



Nicos Sampson

Greek Cypriot guerrilla leader Nicos Sampson and eight-day president of the Greek (Cypriot) Republic (15-23 July 1974), died in Nicosia, 9 May 2001. As the Turkish Cypriots

thought of him as 'the most hated Greek Cypriot', they were horrified when they heard on 15 July 1974 Nicos Sampson declare on the Nicosia radio: 'In the name of God and the people, and in the name of armed forces, I have assumed the presidency of Cyprus.'

It was 8.30 in the morning. The then president **Archbishop Makarios** (d.1977) was welcoming a Greek Orthodox youth delegation, when the Presidential Palace came under mortar attack. Within a few hours the palace had been razed, and the announcement came, Makarios was dead. He was not.

The Archbishop had managed to escape to a mountain hideout in the Paphos area from where he announced on the local radio that he was alive and going to struggle 'against the dictatorship which the Greek junta is trying to impose'. However, with armoured cars and tanks moving towards Paphos and a National Guard naval ship shelling the Bishopric of Paphos - where he was sheltering - barely 24 hours later Makarios decided to leave Cyprus rather than fall into the hands of the junta. The British seemed to approve the putsch; they sent a helicopter to bring the ousted president to their base from where he was flown to London via Malta.

The island's Turkish Cypriot population had little reason to mourn the overthrow of Makarios, but they had no reason to welcome a self-admitted killer with a long history of terror and violence against them. After his overthrow Makarios disclosed to the Italian journalist, Oriana Fallaci (*The Washington Post*, 17 November 1974), that Nicos Sampson and **Brigadier Ionnaides** had visited him in 1963-64 with a proposal to attack the Turkish Cypriots suddenly and to eliminate them to the last man, but which, he claimed, he did not approve. A member of the Greek security service, Ionnaides was then attached with the Cyprus National Guard.

The independence agreement of 1960 had provided for three guarantor powers against the breakdown of the

island's two-community constitution. That constitution already stood violated when, in December 1963, Makarios ejected all Turkish Cypriot elements, including the vice president and three cabinet ministers from the government and declared that the Zurich and London agreements were no longer valid. Now, with Nicos Sampson heading the regime in Nicosia, the threat of Cyprus being 'united' with Greece (*enosis*) had become real and imminent.

The Turks, therefore, wanted Britain, a guarantor power, to intervene in order to restore the constitution and save Turkish Cypriots from being killed and cleansed from the island. But as Britain parried and played the 'peace process', Turkey went ahead to land its forces in northern Cyprus on 20 July 1974. Article 4 (2) of the Treaty of Guarantee empowered Ankara to intervene to protect the peace and independence of Cyprus.

Henry Kissinger says that during the night of 21-22 July, when Turkey had occupied only a small enclave on the island, the US forced a ceasefire by threatening Turkey that they 'would move nuclear weapons from forward position - especially where they might be involved in a war with Greece'. However, within 48 hours of the Turkish intervention, the pro-US Greek junta in Athens suddenly collapsed on 22 July giving away to another pro-American government under **Constantine Karmanlis**.

In Nicosia, too, the eight-day presidency of Nicos Sampson came to an end. On 23 July, the president of the House of Representatives, **Glafochos Clerides**, was sworn in as president by a defrocked dissident priest. No matter what Kissinger claims, frustrated by a fresh round of negotiations in Geneva, on 31 July, the Turkish armed forces seized Lapithos and Karavas on the north coast; in a second round of operations (14-16 August 1974), they were able to liberate 36% of territory in the north and put it under the control of the Cypriot Turkish Administration. The territory is known as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

The Turkish Cypriots had narrowly escaped becoming Greek subjects and being subjected to killings and ethnic cleansing. Nicos Sampson himself told the Athens newspaper *Apoyevmatini* (15 July 1975) that he was 'about to declare *enosis*' (union with Greece) when he was forced to hand over the presidency to Clerides.

The Orders of the Day, discovered

later in Greek military camps, revealed detailed preparations for annexing the island to Greece. There were also clear indications that both Britain and the US were in the know of the putsch and poised to recognise the Sampson coup. That is why instead of helping to restore the legitimate government of Makarios, Britain had flown him out of the country and Kissinger was trying to force a ceasefire upon Turkey. However, having failed to stop the creation of an independent Turkish Cypriot republic, the US imposed military sanctions against its Nato ally, Turkey.

