independence settlement of 1960, invaded Cyprus ostensibly to re-establish constitutional order. The Turkish army imposed its control over one-third of the territory of the island in the north, caused Greek Cypriot residents to flee the area for fear of their lives, gathered all Turkish Cypriots from the southern areas of the island into the north and then brought settlers from mainland Turkey to beef up the numbers, and in November 1983 supported the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş in declaring unilaterally the so-called 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus', a move condemned by the UN Security Council and other international bodies. Greek Cypriots asked for international support to help remove the Turkish army from Cyprus and cancel the consequences of the invasion, but what they received from the UN and its various organs and agencies, the Council of Europe, the old Socialist Bloc, the Non Aligned Movement, the

Commonwealth and so on were a plethora of statements and decisions and declarations expressing pious hopes for a peaceful resolution of the dispute and calls on the Greek Cypriot side and the *Turkish Cypriot* (not *Turkish*) side to enter into negotiations with good will under the auspices of the UN Secretary General and work out a just settlement acceptable to both Cypriot communities.

Most Greek Cypriots have always felt very frustrated about Platonic calls for negotiations to find a just settlement to the Cyprus problem. As a number of Greek Cypriot politicians declared repeatedly, the essence of the Cyprus problem was the Turkish invasion and continuing occupation of an independent and sovereign state, and this is not a matter of negotiations between the victim and the invader; it is a matter of the international community matching its resolutions with a sufficiently strong will to secure their compliance, if necessary by strong sanctions or even force. Greek Cypriots soon realized that the United States and other Western powers were not going to expel mainland Turks from Cyprus, and what used to be called ‘the Socialist Block’ was not unhappy to see a rift between Greeks and Turks. Yet Greek Cypriots, in their vast majority, never doubted that Right and International Law were on their side and had little interest in compromises. For them a just solution of the Cyprus problem, a *really* just solution, would be one which cancelled all the effects of the Turkish invasion and occupation and restore Cyprus to the *status quo ante*. Most Greek Cypriots reasoned in some such way as the following:

- (1) The Turkish invasion brought 35,000 Turkish troops to the island. So all these troops should leave Cyprus.
- (2) Turkey brought by 2004 nearly 120,000 mainlander settlers to Turkish-occupied north Cyprus. So all settlers should be shipped back to Turkey.
- (3) All Greek Cypriots who lived in the north until 1974 and were forced to flee in the wake of the Turkish military operations should be able to return to their former homes in the north and take possession of their properties under conditions of safety..
- (4) The Turkish occupation of the north breached the human rights of Greek Cypriots (and, it was sometimes added, Turkish Cypriots). All Cypriots, whatever their ethnic character and heritage, should be able to enjoy the whole range of the universally acknowledged human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the three freedoms of movement, settlement and property ownership over the whole island. (Greek Cypriots have long been convinced that the three freedoms are firmly entrenched in the Treaty of Rome and

European legislation – the so-called *acquis communautaire* – and they would not listen to anyone suggesting to them that the EU does accept derogations or temporary suspensions of the *acquis*.)

- (5) Turkey invoked the Treaty of Guarantee to invade and bring havoc to Cyprus. In future Cyprus must have credible international guarantees for its security, independence and sovereignty against external aggression, and such guarantees should exclude any unilateral right of intervention by any particular country, especially Turkey.
- (6) The division of the island should be ended, and a unified state should be reconstituted embracing both communities and exercising through their representatives sovereign authority over the whole of the territory. The Greek Cypriot President Archbishop Makarios, in his first post-partition meeting with the Turkish Cypriot leaders Rauf Denktash in February 1977 bowed to the inevitability of a bicomunal (in effect bicantonal or biregional) federation, which was confirmed by his successors in the presidency of the Republic Spyros Kyprianou (1977-88), George Vassiliou (1988-93), Glafkos Clerides (1993-2003), and most recently Tassos Papadopoulos (2003-). However, in a really just settlement, Greek Cypriots felt, the Turkish Cypriot community which amounted to 18% of the settled, legal population of the island as opposed to 80% of the Greek Cypriot population, should not have such constitutional powers as to be able, if it so chooses, to frustrate the will of the Greek Cypriot majority on matters that concern the security of the country, economic development, fiscal policy, and foreign and European policy, especially now that Cyprus was a member of the EU. Rauf Denktash always understood ‘bicomunal’ to be also ‘bizonal’, and more specifically ‘consisting of two mono-ethnic zones’. Vassiliou and Clerides accepted the use of the term ‘bizonal’, but they were unwilling to agree that the northern Turkish-administered zone or constituent state would be one from which Greek Cypriots would be excluded. Clerides also accepted the UN Secretary General’s proposal that the two communities would be ‘politically equal’, on the understanding that this did not imply that the two communities participated in the organs of the federation in equal numbers. President Papadopoulos, who has come to power in February 2003, soon after the Cyprus-EU negotiations had been successfully concluded, studiously avoids any talk about ‘political equality’, most probably because he cannot accept that the relatively small number of Turkish Cypriot members of the government should have a right of veto over decisions deemed necessary by a larger number of Greek Cypriot members.

The preceding list of conditions, then, jointly represents the Greek Cypriots' idea of a *really* just settlement of the Cyprus problem. Have they ever come close to achieving it? Not by a long shot. Successive UN Secretaries-General offered their good offices by trying to persuade the two sides to negotiate in good faith, and the crucial first step in any such exercise is to ask each of the parties to state their position, the *opinion juris*. Successive Greek Cypriot leaders would naturally start any negotiations by listing the conditions for a really just settlement. On the other hand, Rauf Denktaş, the one and only paramount leader of the Turkish Cypriot community had from the early 1970s to 2005, argued that in Cyprus there existed two separate states, the Greek Cypriot state recognized by the international community except Turkey and the TRNC recognized by Turkey, and the only points at issue were mutual recognition by these states on the basis of absolute equality, and then the delineation of the border between the two states (which would result in an unspecified amount of territory being handed by the TRNC over to the Greek Cypriot state), and definition of the structure and composition of the loose link between them – probably a confederal government – which could represent Cyprus abroad and handle a limited set of matters of joint concern.

Given the distance between the two sides, it was difficult to see *how* the gap could be bridged. Kurt Waldheim, Javier Perez de Cuellar, Boutros Ghali and most recently Kofi Annan tried to encourage the two sides to yield more to each other, and the thaw in relations between Greece and Turkey encouraged international statesmen to pay visits to Athens and Ankara to persuade them to prevail upon 'their' respective kith and kin in Cyprus to try to respond more positively and generously to the other side.

