**Telegram from the Embassy in Cyprus to the Department of State**

Nicosia, June 27, 1975, 1700Z.

2069. For the Secretary from Ambassador. Department pass Athens and Ankara as desired. Subject: Conversation with Clerides. Ref: Nicosia 1882.

**1.**

Summary. Clerides has asked that I convey his current thinking to you on a confidential basis pursuant your suggestion. He believes Makarios is trying to weaken his position out of suspicion that there may be an evolving axis between him and Karamanlis, and a desire to see present negotiation fail quickly. Clerides reiterated criticism of pro-Makarios role of Greek Ambassador here. He stressed urgent need for centrist political movement, led by him, to counter increasingly successful Communist activity encouraged by Makarios. End summary.

**2.**

I saw Clerides June 27—our first meeting since Vienna II and UNSC Cyprus debate.

**3.**

At the outset, I told Clerides that Makarios had sharply criticized him in conversation with me just after Vienna II (reftel). I asked if there were an explanation for this display of calculated anger other than reasons given by Archbishop, i.e. Clerides’ acceptance of an appearance of progress and reference to transitional government in final communiqué. Karamanlis had given strong support Clerides in Vienna. Was Makarios perhaps worried that Karamanlis and Clerides had developed a mutuality of interest and understanding from which he being excluded? Was Makarios seeking to demean him in eyes of Greek Cypriots in order to break up this “axis”? I noted the private conversations which had taken place between Karamanlis and Clerides and asked about the state of their relationship.

**4.**

Clerides prefaced his reply by recalling that in your last conversation with him you had said he could communicate with you confidentially through me. He asked that his following remarks be treated in this sense.

**5.**

Clerides said he believed Makarios was actively seeking to undermine his position because (A) he had wanted Vienna II to fail and (B) he was suspicious of the very good relationship which had evolved with Karamanlis. Re (A) Makarios wished to be free to pursue his preferred path of building Arab, non-aligned and Soviet support looking toward UNGA and its advocacy of a broader international negotiation. As evidence of this, Clerides said he had informed Makarios that substantive progress might well not be possible by July 24 date for reconvening Vienna discussion and that a postponement might therefore be desirable. Makarios had replied that, regardless, they wanted the next round to take place as scheduled. Makarios, Clerides thought, wanted to precipitate a failure of this negotiation as quickly as possible lest Turks come up with something quasi-reasonable. Unfortunately, Turkey playing directly into his hands by its unwillingness/inability to table positions on territory and refugees. Given the situation in Ankara and Makarios’ attitude, the prospects for sustained negotiation were poor. Clerides said he was relying on your assurance that you would do what you could with Turkey, but he appreciated the difficulties in this.

**6.**

Returning to my question of his relationship with Karamanlis, Clerides said everything was fine when the two could meet face to face. When he was in Nicosia, however, all communications had to run through Dountas who put everything through the optic of his total personal commitment to Makarios. I asked if this had come up in Clerides’ private conversations with Karamanlis and Clerides nodded. He thought Karamanlis had come to realize how much of a problem he had on this score. Karamanlis had looked “creased” after their discussion.

***Comment***: Undoubtedly, because Dountas is a strong partisan of Mavros, he would be difficult to transfer without stimulating politically motivated criticism from latter. ***End comment***. Clerides cautioned me against confiding in Dountas. I said that from long experience with him I had learned the wisdom of being quite uncommunicative.

**7.**

Clerides then broached what he said was the main concern he wished to convey at this time: the interrelationship of developments on the Greek Cypriot political scene and the negotiation under Waldheim.

**8.**

Clerides remarked that, as I undoubtedly aware, Makarios was discreetly encouraging activity by AKEL (the official Cyprus Communist Party) and Lyssarides (unofficial Communist) as part of his effort to attract non-aligned and leftist support internationally. Building on economic dislocation and political frustration, both were making dangerous headway. The situation urgently required the creation of a broad political movement aimed at pulling together political factions from the genuinely progressive left-of-center to the right but excluding on the far right those tainted by active association with last summer’s coup. This movement would not be opposed to Makarios and would indeed draw in many of his supporters who currently discomfited by his reliance on the left. A counterweight to the latter was increasingly essential and Clerides said he knew only he could lead it. Problem for him was that he felt himself intellectually and morally committed to continuing the present Cyprus negotiation. If, having brought a center movement into being, the negotiation failed and discredited him it would also seriously and perhaps irrevocably damage the chances of a successful center coalition. Clerides said he had to weigh this against the danger of letting non-Communist forces remain leaderless. His decision was to defer for at least another two or three months the announcement of a center movement to allow some more time for progress in the negotiation. In the interim, time would not be completely wasted as lists of movement leaders, structure, and program could be developed. To counter AKEL, which subsidized by Russia, and Lyssarides who generously supported by Syria and Libya, and successful opposition movement would have to have resources which would be hard to come by given straitened economic circumstances of politically sympathetic potential backers.

**9.**

My conversation with Clerides was three times interrupted from calls from UNSYG Special Representative Weckmann to the effect that Denktash has gone back on agreement reached June 25 to swap some Turkish students in the south for permission for ten Greek Cypriot teachers to be allowed to go to Greek enclaves in Karpass Denktash, Weckmann told Clerides, wanted his Turks but was temporarily unable make arrangements for the Greek teachers.  Clerides said then there could be no deal and by telephone ordered transfer of Turkish students halted, commenting to me that matters were back to square one. Clerides also noted with dismay Denktash’s admission to foreign journalists that Greek personal property and merchandise in Famagusta being removed and transferred to Nicosia for sale and other disposition. Greeks, he said, read this as indicating Turkish intention to repopulate New Famagusta in the near future.

**10.**

***Comment***: Unless you wish, I do not think a reply from you to Clerides is required by the nature of his comment. ***End comment***.

**Crawford**