It is pretty evident that both the British and Americans had become quite fed up with Makarios, his non-alignment, his hobnobbing with the Soviets and his imperious posturing. It is highly improbable that they had no prior knowledge of the intentions of the anti-Communist junta in Athens. On the day the coup took place, the Cypriot Greek ambassador to Washington, **Nikos Dimitriou**, went to see Kissinger who asked the ambassador to tell him what he thought of Sampson. 'An egomaniac,' said Dimitriou. Well, they used to describe me too as an 'egomaniac', riposted Kissinger. The ambassador was surprised by Kissinger's remarks which seemed to suggest his approval of the coup.

What no one - neither the Greeks, nor the American or the British - had expected was a Turkish intervention because twice in the past Ankara had huffed and puffed, only to back away when told to do so by the Americans. 'The Turks have formed a habit of going out to sea every year or two just to breathe the Mediterranean air and then return home,' a Greek official told David Tonge, BBC correspondent in Athens, adding the Turkish navy had been put to sea to test Greek reaction.

Even the Turkish commanders were not so sure about their own government's resolve. 'We are ready, but we are wondering if you are also [ready],' the chief of the general staff, **General Sancar**, told a midnight meeting at the military headquarters held on 16 July. Prime Minister **Bulent Ecevit** still wanted to know, 'in how many days can you complete your preparations?' He was told: 'We can land on Saturday morning' - 20 July.

The government agreed that intervention was essential but asked Ecevit to make diplomatic contacts with Britain and the rest of the world. Ecevit flew out to London hoping to persuade Prime Minister **Harold Wilson** (d.1995) and his foreign secretary, **Jim Callaghan**,

that as a guarantor power, Britain should intervene before the island was annexed by Greece. But Callaghan showed little concern or sense of urgency, and told Ecevit that that was out of the question.

However, hardly had Ecevit taken off from London when the (Turkish) General Staff Headquarters told the Landing Units Command in Mersin: 'Unless orders to the contrary are received, operations will commence at 8.30 hours.' In fact the forces had already moved out to the sea.

The military command was still unsure of Ecevit. Then leader of opposition, **Sulaiman Demirel**, believed the threat to the strategic interests of Turkey was greater than that to the security of the Turkish Cypriot community, and that intervention would be a historic blunder. (Demirel was later to become prime minister and president of Turkey, but his timid character showed up again during the genocide in Bosnia and Chechnya.)

In a smart move, however, the military command had already turned to the deputy prime minister, **Necmettin Erbakan**, who was also for that brief while the acting prime minister, and obtained the go ahead orders while Ecevit was still in the air. Erbakan's views were no secret: he was strongly in favour of intervention.

Ecevit returned from London at 03.00, Saturday 20 July 1974, and went straight to the General Headquarters. It is not known what he had exactly said but we know what **Admiral Kayacan** had said to him in reply. 'Mr Prime Minister,' said the Admiral, 'it will take us 20 hours to reach the island. If the plans are to be implemented on time, I must order the navy to set out at 08.30 today ... We wish, Sir, to stress the fact that if, as in the past, we draw back at the last minute, neither we as commanders, nor you as the prime minister can survive ...' (Mehmet Ali Birand: *30 Hot Days*, London, 1985).

The Turkish Cypriots were lucky that Turkey had at that precious moment an acting prime minister who did not vacillate but who had the courage to seize the moment and thus turn a dire situation into deliverance. It is open to speculation as to what would have happened to Cyprus, Turkish Cypriots and Turkey itself, if Erbakan had not been there.

Makarios returned to power in December 1974. Nicos Sampson was put on trial for usurping power and was awarded a 20-year prison sentence. He had, however, always maintained that

he had no part in the putsch and that he had been asked by Brigadier Ionnaides to become the president. Ionnaides was head of the dreaded Greek police.

Nicos Sampson was most probably telling the truth. Born on 16 December 1935 into a publishing family in Famagusta (Gazimagusa) and baptised as **Nicos Georghiadis**, he had a rather adventurous if also a shadowy political career. It started with changing his rather heavy surname, 'Georghiadis', into a little flamboyant, 'Sampson'. He had joined the *Times of Cyprus* as a photojournalist and the by-line Sampson sounded impressive. Sampson was also making 'scoops' all the time; he had the extraordinary gift of arriving at the scene of a shooting before everyone else.