Greek Cypriot politicians themselves, and more widely politically minded opinion leaders and ordinary citizens, were from time to time divided in their view of how far to deviate or back down from the principles which they all agreed constituted the *really* just settlement to the Cyprus problem. Some Greek Cypriot politicians realized that they could not ever get 100 per cent of what they wanted for their constituency (always conceived as the Greek Cypriot community, and not the Cypriot people *sans phrase*), but they insisted that they were unwilling to abandon too many of their rights: if they were to agree to a package, they had to have 90 per cent or 85 per cent, so to speak, of the elements of a just settlement. A sell-out would simply be humiliating and unacceptable – better fight and fight again until the international community realizes that Turkey cannot be allowed to get away with an invasion. This 'hardline' group of politicians were considered to be unrealistic by another group of

politicians in as much as they insisted on maximalist objectives, even if they lacked the diplomatic and political resources to achieve these objectives. The second group argued that if the Cyprus problem remained unsolved long enough, the *de facto* division of the island will be cemented and accepted by the world, started with a number of Islamic states who would be the first to extend *de jure* recognition to the 'TRNC', in which case Rauf Denktash and Ankara would have even less incentive to make any concession on territory. In the light of this analysis, the second group argued that the Greek Cypriot side should be willing to accept, reluctantly to be sure, a settlement that gave their community 80 or 70 per cent of the elements of a really just settlement (for example, maybe small contingents of Turkish and Greek troops could remain on the island, and perhaps not all refugees would be able to return to their former homes and properties in the what would remain a Turkish-dominated state of the federation. The first group of politicians, the 'maximalists' or 'anti-realists' were quick to accuse the second group of 'realists' or 'moderates' as being less patriotic than themselves, and the latter accused the former of having their heads in the clouds.

However, as long as Rauf Denktash and Ankara were unwilling to make concessions to the Greek Cypriot side to satisfy even the realist or moderate or '70 per center' group (consisting largely of the right wing Democratic Rally founded by Glafkos Clerides, in 1976, the communist AKEL, and George Vassiliou's United Democrats) they and the maximalist or '90 per cent-er' group (consisting mainly of the centrist DIKO party and the socialist EDEK) made common cause in accusing Ankara and Rauf Denktash for intransigence. However, when proposals or informal ideas were presented to the two communities for a compromise settlement by UN Secretaries-General – as happened with Kurt Waldheim in 1981, Javier Perez de Cuellar in 1985-86 and Boutros Ghali in 1992 – unpleasant disagreements broke out in the Greek Cypriot community between maximalist politicians (dubbed by their opponents 'rejectionists') and the moderates (dubbed by their opponents 'defeatists').

Section 2

The division within the Greek Cypriot community between maximalist and moderate politicians and their respective supporters grew into an intense dispute in the one-and-a-half years between November 2002 and April 2004. The events can only be indicated very briefly here:

In November 2002 a new government came to power in Turkey formed by the Justice and Development Party (AKP). Its leader Tayyip Recep Erdogan and his deputy Abdullah Gul appeared to be so keen to make progress with Turkey's long-standing application to join the EU, that it was willing to abandon the previous governments' and Rauf Denktash's insistence on a two-state confederal solution in Cyprus guaranteed by stationing of substantial numbers of Turkish troops in the island in favour of a federation (which would ensure a Turkish majority in the Northern state and the maintenance of Turkish guarantees, but not necessarily Turkish troops).

Within days after the installation of the new AKP government in Turkey, Kofi Annan presented the first of five versions of a detailed settlement Plan for Cyprus. This Plan, prepared by a UN team in collaboration with the interested parties was meant to form a basis for a negotiated agreement. Whereas Denktash was dead against the Plan, the Turkish government indicated that it favoured it as a basis for negotiations. Greek Cypriots could only reject it at their own peril, since any such action would place them in a bad light and Turkey in a good light. All Greek Cypriot political parties, those of maximalist conviction and the moderates took the line that this draft Plan could not be accepted as it stood, as it provided for a complicated machinery of checks and balances which limited the effectiveness of the Greek Cypriot majority, put limits on how many refugees could return to the former homes and properties, specified long times frames for the departure of Turkish troops, allowed long-standing Turkish settlers to stay and, worse of all, left Turkish (and Greek and British) guarantees in tact. Still, an effort had to be made to improve it the light of EU legislation, the *acquis communautaire*.

Turkish Cypriot groups in the northern part of Cyprus organized large demonstrations in favour of a UN-sponsored federal solution and entry with the Greek Cypriots into the EU. Denktash still had his supporters, but they no longer appeared to form the majority. Public opinion in the Turkish Cypriot community, while preferring a confederal to a federal solution to the Cyprus problem, was willing to support a federal Plan which involved EU membership.

The Cyprus-EU negotiations, which had started in May 1998, were concluded successfully in autumn 2002, and the European Council which met in Copenhagen on 12-13 December 2002 invited Cyprus and nine other applicant countries to join the EU on 1 May 2004. This was a great success of the government of President Glafkos Clerides and his Chief Negotiator

former President George Vassiliou. Britain and a number of other EU countries, as well as the United States wanted the two Cypriot sides to sign the Annan Plan In Copenhagen, and there is some evidence that President Clerides was willing to do so, if the Turkish Cypriot side indicated a similar intention. As it happened, Denktash lay sick in an Istanbul hospital and the signing never took place

In February 2003 presidential elections were held in the Republic of Cyprus in which the aging Clerides lost to Tassos Papadopoulos, leader of relatively small DEKO and long known for his maximalist convictions. Papadopoulos was supported by the even smaller and equally maximalist EDEK party, and the large and generally moderate left wing AKEL party! Once Cyprus's accession to the EU was assured, there was no pressure on Papadopoulos to accept a 70 per cent offer, if he thought he could get a better deal *after* the formal accession, when Turkey would be itself knocking the EU door. Many ordinary people thought like him.

In December 2004 there were parliamentary elections in the Turkish Cypriot community in which the moderate Republican Turkish Party emerged as the bigger group. Its leader Mehmet Ali Talat became Prime Minister in a coalition government with the Democrat Party led by Rauf Denktash's son Serdar Denktash. Immediately Talat became involved in the negotiating process mastered the intricate details of the Plan and displayed a constrictive attitude which won him the admiration of the UN team and several Western governments.

