

Foreign Press on Cyprus



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SOCIALIST TRUTH IN CYPRUS

Volume XI

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INTRODUCTION

An important article on the looting of church treasures from churches in the occupied part of Cyprus is featured in the magazine Archaeology July/August 198. The article entitled "Church Treasures of Cyprus" by Mark Rose gives an account of the arrest of Aydin Dikman, "a central figure in the looting and selling of church treasures." The article begins with the following: "After the occupation of northern Cyprus by Turkish forces in 1974, looters stripped the region's churches removing several dozen major frescoes and mosaics dating from the sixth to the fifteenth century, an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 icons and thousands of chalices, wood carvings, crucifixes and bibles. Recovery efforts by the Church of Cyprus have resulted in the return of some pieces through acquisition, trial and seizure."

Another important article in The Times, 27.8.98 entitled "Turks risk clash with Europe on human rights", by Charles Bremmer refers to the European Court of Human Rights' decision in Strasbourg "to pay heavy compensation to a Cypriot woman for property seized in the invasion of northern Cyprus". The article adds: "In an unprecedented step for a member of the Council of Europe, Turkey has rejected the landmark ruling..." Charles Bremmer then notes that «no member of the 40-nation council including Turkey has previously failed to comply with a compensation order from its human rights court."

Breach of the decision the article adds could lead to the expulsion of the offending state from the council. The article concludes, however, that Europe is expected to tread delicately in view of the crisis between Ankara and the 15 states of the European Union.

The Irish Times, in an article on 6.8.98 deals with the issue of the persons who are missing since the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus. Julia Langdon criticizes the fact that "there has been no international outcry over what has happened to the 1,619 people who went missing during the invasion» and says that "The Turkish authorities provided lists of prisoners they intended to release but who were never seen. The Red Cross produced lists of missing people who are in detention centres. But no pressure has been exerted to find out what has happened to them."

IRISH PRESS

Newspaper: Irish Times, 14.7.98

Title: *Clerides affirms missiles deal in Kremlin meeting*

By: Michel Jansen

Cyprus: At a meeting in the Kremlin yesterday, President Glafkos Clerides of Cyprus and President Yeltsin expressed their determination to deploy S-300 surface-to-air missiles in Cyprus.

This high-level reconfirmation of the 1997 deal, intended to bolster the republic's defences against Turkish attack, ignored threats from Turkey to "take out" the missiles and opposition to their deployment from the US, the UN and the EU.

Before leaving for Moscow, Mr Clerides reiterated his offer to cancel or suspend the missile deal if there was progress either in the UN-sponsored negotiations for the reunification of the country in a bizonal, bicommunal federation or towards demilitarisation.

Cyprus has been designated by the UN as the most militarised territory on the face of the globe. Mr Clerides postponed delivery of the S-300s from August to November to give the international community time to meet his conditions but Turkey has turned down both talks and demilitarisation.

The US Secretary of State, Mrs Madeleine Albright, last week sent Mr Clerides a letter suggesting Russian short-range SA-15 anti-aircraft missiles as an alternative to the longer-range S-300s which the Turks claim pose a danger to military aircraft operating in mainland Turkish airspace.

Turkey pre-empted Mr Clerides's response by promptly rejecting Mrs Albright's proposal, arguing that the SA-15s would prevent Turkey from protecting the Turkish-Cypriots.

In the past few days the Turkish side has stepped up its verbal campaign against the S-300 deal. The Turkish chief-of-staff, Gen Ismail Karadayi, on a visit to Turkish-occupied northern Cyprus, called the deal a "provocation" and said that "responses to this irresponsibility are being worked out".

The Turkish Prime Minister, Mr Mesut Yilmaz, said: "If the Greeks

Clerides affirms missiles deal in Kremlin meeting

By Michael Jansen, Nicosia

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deploy missiles, so will we.... tension will increase... and armed conflict could arise and we won't be the losers."

As Greece has a defence pact with Cyprus this could mean a Graeco-Turkish war which could ignite the Balkans tinderbox.

Ankara has also a defence pact with Cyprus this could mean a Graeco-Turkish war which could ignite the Balkans tinderbox.

Ankara has also dismissed a proposal put forward by Athens for the suspension of the missile deal in exchange for the creation of a NATO-enforced "no-fly" zone banning Turkish and Greek military aircraft from Cypriot airspace.

Washington, which is way of the "no-fly" zone proposition, put forward a proposal for a NATO-monitored, Security Council-supervised "moratorium" on such flights.

With the aim of heading off a crisis if the missiles are delivered in November, the EU envoy to Cyprus, Sir David Hannay, will visit the island on July 21st. The US State Department's co-ordinator, Mr Thomas Miller, is due in Cyprus at the end of the month.

Church Treasures of Cyprus

Triumphant recovery of stolen Byzantine masterpieces is only a first step in rescuing them.

by MARK ROSE

AFTER THE OCCUPATION of northern Cyprus by Turkish forces in 1974, looters stripped the region's churches, removing several dozen major frescoes and mosaics dating from the sixth to the fifteenth century, an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 icons, and thousands of chalices, wood carvings, crucifixes, and bibles. Recovery efforts by the Church of Cyprus and the Republic of Cyprus have resulted in the return of some pieces through acquisition, trial, and seizure.

A major break came this past October when Munich police arrested 60-year-old Aydin Dikman, a central figure in the looting and selling of the church treasures. The cooperation of Dikman's former associate, Dutch art dealer Michel van Rijn, with Cypriot and German authorities made the arrest possible. By his own account, van Rijn, who claims descent from both Rembrandt and Rubens and has been convicted in France of forging Chagall's signature, had realized the error of his ways and wished to make amends by helping recover the artworks.

In apartments owned and rented by Dikman, police found Cypriot frescoes, mosaics, and icons, as well as Bronze Age figurines, ancient coins, Precolumbian pottery, stolen paintings, and an unauthenticated Picasso. Police estimate the artworks and artifacts to be worth more than \$60 million. If convicted of possessing and trafficking in stolen goods, Dikman faces up to 15 years in jail in Germany. Cyprus has requested his extradition.

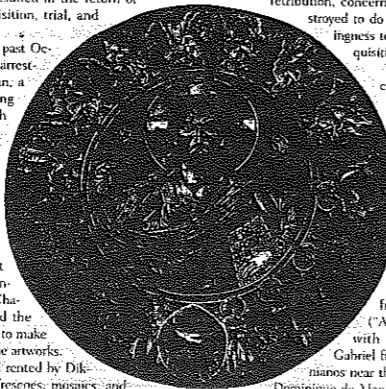
Dikman's participation in the depredation of Cypriot heritage in the occupied part of the island was suspected as early as 1982, when reporter Mehmet Yasin, in the Turkish Cypriot weekly magazine *Olay*, identified him as an antiquities smuggler. It was not until 1989 that the extent of his role became somewhat clearer through testimony in the Goldberg case, a

legal battle in federal court in Indianapolis over Byzantine mosaics from Cyprus. That nearly nine years passed before his arrest can be explained partly by Dikman's efforts to keep a low profile, working through dealers and seldom meeting directly with those who purchased items from him. Furthermore, those who knew that he was selling looted Cypriot artworks did not reveal his identity to authorities out of fear of personal retribution, concern that antiquities would be destroyed to do away with evidence, or unwillingness to jeopardize potential future acquisitions.

There have been three major recoveries of church treasures, and in each case the artworks, particularly the frescoes and mosaics, have been damaged and are in urgent need of conservation.

The first recovery came in the mid-1980s when the Menil Foundation of Houston, with Cypriot government and church authority approval, purchased from Dikman the thirteenth-century frescoes of Christ Pantokrator ("All Sovereign") and the Virgin with the archangels Michael and Gabriel from the Church of St. Theomantanos near the village of Lysi. In June 1983 Dominique de Menil, Walter Hupps (then director of the Menil Collection), and Yanni Petsopoulos, a London dealer acting as an intermediary, met Dikman in Munich and examined two fresco fragments in one of his apartments. Dikman claimed the frescoes were from a ruined church in southern Turkey that was bulldozed during construction of a resort. They suspected that Dikman was lying, and in late June, the foundation engaged Herbert Brownell, a former United States attorney general, to investigate the legality of the acquisition. Brownell sent an inquiry letter and photographs of the fres-

The thirteenth-century fresco of Christ Pantokrator ("All Sovereign") from the Church of St. Theomantanos



U. S. PRESS

Magazine: *Archaeology*, July/August 1998

Title: *Church Treasures of Cyprus*

By: Mark Rose

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The fragments were sent from Munich to London, where conservator Laurence J. Morrocco worked on them. The fresco of Christ Pantokrator had been cut from the church dome in 26 pieces, the Virgin from the apse in 12. Restoring them was nearly impossible because there were no measurements of the original structure (the church, in a military zone in the occupied area, was considered inaccessible), and the fresco fragments had lost their original curvature. To reconstruct the dome and apse, it was first necessary to determine their exact size and shape, then the appropriate curvature could be restored to the fragments so they would fit together on the curved surfaces. The process took three and one-half years.

In November 1987, as the restoration was nearing completion, Morrocco traveled to occupied Cyprus and surreptitiously visited the church to measure the dome and apse. He described what he found in a 1991 account of his work.

It was very strange for me to see the place where the frescoes had come from. It was as if it had just happened: the saw cuts were still visible in the plaster left behind when the fragments were ripped off. I could see how the thieves had cut crudely around the circumference of the base of the dome, leaving the angels' ankles and feet on the wall. Small pieces of the fresco lay scattered around the floor amidst dirt, straw, and sheep droppings.

Once the frescoes were reassembled, decisions had to be made about treating the damaged areas. The saw cuts were restored as invisibly as possible, but the larger missing areas, such as those around the base of the dome and in the lower part of the apse, were filled in with a dark color.

In April 1988, the reconstructed dome and apse frescoes were packed into large crates for the flight to Houston. In November 1997, nearly 14 after they were bought from Dikman, the restored frescoes, housed in a specially constructed chapel consecrated by Archbishop Chrysostomos I, were put on display. According to a deposition taken for the Goldberg trial, Petsopoulos had offered the frescoes to the foundation for \$850,000; the final price has not been disclosed. The conservation costs, according to Cypriot sources, were about \$1 million.

During their 1983 trip to Dikman's apartment in Munich, Hopps and Petsopoulos had noticed a mosaic rondel that the latter subsequently identified as coming from the Church of the Panagia Kanakaria at Lythrankomi. The Kanakaria mosaics, depictions of Christ, the Virgin, archangels, and the apostles decorating the church's apse, were created ca. 525-530. They are among the few sixth-century works to have escaped an eighth-century iconoclastic period during which such images were systematically destroyed in the Byzantine Empire. The church, in northern Cyprus, was stripped between the summer of 1976, when the priest was expelled, and 1979, when an English tourist reported to Cypriot authorities that it had been looted. According to Hopp's deposition for the Goldberg trial, Petsopoulos told him that later in 1983 he had urged Dikman to return the mosaic. According to Petsopoulos, Dikman gave him four rondels, some small pieces of mosaic, and a sack of loose tesserae, swearing that was all he had. The mosaics were returned to Cyprus on November 30, 1984. Two ron-

dels proved to be modern fakes, but the other two, depicting St. Bartholomew and St. Luke, and several fragments of the surrounding decorative frieze, were from Kanakaria. Badly damaged, these were placed in the Byzantine Museum in Nicosia after two years of conservation.

