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**THE COLD WAR AND THE RETENTION OF BRITISH RULE IN
CYPRUS, 1945-1947**

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Abstract

The Mediterranean island of Cyprus was proclaimed as a Crown colony of Britain in 1925. Cyprus' inhabitants, particularly the Greek Cypriots, strongly asked for *enosis* (union) with Greece; hence they revolted against British rule in Cyprus. This paper will detail Britain's decision with regards to the retention of its rule in Cyprus, despite the Greek islanders' pressure that Cyprus be handed back to Greece. The strategic geographical location of Cyprus, being near to British route to the Middle East and the Eastern Empire, is a notable issue reflected in existing literature. A number of historians agreed that this was the obvious justification for Britain to decline the Greek Cypriots' demand for *enosis* and thus maintaining British rule in Cyprus. The prime objective of this paper is to identify the reason for Britain to stay in Cyprus from a point of view that has acquired slight scholarly consideration. This paper has concentrated on the viewpoint of British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin and his Foreign Office through the perusal of archival or primary records such as Bevin's Private Papers (FO 800), the Cabinet Office Papers (CAB), the Foreign Office Papers (FO 371), the Defence Ministry Papers (DEFE) and the House of Commons Parliamentary Debate (*HANSARD*). The scrutiny of these records has discovered that Bevin, Head of the Foreign Office, wanted to stay in Cyprus due to the Cold War tension in Greece. It seemed likely that Cyprus would also turn communist if it was ceded to Greece during this crucial time.

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1. Introduction

The Cyprus question was a long-standing controversial subject that went through several phases: Cyprus under the Ottoman Empire's domination, Cyprus under British rule, and Cyprus as a sovereign republic. The period under British rule can be divided into three main phases: the period between 1878 and 1914 when Cyprus was administered by Britain but was still considered part of the Ottoman Empire, the period from 1914 to 1925 when Cyprus was annexed by Britain to the British empire due to the outbreak of war with Turkey, and the period from 1925 until 1960 in which Cyprus was a British Crown Colony (Alastos, 1976). The focus of this paper is the later part of the third phase of British rule in Cyprus.

This paper concentrates on the British policy on Cyprus between 1945 and 1947 with regards to two issues involving the Cyprus question: British strategic interest in Cyprus and the question of *enosis* (union) with Greece. The latter issue regarding *enosis* is about the demand of the Greek Cypriots for Britain to hand Cyprus over to Greece. According to Kelling (1990), 'Greek Cypriots felt themselves part of the Greek nation and their aspirations for *Enosis* were part of the same movement which created Greece and added Crete (and for that matter Athens) to the Greek state'. Apparently, Greek Cypriots were inspired by the *Megali idea* (Grand Design) of Greece. This idea was an irredentist concept of Greek nationalism that aimed for the establishment of a Greek state in the Eastern Mediterranean by encompassing territories in Europe and Western Asia Minor, which were estimated by Athens as ethnic Greek-inhabited areas. Eighty percent of the Cyprus population were Greek Cypriots. Being the majority population in Cyprus, Greek Cypriots felt that Cyprus was qualified to be a part of the Greek state. This was the reason Greek Cypriots consistently fought for *enosis*. Their desire for *enosis* had stemmed from the era of Ottoman rule and was manifested later at the time of the British occupation of Cyprus.

British rule in Cyprus began when the Cyprus Convention was signed at the Congress of Berlin in June 1878. Article I of the Cyprus Convention between Britain and Turkey stated that Britain was given consent by the Sublime Porte to occupy and administer the island of Cyprus in order to enable Britain to make the necessary provisions for executing its engagement in helping the Sublime Porte against possible Russian aggression (Hill, 1952; Joseph, 2009). The Convention was abrogated by Britain in 1914 when the Ottoman Empire decided to join the First World War in favour of the Central Powers. Cyprus therefore was annexed to the British Empire.

In 1925, Cyprus became a Crown colony of Britain. The British government, the official sovereign power in Cyprus since 1878, had encountered problems with Cyprus' inhabitants who strongly asked for self-determination from Britain. Apart from this, one of the islanders, namely the Greek Cypriots, also demanded a union (*enosis*) with Greece as it was considered Cyprus' mother country by them. Initially, Britain, specifically the Foreign Office and its superior officer Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, did not take these matters seriously, especially the *enosis* question. As a result, in 1931 the Greek Cypriots revolted against British rule in Cyprus. Since then, the sentiment for *enosis* gradually became stronger and was fused with an insurrection against the British administration in Cyprus.