Following contacts between the UN Secretary-General, the two Cypriot communities and the governments of Greece and Turkey, a new effort was undertaken to reach a final settlement to the Cyprus problem in accordance with the following procedure: (1) The two Cypriot sides, led by Tassos Papadopoulos and Rauf Denktash would hold intensive negotiations in Nicosia on the basis of the Annan Plan; (2) if there is no agreement between them, the two sides will be joined by the governments of Greece and Turkey who will try to help achieve an agreement. (3) If agreement still eludes this four-sided meeting, the four sides and the UN Secretary General will all meet together for further talks. If no agreement proves possible, Kofi Annan was authorized to fill the blanks in the document by using powers of arbitration. (4) Some time before 1 May 2004, the two communities of Cyprus will be deciding in separate referendums if they approved the final text of the Annan Plan. If both sides said 'Yes', Cyprus would be transformed into the United Cyprus Republic with a complicated

federal constitution, and as such become a full EU member on 1 May 2004. If one or both sides said 'No', the Plan will be dead and buried.

The negotiations in Cyprus got nowhere and the venue moved to Burgenstock in Switzerland. Rauf Denktaş refused to go there, and Mehmet Ali Talat took charge of the Turkish Cypriot negotiating team. The Turkish delegation headed by Prime Minister Erdogan was actively negotiating. The same could not be said by the delegation of the recently elected Greek government, or indeed President Tassos Papadopoulos. People who claim to be in the know reported that President Papadopoulos stayed in his room most of the time avoiding discussions with other delegations as he took the view that Kofi Annan, under the influence of the representatives of the United States and Britain (who were themselves mindful of Erdogan's possible difficulties with his military) was tilting towards Turkey's point of view. It would not be unnatural for Papadopoulos and his maximalist allies to judge that no settlement Plan constructed under the circumstances prevailing in Burgenstock could be nearly as satisfactory as a solution shaped by European ideas and the *acquis communautaire* after Cyprus joined the EU. So would it not be better to allow a bad plan to be cobbled together in Burgenstock which the Greek Cypriot public would be less tempted to endorse in the upcoming referendum, than a slightly better plan which would attract the moderate segment strand of the community? However, the Greek Cypriot delegation included leaders of moderate parties who, on recognizing Papadopoulos's calculations, took some initiatives themselves to bring the Plan closer to Greek Cypriot wishes and aspiration.. The Greek Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis apparently also chose not to play an active part discussions so that he could never be accused of having tried to impose a plan on Greek Cypriots.

One thing that many Greek Cypriots and foreign observers noticed was that Greek Cypriot journalists and TV crews were given briefings which suggested that the 'Anglo-Americans' were ignoring the rights of the Greek Cypriot people and using their influence to produce ideas that were in line with Turkey's interests, so that the Turkish government could accept the Plan and prevail on the military establishment to support it, thereby improving the country's chances of obtaining in due course a date to start accession talks. The press briefings were echoed by DIKO's leading members and spokespersons in the acrimonious debates that already started on Greek Cypriot TV.

The UN Secretary-General handed copies of the fifth and last version of the Annan Plan to the leaders of the four delegations in Burgenstock on 30 March 2004 and in due course the referendums were set for 24 April. The two communities had just over three weeks to understand the main provisions of the Annan Plan, and decide on how to vote. As would have been expected of any compromise package, the Plan contained some elements which each side considered acceptable as they corresponded with their concerns and requirements, and other elements considered unacceptable – and yet some others which each side could interpret in the light of its wishes or worse-scenario anxieties. Among the fundamental provisions of the Plan which in the main reflected Greek Cypriot wishes and requirements were the following:

- Cyprus *was* (already) a member of the UN (hence there would be an assured continuity of the state, even though it would now be called the United Republic of Cyprus) .
- Cyprus would become a full member of the European Union (and so the Turkish government and Denktash could not block Cyprus's accession).
- The island would be reunited on the basis of a new federal structure comprising two constituent states – each administered by one of the communities and mainly populated by it – rather than a confederation of two sovereign states, and about 7-8% of what had been Turkish-occupied territory in the north would be returned to the Greek constituent state to be inhabited by Greek Cypriots.
- The United Republic of Cyprus would have a single international personality and a single citizenship.
- The new arrangements provided unimpeded freedom of movement for all its citizens.
- Cyprus would become demilitarised in stages over a period of years of 14 years until the troops on the island (other than UN peacekeepers) were reduced to 950 Greek soldiers and 650 Turkish soldiers.

Despite these and some other clear advantages which the Annan Plan presented to the Greek Cypriots by comparison to the prevailing situation, they did not feel happy about it. Politicians and even ordinary people who found many parts of the Plan abstruse and incomprehensible, nevertheless could see that it did not restore to them many important things they had had before the Turkish invasion, and further, they were asked to pay too high

a price for what they were being offered. Thus, the Annan Plan fell far short from any Greek conception of a really just solution. To give a few examples:

- (7) The Turkish invasion troops would not be leaving any time soon. The Plan provided that the 1960 Treaty of Alliance would be updated as to authorize a Turkish (and a Greek) military contingent of up to 6,000 troops to be stationed in Cyprus until 2011, and this to be reduced to 3,000 troops until the 2018 or the accession of Turkey to the EU, whichever would be sooner – and even then 650 Turkish troops (and 950 Greek troops) would remain indefinitely. And Greek Cypriots started considering the worse-case scenario: what if Turkey refused to withdraw any of its troops in 2011? Could the government of the United Republic of Cyprus be able even to make a protest, if Turkish Cypriot members of that government agreed with Turkey's breach of obligation?
- (8) Of the 120,000 mainlander Turkish settlers, only about 45,000 would be taken back to Turkey, while those who remained would be given Cypriot nationality, while the rest would be able to stay in Cyprus and in most cases receive Cyprus nationality. And even then, the door would be open to further emigration from Turkish. How could it be right for any Greek Cypriot refugees not to be able to return to their ancestral homes if tens of thousands of Turkish illegal settlers would be made legal residents?.
- (9) In fact the Plan is extremely obscure on the matter of how many Greek Cypriot refugees and their offspring will be able to return to their former homes and properties. One Greek estimate reckoned about 120,000 people. Although nearly all owners of property would be able to get back one-third of their properties, they may have to accept for the other two-thirds compensation or be forced to offer them to the current users on long leases. Indeed, other restrictions on residency could stop a Greek Cypriot refugee family owning three houses in the north from using one of them as a permanent home.
- (10) The human rights regime, if the Annan Plan were implemented, would become permeated with restrictions and confusions. For example, Greek Cypriots would be unable to sue the authorities in the north either at the European Court of Human Rights or any of the European Union Courts for any breaches of their rights. This was deemed very offensive by Greek Cypriots who could not accept that they may have severe restrictions in their access to European justice which would be unknown in the other 24 EU countries.
- (11) Since Turkey invoked the Treaty of Guarantee to invade Cyprus in 1974 and continued to insist that what it did was perfectly in legal order, Greek Cypriots expected that Turkey would not have in future a similar pretext. They wanted the EU to guarantee