In 1988, Indianapolis art dealer Peg Goldberg bought four Kanakaria mosaics - the archangel Michael, the upper half of Christ as a child, and the apostles Matthew and James - from Dikman, van Rijn, and American dealer Robert Fitzgerald for about \$ 1 million. Goldberg attempted to resell the mosaics to museums in the United States for \$20 million, but J. Paul Getty Museum curator Marion True alerted Karageorghis. The Church of Cyprus and the Republic of Cyprus sued for their return in federal court in Indianapolis and won. In her testimony, Goldberg described the mosaics when she saw them in person at the Geneva airport:

They were very dull and it was very apparent that they... had numerous fissures, or splits, in them, that they were just marginally held together with glue.. they were so fragile that when I bent down to start to touch them, thinking maybe I was going to lift it up to look at the back, literally a piece... separated in my hand.

Conservators Catherine Sease of the Field Museum and Danae Thimme of Indiana University, asked by the Cypriot church and government to assess their condition, concluded that the mosaics had been damaged in five discrete phases beginning with their removal from the apse. The facing - a fabric and adhesive layer applied to a mosaic or fresco to reinforce it during removal, had been ripped off without dissolving the adhesive - loosening many tesserae and pulling off the surfaces of others. The mosaics cracked as they were flown, inadequately packed, from Munich to Geneva and then to Indianapolis. Restoration work, commissioned by Goldberg in an effort to make the mosaics salable, did further damage. Sease and Thimme's assessment, in a 1995 article, is damning:

The restorer clearly did not understand the materials he was working on... He knew nothing about the technology involved and does not seem to have felt that an understanding of it might have proved helpful in choosing a restoration treatment. Thus, the most fundamental aspect of the appearance of the mosaics, namely that they had all been mounted on curved walls, and therefore were meant to be curved, was ignored. Much time and effort went into producing as flat and rigid a surface as possible.

After this restoration, the mosaics were sent, in attempts to sell them, on flights across the Atlantic and within the United States, causing hair-line cracks along earlier mends. In 1991, after Goldberg's appeal failed, they were returned to Cyprus. They are now in the Byzantine Museum in Nicosia.

In February 1997, van Rijn approached Tasoulla L. Georgiou-Hadjitofi, honorary consul of Cyprus in The Hague and representative of the Church of Cyprus for stolen art, offering to help buy back mosaics and frescoes. Van Rijn's first effort yielded the mosaic rondel of St. Thaddeus from Kanakaria, which he brought to the Cypriot consulate in The Hague on September 5. The following day he purchased, via intermediaries, 25 frescoes from Dikman for \$75,000. Athanasios Papageorghiou, an authority on Byzantine art and advisor to the Church of Cyprus, identified the frescoes as coming from the Church of Christ Antiphonitis near the village of Kalogera in northern Cyprus. Built in the twelfth century, it was decorated in the fifteenth century with frescoes of the Tree of Jesse (a pictorial genealogy of the Virgin) and the Last Judgment. In 1976, an English reporter informed the church that the frescoes had been removed; this was confirmed by an Anglican priest in 1979. That same year a diplomat brought to Cypriot authorities pieces of cloth from the church to which fresco fragments adhered, evidence of failed attempts to remove some of the paintings. Van Rijn then purchased an additional seven Antiphonitis frescoes for \$49,000.

Having recovered 32 frescoes and one mosaic, Georgiou Hadjitofi decided to move on Dikman. On October 10, police struck, raiding two apartments and arresting Dikman. Police hit a third apartment, rented by Dikman under a false name, on November 26. Among the artworks seized were more Antiphonitis frescoes and the St. Thomas Kanakaria mosaic.

The 32 Antiphonitis frescoes and the mosaic of St. Thaddeus recovered by Georgiou - Hadjitofi, which were temporarily exhibited in The Hague, were returned to Cyprus on December 22, 1997, and put on display in the Byzantine Museum. Conservation and possible reconstruction of the Antiphonitis frescoes is on hold until the additional pieces seized in Munich are released by German police. According to Papageorghiou once the mosaic St. Thomas is returned, the apse of the Panagia Kanakaria church may be re-created in the Byzantine Museum to give visitors an idea of what the mosaics looked like in their original setting.

July 31, 1998

On Dry, Divided Island of Cyprus, 'Just Add Water' Only Raises Heat

Michael Theodoulou

OUR dinner guests were due in two hours when calamity struck. The washing machine was stuck in mid-cycle, dishes were piled up in the kitchen sink, and tiny snails speckled the unwashed lettuce. Our water had run out.

Cyprus is suffering one of its worst droughts this century, making water shortages the most pressing problem after the cold war with Turkey. Reservoirs are less than 15 percent full, rains are not due for weeks, and rationing means the mains are opened just three nights a week.

Most of the island's 630,000 Greek Cypriots depend on two water-intensive activities: tourism and agriculture.

Now, perhaps for the first time, some are looking a little enviously across the island's dividing line. Because of their international isolation and a European Union embargo on their products, Turkish Cypriots earn on average four times less than Greek Cypriots - but at least their acute drought is being solved.

Turkey, one of the few water-rich countries in the region, is tugging huge, Moby Dick-size balloons of drinking water 60 miles across the Mediterranean to northern Cyprus. Turkish President Suleiman Demirel visited July 25 to inaugurate the extraordinary project amid great fanfare.

Three of the balloons, each more than 300 feet long, 80 feet wide, and swollen with 350,000 cubic feet of water - enough to fill about 150 backyard-style swimming pools - are due to make the journey each week. Ultimately, a total of 245 million cubic feet of water is to be delivered.

Turkey also plans to lay a pipeline under the sea to provide irrigation water for parched northern Cyprus. There could be no better symbol of the umbilical cord that exists between the Turkish motherland and its tiny protectorate.

In 1974, Turkey invaded northern Cyprus following a coup by right-wing Greek Cypriots. Greek Cypriots now plan to deploy Russian-made antiaircraft missiles in November. Turkey has threatened to knock them out, and since Greece has a defense pact with Cyprus, this could ignite a Greco-Turkish war.

Turkish Cypriots in recent months have been forging ever-closer links to Turkey, making the island's

U.S. PRESS

Newspaper: The Christian Science Monitor, 10. 8.98

Title: *On dry, divided island of Cyprus, 'Just Add Water' only raises heat*

By: Michael Theodoulou

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Turkish Cypriots in recent months have been forging ever-closer links to Turkey, making the island's reunification look more unlikely. Many Turkish Cypriots view the water deal as a sign that northern Cyprus, recognized only by Turkey, can at last survive as a separate state, albeit with crucial Turkish help.

Mr. Demirel said the deliveries were "just the beginning" of northern Cyprus's economic integration with his country. Last week, Turkey also announced it was integrating the Turkish Cypriot telephone system. Turkish officials say they are retaliating against the European Union's decision last December to begin accession talks with Cyprus, which is represented internationally by the Greek Cypriots.

International mediators used to take some comfort in the fact that necessity forced Greek and Turkish Cypriots to share some resources, which would help to build trust. The Greek Cypriots provided the north's electricity free of charge and water pipes still cross the island. The sides worked together on a sewage-treatment plant for Nicosia.

But for two years, the Turkish Cypriots have been self-sufficient in electricity, thanks to a huge power plant completed with Turkey's help. Now, Rauf Denktash, the Turkish Cypriot leader, has offered to share the water with the Greek Cypriots in return for "good neighborly" relations. Tantalizing as the offer may be, it will be rejected. Mr. Denktash implied his offer was conditional on the Greek Cypriots recognizing his breakaway state. Some Greek Cypriots ask, only half in jest, how they would know the water has not been poisoned.

BRITISH PRESS

Newspaper: The Times, 27. 8. 98

Title: *Turks risk clash with Europe on human rights*

By: Charles Bremmer

Turkey is heading for a new collision with Europe after an order to Ankara from the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg to pay heavy compensation to a Cypriot woman for property seized in the invasion of northern Cyprus.

In an unprecedented step for a member of the Council of Europe, Turkey has rejected the landmark ruling which opens the way to huge claims by Greek Cypriots forced to leave their homes in the 1974 invasion and for claims by dispossessed Turkish Cypriots against the Government in Nicosia.

No member of the 40-nation council, including Turkey, has previously failed to comply with a compensation order from its human rights court. Breach of the underlying Human Rights Convention can, in theory, lead to the expulsion of the offending state, but Europe is expected to tread delicately in view of the crisis between Ankara and the 15 states of the European Union. Turkey has, in effect, cut off dialogue with the EU after its exclusion from entry talks, while Cyprus and ten European states have been accepted as future members.

Yiannakis Cassoulides, the Cypriot Foreign Minister, said his Government would seek Turkey's expulsion from the council. Rauf Denktas, the leader of the breakaway northern republic, has demanded a reversal of the Strasbourg decision as a condition for returning to the United Nations peace talks with the Greek Cypriot Government on the future of the divided island.

However, some diplomats believe the pressure from the Council of Europe, with the threat of huge costs for Turkey and Turkish Cypriot claims against Nicosia, could help to ease the two sides back to the negotiations, which were suspended a year ago.

Ending a legal wrangle that began in 1989, the Strasbourg judges refused on July 30 to accept Turkey's argument that the self-proclaimed Republic of Northern Cyprus was sovereign state. They ordered Ankara as the occupying power to pay £432,000 to Titina

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Turks risk clash with Europe on human rights

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

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Loizidou, a Nicosia tour guide, as compensation for depriving her of land and a flat at Kyrenia, in breach of Article 1 of the Convention.

In a move depicted as historic by Greek Cypriots, the court ordered Turkey to end the breach by giving Mrs Loizidou free access to her property. She was the first Cypriot to make use of Turkey's acceptance of individual petitions to Strasbourg in 1990.

Achilleas Demetriades, her lawyer, said yesterday that the Loizidou case opened the way to claims from about 200,000 Greek Cypriots who have been deprived of their property. Using the formula of the Strasbourg judges, this would cost Ankara \$1 billion (£600 million) a year in compensation, he said.

While the Cyprus Government hailed the ruling as a precedent for all Greek Cypriot refugees who fled the north in the wake of the invasion, Ankara insisted that it had nothing to do with the case. "Turkey does not exercise any act of public authority in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus," it said.

A question of identity in northern Cyprus

A bust of the founder of modern Turkey, Kemal Ataturk, takes pride of place in the square which marks the centre of this old Turkish Cypriot village, writes **Chris Morris** in Ser Darli, northern Cyprus.

It reminds everyone that without Turkey's huge financial and military support, the self-declared Turkish Cypriot republic would cease to exist. Around the edge of the square, groups of men sit outside small cafes, mulling over the events of the day.

Their Greek neighbours have long gone, forced out in the often brutal population exchange in the 1960s and 1970s.

"Turkey is our motherland," said the village mayor, Mr Erdin Sutcuogullari, "but we came here 400 years before the Turkish people who arrived recently. We have a better understanding of modern democracy."