Greece was also inevitably affected by the question of *enosis* because Greek Cypriots wanted to unite with this nation. Greece's reaction to *enosis* differed according to the times. At the beginning of irredentist nationalism, Greece was ready to take over Cyprus from Britain. But after Greece was defeated

by the Turkish National Movement in Asia Minor in 1922, Greece's ambition for the *Megali idea* had to be dismissed. However, Greece's interest over Cyprus was once again revived after World War II came to an end. As Greece participated in the World War II as Britain's only fighting ally in the Eastern Mediterranean region, the British government therefore was ready to consider *enosis* (Hatzivassiliou, 2009). Accordingly, this new development forced ministers and officials in the newly elected Labour government that came into office in July 1945, to reconsider Britain's position in Cyprus and to re-evaluate British strategic interest in Cyprus.

2. Problem Statement

Cyprus is situated in the eastern Mediterranean, which is at the crossroad of sea routes of three geographical areas: the Middle East, the Mediterranean and Europe. This position contributed to the strategic significance of Cyprus. This geostrategic value elevated Cyprus' importance in the international political scene. For instance, in the course of the World War II, Cyprus was used as a military defence base because of a threat of attacks through Turkey (Playfair et al., 2004). Later on, during the 1956 Suez crisis, Britain used Cyprus as a base for launching an attack on the Suez Canal (Eden, 1960; Varble, 2003). However, the Greek Cypriots and their mother country, Greece, strongly demanded *enosis*. The British government, particularly the Foreign Office, therefore had a dilemma as to which decision should be made: to continue British control over Cyprus or to abandon Cyprus' strategic value to Britain by agreeing to *enosis*.

Historians such as Wm. Roger Louis (1978), Allan Bullock (1983), George H. Kelling (1990), Evanthis Hatzivassiliou (2009) and Simon Ball (2010) discussed that the British Foreign Office's decision for Cyprus to remain under Britain's possession was because of the strategic geographical location of Cyprus as a valuable asset for Britain's Middle Eastern position. Bullock, for instance, argues that Cyprus became increasingly prominence to Britain was primarily because of the latter's geostrategic and security interests towards the Middle East region (Bullock, 1983). Ball stresses that although British bases on Cyprus were too far to the east to be useful in the usual run of the Mediterranean operations, these bases were perfectly placed for use against ships trying to make a run from Greece to Syria (Ball, 2010). According to Hatzivassiliou (2009), as the Palestine mandate collapsed and the rebellion in Palestine failed to be solved effectively, and the bases in Iraq and Suez became harder to hold on to, Cyprus was seen by the British government as preferable alternative for new bases, thus Britain should keep its possession of this island. As stated by Hatzivassiliou (2009): 'Much instability has been caused in the Middle East by moves and rumours of moves of British troops. A stable and firmly held British stronghold on Cyprus is therefore of the greatest strategic importance' (p. 1151).

Apparently, the geostrategic significance of the Middle Eastern region to Britain has received most attention from historians in justifying Britain's decision to renounce *enosis* and thus retain British sovereignty in Cyprus. These historians seem to have paid less attention to other circumstances – the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) in Greece, for instance – that also contributed to Britain's decision to disagree on *enosis*. Interestingly, this neglected issue still concerns the matter of the Cold War. This matter therefore provides an opportunity for this paper to be considered the missing piece in the research

literature of this issue, and provides a thorough perusal of Bevin and his Foreign Office's perspective on the question of *enosis* and the continuation of British rule in Cyprus.

3. Research Questions

This paper seeks to look on the attitude of Foreign Secretary Bevin towards Cyprus by the time of the war of nerves developed between 1945 and 1947, which he as well as the Foreign Office favoured Cyprus to be retained under rule, despite the Greek Cypriots' demands for Cyprus' independence and *enosis* with Greece.

Given that, thus far, most research on Britain's decision to stay in Cyprus have focused on the importance of Cyprus as a valuable asset for military defence of the British Middle Eastern position due to the island's proximity to the Middle East, this paper seeks instead to shed light on the domestic problems in Greece that it had suffered from the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) in understanding Britain's decision to continue its rule in Cyprus. To expound this matter, this paper rigorously scrutinises the opinion and stance of Bevin and the Foreign Office, who were the key decision makers in determining the future of Cyprus. This paper presents new insights regarding Bevin's decision on the future of Cyprus by concentrating on his concern of the possibility of Greece, Cyprus's mother country, becoming communist.