the independence of Cyprus, its security and the maintenance of the new constitution. Turkey would not consider any talk about abandoning what it regarded as its rights in Cyprus and demanded a right to intervene whenever there were a breaches of security or constitutional order. The Greek Cypriot side counter-proposed that if on any future occasion there were allegations of such breaches, the UN Security Council should discuss and investigate the situation, and only if *it* decided that the breaches were real and it failed to remedy the situation would the guarantor powers be able to intervene. Again, Turkey flatly refused the setting of a triggering mechanism and Kofi Annan bowed to Turkey's demands. Many Greek Cypriots thought that the new provision was worse than the old one, since Turkey could now intervene in the Greek constituent state!

- (12) What offended many Greek Cypriots was that any advantages they stood to gain from the Annan Plan would have to be exchanged with the sharing of political power with the Turkish Cypriot community on the basis of political equality. Even though the Presidential Council (corresponding to the Cabinet or Council of Ministers in most constitutions) would consist of 4 Greek Cypriot voting members and 2 Turkish Cypriot voting members, no decision taken by the majority would be valid unless it including at least one vote from each community. This means that the *Greek Cypriot* majority could not make policy decisions against the opposition of the Turkish Cypriot members. Similar mechanisms of weighted voting were provided for the federal legislature and various administrative organs. Thus the Greek Cypriots, who since December 1963 ruled the Republic of Cyprus (wherever its writ ran, which was not everywhere on the island), now had to yield the majoritarian principle which they had been taking for granted

Greek Cypriots looked at the 'positive points' of the Annan Plan, compared them with the 'negative points', and most of them felt that they had been offered a rotten deal. The disappointment felt by many Greek Cypriots, which sprang from a sense that they had suffered a grave injustice from a UN Secretary-General who instead of seeking for justice for the downtrodden acted as a front for the 'Anglo-Americans', was articulated, exploited and channelled by various groups of Greek Cypriot politicians and opinion makers into a large and vocal 'rejectionist' movement led behind the scenes by the President himself. Surely, people thought, a better package should be achievable in the framework of the EU, where the United States is an outsider and Britain is one of many powers. They might not be able to get 100 per cent or even 90 per cent of what they deserved, but could they not hope for 80 per cent? Did they have to tolerate the military presence of their enemy on the island for years

and years? Do they have to give up their homes and properties in the north even after houses are build for the Turkish Cypriots, or possibly mainland Turks, who may live in them? No such humiliation is tolerated anywhere in Europe. Thus even people who never counted themselves as maximalists declared their opposition to the Plan, and joined those politicians who called for a 'European solution', which would surely be attainable within months after Cyprus joins the EU.

Even during the weeks in March 2004 when President Tassos Papadopoulos and other Greek Cypriot politicians and officials were negotiating with their Turkish Cypriot, Greek and Turkish counterparts in Burgenstock, and other UN and EU officials, officials of Papadopoulos' government and DEKO party of which he was leader were orchestrating the 'No' campaign. On the other hand, Greek Cypriot politicians whose instinct was to accept what appeared to be on offer in the absence of anything better, could not bring themselves to argue their case while negotiations were still going on, given that ever since Kofi Annan presented the first preliminary draft of his Plan in November 2002, all Greek Cypriot parties agreed that they were going to demand 'improvements' (more 'positive points', fewer 'negative points'). You don't say 'The Plan is now good enough' when your leader and chief negotiator is still seeking a better deal for the people.

The UN Security Council met to consider the Annan Plan and judged that it was a fair and balanced package which would resolved a long-festering international problem and commended it to the two Cypriot communities. The European Union, too, endorsed the Annan Plan and several of the Commission's officials made statements indicating that the Plan was compatible with the Treaty of Rome and the *acquis communautaire*, and consequently it was a sufficiently European solution.

However, pleas from great and small powers of the world, senior statesmen and officials of the Commission did not cut ice with President Papadopoulos and the forces supporting him. Indeed it soon became known that officials in the Presidential Palace had been orchestrating for some time the campaign for a 'No' vote. Big and small businesses, the Greek Orthodox Church and many individuals gave money – the total funds were rumoured to be in the region of \$800,000, a large sum for a community of 700,000 people – to pay a certain Marketing and Public Relations firm connected with a minister in Papadopoulos's government to promote the 'No' campaign. Before the referendums were held, representatives of an American Public

Relations firms were invited to Cyprus by the Cypriot authorities to plan and carry out a campaign to 'explain' the (anticipated) 'No' vote to American public opinion.

On the other hand, the United States Embassy in Cyprus offered directly or through the local UN office sums of money to Greek and Turkish Cypriot groups which wanted to produce brochures or other publicity material explaining in simple language the main provisions and advantages of the Annan Plan. The local EU Delegation also offered help, as did the UN staff in Cyprus. The fact, however, was most of the work in promoting public acceptance of the Annan Plan was carried out by small groups of Greek and Turkish Cypriot reconciliationists, Cyprus's version of *peaceniks*, people who for years had been working together in bicomunal organisations and project to bring about a *rapprochement* between the communities. So, even where there was some money available for the 'Yes' supporters, there were relatively few 'Yes' supporters to use them in their campaign. The fact is that most Greek Cypriots and most Turkish Cypriots do not value and seek friendship with members of the other community. This much was clear from the interminable and generally ill-tempered discussions in the pro-'No' TV and radio stations and articles in newspapers.

One thing, however, that worried the 'No' supporters was: what would happen if the Greek Cypriots voted 'No, and the Turkish Cypriots voted 'Yes'? United States and EU officials made it clear that in that case the Turkish Cypriot community would be helped to end its 'isolation'. It would be offered direct financial help, bypassing the 'official' Cyprus government and the EU would insist that the community would be able to enjoy all the benefits that Greek Cypriots enjoy. This was taken by Turkish Cypriots to mean that they would be able to put direct flights from North Cyprus to European airports, and further they would be able to use their sea-ports to export and import goods, even though the Cyprus government had long declared them to be illegal. Gradually the fear began to spread among Greek Cypriots that those evil Anglo-Americans had it in mind to treat the 'TRNC' as a proper lawful state, even though that would fall short of diplomatic recognition – just like Taiwan. The prospect of the 'Taiwanisation' appeared to be a real possibility, which frightened Greek Cypriots and excited Turkish Cypriots.

