

APPENDIX

NON-CYPRriot MIGRATION FROM CYPRUS TO BRITAIN

At the time of the Census in 1960, there were resident in Cyprus 30,714 persons of ethnic groups other than Greek or Turkish Cypriot, i.e. 0.53 per cent of the total population.¹ The majority of these 'non-Cypriot' persons were classified as British, but the number included several thousand each of Armenians and Maronites. Both British and Armenians figure among the flow of post-war emigrants from Cyprus to Britain, and the pattern of movement of each group is considered briefly below. For the Maronites, on the other hand, there is no evidence of their participation in the movement overseas, and the majority continue to live in the four villages which they have traditionally inhabited in the north-eastern corner of the island.

TABLE A.1

SMALLER ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS IN CYPRUS 1960

Armenians	3,628
Maronites	2,708
British	20,955
Other	3,423

Source: C.P.A. 1960

Armenians

Armenian settlement on Cyprus has a long history, and throughout the present century Armenians have constituted a small but significant ethnic minority on the island. From a population of around 500 at the turn of the century, the size of this settlement increased to 3,686 by the end of the Second World War. By 1960, however, the equivalent figure (of 'Armenian-Gregorians' 'by religion') stood at 3,378, although the number of Armenians in the 'ethnic' sense (termed 'by race' in the Census) was 3,628 persons.² In more recent times, therefore, there has been a reduction in the size of the Armenian settlement on the island.

The establishment of a sizeable Armenian community on the island in the present century was largely a consequence of their persecution at the hands of the Ottomans in Turkey. Local massacres and expulsions around the end of the century gave way to more systematic persecutions at the time of the First World War. Most of those who could escape fled southwards into Arab territories recently liberated from Ottoman rule, and of these some two to three thousand in due course found their way to Cyprus. These refugees, and their descendants, form by far the greater part of the post-war community of Armenians on the island.

Although this minority comprises less than 1 per cent of the population, its position in the life of the island is a significant one. Almost all Armenians live in the six towns, the majority in either Nicosia or Larnaca. Most are relatively well-educated (often at Armenian schools), and tend to be engaged in non-manual work, often in trade or commerce. In retail trades, especially in imported goods, they developed an important role for themselves, gaining wealth and influence for their community as the market for consumer goods expanded through the post-war years. Yet in spite of this - indeed, to some extent because of it - they have remained socially separate from other groups on the island. Armenians in Cyprus speak their own language, practise their own religion, organise their own schools, and often run their own businesses. They do not regard themselves as 'Cypriots' in any ethnic

sense: Cyprus is to them 'home' not because they belong, but because they happen to live there. Moreover, their roots in Cyprus are relatively shallow, having been laid down over little more than a generation. The only sense in which they are collectively 'Cypriot' is in opposition to Armenians exiled in other territories. But like all expatriate Armenians (in the ethnic sense) they owe primary allegiance to their own civilisation, and to the homeland to which few will now return.

The population figures already cited suggest that some at least of the Armenians of Cyprus have once again been on the move. This is borne out by the emigration statistics available since 1955, which are shown in Table A.2. This indicates that almost 1,200 Armenians have departed the

TABLE A.2

ARMENIAN EMIGRATION FROM CYPRUS TO BRITAIN 1955-66

	All Emigrants	Emigrants to Britain
1955	20	..
1956	58	..
1957	40	17
1958	36	17
1959	54	47
1960	261	255
1961	185	178
1962	347	15
1963	162	8
1964	77	61
1965	13	8
1966	12	6
1957-66	1,187	612

Source: V.& M.S./D.R.

island during the twelve years from 1955 to 1966, representing approximately one-third of the Armenian community. The majority of these emigrants left between 1960 and 1964. In some years during the period a few Armenians were among the immigrants to Cyprus, but their total of 66 persons is relatively very small.³

Some 500 of the Armenians who left Cyprus in 1962-64 did so in an organised return to Soviet Armenia.⁴ Of the remainder, the large majority (88 per cent) migrated to Britain - in this case mostly in 1960 and 1961. At least a small number of Armenians has migrated to Britain in every year of the period, and probably did so in years prior to 1957 as well.

The main years of Armenian migration differ from those for British migration, and are more similar to those for Greek and Turkish-Cypriot migrants generally. To some extent, then, it seems that Armenians were influenced by similar factors as the latter in migrating to Britain. However, two additional factors have played an important part. In the first place, being much involved in retail trade, Armenians for their living are particularly dependent upon their customers. While the early part of the Emergency Period left them little affected, the outbreak of open strife between Greeks and Turks at the end of the decade, and again at the end of 1963, resulted in an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust in which the protagonists increasingly restricted contacts to their own group. The Armenians thus became relatively isolated, and their businesses suffered seriously. From 1959, too, they became aware that they could no longer rely upon the protection of the British. In the second place, with the worsening of the civil strife in the 1960s, the division of Nicosia into Greek and Turkish sectors led to loss of property by Armenians, for a number owned houses within the Turkish sector which were sequestered without compensation.

There was not at any time direct hostility towards Armenians. It was nonetheless the political situation which has been the major cause of their departures, affecting them indirectly by means of their business and property interests. That this is indeed the case is supported by the migration figures, which show the periods of inter-ethnic strife to be the periods of emigration, departures being very small in other years by comparison.