4. Purpose of the Study

The objective of this paper is to conduct an examination of Bevin's decision to retain British control over Cyprus in connection with the Greek Civil War in Greece between 1945 and 1947. While this paper acknowledges the geostrategic prominence of the Middle Eastern region to Britain, this paper posits considerable political unrest in Greece has been disregarded in grasping why Bevin and the Foreign Office determined not to succumb to the Greek Cypriots' pressure for *enosis*.

The *enosis* matter was a delicate one for Bevin because if he wanted to strengthen the relationship between Britain and Greece for British security in the Middle East, Bevin should consider granting *enosis* to please Greece. However, by agreeing to *enosis*, Britain would lose Cyprus, a valuable asset in terms of military defence and its Middle Eastern position. Clearly however, either way, the decisions by Bevin in this Cyprus question would have negatively affected the British Middle Eastern position, such that Britain would not have let it happen at any cost.

The *enosis* campaign gained momentum in December 1946 and continued onward. It is worth mentioning that at the same time, the Greek Civil War in Greece, which broke out in March 1946, had gone from bad to worse by the end of 1946 and continued to be fought severely throughout 1947. These two matters: *enosis* and the Greek Civil War happened almost simultaneously, and Britain was extensively involved in both. Apparently, these affairs created a situation more difficult than other previous events for Bevin to handle in terms of British strategic interest in Cyprus. Bevin was caught in a dilemma because either he agreed to the continuation of British rule in Cyprus or he had to support *enosis*; both decisions would bring damaging implications to Britain's relationship with Greece and the British Middle Eastern position respectively.

5. Research Methods

This paper is not about the *enosis* movement in Cyprus, but relatively it pays attention to the decision made by Bevin and the Foreign Office in maintaining British sovereignty although the Greek Cypriots and Greece kept demanding for *enosis*. This paper adopts qualitative approach that employs perusal of the archival records from the viewpoint of policy-making and diplomatic history during the Cold War period. Those archival records used in this paper were substantially retrieved from London National Archives. There are also some primary sources were slightly retrieved from the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds. Secondary sources were largely retrieved from the Brotherton Library and Edward Boyle Library at the University of Leeds as well as London British Library.

A substantial amount of archival or primary records such as reports by the officials, official letters and meetings minutes produced by the Foreign Office and Foreign Secretary Office on the matter of the Cyprus question – *enosis* and the retention of British rule –, were found in FO 371 (Foreign Office Papers), FO 800 (Bevin's Private Papers), CAB (Cabinet Office Papers) and DEFE (Chiefs of Staff Committee Papers). All these primary materials are highly credible as they demonstrate actual events in a particular situation. Other online archival and academic sources, such as the House of Commons Parliamentary Debate (*HANSARD*) and the Foreign Relations of the United States (*FRUS*) alongside journal articles and monographs, respectively, have also been used in this paper. The other appropriate sources, for instance memoirs by politicians and diplomats who directly involved in this matter, also newspapers and books, were equivalent importance in understanding the matter at hand.

In showing how the local dynamics in Greece – that Greece suffered from the Greek Civil War – also had a crucial impact on Bevin's decision to dismiss *enosis* and thus maintain British rule in Cyprus, this paper extracts, compares and analyses the data from Bevin's Private Papers (FO 800) that hold Bevin's view regarding Cyprus, Greece and *enosis*, and the data from the Foreign Office (FO 371) that hold records regarding Greece and Cyprus during the later part of the third phase of British rule in Cyprus.

6. Findings

At the beginning of Bevin's responsibility in handling matters regarding Cyprus, he seemed indecisive about the best decision for Cyprus' future status. At first, Bevin agreed with the Foreign Office's suggestion that Cyprus should be handed to Greece (FO 371, 1941).¹ However, Bevin strongly championed a potent Britain's overseas sphere of influence and determined in preserving Britain's commitments in overseas theatres. But, Hugh Dalton as Chancellor of Exchequer, the person who responsible for budgeting for government expenditure, strongly recommended Bevin and his Foreign Office, as well as Albert V. Alexander (the Defence Minister) and the Chiefs of Staff (hereafter COS) to cut British overseas expenditure (CAB, 1946; Devereux, 1990).² However, in the case of Cyprus, Bevin felt that Cyprus naturally belonged to Greece. Bevin also accepted the Foreign Office's justification that

¹ FO371/29846/R397, Minute by Edward Warner, 16 January 1941; FO 371/23776/R4176, Memorandum of Royal Institution for International Affairs, 17 April 1941.