There's general agreement that this is a separate culture - a mingling of Turkish and Cypriot traditions. There is also an undercurrent of concern in some quarters that this separate sense of identity is gradually withering away.

Tens of thousands of mainland Turks have settled on Cyprus since the Turkish invasion in 1974 formalised the division, but the Turkish Cypriot administration insists that there is no deliberate policy of colonisation.

"This may be something alleged by the Greeks to mislead the world, but it has nothing to do with reality," the Turkish Cypriot Interior Minister, Mr Ilkay Kamil, says.

The settlers do play a significant role, however. They provide the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mr Rauf Denktash, with the backbone of his political support.

As recent immigrants, they have little interest in a solution which would see Cyprus reunited under a federal system, and they approve of Mr Denktash's hard line approach to any future negotiations. "Mr Denktash believes that

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Newspaper: Irish Times, 21. 7. 98

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By: Chris Morris

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The settlers do play a significant role, however. They provide the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mr Rauf Denktash, with the backbone of his political support.

As recent immigrants, they have little interest in a solution which would see Cyprus reunited under a federal system, and they approve of Mr Denktash's hard line approach to any future negotiations. "Mr Denktash believes that Turkish Cypriots are Turks living in Cyprus",

said the opposition politician, Mr Mehmet Ali Talat.

"This is not our view, we believe in a distinct identity. But it is becoming harder to maintain." That is true in all walks of life. Newspapers from the mainland outsell their local rivals, and if you want to buy a paper you pay in Turkish lira, the legal tender in northern Cyprus. Telephone numbers and postal addresses are also part of the Turkish national system.

Much of this is done out of necessity - a response to the international isolation imposed on the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Some residents believe it goes deeper, though, and they fear that Turkish Cypriot schools no longer teach enough about their own history and culture.

Most Turkish Cypriots are too polite to mention that they also blame recent immigrants for a sharp rise in crime. Cars and houses whose doors always stood open are now carefully locked at night.

Despite these misgivings, however, most Turkish Cypriots remain deeply grateful to Turkey for the 35,000 troops it has stationed on the island, and for hundreds of millions of pounds in financial assistance.

Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots have promised to move towards even closer integration as long as the Greek Cypriot government pursues its membership application to the EU.

Many Turkish Cypriots see no way out of the impasse, and questions about a political solution on Cyprus are often met with a resigned shrug of the shoulders. As the stalemate drags on, the old links with Greek Cypriots get weaker with each passing year.

"Of course our closest links are with Turkey," said Mr Yurda kul Cafer a student walking with his friends on a Nicosia street. "It is the only country which recognises our right to exist." The path towards a permanent division of the island is clear, and political flexibility is in short supply.

IRISH PRESS

Newspaper: Irish Times, 6.8.98

Title: *Questions asked at last about 'disappeared'*

By: Julia Langdon

On July 21st, 1974, the day after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, Stavros Kallis, a Greek Cypriot from Famagusta, was arrested by Turkish forces and taken away. He was 21. He has never been seen since.

Nearly 24 years later, a lifetime away in London, his sister, Katerina Petrides, sits weeping as she describes the pain her family have suffered. Her mother still lays a place for her son at every meal. Her father's last words as he lay dying were: "Where is my son?"

It is a sorrow the family share with many other Greek Cypriots: 1,619 people went missing after the invasion. Nothing is known about them now and this ignorance about their fate produces a particular sort of misery which does not diminish over the years.

There have been years of silence from the Turkish government about the fate of the missing Greek Cypriots and, oddly, an international silence about the events, too.

After the democratic Allende government was swept away by the Pinochet regime in Chile, international outrage about the violation of human rights centred on the 15,000 people who "disappeared".

Even though Cyprus is rather closer to home than Chile and despite the fact that the Turkish zone of northern Cyprus has remained a popular holiday destination for wealthy western Europeans - there has been no outcry over what has happened to the 1,619.

It is a smaller number, of course, than those who "disappeared" in Chile, but then the population of Cyprus is only half a million. It is a humanitarian problem and one Turkey has not been asked to explain.

The Turkish authorities provided lists of prisoners they intended to release, but who were never seen. The Red Cross produced lists of "missing" people who are in Turkish detention centres. But no pressure

Questions asked at last about 'disappeared'

CYPRUS LETTER/Julia Langdon

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has been exerted to find out what has happened to them.

Questions are at last being asked, however. The issue came even more sharply into focus earlier this year when Turkey boycotted the London summit of the first European Conference and, in doing so, in effect put at risk the entire programme of enlargement of the EU precisely because of the unsettled Cypriot question.

One British Labour MP, Ann Keen, first noticed a group of exiled Greek Cypriot women last summer, on one of their periodic small demonstrations outside the House of Commons to mark the anniversary of the Turkish invasion.

She was shocked by the lack of attention the case has attracted and resolved to fight for some sort of resolution to the problem. She has taken up the matter with the British Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, and asked for a meeting with him to discuss it.

"I promised those I met that I would do my best to get them some answers. I find it outrageous that this is happening and nothing is being done about it," she says.

"I think it is something we should know more about here, not least because so many people regularly go for their holidays to Cyprus without even being aware of what has occurred."

The women who met Ms Keen do not understand why their circumstances have not previously attracted political attention. They have tried to put pressure on Turkey through the UN, the Greek Cypriot government and the International Red Cross.

All to no avail.

"No one can communicate with Turkey," Ms Petrides says. "Turkey and human rights do not go together. We are told nothing except that they are all dead, which we do not accept. We want evidence. We want to know the truth."

The stories are all different in detail and harrowingly similar in reality. Yiannoulla Odysseos's brother was captured by Turkish troops and reported to have been held in a labour camp.

He was an engineer and there was a story that he had been seen working at an airport. But the last sighting of him was in 1978, 20 years ago.

"We assume he was transferred to another labour camp in mainland Turkey" she says. "We still live in hope that we will see him again and pray every day for God to keep him well." -

Envoy upbeat on restarting talks process

By Michael Jansen

The UN's chief envoy to Cyprus, Mr Diego Cordovez, hopes talks between the two communities on the island will resume in the autumn once he finds a "reasonable, practical and fair" formula acceptable to both sides.

Mr Cordovez was speaking at the end of a three-day mission aimed at defusing tension caused by Turkish threats to "take out" Russian missiles if they are deployed by the Greek-Cypriots. Mr Cordovez, a former Ecuadorean foreign minister who served as UN mediator during the Afghan conflict, spoke of "progress" and said his discussions with Cypriot leaders were "positive, substantive and constructive".

He said "both sides are interested" in finding a formula for the resumption of negotiations leading to reunification of the island in a bizonal, bicomunal federation. He insisted that such talks should be "sustained" rather than on the former "stop-and-start" pattern.

Ahead of his visit, analysts on both sides of the Green Line had expressed deep pessimism about the possibility of progress because of the hard line adopted by the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mr Rauf Denktash. He refuses to return to UN-sponsored negotiations unless his breakaway statelet is granted diplomatic recognition and the Cyprus government suspends membership talks with the EU. These demands are rejected by the Greek-Cypriots and the EU. Although Mr Denktash made it clear that he had nothing new to say to the envoy, Mr Cordovez said that a distinction should be made between "the real story and soap opera". Mr Cordovez will report to the council today and return to the island in September. "There is very deep concern in the Security Council about what is going on here," he stated. "The whole atmosphere in the Eastern Mediterranean [between Greece and Turkey] will improve if we have a process going." His aim is to restart the process ahead of the arrival in the Greek-Cypriot south in November of the Russian air defence system, considered a *casus belli* by Turkey.

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Contact: itwired@irish-times.com

Newspaper: Irish Times, 6.7.98

Title: *Cyprus: Envoy upbeat on restarting talks process*

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Greek Cypriots grieve for 'missing' men

Michele Kambas in Nicosia, and Julie Langdon, in London, spoke to mothers and wives still mourning their menfolk 24 years after they 'disappeared'.

Ms Panayiota Solomi wipes the beads of perspiration away from her forehead as she sits under a plastic canopy in Nicosia's scorching mid-day heat, relating memories of the past that have become a living nightmare.

In 1974, her son, Solomis, wanted to finish school and go to university. His parents wanted him to take over the family farm. In the end, neither happened.

Solomis was 17 when he was detained with his father, Pavlos, by Turkish forces on August 15th, 1974, at Komi Keppir village in the south-eastern Famagusta district. His mother has not seen either of them since.

"They took us away in a truck from our homes. The women and children were allowed to leave but they kept the men for questioning. I haven't heard from them since," she says.

The Solomis story is similar to those of other women who have been a permanent fixture at Nicosia's Ledra Palace checkpoint for the past two years, demanding to know the fate of some 1,600 Greek Cypriots missing since 1974.

The missing persons issue is the most poignant to Cypriots, divided along ethnic Greek and Turkish lines since Turkish forces invaded the island in July 1974 after a short-lived Greek Cypriot coup engineered by the military junta then ruling Greece. Turkish Cypriots say some 800 members of their own community are missing from intercommunal clashes which broke out between the two sides in the early 1960s. The Turkish side, arguing that the intervention was in keeping with the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee, describes the 1974 intervention as a peace operation which prevented the imminent genocide of Turkish Cypriots and foiled plans for the annexation of the island by Greece.

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IRISH PRESS

Newspaper: Irish Times, 21.7.98

Title: *Greek Cypriots grieve for "missing men"*

By: Michele Kambas and Julie London

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A glimmer of hope about the fate of the missing was dashed last month

when a deal hammered out between the two sides to exchange information on the whereabouts of mass graves fell through. The Greek Cypriot side accused the Turkish Cypriots of blocking the deal by demanding that people killed during the coup be removed from the list of the missing. The Greek Cypriots say all those missing on their side disappeared from the day of the invasion onwards.

"They took my baby alive. I just want to know what happened to him," said Ms Maroulla Kozakos. "Baby", the Cypriot affectionate term for child, was Yiannakis, a 14-year-old in the second grade of high school. He was the youngest of a group of men rounded up at the village of Karavas in northern Cyprus on July 20th, 1974.

The day after the invasion, Stavros Kallis, a Greek Cypriot from Famagusta, was arrested by Turkish forces and taken away. He was 21. He has never been seen since.

Twenty-four years later, a lifetime away in London, his sister, Mrs Katerina Petrides, weeps as she describes the pain her family has suffered. Her mother still lays a place for her son at every meal. Her father's last words as he lay dying were: "where is my son?"

The Turkish authorities provided lists of prisoners they intended to release, but the people in question were never seen. The Red Cross has produced lists of "missing" people who are in Turkish detention centres but no pressure has been exerted to find out what has happened to them.

Greek Cypriot women living in Britain have demonstrated outside the House of Commons and have tried to put pressure on Turkey through the UN, the Greek Cypriot government and the Red Cross. "No one can communicate with Turkey", Ms Petrides says. "Turkey and human rights do not go together. We are told nothing except that they are all dead, which we do not accept. We want evidence. We want to know the truth."

BRITISH PRESS

Newspaper: The Guardian, 27.8.98

Title: *Turkey defies Europe over compensation for Cyprus seizure*

By: Martin Walker

Turkey could be expelled from the Council of Europe for saying it will defy a European Court of Human Rights ruling that it should compensate a Greek Cypriot tourist guide for the loss of her home after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974.