Most Armenians migrated to Britain as families, and the age and sex composition of the migrants is a very even one. In Britain they have joined a small settlement of Armenians who live mostly in London, and who in 1966 numbered between three and four thousand. Their still close-knit community life centres on the Armenian Cathedral of St. Sarkis in Kensington, although residentially Armenians are quite widely scattered around the metropolis. The arrival of Armenians from Cyprus, alongside a smaller number from Egypt, strengthened this community considerably, but in spite of their addition its size is no greater than the community from which they came.

British

As already noted, rather more than 20,000 British persons were enumerated as resident in Cyprus in 1960. This figure, however, cannot be taken as indicating the size of a permanent British settlement in Cyprus, since the great majority of British in Cyprus at that date were Military Personnel and their families. Indeed throughout the post-war period the number of British persons in Cyprus has varied with the amount and nature of British activity there, and the differing categories of persons involved must be taken into account when considering "migration" in its strict sense.

Immediately after the war, in 1946, the British ("English-speaking", in this case) population of the island was approximately 4,700.⁵ Of this number, about 3,600 were categorised as 'military', and 1,057 described as 'civilian'. According to the Report on the Census for that year, the civilian component "includes one or two families settled in Cyprus before the occupation (i.e. in 1878) and perhaps 200 recent settlers, but for the most part consists of officials, salaried employees of banks and commercial houses and business travellers."⁶

In subsequent years, the number of both these categories of British residents rose substantially. First with the Palestinian War, then with the construction of the Military Bases, and finally with the Emergency Period in the later 1950s, increasing quantities of military personnel and their families came to be stationed on the island. The 'civilian' section, on the other hand, expanded more in connection with the social and economic developments introduced by the Colonial Government, though it also included many retired persons, as well as some artists and writers. The 'community' which grew up among these residents has been evocatively described by Lawrence Durrell in his book 'Bitter Lemons'.

Only the latter of the two categories may properly be considered as 'migrants'. The military personnel were present on the island only for specific tours of duty, for the most part living in isolation from the mainstream of island life. The same was true by and large of their families, and neither of these two classes of persons were recorded as 'migrants' in the Government's migration statistics. Even among the civilians, there were many who were not migrants in the sense of 'permanent settlers' -

officials in the colonial administration, to take an example. Most, however, worked on the island for several years at least, and did not live quite such a segregated life as the military group. It is reasonable, therefore, to follow the practice of the Government in its migration statistics of regarding all the civilian categories as 'migrants'.

With regard to migration, then, we are dealing with only a portion of the British residents enumerated on the island - a portion whose number is not exactly known, but which would certainly have comprised a minority of all those British enumerated. However, the emigration of these residents constituted a significant proportion of all migrants departing Cyprus in certain post-war years. Figures for 1955 onwards (those for earlier years not being available) are presented in Table A.3.

<u>Table A.3</u>		
<u>BRITISH^(a) MIGRATION FROM CYPRUS TO BRITAIN 1955-66</u>		
	All Emigrants	Emigrants to Britain
1955	5	..
1956	1,871 ^(b)	..
1957	899	732
1958	704	656
1959	729	725
1960	341	341
1961	27	24
1962	4	3
1963	13	11
1964	4	4
1965	6	6
1966	-	-
1957-66	2,727	2,502
<p><u>Notes:</u> (a) Migration statistics refer to persons classified as 'Anglo-American' by ethnic group. In view of the minimal number of persons in this category destined for the U.S.A., it is assumed for present purposes that all in the category are British.</p> <p>(b) "A large proportion of this figure represents families of British Military Personnel." (V.M.S. 1956)</p>		
<u>Source:</u> <u>V.& M.S./D.R.</u>		

From this Table it is clear that a major exodus of British civilian residents in Cyprus occurred during the period 1956-60. The figure for 1956 includes the families of Military Personnel and so the number of civilian migrants cannot be determined, but the statistic for the previous year leaves no doubt that at

that time the exodus had not begun. On the other hand, by 1961 it had virtually terminated. From then until 1966 only 54 British persons emigrated, compared with 2,673 in the preceding four years.

The main period of departure coincides with that of the Independence Struggle, and particularly the period extending from the Declaration of the State of Emergency to the Year of Independence. The conditions of living during that period (especially the terrorism directed against British persons), the future prospects once Independence became assured, and the change-over from British to Cypriot administrative staff, were the principal factors leading to the departure of so many British. Indeed, so complete was the exodus that by the time the author visited the island in 1965, the British couple with whom he stayed were almost the only private residents who had remained on the island throughout the whole period of political crisis. Thus leaving aside the military presence on the island, it would be virtually true to say that the entire settlement of the British minority on Cyprus that had developed both before and after the war was removed by the end of 1960, with only a handful of persons remaining for any period subsequently.

As may be seen from the same Table, almost all of these British emigrants returned to the United Kingdom - at least in the first instance. A few travelled directly to different destinations, about 9 per cent in all, many of them going to other Commonwealth countries.

Footnotes

¹ C.P.A. 1960.

² Population Censuses, Cyprus.

³ V. & M.S./D.R.

⁴ D.R.

⁵ C.P.A. 1946.

⁶ C.P.A. 1946, Report by D.A. Percival, p. 11.