² CAB 131/1/DO (46) 1, Reports by Chancellor of the Exchequer, 11 January 1946.

the handover of Cyprus to Greece was a gesture of goodwill in improving Greek–British relations, as well as strengthened Britain’s position in Greece (FO 371, 1945; FO 371, 1946).³

The COS’s opinion on this issue, it should be noted, was in complete opposition to that of the Foreign Office. They considered the withdrawal of Britain from Cyprus as wrong. They stated that Cyprus was ‘the only British possession in the Middle East area and the only territory in the Middle East where such measures as they consider necessary for defence can be carried out unfettered by treaties’ (CAB, 1945).⁴ Hence, the COS highly recommended the retention of British control in Cyprus. This consideration was driven by the island’s proximity to the Middle East, an area that greatly importance to Britain and its empire. The COS felt troubled by the prospect of the Soviet Union’s military action against the Middle East region, and this matter would endanger British predominance in that area (CAB, 1945).⁵ In ensuring Britain’s continued its predominance in the Middle Eastern area, as well as to have a strategic military defence should war break out with the Soviet Union, the COS believed that the maintenance of British control in Cyprus could support these plans successfully.

Although Bevin accepted COS’ view positively and was in favour of Cyprus to remain as part of Britain, Bevin however, initially believed that Greece could provide Britain with better bases than Cyprus (FO 371, 1945).⁶ Nonetheless, Bevin’s ambition for bases in Greece appeared difficult to achieve because of the Greek Civil War. As a result, Bevin’s position, which was originally in the Foreign Office’s favour, was later shaken. Bevin became uncertain about giving up Cyprus to Greece. This was apparently because of the situation in Greece that it became progressively worse in consequence of invasion, resistance, occupation, and civil war (FO 371, 1945; Bullock, 1983).⁷ Greece became ineffectual because of these crises, and Bevin expected that Greece would not be able to guarantee Cyprus’ security if Cyprus was ceded to Greece at that time. Therefore, Bevin began to believe that Cyprus should remain British. Furthermore, if the Greek government’s army was defeated by the Democratic Army of Greece, which was the Greek Communist Party’s military branch in the Civil War, Greece would inevitably fall under communist control. In short, if Cyprus was ceded to Greece at that time, the island would also turn communist. These circumstances would have completely endangered British predominance in the Middle East region. Therefore, Bevin became more certain that Cyprus should remain under Britain’s possession.

Obviously, the Greek Civil War, one of the Cold War’s earliest conflicts, had encouraged the British government to handle the Cyprus question more thoroughly. As a result of growing fears of Greece becoming a communist nation, the British government became more convinced that Cyprus should stay within the British Empire. This was mainly because ‘British sovereignty denied the island to a potential enemy’ (Hatzivassiliou, 1997). Accordingly, *enosis* seemed to be an option that could not be considered by the British government during this crucial time.

Although at that time Greece suffered from the Greek Civil War, the question of *enosis* continued as a more menacing threat, which was regrettable for Britain. Bevin was furious and disappointed with

³ FO 371/48344/R15384, Memorandum by Orme G. Sargent, 8 September 1945; FO 371/38760, Minute by M. S. Williams, 9 April 1946.

⁴ CAB 79/39/COS (45) 215, Defence Committee to the Chiefs of Staff, 5 September 1945.

⁵ CAB 79/39/COS (45) 215, Defence Committee to the Chiefs of Staff, 5 September 1945.

⁶ FO 371/48360/R16295, Bevin to Hall, 18 September 1945.

⁷ FO 371/48344/R15384, Memorandum by Orme G. Sargent, 8 September 1945.

the Greek government because of this issue. Bevin angrily pointed out that it was: ‘senseless to hand Cyprus to Greece if that country was on the point of going communist’ (FO 371, 1946).⁸ The Greek government’s determination to fight for *enosis* was regarded by Bevin as mindless, and his displeasure was based on the fact that Britain was a major political, financial and military supporter of Greece in the Greek Civil War (FO 371, 1945; FO 800, 1945; *HANSARD*, 1945; CAB, 1946; CAB, 1947; FO 800, 1945-1950).⁹ Nonetheless, the Greek government and the Greek Cypriots had placed a stronger and more unified diplomatic pressure on the British government over the question of *enosis* in early 1947.