Already at loggerheads with the European Union, which has refused to make it a candidate for membership, Turkey is now on a collision course with the one European body to which it does belong, just as the United States and Britain are working to lock it into the European system.

Ankara has officially denounced the court judgment, saying it "lacks the means of applicability or of implementation". But the Council of Europe's committee of ministers is legally required to enforce the court's rulings, and the stage is set for confrontation when it meets in Strasbourg on September 14.

The test case was brought in 1989 by Titina Loizidou under Article 50 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which states: "Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions."

Having decided that the Turkish authorities violated her rights by denying her access to her property — some plots of land and an unfinished apartment building — the court has awarded her compensation of 300,000 Cyprus pounds, plus 20,000 pounds in "normal damages" and 137,000 pounds costs, amounting in all to £544,000.

"I am not so much interested in the money, because what I miss of my home in Kyrenia cannot be counted in money," Mrs Loizidou said in Nicosia yesterday.

"I inherited this land of olive and carob trees from my grandfather and we can trace our roots back for five generations. I hope this court verdict is a victory for human rights for all Cypriots, Greek as well as Turkish."

In roubles Turkey defies Europe over compensation for Cyprus seizure

Martin Walker unravels a human rights ruling

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Enforcing this judgment is not a battle the Council of Europe wants to fight. It has always said the place to resolve the Cyprus dispute is the United Nations-sponsored talks between the Greek and Turkish communities on the island.

But the ruling forces it to make Turkey comply, or sabotage the authority of the court.

"The stakes are very high," a council spokesman said yesterday. "Given the importance of the court and of human rights to this organisation, it

EU states, can suspend or expel a member which defies the court, a sanction applied against Greece 30 years ago when it was under military rule. So far, no member state has failed to obey a Court of Human Rights decision.

Even if the council tries for political reasons to duck or to defer the issue, the ruling entitles Mrs Loizidou to ask any court in Europe to help enforce the judgment. Lawyers in Cyprus are now looking at seizable assets such as Turkish Airlines property and aircraft. Ankara is planning to privatise the airline, and the legal threat could affect the sale price.

"Turkey has no jurisdiction on the island," a Turkish embassy spokesman in London said. "Even though the court may condemn Turkey, we will not pay the money and will apply for an appeal."

The Cypriot attorney-general, Alekos Markides, says the ruling is of "historic significance", and hundreds of similar cases are now in the pipeline: up to 200,000 Greek Cypriots may have legal grounds to join them. On the basis of Mrs Loizidou's award, the eventual compensa-

tion of access, the court put the blame squarely on Turkey, thus rejecting the Turkish claim that the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus was the legal authority concerned.

The TRNC, denounced by Cyprus as a Turkish puppet regime, is recognised as a state only by Turkey.

The Turkish government, beset by Islamic fundamentalists and nationalists, and Westernisers who want to join the EU, has little room to manoeuvre. Delaying the court would strengthen the hand of Greek and other critics who claim that Turkey's human rights record makes it unfit to apply for EU membership.

The legal strategy was devised by Mrs Loizidou's Cypriot lawyer, Achilles Demetriades, a member of the British bar, after he spent a month of work experience at the Court of Human Rights 10 years ago.

"This case shows that the system works, and that the Court of Human Rights lived up to its name," he said yesterday. "In the event that Turkey does not pay, we will have to consider taking legal action in a Council of Europe member state in order to enforce the court's judgment."

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PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW MALISEY

... rine trade, buying dollars over sell, shut up shop. If a dollar today is worth 100 roubles, which would be worth 20 or in a week it could be 100.

... manager. With the prospect of a worthless rouble, trade is shrinking to a halt. "The rouble is being converted into a receipt manna-facturer," said a Russian advertising executive. "No one

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The council, whose 40 members include Cyprus, Greece and Russia as well as all the EU states, can suspended or expel a member which defies the court: a sanction applied against Greece 30 years ago when it was under military rule. So far, no member state has failed to obey a Court of Human Rights decision.

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But the political implications of the judgment outweigh the money. In addition to awarding compensation for the denial of access, the court put the blame squarely on Turkey, thus rejecting the Turkish claim that the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus was the legal authority concerned.

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This would probably not be Britain since the Convention on Human Rights has not yet been fully incorporated into British law.

Spanish Press

Magazine: Memoria, September 1998

Title: *Chipre. La sombra de los Balcanes*

By: Jose Angel Leyra

Chipre representa una cadena legendaria de invasiones, de influencias, de mezclas culturales, aunque siempre ha permanecido y predominado lo griego. Asirios, egipcios y persas la dominaron de manera consecutiva. Tuvo su época romana y fue un centro fundamental de la cultura y el imperio bizantino, por la cual se fusionó al mundo cristiano ortodoxo - griego. Ricardo Corazón de León, en su paso Tierra Santa, la conquistó para dejarla luego en manos de la Orden de los Templarios. Francia y Venecia impusieron su presencia antes de que, en 1571, el Imperio Otomano la agregara a sus dominios. Los turcos la mantuvieron en su poder durante tres siglos, hasta 1878, cuando la cedieron a la Gran Bretaña para protegerla de la expansión de la Rusia zarista. En agosto de 1960, los movimientos independentistas chipriotas lograron su objetivo y constituyeron la República de Chipre, liberándola del colonialismo británico, pero cediendo a dicha potencia 240 kilómetros cuadrados para el asentamiento de sus bases militares.

Chipre es una isla de dualidades. Habitada desde siglos por dos pueblos que representan esencialmente dos culturas, la griega y la turca, dos idiomas, griego y turco, y dos religiones, la cristiana ortodoxa y la musulmana, contiene además una historia llena de símbolos que confirman dicho rasgo. Hoy, más que una dualidad, Chipre es un territorio dividido y confrontado, desde que el ejército turco iniciara la ocupación, en 1974, del 37 por ciento de la isla y levantara un muro en el corazón de la capital de Chipre, Nicosia.

Las razones que esgrimiera entonces el ejército de Turquía fueron el golpe de Estado contra Makario III, quien gobernaba en la isla, y la protección de la comunidad turcochipriota, que representaba el 18 por ciento de la población, descendiente de los soldados y colonos del imperio otomano. Así, con su territorio y su capital partida en dos, representa el final de la convivencia entre las partes que constituyeron durante varias centurias su coherencia cosmopolita. No obstante, los chipriotas de ambas comunidades reconocen que la política de los británicos aplicó la lógica de divide y vencerás. Las leyes que rigieron

CHIPRE

La sombra de los Balcanes

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
José Ángel Leyva

En memoria de Sergio de la Peña

CHIPRE REPRESENTA una cadena legendaria de invasiones, de influencias, de mezclas culturales, aunque siempre ha permanecido y predominado lo griego. Asirios, egipcios y persas la dominaron de manera consecutiva. Tuvo su época romana y fue un centro fundamental de la cultura y el imperio bizantino, por lo cual se fusionó al mundo cristiano ortodoxo-griego. Ricardo Corazón de León, en su paso a Tierra Santa, la conquistó para dejarla luego en manos de los Orden de los Templarios. Francia y Venecia impusieron su presencia antes de que, en 1571, el Imperio Otomano la agregara a sus dominios. Los turcos la mantuvieron en su poder durante tres siglos, hasta 1878, cuando la cedieron a la Gran Bretaña para protegerla de la expansión de la Rusia zarista. En agosto de 1960, los movimientos independentistas chipriotas lograron su objetivo y constituyeron la República de Chipre, liberándola del colonialismo británico, pero cediendo a dicha potencia 240 kilómetros cuadrados para el asentamiento de sus bases militares.

Chipre es una isla de dualidades. Habitada desde siglos por dos pueblos que representan esencialmente dos culturas, la



ARTE BIZANTINO DE CHIPRE

SEPTIEMBRE DE 1998

en el país fueron establecidas por el imperio y muchas de estas prohibieron la unión de parejas musulmanas y ortodoxas, por lo que debían vivir en la clandestinidad sus relaciones amorosas o sin casarse. Las conversiones religiosas de los dos grupos fueron algo frecuente, ya fuera por razones maritales o por otro tipo de causas, como las presiones políticas o la conveniencia de integrarse a las mayorías. Nada pudo impedir la fusión entre turcos y griegos, ni negar la posibilidad de que existiera un dialecto chipriota sembrado con sus respectivas lenguas. Algo de esa convivencia quedó fuertemente arraigada en la conciencia de muchos sectores de la población hoy escindida, por lo que pierden la esperanza de que la presión internacional derribe ese muro que los separa y que de algún modo sean ellos, los nacidos en Chipre, quienes puedan decidir su destino. Sin embargo, los intereses externos parecen inclinar la balanza peligrosamente hacia el lado contrario de la paz.

LA CRISIS DE LOS MISILES

La decisión de Chipre de adquirir misiles antiaéreos S-300 de fabricación rusa (probablemente soviética) para su defensa desató la furia del gobierno turco. De inmediato Ankara amenazó con imponer su fuerza e impedir que dicho armamento llegue a la isla, pues considera que altera el equilibrio militar de la región del Mediterráneo Oriental.

Mientras tanto, la situación política de la zona es ambigua, pues Chipre es uno de los países con mayores posibilidades de sumarse a la Unión Europea, de los cinco que están contemplados para la ampliación del bloque político-económico-cultural, y el único país dividido y ocupado. El ejército de Turquía invadió la parte Norte de la isla en julio de 1974, cuando la Junta Militar de Grecia fraguó un golpe de Estado contra Makario III, con el argumento de regular la situación política. Con sus tropas (más de 40.000 efectivos fuertemente armados en la actualidad) trazó una línea divisoria para crear la República Turca de Chipre, que ningún país, salvo el de Ankara, reconoce como legítimo. Este verano se cumplen 24 años del acontecimiento que dejó un saldo de miles, de muertos y desaparecidos, desplazamientos humanos de proporciones descomunales, de ambas comunidades, de una a otra parte de la isla, repoblación acelerada -con más de 85.000 colonos turcos de Anatolia— en la parte ocupada y serios problemas sin resolver dentro del terreno de los derechos humanos. Turquía, por su parte, desea ser miembro de la Unión Europea y pone en la balanza el peso que

representa para los intereses de Europa y Estados Unidos como aliado en una zona particularmente estratégica.

Importantes diarios europeos dedicaron sus primeras páginas a la noticia del 15 de junio del presente año, cuando un barco con destino a Chipre, con bandera de Malta procedente de Rusia, el *Natasha I*, fue detenido por las fuerzas de seguridad turcas en el estrecho de Dardanelos para una inspección. El ministro de Defensa de Turquía, Ismet Sezgin, declaró a los medios que seguían estudiando el cargamento del *Natasha I* porque sospechaban que transportaba rampas para misiles móviles con alcance de 150 kilómetros. Si las costas turcas se hallan a 60 kilómetros de Chipre, éstos, dice el gobierno de Ankara, amenazan su seguridad. Por si fuera poco, el asunto avivó el viejo conflicto entre Turquía y Grecia.