In the referendum of April 24, 2004, the Greek Cypriot people were urged their leader President Tassos Papadopoulos and most of the political parties, to reject the Annan Plan, and they did so by 76% majority. Interestingly, those who urged for a 'Yes' vote included former

Presidents Vassiliou and Clerides, former Foreign Minister Kasoulides, former Government Spokesmen Christos Stylianides and Michalis Papapetrou, Papadopoulos's former EU Coordinator, the leader of the DESY (Democratic Rally) party Nicos Anastasiades, and a number of other politicians with experience of international and European affairs, and also members of the various intercommunal reconciliation groups. Their advice that it could be dangerous to antagonize the counsel of European statesmen and ignore the Turkish Cypriot point of view obviously did not carry any great weight

The Turkish Cypriot people and the mainland Turkish settlers living among them, voted in favour by a majority of 65%, even though they were also urged by their long-serving leader 'President' Rauf Denktash to reject it and support the continued existence of the 'TRNC'. The Plan *and entry into the EU* was supported with great determination by Mehmet Ali Talat, leader of the Turkish Republican Party and 'Prime Minister' of the 'TRNC'. One by-product of the Turkish Cypriot referendum was the reduction of Rauf Denktash's influence on the Turkish Cypriots and the confirmation of the ascendancy of Mehmet Ali Talat.

Section 3

Once the referendum results became known and the Greek Cypriots turned their gaze on the Republic's official entry into the EU as full member, President Papadopoulos and his government started planning a diplomatic effort to achieve three aims:

- (A) To bring about a fair and workable solution to the Cyprus problem. This was after the all the great strategic goal of every Greek Cypriot leader since the breakdown of the 1960 bicomunal constitutional order in December 1963. Unlike President Kyprianou who was cagey about his intentions, President Papadopoulos made it clear that he was seeking a bicomunal, bizonal federation. Unlike Presidents Vassiliou and Clerides, Papadopoulos dropped any references to the principle of the political equality of the two communities, probably because he thought that this term, as interpreted by the UN Secretary-General, was inconsistent with the concept of democratic governance which required that policy decisions be made by the majority. Papadopoulos, like Clerides before him, also emphasized that the federation should ensure respect of human rights for all its citizens, compliance with the EU *acquis* and the enforcement of the decisions made by the European Court of Human Rights in cases brought by Greek Cypriots

against Turkey. So, whereas the Annan Plan did not have to be scrapped entirely, it would have to be changed in substantial, if as yet unspecified ways. It seemed clear that Turkey would never consent to any serious concessions to the Greek Cypriots beyond those made in the last version of the Annan Plan, unless perhaps they had the strong and active support by the permanent members of the UN Security Council, and more especially the EU which before long would be examining Turkey's request for a date to start accession talks..

- (B) The preceding aim would be unattainable if the 'Anglo-Americans' were to succeed in upgrading the political and economic status of the TRNC, or 'pseudo-state' as Greeks had always called it. If American and European sympathy for the Turkish Cypriot community – the good guys who had responded positively to the Annan Plan – was translated into a concerted action to help it improve its economy through attracting development aid, investment and tourism, then the Turkish Cypriots will have much less incentive to join the Greek Cypriots into the EU, especially as a minority community. Worse, if the TRNC received political respectability by receiving through its ports and airport direct traffic from Europe and was internationally acknowledged as a quasi-independent state, then it would be very difficult for the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey to accept even the option of a confederation with the Republic of Cyprus. The spectre of 'Taiwanisation' of the TRNC was very worrying for the Greek Cypriots.
- (C) To prevent the economic and political upgrading of the TRNC by the Americans and the EU and secure support from EU states for a new effort to force Turkey to consent to changes to Annan Plan, Greek Cypriot had to meet and diffuse European and American criticisms of their 'No' vote in the referendum, and demonstrate, first, that the Republic of Cyprus was still very keen to enter negotiations with the other side for a fair, workable and mutually acceptable political settlement, and second, until the Republic achieved its strategic goal it was willing to give Turkish Cypriot citizens of the Republic the same rights and privileges as Greek Cypriot citizens and offer them facilities to make their life better.

Let us look at what the Republic of Cyprus did do after its formal EU accession by way of trying to promote these aims in reverse order.

The referendum result provoked a great disappointment in Europe and in American circles, especially among statesmen and officials who had been led to believe by previous governments that if the Greek Cypriots' desire to join the EU were granted, they would display great flexibility on the details of the settlement package. After the referendum, Greek Cypriot politicians and officials noticed that European and American officials behaved coldly towards them, as if they had let them down. Years of friendships patiently cultivated by Greek Cypriot politicians had evaporated overnight.

President Papadopoulos, annoyed and perhaps worried by criticisms made by the UN Secretary-General in his address to the Security Council in May 2004 to the effect that Greek Cypriots may have lost their interest in working for a negotiated settlement for a unified federation, wrote to Kofi Annan to set out the anxieties and concerns of his people arising from the flaws of the Plan. The suggestion was that if these anxieties were assuaged and the concerns removed in a new Plan, the Greek Cypriot side would be willing to accept it. Papadopoulos made it clear in his TV address to the Greek Cypriot people a few days before the referendum that he did not expect the Annan Plan to be taken off the negotiating table, but instead he believed it will reappear in a changed form in future, when new opportunities will arise for further negotiations for a fair and workable settlement acceptable to all sides. More will be said about this matter later on..

Secondly, the Cyprus government has had, since before the country's accession to the EU, a series of measures in place intended to give Turkish Cypriot individuals mainly living in the north but visiting the government-controlled areas in the south the rights and benefits it gives its Greek citizens. Thus the government facilitates the movement of persons, vehicles and goods from the north, deals with applications of Turkish Cypriots for identity cards, birth certificates and passports, and allows them to be treated in government hospitals, even though they do not pay taxes or social insurance contributions. It is difficult to suggest that in carrying out these and similar measures the government is going beyond its basic duties, even when the government claims to tolerate the results of actions generated by illegal bodies in the north (e.g. allowing vehicles from the north licensed by 'illegal' TRNC authorities). For a long time the Cyprus government has been engaged in the process of establishing a Turkish school in the southern city of Limassol, but a year after the referendum the task is still not completed, partly because the Republic's Ministry of Education and Culture is unhappy about the contents of certain school books prepared in the north.