Unfortunately for Britain, its economic crisis had gone from bad to worse by the beginning of 1947 (Morgan, 1985; Robertson, 1987). Britain’s economic depression brought the British government to the conclusion that Britain could no longer continue giving economic and military aid to Greece (DEFE, 1947; CAB, 1947).¹⁰ At first, the British government decided to make a massive reduction in military expenditure in Greece, and at the same time hoped the United States would be willing to share the burden with Britain (CAB, 1947).¹¹ However, because the United States appeared hesitant to help Britain in this matter, Bevin decided to put pressure on the United States government by sending a letter to the United States Secretary of State, George C. Marshall, which informed the United States that Britain would completely withdraw from Greece within six months (Cook, 1989; Foreign relations of the United States [FRUS], 1947a; Williams, 1952).¹² As a result, on 12 March 1947, the United States announced that it agreed to help Greece and Turkey, and the \$400 million aid to these countries was given through the Truman Doctrine which became effective in May 1947 (FRUS, 1947b; Truman, 1956).¹³

Britain’s decision to withdraw from Greece indicated that it would lose its right to freely use the bases in Greece. This circumstance would weaken British control and power in the Middle East region. Therefore, Britain was desperately in need of another base to strengthen its predominance in the Middle East area. Apart from the fact that Cyprus was already under British possession, Cyprus seemed to be the best option because of the island’s proximity to the Middle Eastern region. Bevin therefore became more convinced that the retention of British rule in Cyprus was the best alternative to guarantee the region of Middle Eastern remained under British hegemony. Even the Prime Minister, Clement C. Attlee, who had previously been reluctant to keep Cyprus under the British Empire, changed his mind and supported the continuation of British rule in Cyprus (FO 371, 1947; FO 371, 1947).¹⁴

⁸ FO 371/58891/R18129, Minutes of conference between Bevin and Aghnidis by Frederick Warner to Foreign Office, 7 December 1946.

⁹ FO 371/48276/R13143, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, ‘Summary on the situation in Greece’ (Drafts), 1 August 1945; FO 800/468/Gre/45/1, Foreign Office to Athens, 1 August 1945; *HANSARD*, Vol. 413, Great Britain, Parliament, House of Commons, 20 August 1945, p. 289; CAB 131/12/DO (46) 40, Memorandum by Secretary of State to the Defence Committee, 13 March 1946; CAB 129/16/CP (47) 34, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, ‘Policy towards Greece and Turkey’, 25 January 1947; FO 800/468, Greece, 1945-1950.

¹⁰ DEF 5/3/COS (47) 10 (0), Chiefs of Staff Committee, ‘Assistance to Greece – Financial Implications’, 13 January 1947; CAB 131/5/DO (47) 6, Defence Committee, ‘Greece: Previous Reference: DO (46) 9th Meeting, Minute 5’, 3 March 1947.

¹¹ CAB 131/5/DO (47) 6, Defence Committee, ‘Greece: Previous Reference: DO (46) 9th Meeting, Minute 5’, 3 March 1947.

¹² *FRUS*, The Near East and Africa, Vol. V, pp. 32-35, The British Embassy to the Department of State, ‘*Aide-Mémoire*’, 21 February 1947.

¹³ *FRUS*, The Near East and Africa, Vol. V, pp. 63-64, Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State (Acheson) to the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson), ‘Implementation of Measures for Aid to Greece and Turkey’, 27 February 1947.

¹⁴ FO 371/67081/R2360, Notes of the Meeting, 7 February 1947; FO 371/68071/R2527, Arthur Creech Jones to Cypriot Delegation, 25 February 1947.

It appeared that the Cold War tension in Greece had driven the British government, specifically Bevin and his Foreign Office, to make a clear resolution for Britain's national interest in Cyprus. The British government had made a unanimous decision over the Cyprus question that Cyprus must remain British. However, this was hard to achieve because of *enosis*. It could not be denied that the biggest obstacle for the British government was the question of *enosis*. In order to find the best solution on this matter, 'the Cabinet had authorised the Foreign Secretary [Bevin] to explore the possibilities of reaching an understanding with the Greek Government, that they would not raise for some years to come with the question of the status of Cyprus' (FO 371, 1947).¹⁵