Tres días más tarde, el 18 de junio, Turquía envió a Chipre seis cazabombarderos F-16 como respuesta al envío griego de varios aviones de combate y dos aviones Hércules C-130 de transporte a la base de Pafos. "El gobierno de Atenas será responsable de lo que ocurra", sentenció el primer ministro de Turquía, Mesut Yilmaz, el mismo día en que la televisión de Chipre informaba que varios barcos de guerra, con bandera turca, se acercaban a la isla.

EL PORVENIR EN LA UNIÓN EUROPEA

El primer ministro del Reino Unido, Tony Blair, ratificó en su discurso de la Cumbre de Cardiff los propósitos de ampliación de la Unión Europea a cinco países, de Europa Central, de Europa del Este y Chipre, además de enviar un claro mensaje cuando expresó su "voluntad de que la Unión Europea reinicie un diálogo productivo con Turquía", con las mismas intenciones de integración. Pero en la Cumbre, Grecia vetó el ingreso de este país a la Unión Europea y pidió que se le nieguen apoyos económicos mientras no se someta al Tribunal Internacional de la Haya para resolver las disputas territoriales que ambas naciones mantienen en el mar Egeo. Los conflictos entre Grecia y Turquía han estado a punto de desembocar en enfrentamientos militares. Hace dos años, la disputa por el control del islote de Imia puso a la paz en el filo de la navaja.

Christos Stylianides, portavoz del Ejecutivo de Chipre - en una entrevista que sostuve con él, en Nicosia, días antes de la interceptación del barco por los turcos —, explicó las razones para adquirir los misiles y dió su opinión respecto a los riesgos que ello implica.

"En primer lugar —dijo—, el gobierno de Chipre no está a favor de la

compra de armamento. El problema de los misiles existe a raíz de que no hay desmilitarización en la isla. La posición del presidente de la república, Glafkos Klirides, de toda la dirigencia política y de todo el pueblo de Chipre, es que deben darse pasos hacia la desmilitarización y hacia la reanudación de las negociaciones intercomunales, dentro del marco de una solución total. Una vez que se den estos pasos, estamos dispuestos a anular de inmediato la llegada de los misiles. Pero los acontecimientos se dan en esa dirección porque somos rehenes de un desbalance de fuerzas, y estamos obligados a ejercer el derecho soberano por nuestra defensa.

"Han llegado algunos expertos a Chipre y le han dicho al presidente de la República que estos misiles de ninguna manera cambian la situación de desventaja ante las fuerzas militares de Turquía. El presidente les ha contestado que eso él ya lo sabe, pero que deberían hacerselo notar y entender a los turcos. No queremos aumentar la tensión, deseamos una solución pacífica y justa del problema, y un avance en dirección al ingreso a la Unión Europea, lo cual beneficiará sobre todo a la comunidad turcochipriota, que incrementará así su nivel de vida."

En diferentes instancias del gobierno de Chipre se me hizo hincapie en el carácter de sobrevivencia que tiene para su territorio y sus habitantes el ingreso a la Unión Europea (UE). Pero uno se interroga si han previsto la posibilidad de algún obstáculo que frustre en último momento dicho plan. En este caso, el vocero Stylianides responde que Chipre pertenece a Europa histórica, cultural y geográficamente, y que no dudan en que su ingreso a la Unión Europea será el puente entre Chipre y la región del Medio Oriente-en general, lo cual ayudará a que Europa tenga contactos ya mejores relaciones con estos países ya la inversa. Así la isla sería útil en ambas direcciones. Inside en que las negociaciones para su ingreso ya se iniciaron y que el presidente Klirides ha propuesto la participación de los turcochipriotas como miembros plenos del grupo de negociación, pero el gobierno turco se ha negado a aceptar la propuesta. De este modo y tal como ha declarado el responsable de la Unión Europea, Van der Vas, dicho proceso continúa independientemente de la solución del problema. "Nosotros creemos que nuestro ingreso a la UE será un catalizador para solucionarlo. En lo que se refiere al aspecto económico e institucional, preveemos estar listos muy pronto para cumplir con los requisitos de Maastricht, incluso antes que los otros países considerados en la primera ronda de ingreso. Confiamos en que podamos entrar como República de Chipre, incluyendo a los

turcochipriotas, todos juntos, a la Unión Europea. Una vez que se supere la intransigencia de Turquía y dejemos de ser sus rehenes.

"Nadie puede ignorar que la ocupación, a partir de 1974, y la amenaza de Turquía de anexar a Chipre a su territorio, ha alimentado, una serie de sentimientos que nos hieren —continuó el portavoz presidencial, ante la interrogante acerca de los sentimientos antiturcos que se han desarrollado en la parte griega de la isla. El problema no nace de imposibilidad de convivencia entre las comunidades chipriotas de griegos y turcos, pues sus diferencias se pueden resolver con una solución justa dentro del marco de la Unión Europea y la salvaguarda de los derechos humanos para todos los ciudadanos de Chipre."

A propósito de derechos humanos, el Comisionado Presidencial para Asuntos Humanitarios, Takis Christopoulos —en entrevista con quien esto suscribe—, afirmó que los dos problemas fundamentales sobre esta materia que se han puesto a revisión, con representantes del Secretario General de la ONU, no han experimentado avances, a pesar de acuerdos ya firmados en distintos foros europeos, por el presidente Klirides y el líder turcochipriota, R. Denktash. Ni el asunto de los más de 1400 grecochipriotas desaparecidos desde 1974, que los turcos afirman murieron ya, y que los familiares exigen presenten los adáveres para aplicarles la prueba de ADN y confirmar si realmente se trata de ellos; ni el problema de los enclaves maronitas y grecochipriotas, que se negaron a abandonar sus tierras, han tenido una respuesta mínima.

Este último conflicto radica en que una parte de la población que habitaba en Karpasia, cerca de la península de Akamas, en la región Noreste de Chipre, son maronitas (aproximadamente 3 000), o sea católicos de origen libanés, y de la comunidad griega (20 000), pero se resistieron a abandonar sus hogares y se quedaron a vivir bajo la administración turca. La gran mayoría de ellos son ancianos a quienes se les prohíbe tener contacto con sus familias, sobre todo si se trata de jóvenes que pudieran perpetuar la propiedad sobre los terrenos, muchos de los cuales han pasado a manos de los colonos turcos. En 1985 quedaban sólo 8 000 griegos y menos de mil maronitas.

Esta segregación condena a la extinción de tales grupos, pues no se les permite renovarse, y la medida es interpretada como una forma de practicar limpieza étnica, pues los viejos van muriendo aceleradamente en el aislamiento.

"En el encuentro de Viena, los representantes de ambas comunidades firmaron un acuerdo conocido como la Tercera Viena —puntualiza el

comisionado para Asuntos Humanitarios—, cuyo objetivo era crear condiciones para conservar a quienes quedaron allá, en sus lugares de origen. Como muchos otros acuerdos, no se cumplieron, y en ambas regiones las medidas represivas continúan expulsando a sus habitantes, de tal forma que la población de los enclaves se reduce a 540. La edad promedio de las personas que los habitan fluctúa entre los 60 y 79 años. Es decir que dentro de cinco o diez años, no habrá más enclaves."

Por su parte, el recién nombrado embajador estadounidense ante las Naciones Unidas, Richard Holbrooke, afirmó que intentará completar su misión de mediación en Chipre antes de incorporarse a su destino diplomático. Pero diversas organizaciones políticas, como la oposición conservadora griega y el ala crítica del Partido Socialista Panhelénico (PASOK), ven en ello una intromisión norteamericana en asuntos europeos.

LOS MISILES

La orden de compra de los misiles fue girada en enero de 1997, pero ha sido durante el presente año que la tensión llega a un punto de verdadero riesgo, pues el ingreso de Chipre a la Unión Europea es inminente y Turquía no ve la claridad sugerida por Blair. Tampoco el asunto de los misiles parece dar marcha atrás, por el contrario, en Rusia se adiestra a soldados grecochipriotas en el manejo de la tecnología bélica y los presidentes de ambos países, Klirides y Yeltsin, han tenido encuentros para reafirmar lazos ya comprometidos políticos y militares.

La economía de la República de Chipre depende en gran medida de la llegada anual de más de dos millones de turistas en busca de sus playas, lo cual coloca a su aproximadamente medio millón de habitantes en un nivel de bienestar bastante elevado y permite un clima interno de tranquilidad y de escasísima delincuencia. Pero como reconocen el economista Andreas Charalambous, del Buro de Planificación, y Takis Christopoulos, su desarrollo depende de la paz, y ésta pende un hilo. El primer disparo y desaparece el turismo. Por eso, el vocero Stylianides no tiene empacho en reconocer que la causa fundamental por la que luchan para ingresar a la Unión Europea no es la mejora de sus condiciones de vida, sino la sobrevivencia. Hasta este momento ignoramos los alcances de Turquía en sus amenazas de aplicar toda su fuerza militar para impedir la llegada de los misiles, mas no perdemos de vista, y para eso basta con ver el mapa y revisar la historia, que Chipre ha sido, y es, un apetitoso

bocado que se la atora a Turquía en la boca. Takis Christopoulos es más ilustrativo cuando afirma que una agresión a su país "podría iniciar una guerra entre Grecia y Turquía, que nadie sabe en dónde podrá terminar. Turquía es un país muy fuerte y está ubicado en una región delicada en lo militar y en lo que concierne a intereses estratégicos sobre fuentes de energéticos, por lo que resulta un aliado fundamental para la defensa de yacimientos petrolíferos. En ello radica la fuerza de Turquía y su impunidad en el problema de Chipre".

NICOSIA

Lellos Demetriades, abogado de profesión y sin filiación partidista, es reelegido en las urnas como alcalde de Nicosia —o Lefkosía, como acostumbran decir los griegos— desde hace más de 30 años. En 1971, fue la primera vez que se hizo cargo de los asuntos relacionados con esta ciudad de más de 5 000 años de antigüedad, y con mil años de historia como capital de la isla. Con él conversamos en entrevista sobre el futuro de esta pequeña urbe amurallada y fragmentada.

"La comunidad turcochipriota habitaba ya esa parte de Nicosia desde 1963 y 1964, y tenían sus propios representantes—comenta—, por lo que goberné siempre sólo una mitad de ésta. En 1974, la división fue absoluta y perdimos nuestro único aeropuerto, la zona quedó en territorio ocupado. Empeñamos todas nuestras fuerzas para lograr que esta ciudad sobreviva, aun sin áreas verdes. Hemos decidido hacer de Nicosia el centro cultural de Chipre, pues al carecer de playas, nuestro patrimonio son los museos, los mejores centros culturales capaces de atraer al turismo extranjero y al chipriota. Mi trabajo es difícil, pues además de los problemas ordinarios como la contaminación, el tráfico de automóviles, la falta de agua, la carencia de lugares abiertos para los niños, es una ciudad que padece la separación de la mitad de su cuerpo."