What the Cyprus government has been most unhappy about was contributing to the development of the Turkish Cypriot community living in the ‘occupied areas’, as that could mean making the life of the Turkish Cypriots – and the mainland Turks living among them – more comfortable and contented. What the government might like to tell the Turkish Cypriots, if it could was something like: ‘Do you want a better life for yourselves? Either come to the “free areas” in the south, or do what you can to dissolve the illegal TRNC and re-establish the authority and rule of the Republic of Cyprus everywhere in the island!’ But there are pressures on the Cyprus government coming from the EU and from foreign countries which are well-disposed towards the Turkish Cypriots, which force Greek Cypriots to be more generous and humane towards the Turkish Cypriots in the north that they might otherwise want to be.

During the period of campaign for the parallel community referendums, when it became clear that Greek Cypriots would be voting ‘No’ to the Annan Plan thereby preventing a unified Cyprus from joining the EU, European officials and statesmen began to suggest that if the Turkish Cypriots voted ‘Yes’, they could expect to get as a community as many of the privileges and advantages of EU members as possible. They would get, for example, a generous proportions of the development aid that would have gone to a united Cyprus, and also they would be able to import from, and export to, EU countries under terms similar to those of EU member states. Indeed, a few days after the referendums and just before Cyprus joined the EU, the European Council met and decided that the Turkish Cypriot community should be helped out of their isolation. Many Greek Cypriots, who had always claimed that Turkish Cypriot isolation was the consequence of the Turkish invasion and occupation, took the European Council’s decision to signal that in due course there would be direct flights and see links from European countries to the TRNC. President Papadopoulos, no doubt mindful of his reputation as someone who was no friend of the Turkish Cypriots, proposed to the EU that they give the Turkish Cypriots the *whole* sum of 259 million Euros which had been earmarked for the whole of Cyprus in case there would be a political settlement. He only asked that this money should *not* be used for development of land in the north belonging to Greek Cypriots, a restriction which the EU deemed reasonable. (The President later told a Greek Cypriot audience, “Let the Turkish Cypriots get all the money, so we will not have to support them!”) Despite the rude undertone of this remark, some people noticed that the

President, for all his unimaginative personality, understood that the EU could not agree that the Turkish Cypriot community should continue to be pariahs.)

But what was to be the trading position of the Turkish Cypriot community? On July 7, 2004 the European Commission proposed that the regulation governing the aid package should be linked to another regulation permitting direct trade between North Cyprus and the EU member states. The Greek Cypriot authorities shuddered at the thought that Turkish Cypriot products could be exported to the EU from the Ercan airport in the North, which the Cyprus government had declared to be illegal, or any similarly illegal ports in Turkish-occupied Cyprus, and moreover that the certificate stating the country of origin of these products would be issued by what Greek Cypriots called “the pseudo-authorities in the occupied territories”. The Cyprus government counter-proposed that while Turkish Cypriot products could not be exported from any entry and exit in the North which were outside the government’s control and so were declared illegal (otherwise, it would have to be supposed that the government did not have a proper title over the whole of the island), they could nevertheless be exported from Larnaca port in the south on the basis of certificates of origin issued by the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce, which was an NGO and not an official TRNC body. This proposal was accepted by the European Commission in August 2004 and revised in February 2005. The Turkish Cypriot authorities – for once Denktash in alliance with Talat, probably under instructions from Turkey) refused to agree to the de-coupling of the two regulations, and so they would be willing to turn their backs on 259 million Euros (temporarily at least!) if that was not linked to the politically much more important matter of direct trade from Turkish controlled ports in the TRNC. The Turkish Cypriot authorities were more interested in advancing a political claim against the Greek Cypriots than obtain and use a considerable aid package from the EU.

Turkish Cypriot posturing was matched by more posturing by the Greek Cypriot authorities. At some point President Papadopoulos proposed a deal: if the Turkish Cypriots, or more precisely Turkey, agreed to return the Turkish-controlled and formerly entirely Greek-inhabited city of Famagusta, he would be willing to agree that the Turkish-controlled port of Famagusta should be handed over to UN administration and managed by a committee of Greek and Turkish Cypriot officials. This arrangement would, of course, enable Turkish Cypriots (and Greek Cypriots too) to use the ports for exports and imports, but in return it would give Greek Cypriots both full control of the city of Famagusta and a measure of

control of the port (which, incidentally the Turkish army has used to bring troops and materiel into North Cyprus). Was there ever a chance of Turkey and the Turkey Cypriots agreeing to Papadopoulos's offer? No – but Papadopoulos thought the EU might be favourably impressed by his constructive spirit. The EU did not take up the suggestion. There is no reason to think that the EU will want to get involved in Cyprus-style politics of gestures. Still, the EU delegation in Nicosia is watching developments in Cyprus and reporting to Brussels; and the Greek Cypriots are likely to show some generosity to Turkish Cypriots only when they sense Brussels is inclined to accuse them of ungenerous attitudes.

Maybe the most impressive game – and it was a game – occurred on February 17, 2005, when a delegation of Turkish representatives of American companies based in Turkey travelled from Ankara to Ercan airport in North Cyprus accompanied by the Commercial Attache of the US Embassy in Turkey, a man whose name was given as Ane Kayani (probably an embassy official of Turkish origin). There was no suggestion that the trade delegation made any significant contacts with Turkish Cypriot businessmen they could not have otherwise made, or that there is going to be a rush of American investment in North Cyprus. The likeliest explanation is that the United States government tried to please Turkish and Turkish Cypriot public opinion, and possibly warn Greek Cypriots that 'Taiwanisation' of the TRNC was a distinct possibility. Amidst wide condemnation of the visit, President Papadopoulos said that "such actions are an affront to the feelings of the Cypriot people and do not contribute towards improving relations between US and Cyprus... nor to creating the necessary climate for efforts to reuniting Cyprus." The Greek Cypriot Minister for Commerce and Industry warned the United States its behaviour may be jeopardizing their commercial interests in the much larger Greek Cypriot economy.

