

cyprus
8

Briefing Item

The Soviets and Cyprus: Soviet actions during the UNSC debate on renewal of UNFICYP and recent public statements regarding Cyprus-related developments suggest that Moscow may have grown less concerned about Turkish sensitivities and less cautious in overtly courting the Greeks and Greek Cypriots. In geopolitical terms, Turkey remains a more important country than Greece for the USSR. Throughout the Cyprus crisis, Moscow has been careful to avoid offense to Ankara. But this approach may now be changing. The Soviets probably see a policy more openly sympathetic to the Hellenic community as strengthening existing Greek and Greek Cypriot inclinations to support some kind of Soviet role in the Cyprus settlement. At the same time they seem to be applying measured pressure on the Turks, presently faced with troubles at home and in their relations with the U. S., in an effort to revise the negative Turkish attitude toward Soviet proposals designed to increase Moscow's voice about Cyprus. In present circumstances, the Soviets seem to be departing from the even-handed policy toward Turkey which has had little payoff since it was enunciated in July. The Soviets may well reckon that their best opportunities would emerge from a stalemate in Cyprus or a partial defusing of the crisis there which would leave enough unresolved differences to assure continued Greek-Turkish confrontation. We expect that Soviet policy relating to the Cyprus affair will continue to be reactive and we believe that the Soviets will continue to be constrained by detente

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958 (as amended) SEC 3.3
NSC Memo, 3/30/06, State Dept. Guidelines
By MM NARA, Date 3/22/11



considerations and by their basic strategic interests in Turkey. Thus, in Embassy Moscow's view, it is doubtful that Soviet diplomacy on Cyprus will go beyond the relatively low-level of meddling that has characterized it since last summer.

(ADClift:12/30/74)