EL SAQUEO DE LA HERENCIA

CULTURAL

Si hay algo que duele profundamente a los chipriotas, es la destrucción de lo que ellos denominan su "Herencia Cultural", que data del VI milenio a. C. Los aportes griegos, romanos, asirios, persas, egipcios, venecianos, franceses, británicos y otomanos, constituyen esa riqueza monumental que los hace visibles e importantes ante el mundo. La isla es sin duda uno de los asentamientos fundamentales del arte bizantino, pues fue además el primer país gobernado por un cristiano, el romano Sergius Paulus, convertido por los apóstoles Lucas y Pablo,

quienes predicaron allí. Además, en la ciudad de Larnaka vivió Lázaro después de su resurrección. El Museo de Makario III contiene una importantísima colección de iconos que provienen desde el siglo VII, y en el Museo Arqueológico de Chipre puede constatar el valor histórico y estético de sus piezas, que datan desde el siglo VII a. C. En particular, impresiona el conjunto de 2 000 figuras en terracota, similares a las localizadas en China, algunas del tamaño normal de un hombre, que fueron halladas por arqueólogos holandeses en Santa Irene, al Noroeste de la isla. Mil de éstas se encuentran en Estocolmo y el resto en Chipre, y datan de la edad del bronce tardío.

"Tenemos una colección de fotos que muestran los daños terribles a los edificios antiguos, a los murales y el saqueo de los sitios arqueológicos en la zona ocupada. Los soldados turcos han destruido más de 500 iglesias. Hoy sólo quedan cinco en pie. Algunas de ellas las emplean como establos. El contrabando de piezas de arte es verdaderamente aterrador. Hace poco, en diciembre de 1997, las autoridades alemanas capturaron a un famoso ladrón turco, Aydın Dikilómetros, quien había extraído frescos del siglo XV y los vendía en fragmentos en Europa", afirma Marina Solomonidou, del Departamento de Antigüedades de Chipre. Ella nos recuerda los casos, bastante sonados, de los mosaicos de Kanakariá, en manos de una comerciante estadounidense, Peggy Goldberg, y de los iconos del Holanda. Para ella, la única forma de detener esta catástrofe es crear una conciencia internacional de que no se está destruyendo el patrimonio cultural de Chipre, sino de la humanidad.

NICOSIA POR DEBAJO DEL MURO

Es increíble pero una ciudad tan pequeña como Nicosia tiene graves problemas de estacionamiento, ya que el nivel económico de los chipriotas les permite tener tres o cuatro coches por familia. Nivel de consumo que les aproxima a su inminente ingreso a la Unión Europea. Salvo la zona conocida como Laiki Yitonia y la Puerta de Famagusta, es difícil percibir de conjunto el centro histórico. Parecería que la "Línea Verde", como llaman al espacio muerto que divide a la ciudad con casas abandonadas, alambres de púas, sacos de arena y fortines, impide a la vista y a la imaginación reconstruir el conjunto arquitectónico, contenido en el interior de un muro veneciano erigido en 1570, para detener sin éxito el avance otomano. Lo moderno domina ya sobre lo antiguo?

"Desde 1977 —apunta el alcalde Demetriades— estoy en contacto con el encargado de asuntos municipales de la parte turcochipriota.

Con frecuencia nos encontramos, no como alcaldes, sino como representantes de nuestras comunidades, para discutir el desarrollo integral de Nicosia e intercambiar información sobre ambos sectores. Estamos de acuerdo en que no podemos crecer de una manera opuesta, sino armónica, tomando en cuenta la historia de esta ciudad. Grupos de técnicos de ambas comunidades se reúnen a menudo para revisar los problemas urbanos e intentar soluciones congruentes, pues hay problemas comunes, como es el caso del agua y del drenaje, cuya mayor infraestructura se encuentra en la parte ocupada. Creemos que la ciudad no estará dividida por siempre. No se trata de un sueño romántico, el hombre es un animal y la ciudad es el lugar privilegiado donde él se realiza como tal. Entonces, con la ciudad unida, podremos regresarle la cohesión que ha perdido en los últimos 30 años».

LA CIUDAD FANTASMA

Veríamos sólo Famagusta desde el mirador de Deryneia (Derina), junto a un montón de turistas curiosos que lanzan su morbo a través de los telescopios apostados en un edificio oficializado como mirador de la "Ciudad Fantasma", pero Chrystos, el chofer, torció el camino y nos dijo con cierto aire de complicidad que antes pasaríamos por la línea que divide la parte turca de la parte griega de Chipre. De un lado y de otro de la carretera, sin que medie nada, salvo un cable de luz y las postas militares de ambos ejércitos, se ven casas abandonadas y soldados que observan milimétricamente nuestros movimientos. "No saquen fotos, es muy peligroso —advierte Chrystos. Hace un año un periodista inglés apuntó con su cámara hacia las casetas turcas, sin saber que él también era el blanco de unas balas que, afortunadamente, fallaron por mala puntería o porque sólo buscaban advertir al visitante. Pero eso, él nunca lo sabrá." En Pyla, un pueblo limítrofe, pero del lado griego, hay dos cafés con distintas banderas — y un público revuelto—, el de los grecochipriotas y el de los turcochipriotas. "Así vivíamos antes de 1974", nos dice Chrystos. Entre Pyla y Deryneia se hacen más frecuentes los conjuntos de casas sin puertas ni ventanas que, según dicen, han desmantelado los soldados turcos para llevarlas a las casas que antes ocuparon chipriotas y hoy habitan los 85 000 turcos que vienen de Anatolia a colonizar la isla.

A lo lejos divisamos Famagusta, "la ciudad fantasma". El antiguo paraíso del turismo aparece a la orilla del mar con su cadena de edificios espectrales, vacíos, como una maqueta de obra negra, o como un cadáver al que le han ido arrancando día a día el pellejo, los músculos, los ojos.

Mientras tanto, la tensión aumenta. Los chipriotas compran misiles a Rusia, Turquía amenaza con emplear la isla. Lo mismo hace Grecia. Esa es la historia, pero el mito narra que Cronos devoraba a sus hijos, hasta que Zeus, uno de sus vastagos, lo derrotó y le arrancó los genitales lanzándolos al mar. Estos se convirtieron en espuma y de ella nació Afrodita, la diosa del amor, en unas piedras que se hallan cerca de Pafos, en Chipre.

ZYPERN / Präsident Clerides fordert Entmilitarisierung der geteilten Insel - Gegen türkisches Konzept einer Konföderation

Griechische Zyprioten setzen auf Drohungen und Dialog

Von VIOLA HERMS-DRATH

HANDELSBLATT, Sa. 6., 17./18.10.98
 NIKOSIA. Zyperns Status quo ist nicht länger akzeptabel. Die jüngsten Resolutionen des Uno-Sicherheitsrates zeigen, daß diese Position auch von der internationalen Gemeinschaft geteilt wird, hat der Präsident der Republik Zypern, Glafcos Clerides, im Gespräch mit dem Handelsblatt erklärt. Seine Drohung, russische S-300-Abwehrraketen auf der geteilten Mittelmeerinsel zum Schutz gegen türkische Überflüge zu installieren, hatte dem seit Jahrzehnten schwellenden Zypernproblem neue Brisanz gegeben. Denn da die Reichweite der Kurzstreckenraketen bis Ankara reicht, meldete die Türkei - Schutzmacht der im November 1983 deklarierten, Türkischen Republik des nördlichen Zyperns - erwartungsgemäß deren Zerstörung an.

benen türkischen Zyprioten müsse eine „politische Lösung zur Frage der Wiedervereinigung des Landes“ gefunden werden.

Seine kontroverse Raketenabwehrinitiative will Clerides nur unter drei Bedingungen zurücknehmen: „Direkte Verhandlungen, Entmilitarisierung der Insel und international verankerte Garantien, die Zypern zur überflugfreien Zone erklären.“ Er sieht es als selbstverständliches an, daß am Ende dieser „vertrauensbildenden Maßnahmen“ der Abzug der im türkisch-zypriotischen „Staat“ stationierten 36 000 Mann starken türkischen Truppen steht.

Auch die Uno fordert den Einheitsstaat

Als Sicherheitsgarantie schlägt Präsident Clerides die Übergabe sämtlicher Waffen an eine internationale Organisation vor. Zudem sollen wie in Bosnien internationale Sicherheitsstruppen den Schutz beider Bevölkerungsgruppen garantieren. Er ließ aber offen, ob er damit Kontingente der EU, der Nato oder der Uno

meint. Die durch die Reduzierung des Militärs eingesparten Gelder sollten der Finanzierung der Infrastruktur, der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung des türkischen Zypernteils sowie der Unterhaltung von Inspektionsgruppen dienen. Der Uno-Sicherheitsrat hatte jetzt auf Antrag Clerides die Abwesenheit der an der Waffenstillstandslinie stationierten Friedensgruppen bis Jahresende verlängert.

Zu den positiven Entwicklungen zählt der Präsident auch die Ernennung der Neuseeländerin Ann Herrington zur Uno-Präsidentin und Uno-Missionschefin in Zypern.

Scharf wendet sich Clerides gegen das vom Chef der türkischen Zyprioten, Rauf Denktaş, geforderte Konzept einer Konföderation zur Lösung des Zypernproblems: „Es ist offensichtlich die Absicht der türkischen Regierung und von Herrn Denktaş, von einem unabhängigen souveränen Staat in zwei Protektorate zu verwandeln.“ Als eigener Vertreter einer Föderation sieht Clerides den Uno-Sicherheitsrat auf seiner Seite. Gern zitiert der ehemalige

In diesem Kontext verweist der Präsident auf „110 000 illegale türkische Siedler, die die Zahl der türkischen Zyprioten übertrifft“. Obwohl schon diese ethnische Minorität nur 18 % der Bevölkerung repräsentiere, gesteht ihr laut Clerides die Verfassung von 1960 die Vizepräsidentenschaft, 30 % der Regierungsstellen und ein Vetorecht in Entscheidungen der Außen-, Verteidigungs- und Sicherheitspolitik zu. Die türkische Minorität legt dies jedoch weniger positiv aus.

Der Streit um Verfassung, Souveränität und Staatenbund kontra vereinigen Staat wird zudem von den Meinungsverschiedenheiten über den von Clerides betriebenen Beitritt in die EU vertieft. Was von ihm als Katalysator für die Vereinigung gehalten wurde, erweist sich nun durch die Ablehnung durch die türkischen Zyprioten als zusätzliches Verständigungshindernis. Dennoch begrüßt Clerides, daß die erste Runde der EU-Beitrittsverhandlungen mit fünf mitteleuropäischen Reformstaaten und mit Zypern am 10. November aufgenommen werden soll.

Angestrebter EU-Beitritt entpuppt sich als Hürde

Neben dem Abzug sämtlicher ausländischer (sprich türkischer) Truppen, die seit 1974 gut ein Drittel der Insel besetzt halten, fordert Zyperns Präsident auch „die Rückkehr der Flüchtlinge und die Respektierung der demographischen Zusammensetzung der Republik“, die Anerkennung der Eigentumsrechte enteigneter griechischer Zyprioten sowie die Wiederherstellung der Menschenrechte.

GERMAN PRESS

Newspaper: Handelsblatt, 19.10.98

Title: Griechische Zyprioten setzen auf Drohungen und Dialog

By: Viola Herms - Drath

«Zyperns Status quo ist nicht länger akzeptabel. Die jüngsten Resolutionen des Uno-Sicherheitsrates zeigen, daß diese Position auch von der internationalen Gemeinschaft geteilt wird», hat der Präsident der Republik Zypern, Glafcos Clerides, im Gespräch mit dem Handelsblatt erklärt. Seine Drohung, russische S-300-Abwehrraketen auf der geteilten Mittelmeerinsel zum Schutz gegen türkische Überflüge zu installieren, hatte dem seit Jahrzehnten schwellenden Zypernproblem neue Brisanz gegeben. Denn da die Reichweite der Kurzstreckenraketen bis Ankara reicht, meldete die Türkei - Schutzmacht der im November 1983 deklarierten, Türkischen Republik des nördlichen Zyperns - erwartungsgemäß deren Zerstörung an.