Posturing apart, a year after they said 'Yes' in the referendum, Turkish Cypriots have not obtained their reward, either in the form of a 259 million Euros grant, or in rights to despatch and receive people and goods through its own ports and airport. Greek Cypriots, including people who would never buy an orange from the North in case it came from an orange grove owned by a Greek Cypriot, claim that they would like to see an increase in intra-island trade and Turkish Cypriots products exported through the southern ports. About half of all Greek Cypriots and about half of all Turkish Cypriots visit the 'other side' occasionally – mostly for shopping and leisure pursuits – but the two communities remain distinct political entities, each with its own economy. Social relations remain limited – by and large confined to the

holding of bicommunal events organized by and for reconciliationists – and both communities mistrust and dislike the other community’s leaders and officials. It is impossible in this most unpredictable country to know what the future has in store, but on present evidence it appears unlikely that intercommunal relations will become a deep aspect of Cypriot society.

What happened to the great strategic aim of achieving a fair and workable settlement to the long-festering Cyprus problem? Did the Republic, as many Greek Cypriots believed and hoped, succeed in using its new role as a European power with enhanced diplomatic clout to secure for itself a more appropriate solution to the Cyprus problem than had been possible any time in the past? The simple answer is: No, it did not. Why not? It seems that the strategy adopted by the Cyprus government, such as it was, proved to be entirely unrealistic. And what was this strategy? To the extent that a strategy can be discerned from the diplomatic moves of the Cyprus government, it amounted to securing support among as many EU member-states to create pressure on Ankara to concede a series of demands made Cyprus which constituted requisites for a new, fair and workable settlement package. This strategy appeared to be based on some such reasoning as the following:

1. Turkey’s request for a date to start accession talks with the EU would be discussed by the European Council meeting in Brussels in December 2004. It was well-known that the Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Recep Erdogan and his government, and indeed most sections of Turkish society, were very keen to get a date. Could this keenness mean that the Turkish government would be prepared to pay a high price for the date, such as undertake to withdraw its troops and mainland settlers?
2. For Turkey to receive the date, all 25 EU member-states had to give their consent. One dissent would amount to a veto.
3. Could the Republic of Cyprus use its power of veto? President Papadopoulos appeared to toy with the idea, and he certainly talked about the possibility even before Cyprus’s formal accession in May 2004. Later, following talks with officials of Greece and some other EU countries he told the Greek Cypriot public that “The right to veto is not to be used by small countries.” (One thing he did not say in public was that the Greek Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis made it clear to him that Greece was going to support Turkey’s accession process and he hoped that Cyprus would do the same.” If Cyprus came into conflict with its closer ally, its isolation would be apparent to all.)

4. Would any big EU powers be willing to threaten the use of veto, so that Turkey might be forced to start considering paying a price? France and Germany were not very happy with Turkey's request for an early date for accession talks, but they were unwilling to anger their Turkish friends. Besides, Britain, Italy and smaller countries, with some prompting from the United States, decided to support a date for Turkey, and the Cypriots knew it.
5. In October 2004 President Papadopoulos addressed the UN General Assembly and said among other things that Cyprus was willing to support Turkey's European course, provided that Turkey behaved like a European state. He added that he wanted direct talks with the Turkish government to sort out their differences. Thus Papadopoulos tried to introduce himself as a factor in the EU decision-making process. Turkey ignored him. A few days later the European Commission brought out its report in which it recommended that as Turkey made considerable progress in meeting the Copenhagen criteria, it should be given a date to start talks. Greek Cypriots were shocked to read that Turkey had no enemies in Europe who could then band together with Cyprus. The Cyprus problem, although still unsolved, had lost its urgency. You could occupy the territory of an EU member-state and still be counted by the Europeans as a democratic country.
6. Late in the day, the Cyprus government decided to submit a memorandum to the European Commission setting out a list of demands which Turkey should undertake to comply with before it could be given a date. This document dated 11 October 2004 requires Turkey to do the following things:
 - Turkey should recognize the Republic of Cyprus
 - Turkey should promptly sign the adaptation protocol to the Ankara Agreement for extending the terms of the Customs Union to take account of the accession of the ten new Member States.
 - Turkey should abolish all restrictive measures against vessels of Cypriot interest or other Community vessels that approach its ports.
 - Turkey should lift its prohibition on Cyprus-registered aircraft from using internationally-approved air corridors over Turkey.
 - Turkey should cease to veto Cyprus' accession to a number of Regional and International Organizations.
 - Turkey should allow the unimpeded exercise of freedom of expression of its people, especially concerning Turkey's policies on Cyprus.

- Turkey should end the military occupation of Cyprus and the EU should support the earliest demilitarisation of the island with the full withdrawal of the occupation troops.
- The EU must support new efforts, under the auspices of the UN Secretary General, “to resolve the problem through an equitable, comprehensive, viable and mutually acceptable settlement, consistent with the fundamental values and principles of Europe” with the constructive cooperation of Turkey.
- Turkey should return of the town of Varosha to its lawful inhabitants; introduce a moratorium on the influx from its territory into the occupied part of Cyprus of Turkish settlers and the facilitation of their repatriation; introduce a moratorium on all construction activities not having the consent of the lawful property owners in the occupied areas.

As it happened, the Cyprus government failed to induce the EU to take on its own cause and impose a dilemma on Turkey in the form: “Either you agree to Cyprus’s conditions, or else you will not get your date for accession talks!” The Cyprus government – its credibility among the main European states in tatters – had no instrument or other means of persuading Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Greece and the other countries to force to Turkey to accept the list of conditions set by the Cyprus government – except for one-half of the second condition. On 17 December 2004, at the Brussels EU summit, Turkey was given its date, 3 October 2005, after the Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan promised that before then his government would sign the protocol of adaptation of the Ankara Agreement, taking account of the accession of the ten new EU member states, including Cyprus.

President Papadopoulos who participated in the summit and came face to face with the fact of his diplomatic impotence returned to Cyprus to receive *not* a hero’s welcome. He and his ministers tried to put a brave face, insisting that what Ankara was forced to accept was an implicit or indirect recognition of the Republic of Cyprus. Erdogan claimed in Turkey that what he agreed to do was extend a Customs Union agreement to ‘Greek Cyprus’, and this did not amount to recognition. The British Prime Minister Tony Blair rubbed salt in the Cypriots’ wound by saying that the signing of the Ankara Protocol did not constitute “formal legal recognition of the Republic of Cyprus”, and a similar line was taken by a number of Greek Cypriot lawyers and politicians.

One may well ask: Let it be supposed that Turkey decides, without being compelled, to declare that it recognize the Republic of Cyprus. How does this hypothetical event bear on the Greek Cypriot strategic goal of achieving a fair and workable solution to the Cyprus problem “consistent with the fundamental values and principles of Europe”? Will recognition bring about, as a matter of course, the desired ‘European’ solution? Greek Cypriots, when they talk to one another, say, ‘But it is inconsistent for Turkey to recognize the Republic of Cyprus, and also to continue to recognize and keep occupation troops on, the so-called TRNC!’ and the listeners of this argument agree. Yet the facts on the ground remain unchanged, whatever the legal considerations that Greek Cypriots bring up.