In 1955, the Greek Cypriots had set up a guerrilla group Eoka (National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters) to fight the British and make *enosis*, that is join the island with Greece. The Greek Orthodox Archbishop of the island, Makarios III, headed the political wing; the military wing was led by **General George Grivas** (d.1974); and the most 'extremist' of the two Nicos Sampson was there, not improbably as a British agent. That explained his 'scoops', his 'throwing grenades and organising riots' and bragging later that that he had killed more than 15 British policemen and civilians.

He was sent on trial twice. Once in 1957, he was accused of being the chief 'executioner' on the so-called 'Murder Mile,' the Ledra Street in Nicosia which had seen more than 15 British policemen and civilians shot dead by Eoka terrorists. He claimed that he had been tortured into confessing to the murder of police sergeant. However, Sampson was acquitted by Justice Bernard Shaw who held that the prosecution had failed to prove his confession was free and voluntary.

A month later, Sampson was sentenced to death for possessing a Sten gun and threatening the life of four British policemen. The governor general commuted the death penalty to life imprisonment and sent him to Britain to serve his sentence at the Wormwood Scrubs prison. But with the signing of the independence agreement and amnesty, in 1959, he went into exile in Greece and then flew back to Nicosia to a hero's welcome.

Archbishop Makarios who had been elected president hailed and welcomed him as 'the pioneer of the ideals that had been realised'. Playing to the

gallery, Makarios told him: 'To you more than anyone the supreme boon of freedom is due, You are the incarnation of the spirit of Greek virtue.'

This incarnation of Greek virtue established his own newspaper *Makhi* (Combat) and soon he was upstaging Makarios for *enosis* as the Archbishop seemed to have become less enthusiastic about putting the island under the sovereignty of Athens. Nicos Sampson's role was to keep stirring one thing or another, including the British, who he claimed had planned to assassinate Makarios.

The Turkish Cypriots were of course *the* enemy and his inciting the Greek and Turkish Cypriots to clash in 1963 paved the way to the establishment of a UN Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) in March 1964. In 1964 he had personally led a mob of thugs against the Turks who used armoured bulldozers to knock down Turkish houses.

He also made several trips to Athens to urge the Greek junta to take action in Cyprus which did come eventually, albeit disastrously, in 1974. First paroled to go for medical treatment in France, Nicos Sampson was released from prison in 1991. He went back to publishing and revived his two newspapers, *Makhi* and *To Tharros*. He was elected twice on a right wing ticket to the Greek Cypriot parliament.

Colourful, controversial and shadowy, whatever he was, the Turkish Cypriots owed their independence very much to the adventurism of one man, Nicos Sampson.

M H Faruqi

Professor Charles L Black Jr

Leading American constitutional law scholar, Professor Charles L Black Jr, 85, died on 5 May 2001 at his home in Manhattan. He spent nearly 40 years teaching at the Yale University Law School. There he married a Jewish student of his who later became dean of the Columbia University Law School.

Professor Black was one of the white attorneys who worked with the Black Community on the historic *Brown v. Board of Education* case in the 1950s. It was the case that caused the Supreme Court to rule that 'separate but equal' was unconstitutional and which changed forever race relations in the United States.

When Professor Black retired from the Law School, a special issue of the prestigious *Yale Law Review* was devoted

L Dean Brown

Former US ambassador to Jordan (1970-73), deputy under-secretary for management at the State Department (1973-75) and president of the Middle East Institute (MEI), Washington, (1975-86), L Dean Brown, died on 2 May 2001 at Georgetown University Hospital. He was 80.

A career diplomat, Dean Brown was educated at Wesleyan and had joined the Foreign Service in 1946 after serving the army in the Second World War. His other assignments included directing the evacuation of Vietnamese and Americans from Saigon, taking over charge of the embassy in Nicosia immediately after the assassination of the US ambassador to Cyprus, and mediating in Lebanon at the height of the civil war.

The MEI had started very small in 1946, when the US was not as concerned with the Middle East as now and Dean Brown was trying all the time to catch up. The institute sponsored conferences, seminars, exhibitions and lectures; provided language and culture courses; published books and periodicals (including the *Middle East Journal*); operated a large library on Middle East affairs; rented out films on Middle Eastern subjects; and received or held small get-togethers for visitors referred to it by the state department, quite often from both sides of a conflict.