Mit seiner Herausforderung an die Adresse der Türkei wolle er den brachliegenden Dialog neu beleben, sagt der 79jährige Präsident des griechischen Teils der geteilten Insel. In «direkten Verhandlungen» mit den dem Separatismus verschriebenen türkischen Zyprioten müsse eine «politische Lösung zur Frage der Wiedervereinigung des Landes» gefunden werden.

Seine Kontroverse Raketenabwehrinitiative will Clerides nur unter drei Bedingungen zurücknehmen; «Direkte Verhandlungen, Entmilitarisierung der Insel und international verankerte Garantien, die Zypern zur überflugfreien Zone erklären». Er sieht es als selbstverständlich an, daß am Ende dieser «vertrauensbildenden Maßnahmen» der Abzug der im türkisch-zypriotischen «Staat» stationierten 36 000 Mann starken türkischen Truppen steht.

Auch die Uno fordert den Einheitsstaat

Als Sicherheitsgarantie schlägt Präsident Clerides die Übergabe sämtlicher Waffen an eine internationale Organisation vor. Zudem sollen wie in Bosnien internationale Sicherheitsstruppen den Schutz bei-

der Bevölkerungsteile garantieren. Er ließ aber offen, ob er damit Kontingente der EU, der Nato oder der Uno meint. Die durch die Reduzierung des Militärs eingesparten Gelder sollten der Finanzierung der Infrastruktur, der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung des türkischen Zypernteils sowie der Unterhaltung von Inspektionstruppen dienen. Der Uno-Sicherheitsrat hatte jetzt auf Antrag Clerides' die Anwesenheit der an der Waffenstillstandslinie stationierten Friedenstruppen bis Jahresende verlängert.

Zu den positiven Entwicklungen zählt der Präsident auch die Ernennung der Neuseeländerin Ann Hercus zur Uno-Repräsentatin und Uno-Missionschefin in Zypern.

Scharf wendet sich Clerides gegen das vom Chef der türkischen Zyprioten, Rauf Denktash, geforderte Konzept einer Konföderation zur Lösung des Zypernproblems: «Es ist offensichtlich die Absicht der türkischen Regierung und von Herrn Denktash, Zypern von einem unabhängigen souveränen Staat in zwei Protektorate zu verwandeln. Als eiserner Verfechter einer Föderation sieht Clerides den Uno-Sicherheitsrat auf seiner Seite. Gern zitiert der ehemalige Justizminister die Uno-Resolutionen 1178 und 1179 vom Juni: Sie schreiben eine Zypernregelung auf der Basis eines souveränen Einheitsstaates mit internationaler Identität und nur einer Staatsangehörigkeit vor.

Was der Weltsicherheitsrat und Clerides anstuern, ist eine bikommunal und bizonal Föderation. Die Vereinigung des Landes oder eines Teils davon mit einem anderen Land seien dadurch ebenso ausgeschlossen andere Formen der Teilung oder de Separatismus.

Angestrebter EU-Beitritt entpuppt sich als Hürde

Neben dem Abzug «sämtlicher ausländischer (sprich türkischer) Truppen», die seit 1974 gut ein Drittel der Insel besetzt halten, fordert Zyperns Präsident auch «die Rückkehr der Flüchtlinge und Respekt vor der demographischen Zusammensetzung der Republik», die Anerkennung der Eigentumsrechte enteigneter griechischer Zyprioten sowie «die Wiederherstellung der Menschenrechte».

In diesem Kontext verweist der Präsident auf «110 000 illegale türkische Siedler, die die Zahl der türkischen Zyprioten übertrifft». Obschon diese ethnische Minorität nur 18% der Bevölkerung

repräsentiere, gesteht ihr laut Clerides die Verfassung von 1960 die Vizepräsidentschaft, 30% der Regierungsposten und ein Vetorecht in Entscheidungen der Außen-, Verteidigungs- und Sicherheitspolitik zu. Die türkische Minorität legt dies jedoch weniger positiv aus.

Der Streit um Verfassung, Souveränität und Staatenbund kontra vereinigten Staat wird zudem von den Meinungsverschiedenheiten über den von Clerides betriebenen Beitritt in die EU vertieft. Was von ihm als Katalysator für die Vereinigung gehalten wurde, erweist sich nun durch die Ablehnung durch die türkischen Zyprioten als zusätzliches Verständigungshindernis. Dennoch begrüßt Clerides, daß die erste Runde der EU-Eintrittsverhandlungen mit fünf mitteleuropäischen Reformstaaten und mit Zypern am 10. November aufgenommen werden soll.

La Turquie tente une reprise du dialogue avec l'Union européenne

ISTANBUL

de notre correspondant

Un léger dégel semble s'être amorcé entre la Turquie et l'Union européenne, après une longue période de froid. En décembre 1997, les Européens, au sommet de Luxembourg, avaient décidé d'engager une procédure d'adhésion avec onze pays, y compris Chypre, mais ils n'avaient pas inclus la Turquie, candidate depuis 1963. Ankara n'avait pas décoléré depuis et les autorités turques avaient même déclaré envisager de renoncer à toute candidature d'adhésion à l'Union.

L'atmosphère n'est pas encore au beau fixe. Loin de là. Mais la Turquie a soumis il y a quelques jours au gouvernement autrichien, qui préside actuellement l'UE, un rapport comportant des suggestions pour relancer et développer les relations. Ce rapport, qui est en fait une réponse à un document des Européens sur leur politique à l'égard d'Ankara, pourrait fournir une base pour la reprise d'un dialogue constructif. Dans son rapport, la Turquie pose deux conditions importantes pour remettre les relations turco-européennes sur les rails : d'abord, Ankara attend de l'Union que soient finalement payés les fonds promissés dans le cadre de l'accord d'union douanière. Plus de 400 millions de dollars demeurent bloqués par un veto grec. Les Européens sont conscients de leur dette à l'égard de la Turquie et le paiement de ces fonds est mentionné dans leur rapport, mais, jusqu'à présent, aucun moyen n'a été trouvé pour surmonter l'opposition d'Athènes. Les Turcs demandent également un meilleur fonctionnement du Conseil d'association, une institution qui se veut un forum de dialogue mais n'a jamais travaillé avec l'efficacité et la régularité nécessaires. Parmi les points soulevés par

Ankara figurent des détails techniques liés à l'application de l'union douanière. Les Turcs souhaitent aussi avoir accès à certains programmes d'assistance financière dans des domaines aussi divers que le tourisme, l'environnement ou l'énergie. Une partie du rapport est consacrée aux droits des Turcs dans les pays européens et à la libre circulation des travailleurs.

La publication de ce nouveau document n'est pas la seule indication d'un léger anéantissement du climat. Récemment, le ministre des Affaires étrangères, Ismail Cem, a convoqué les ambassadeurs européens

à un repas, le premier depuis Luxembourg. D'après la presse turque, quelques échanges acerbes ont d'ailleurs eu lieu entre Mete Susunuth et plusieurs députés, à qui elle avait posé des questions sur l'état de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme.

L'amertume ressentie par les Turcs est en effet toujours vive. Pour l'opinion publique turque, Luxembourg a marqué la fin d'un rêve européen, un rêve, brutal,

dit à la fois à la maladresse diplomatique des Quinze et aux déclarations peu réalistes des politiciens turcs. Ce rejet à Luxembourg avait particulièrement offensé les Turcs occidentaux, qui défendaient avec le plus de vigueur une intégration à l'Europe et dont la rancœur est encore perceptible.

La Turquie surmonte lentement ses émotions et reprend le contact. Le rapport récemment publié sur l'UE, mais alors que par le pas sur l'UE, mais alors que par le pas même d'une période sombre de son histoire.

L'autre visiteur était la présidente du Bundestag, Rita Susunuth. Aux yeux des Turcs, l'Allemagne est, avec la Grèce, la principale responsable du rejet

ÉCHANGES ACERBES

Ces derniers jours, deux invités européens étaient de passage en Turquie. Le premier ministre espagnol, José Aznar, a notamment souligné que les critères d'admission applicables à la Turquie doivent être les mêmes que ceux des autres pays candidats. Toujours plus à l'aise avec les Méditerranéens qu'avec les Nordiques, la Turquie est particulièrement sensible à l'appui de l'Espagne, qui, lorsqu'elle était devenue membre du club européen, émergeait elle-même d'une période sombre de son histoire.

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Nicole Pope

FRENCH PRESS

Newspaper: Le Monde 28.7.98

Title: *La Turquie tente une reprise du dialogue avec L' Union européenne*

By: Nicole Pope

Un léger dégel semble s'être amorcé entre la Turquie et l' Union européenne, après une longue période de froid. En décembre 1997, les Européens, au sommet de Luxembourg, avaient décidé d'engager une procédure d'adhésion avec onze pays, y compris Chypre, mais ils n'avaient pas inclus la Turquie, candidate depuis 1963. Ankara n'avait pas décoléré depuis et les autorités turques avaient même déclaré envisager de renoncer à toute candidature d'adhésion à l' Union.

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La publication de ce nouveau document n'est pas la seule indication d'une légère amélioration du climat. Récemment, le ministre des affaires étrangères, Ismail Cem, a convié les ambassadeurs européens à un repas, le premier depuis Luxembourg. «Depuis le dernier sommet des Quinze à Cardiff, l'atmosphère est plus détendue», affirme un ambassadeur européen. Ce sommet n'avait débouché sur aucun résultat concret en faveur de la Turquie, mais le premier ministre britannique, Tony Blair, y avait exprimé la volonté des Européens d'approfondir leurs relations avec ce pays.

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L'autre visiteur était la présidente du Bundestag, Rita Süßmuth. Aux yeux des Turcs, l'Allemagne est, avec la Grèce, la principale responsable du rejet cuisant que la Turquie a subi à Luxembourg. D'après la presse turque, quelques échanges acerbes ont d'ailleurs eu lieu entre Mme Süßmuth et plusieurs députés, à qui elle avait posé des questions sur l'état de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme.

L'amertume ressentie par les Turcs est en effet toujours vive. Pour l'opinion publique turque, Luxembourg a marqué la fin d'un rêve européen, un réveil brutal, dû à la fois à la maladresse diplomatique des Quinze et aux déclarations peu réalistes des politiciens turcs. Ce rejet à Luxembourg avait particulièrement offensé les Turcs occidentalisés, qui défendaient avec le plus de vigueur une intégration à l'Europe, et dont la rancoeur est encore perceptible.

La Turquie surmonte lentement ses émotions et reprend le contact. Le rapport récemment publié indique que le cap est toujours fixé sur l'UE. Mais alors que, par le passé, la Turquie avait une notion quelque peu romantique de ses relations avec l'Europe, elle semble désormais s'être résignée à un mariage de raison.