Since the Republic of Cyprus joined the EU and the maximalist brigade started sniffing a great diplomatic victory against Turkey in the near future, the opposition to President Papadopoulos’s government consisting of the DESY (supported by about 25 or 27% of the electorate) founded by former President Clerides and the tiny E.DE. (United Democrats) still led by former President Vassiliou urged argued that the notion of a ‘European solution’ to the Cyprus problem, or even the expectation of a European initiative for a Cyprus settlement are illusions. In the moderates’ view the Cyprus problem had already lost much of its urgency in the eyes of European statesmen, and if a settlement is still wanted the Greek Cypriot side should ask to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to call a new round of negotiations between the two communities on the basis of the Annan Plan. Although when his Plan was rejected by the Greek Cypriots on April 24, 2004, Annan declared that the Plan is no longer on the table, later he changed his position and said that if the two sides wish to resume their efforts for a comprehensive settlement, they know where to find him. Annan also said that the Greek Cypriot leader should put any changes he wants to see in writing. Both DESY and E.DE., as indeed one or two newspapers who support the ‘realist’ line on the Cyprus problem agree.

Curiously, the former Communist Party AKEL (supported by about 33% of the electorate), which is the main partner in Papadopoulos’s government supports this view. AKEL has long been a moderate party, suspicious of both the role of the Anglo-Americans in the UN Security Council and the influence of Britain, Germany, France, Italy and the other ‘capitalist’ countries in the EU, does not believe that the Annan Plan can be either circumvented or greatly improved. It has long held the view that the development of reconciliation and friendship between the working and farming classes in the two communities is an indispensable elements for any bicomunal partnership which can end

the division of the island. Yet, in February 2003 it supported Tassos Papadopoulos in the Presidential elections ensuring his election, and was rewarded with several positions in the Council of Ministers and semi-governmental organisations, thereby turning for the first time in its long history into a party of power. AKEL will not leave the Papadopoulos government, but although it is not united on the Cyprus problem, from time to time makes strong statements in support of the need think carefully about the absolutely necessary changes which could make the Annan Plan palatable to a majority of the Greek Cypriot people.

In early 2005, DESY, E.DE. and AKEL made separate proposals to the National Council, the President's top advisory body on the Cyprus problem, and it turned out that their respective positions contain many common or similar elements. All these parties, which *could* command a small majority in a referendum, believe that the Greek Cypriot side must seek few concrete changes, concentrating on the following:

- Strong assurances from the UN Security Council (and possibly the EU) that in any agreement Turkey will carry its side of any bargain
- The complete withdrawal of Turkish troops on the basis of a clear time-schedule, and certainly by the time Turkey joins the EU
- Clear commitment that all Turkish mainland settlers other than a set number who are either long-standing residents or married to Turkish Cypriots will be taken back to Turkey
- Prohibition of any unilateral intervention by any of the guarantor powers
- Shorter time-frames for the return of refugees to their homes and properties
- The lands that will eventually form part of the Greek constituent state should be placed under UN administration from the start
- Guarantees for a unified economy and monetary policy.

There is some evidence that the Turkish Cypriot side, with the support of Turkey and the Security Council, will be willing to accept some of these demands, if the result is going to be a Cyprus settlement before the October 3, when Turkey starts its own accession talks. There is certainly no expectation that the Secretary-General is going to be involved in a radical reconstruction of his Plan, or that Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots will be making any serious concessions on the principle of political equality or on Turkish guarantees for the independence and security of Cyprus.

President Papadopoulos is greatly irked when people urge him to state his requirements at the time when there is no negotiating procedure in place, in which case anything he says will become a subject of acrimony and dispute between maximalists and moderates. Sometimes he says cryptically that ‘those people who should know about the Greek Cypriot requirements have been properly informed by him’. Whatever be the truth of the matter, Kofi Annan and influential European governments as well as the United States claim to be ignorant of the President’s thinking.

Some Greek Cypriot politicians, including people who know and have worked with him for years, claim that President Papadopoulos is not willing to share power on the basis of political equality and a substantial time frame for the withdrawal of Turkish troops and settlers. He once stated that the present situation is second best to a satisfactory solution, and in any case better than a solution based on the Annan Plan. The nearest he came to indicating the circumstances under which he would be willing to negotiate a new settlement is a series of general principles:

- The solution must be workable or functional
- The solution must be of European character
- There should not be a strict time-frame for the accomplishment of a solution
- The two sides must agree on the solution before it is put to referendums – no arbitration will be agreed to
- A distinction must be made between the external aspects of the solution (the presence of the Turkish army, Turkish settlers, foreign guarantees) which will have to be discussed between him and the Turkish government, and the internal aspects (the structure of government, territorial adjustments) which he would be willing to discuss with the Turkish Cypriot leader
- The solution must satisfy the concerns and anxieties of Greek Cypriots
- The solution must involve substantial changes in the Annan Plan

These requirements are accepted by many people, and the President, for all the great disappointment of the Brussels Summit which showed up the ineffectiveness of Cyprus diplomacy, has lost little of his popularity. Yet the Cypro-Barometer, a public opinion

research programme conducted by RAI Consultants Public Ltd which monitors Cypriot attitudes indicates that in November-December 2004, 68% of Greek Cypriots believe that there will be no solution in the foreseeable future, while only 23% appear optimistic. Some 40% of the respondents said that the withdrawal of the Turkish troops is the first requirement for any solution, and about 25% demand guarantees for their security from any Turkish threat and the departure of all Turkish settlers. Interestingly only 17% consider that the return of the refugees is a necessary condition for an acceptable solution and only 11% demand that the refugees should be able to take possession of their properties.

In April 2005, the Turkish Cypriot community went to the polls to elect a president, and this time the veteran leader Rauf Denktash, always considered as a maximalist and hardliner by Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots alike, did not stand. The winner was the leader of the Turkish Republican Party Mehmet Ali Talat who began his political career as a social democrat but since his appointment as Prime Minister in December 2002 he had occupied a centrist position in most policy areas and clearly had the support of the AKP government in Ankara. He is much more moderate than Denktash could ever be and he is willing to enter into negotiations with President Papadopoulos for the conclusion of a new, but not greatly changed Annan Plan. But now the Greek Cypriots have a maximalist leader.