

## **The issues with the constitution from Federal Research Division of the US Library of Congress**

A number of quarrels broke out over the balance of representation of the two communities in the government and over foreign policy, taxation by communal chambers, and other matters, bringing the government to a virtual standstill. The leading cause of disagreements was the ratio of Greek Cypriots to Turkish Cypriots in the civil service. Turkish Cypriots complained that the seventy-to-thirty ratio was not enforced. Greek Cypriots felt that the provisions discriminated against them, because they constituted almost 80 percent of the population. Another major point of contention concerned the composition of units under the sixty-to- forty ratio decreed for the Cypriot army. President Makarios favoured complete integration; Vice President Fazil Küçük accepted a mixed force at the battalion level but insisted on segregated companies. On October 20, 1961, Küçük used his constitutional veto power for the first and only time to halt the development of a fully integrated force. Makarios then stated that the country could not afford an army anyway. Planning and development of the national army ceased, and paramilitary forces arose in each community.

From the start, Greek Cypriots had been uneasy about the idea of separate municipalities, which Turkish Cypriots were determined to preserve. Also, the Greek Cypriot Communal Chamber never set up a communal court system, whereas Turkish Cypriot communal courts were established.

Still another issue that provoked strong Greek Cypriot criticism was the right of the veto held by the Turkish Cypriot vice president and what amounted to final veto power held by the Turkish Cypriot representatives in the House of Representatives with respect to laws and decisions affecting the entire population. Turkish Cypriot representatives had exercised this veto power with respect to income tax legislation, seriously limiting government revenues.

In late 1963, after three years' experience of unsteady self-government , Makarios declared that certain constitutional provisions "threatened to paralyze the State machinery." Revisions were necessary, he said, to remove obstacles that prevented Greek and Turkish Cypriots from "cooperating in the spirit of understanding and friendship." On November 30, 1963, Makarios proposed thirteen amendments to be considered immediately by the leaders of the Turkish Cypriot community.

These proposals, outlined in a presidential memorandum entitled "Suggested Measures for Facilitating the Smooth Functioning of the State and for the Removal of Certain Causes of Intercommunal Friction," reflected all the constitutional problems that had arisen. The president's action had far-reaching implications. Most important, it deeply eroded Turkish Cypriot confidence in the fragile power sharing arrangement. The proposals also automatically involved Greece, Turkey, and Britain, which as signatories to the Treaties of Guarantee and Alliance had pledged to guarantee the status quo under the constitution.

The proposed amendments would have eliminated most of the special rights of Turkish Cypriots. For instance, they would have abolished many of the provisions for separate communal institutions, substituting an integrated state with limited guarantees for the minority community. The administration of justice was to be unified. Instead of the separate municipalities that the constitution had originally called for in the five largest towns, municipalities were to be unified. The veto powers of the president and vice president were to be abandoned, as were the provisions for separate parliamentary majorities in certain areas of legislation. Turkish Cypriot representation in the civil service was to be proportionate to the size of the community. By way of compensation, the Turkish Cypriot vice president was to be given the right to deputize for the Greek Cypriot president in case of his absence, and the vice president of the House of Representatives was to be acting president of the body during the temporary absence or incapacity of the president.

Küçük reportedly had agreed to consider these proposals. The Turkish government, however, rejected the entire list.