BELGIAN PRESS

Newspaper: Le Matin, 20.7.98

Title: *Chypre: une négociation très spéciale*

By: Robert Falony

Nicosie, juillet

Des six pays candidats à l'Union européenne qui sont placés en première ligne – République tchèque, Pologne, Hongrie, Estonie, Slovaquie, Chypre – deux présentent la particularité d'être issus, l'un de l'URSS (Estonie) l'autre de la Yougoslavie, (Slovaquie).

Mais le cas de Chypre est unique parce qu'il s'agit d'une île divisée dont une partie est soumise au contrôle de la Turquie, elle-même candidate à l'Union mais hostile à l'adhésion à l'Europe des seuls cypristes grecs. Plantée loin en Méditerranée orientale, à proximité des côtes asiatiques, Chypre occupe par ailleurs une position extrême par rapport à l'Europe. Voilà pour le décor géopolitique...

Face à l'intransigeance d'Ankara dans le règlement de la question cypriste, l'Union européenne a cessé de faire de ce règlement un préalable à la négociation d'adhésion. Le poids de la Turquie influence toujours cependant la position de certains Etats membres, notamment, celle de la France (du président Chirac en particulier). Peut-on dire qu'une fois réglées les questions économiques et financières entre Chypre et l'Union, le «facteur turc» ne sera plus une interférence, parasitant la négociation et son issue?

L'incidence d'intérêts

Le Dr Vassos Lyssarides, président du parti socialiste Edek (1) évoque précisément la géopolitique pour retourner le constat en faveur de son pays: «je suis optimiste. Il y a une coïncidence d'intérêts entre Chypre et l'Europe. Chypre peut aider l'Europe «à effectuer une percée vers ce Moyen-Orient où les Etats-Unis sont en position de monopole. Inversement, pourquoi les Etats-Unis souhaiteraient-ils que la Turquie fasse partie de l'Union européenne? Ils perdraient de leur influence à Ankara».

La situation turque, M. Lyssarides l'analyse comme suit: «Si le courant islamiste représente le premier parti, l'armée est le vrai pouvoir. Nous

sous la loupe

Chypre : une négociation très spéciale

Nicose, juillet.
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Le cas de Chypre est unique parce qu'il s'agit d'une île divisée dont une partie est soumise au contrôle de la Turquie, elle-même candidate à l'Union mais hostile à l'adhésion à l'Union européenne. Les seuls cypristes grecs, plantés dans la Méditerranée orientale, à proximité des côtes asiatiques, Chypre occupe par ailleurs une position extrême par rapport à l'Europe. Voilà une île décalée géographiquement.

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Incidence d'intérêts

Le Dr Vassos Lyssarides, président du parti Akel (1) évoque précisément la géographie de Chypre pour retourner le constat en faveur de l'adhésion : « Je suis optimiste. Il y a une convergence d'intérêts entre Chypre et l'Europe. Chypre

peut aider l'Europe à effectuer une percée vers le Moyen-Orient. Les États-Unis sont en position de monopole. Inévitablement, pour qu'il y ait une Union européenne, il faut la Turquie. Mais pour que la Turquie adhère à l'Union européenne, il faut que l'Europe ait une influence à l'est de la Méditerranée ».

La situation turque, M. Lyssarides l'évalue comme suit : « Si le régime turc n'est pas le premier parti, l'armée est le vrai pouvoir. Nous ne pouvons pas nous attendre à ce que la Turquie fasse quelque chose de bon pour Chypre. Les Turcs ne font pas de bons parrains. Ils ont été pourtant très occupés à faire de leur mieux pour faire un gouvernement fédéral viable ».

Sur la question des missiles : « Chypre a le droit de se défendre. La Suisse et son armée, la Turquie et Chypre, ont l'appartenance et la volonté de se défendre. Les missiles ne seraient pas si la Turquie ne nous attaquait pas ».

M. Lyssarides est satisfait de la politique allemande à l'égard de Chypre, mais, en cas de victoire des sociaux-démocrates : « We hope they will do more » (« Nous espérons qu'ils feront encore plus »).

Le 1er janvier 2003

Chypre a désigné un négociateur en chef pour conduire les négociations avec l'Union. C'est George Vassiliou, ancien président de la République. Il vient d'annoncer que la date du 1er janvier 2003 était l'objectif (« guideline ») que se fixe son équipe pour réaliser l'adhésion de Chypre, bien qu'aucune date ne soit certaine, et que « l'accession puisse se faire soit plus tôt, soit plus tard » (2).

« Cette date est très réaliste, et nous serons prêts à nous assurer le succès du comité des affaires étrangères au parlement, Tassos Papadopoulos, du parti démocratique (Diko). Il fait valoir l'unanimité des partis cypristes sur ce problème. Le Pachtivan, y compris de l'Akel, l'ancienne gauche communiste, lorsque nous avons fait des débats de nos réserves sur divers aspects du libéralisme économique ».

« Nous acceptons les règles du club, et une perte de souveraineté, nous faisons des sacrifices financiers pour entrer dans l'Europe, même sur des sujets où nous ne sommes pas obligés d'en faire ». Et, de conclure : « Chypre sera un contributeur net à l'Union ». La petite île de 9.250 km² est un atout, elle miniaturise les problèmes. Simple image comparative : « Notre production totale de pommes de terre présente trois heures de consommation en Europe ».

Les exigences européennes

Il n'empêche. Les trop fameux critères de Maastricht rattrapent tous les candidats à l'Union, donc Chypre. La dette publique totale, exprimée en pourcentage du produit intérieur brut (PIB) est passée de 85 % en 1993 à 89,8 en 1997, et grimperait à 97,4 selon la projection pour 1998. La part de la dette extérieure est cependant limitée à quelque 13 p.c.

Le déficit public a dépassé cinq pour cent l'an dernier et atteindrait 7,3 p.c. en 1998. La part de la dette extérieure est cependant limitée à quelque 13 p.c.

Après des années de croissance facile en 1994 et 1995, la croissance a ralenti le taux de

croissance à 2 pour cent en 1996 et à 2,3 p.c. en 1997. Elle est escomptée de 4,2 p.c. cette année.

Le niveau de l'Espagne

Cela donne un revenu par tête, en dollars, de 12.000 pour l'an dernier. Le produit intérieur brut par habitant est de 12.000 dollars.

Sofronios Etoucou, directeur d'études du ministère des Affaires étrangères de l'Espagne, l'ancien ministre de l'Économie, le directeur d'un journal, et le directeur d'un journal, ont dit : « Notre économie ».

L'off-shore

La fiscalité à Chypre est très « libérale ». Le gouvernement s'est engagé dans un processus de libéralisation de la loi de 1994. Mais le régime des entreprises « off-shore » n'est pas libéral. Les entreprises qui sont détenues par des étrangers et qui ont des adresses dans le pays n'ont pas le droit de bénéficier des avantages fiscaux privilégiés. Le malheur des uns faisant le bonheur des autres, la guerre du Liban avait déplacé sur Chypre de nombreux investisseurs étrangers, d'importantes activités. À cette « phase libérale » a succédé, avec l'effondrement du bloc soviétique, une vague alarmiste en provenance d'Europe centrale et orientale.

Les officiers cypristes font valoir que l'« off-shore » génère des revenus pour l'État, crée de l'emploi, favorise la qualification. « Nous présenterons nos arguments pour continuer ».

Lorsque Ten parle d'affaires étrangères et de blanchiment d'argent sale : « La Banque

aimerions que la Turquie puisse faire partie de l'Europe, mais les principes font défaut. Quant à Chypre, si la Turquie ne veut pas d'une partition totale, elle pourrait s'accommoder de deux États fédérés avec un gouvernement fédéral faible ».

Sur la question des missiles : « Chypre a le droit de se défendre. La Suisse a une armée. La Turquie et Chypre, c'est l'éléphant et la souris. Les missiles ne serviront pas si la Turquie ne nous attaque pas ».

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« Cette date est très réaliste, et nous serons prêts avant » assure le président du comité des affaires étrangères au parlement, Tassos Papadopoulos, du parti démocratique (Diko). Il fait valoir l'unanimité des partis cypristes sur ce problème de l'adhésion, y compris de l'Akel, l'ancienne gauche communiste naguère prosoviétique (en dépit de ses réserves sur divers aspects du libéralisme économique).

« Nous acceptons les règles du club, et une perte de souveraineté, nous faisons des sacrifices financiers pour entrer dans l'Europe, même sur des sujets où nous ne sommes pas obligés d'en faire ». Et de conclure : « Chypre sera un contributeur net à l'Union ». La petite île de 9.250 km² est un atout, elle miniaturise les problèmes. Simple image comparative : « Notre production totale de pommes de terre présente trois heures de consommation en Europe ».

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en 1998. L'île a connu un grave problème de sécheresse, entraînant des interventions publiques.

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«Le niveau de l'Espagne»

Cela donne un revenu par tête, en dollar, américain, de 12 896 pour l'an dernier. Le produit «per capita» dans le secteur turc est estimé au tiers seulement.

Sofronis Eteocleus, directeur d'études économiques au ministère des Finances: «Nous atteignons le niveau de l'Espagne. D'ici 2002 ou 2003, nous aurons parachevé le processus d'union douanière que couvre déjà 85 pour cent de notre commerce.

L'off-shore

La fiscalité à Chypre est très «incitative. Le gouvernement s'est engagé dans un processus de relèvement des taux de TVA. Mais le débat porte surtout sur le régime fiscal privilégié des entreprises «off shore». Il s'agit des entreprises qui sont détenues par des étrangers et font des affaires hors de Chypre. Il faut savoir que, le malheur des uns faisant le bonheur des autres, la guerre du Liban avait déplacé sur Chypre, dès la fin des années septante, d'importantes activités. A cette «phase libanaise» a succédé, avec l'effondrement du bloc soviétique, une vague affairiste en provenance d'Europe centrale et orientale.

Les officiels cypristes font valoir que l'«off shore» génère des revenus pour l'île, crée de l'emploi, favorise la qualification. «Nous présenterons nos arguments pour continuer.

Lorsque l'on parle d'affaires douteuses et de blanchiment d'«argent sale» à la Banque centrale, ses «managers», MM Akhniotis et Pashos, se veulent très persuasifs: «Nous sommes très stricts. Chypre a ratifié les conventions internationales dans ce domaine. Nous exerçons un contrôle sur l'actionnariat, sur les comptes annuels. Par le biais du permis de séjour, nous exerçons un droit d'expulsion. L'Etat a une unité d'investigations et chaque banque est surveillée».

Difficultés sociales

Si l'Europe représente pour Chypre l'espoir de résoudre la question nationale, la négociation charrie aussi ce dont beaucoup de Cypristes se seraient passés, comme les règles sur la «libre concurrence».

Le ministre Stylianides, porte-parole du gouvernement: «Nous ferons tout ce qui est nécessaire pour nous conformer aux règles européennes. Nous admettons les privatisations comme on dit. Nous aurons un dialogue avec les organisations syndicales et sociales, et ce dialogue sera fructueux, de manière à éviter de gros problèmes sociaux.

Mais les problèmes sociaux sont là, comme à Cyprus Airways où les syndicats bataillent contre un plan de réduction drastique des dépenses de la compagnie, au détriment de l'emploi et des salaires.