It is worth highlighting here that the Cabinet's authorisation for Bevin to reach an agreement with the Greek government about *enosis* happened almost simultaneously with Bevin's decision to cut military expenses in Greece. It seemed that, apart from the economic depression in Britain, Bevin's decision to stop supporting Greece was driven by his anger towards the Greek government's demand for *enosis*, which he regarded as happening at an inappropriate time. This was because, after the announcement of the withdrawal of British troops from Greece in March 1947, the Greek government seemed reluctant to raise the issue of *enosis* when it was approached by Bevin as requested by the Cabinet. Bevin accordingly told the Cabinet that this outcome was the best because he believed that no satisfying solution could be reached if this issue were discussed with the Greek government at that time:

If discussions were opened with them, they were bound to raise the question of the Cypriots' right to determine their future status and, as we were not ready to give them any satisfaction on that point, they would have no incentive to reach any understanding with us. There was also a risk that any such discussions would become known and would provoke further agitation (FO 371, 1947).¹⁶

Based on this report to the Cabinet, the Greek government toned down its claims for *enosis*. The Greek government's new attitude would allow for the retention of British rule in Cyprus without causing any hard feelings to Greece. The Greek government later gradually stepped out of the question of *enosis* and had the intention to leave it in the Greek Cypriots' hands.

It is important to emphasise here that apart from the strategic geographical location of Cyprus, Cyprus' most valuable asset was its military virtue: the Cyprus bases were not subject to any treaties or understandings with any other countries (Kelling, 1990). Therefore, Britain could deploy its forces or military resources freely at any time without limitation because the bases were absolutely under British authorisation. It became one of the greatest motivations for Britain to stay and continue its sovereignty in Cyprus (DEFE, 1951).¹⁷

In brief, further archival research of British records, in particular Bevin's Private Papers of FO 800, shows that Bevin's concern over the local dynamics in Greece – that it suffered from the Greek Civil War and was on the verge of becoming communist – had also influenced Bevin to reject *enosis*. If Cyprus was ceded to Greece during this crucial time, it was believed that Cyprus too would turn communist. This

¹⁵ FO 371/68082/R13855, CM (47), Conclusions, 18 March 1947.

¹⁶ FO 371/68082/R13855, CM (47), Conclusions, 18 March 1947.

¹⁷ DEFE 5/31/COS (51) 245, Note by the War Office: Sovereignty of Cyprus – Background, 24 April 1951.

matter would endanger British possession of Cyprus, and also jeopardize Britain's predominance in the Mediterranean area and the Middle Eastern region.

7. Conclusion

The discussion above clearly showed that Britain would defend its privilege in Cyprus at any cost so that British dominance in the Middle East area could be preserved. However, the continuous movement for *enosis* by Greek Cypriots presented a major danger to Britain's position in Cyprus. Luckily for Britain, even though *enosis* was revitalised in 1945, became stronger at the end of 1946 and turned into a more unified movement in early 1947, the British government succeeded through these rough years without surrendering to the *enosis* demands by the Greek Cypriots and Greece.

This paper has analysed Britain's decision in continuing its sovereignty in Cyprus from the perspective that has received less attention from previous historians – the local dynamics in Greece. As mentioned above, Cyprus was of substantial in keeping Britain's predominance in the Mediterranean area and also the Middle Eastern region. Considering this, it is understandable why previous historians have mostly focused on this issue and neglected other factors or perspectives.

It is worth reminding here that Bevin was the one who made the decision to retain British rule in Cyprus, and he was the one who initially championed the idea of returning Cyprus to Greece, even though he was fully aware that Cyprus was of great valuable to Britain in terms of geostrategic and security interest. It stands to reason then that there must be other factors that encouraged Bevin to change his decision towards Cyprus. As the decision to stay in Cyprus was made simultaneously to when Bevin was considering unfavourable local dynamics in Greece and the geostrategic importance of the Middle Eastern region as well as the Mediterranean area to Britain, this shows that the former matter – as argued by this paper – was another justification that had a great influence on Bevin and the Foreign Office's stance towards the future of Cyprus.

This paper has only concentrated on the perspectives of Bevin and the Foreign Office in understanding Britain's decision towards Cyprus. Thus, this paper has not presented a full analysis of this issue from other perspectives. To present a comprehensive analysis of Britain's decision to remain in Cyprus, the point of view of other departments, for instance the Colonial Office, the office of Prime Minister and Ministry of Defence, should be considered in future studies.

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