The MEI had no official position on the Middle East conflict, but Ambassador Brown had been quite forthright in his own views.

'President after President of the US, has committed himself to supporting the security and territory of Israel,' he told the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, but 'the question they should have been asking Israel is: just what is Israel? What are its boundaries? We have not asked Israel this question. This is the hidden problem that Messrs [Ronald] Reagan and [Al-]Haig don't seem to be willing to cope with yet.

'Another problem is our seeming inability to understand that other countries have legitimate interests in the Middle East which we have to consider. Our failure, among other things, to address the fundamental problem of what to do about the Palestinian people, is poisoning our relations with Europe. And look at Japan. One of the most significant events of this past year was that the Japanese received Yasser Arafat. Never before have they raised their voice to the US except in trade matters. But now even the Japanese are giving us

strong signals that they think we are on the wrong track in the Middle East.

'Finally: why is it that American leaders, while they are in office, say there cannot be a Palestinian state, and then when they leave office say that there can be no solution without a Palestinian state?'

Things have since changed little in Washington except that the new George W Bush administration has become yet more committed to the brutal Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.

Raji Habib Sahyoun

Palestinian journalist, writer, broadcaster and member of the Palestinian National Council, Raji Habib Sahyoun (Abou Rabee') died on 27 April 2001 at the American University Hospital, Beirut.

Raji had dedicated his life to writing and promoting the understanding of Palestinian issues in the media. After the establishment of the PLO in 1964, he was appointed head of its Media Department. The following year, he started *Saut Filistine*, The Voice of Palestine Radio. And in 1966, he established a newspaper, *Akhbar Filistine*, in Gaza.

His book, *Lest We Forget* (1997), was both memoir and history of the Palestinians over the last 50 years. Raji survived by his wife, **Souhaila**, and son **Rabee'**.

Maj-Gen Muhammad Abdallah Salih

Maj-Gen Muhammad Abdallah Salih, 61, eldest brother of President **Ali Abdallah Salih** of Yemen, passed away on 14 May 2001 at a London hospital. He was buried on 16 May in his home town, Bayt al-Ahmar, in the region of Senhan. Maj-Gen Muhammad Abdallah Salih was commander of central security forces.

Mubarak Bin Rashid al-Khatir

Historian and Bahrain's leading literary and cultural personality, Mubarak Bin Rashid al-Khatir, breathed his last in April. He was among those inspired people who had brought the message of **Hasan al-Banna Shaheed** (d.1949) to the then British colony in the 1940s and laid the foundation of the Islamic movement in Bahrain. A kind and contented soul, he was a source of great inspiration for the young; as for himself, his only abiding concern was the advancement of Islam and Islamic movement. (From an Obituary by Hafiz al-Shaikh Saleh in the Beirut weekly, *Al-Aman*)

to him, to his writings and teachings. Among so many others he taught Hillary Clinton Constitutional Law.

Professor Black wrote in September 1989, about the Middle East, the terrible plight of the Palestinians, and the complicity of the United States in this situation because of the 'Special Relationship' with Israel. That was the time in his career when no magazine or journal would agree to publish his writings; so a Jewish organisation, Jewish Committee on the Middle East (JCMOE), decided to publish Professor Black's pamphlet, *Let us rethink our 'special relationship' with Israel*.

The pamphlet, written 13 years ago at the time of the First Intifada, seems yet more relevant and important today than when it was first published.

Professor Black believed that 'the so-called "special relationship" ... is sweepingly and grossly incompatible with our country's supposed [claim] to be dedicated to the cause of human rights throughout the world'. That should change, but that depends, he wrote, 'on the possibility of change in the knowledge and conscience of the whole American people.' That is what he was seeking to achieve by writing that well reasoned pamphlet.

Professor Black demanded, 'we ought now to bring our so-called "aid" to Israel, our "special relationship" with Israel, to an end.' For, he argued, 'we are morally obliged to do this, whether we like to do it or not; we ourselves otherwise remain *participes criminis*. We have no right to keep on sustaining and constantly renewing the power of Israel.'

'Against huge odds, quite without real weapons or any other resources, they at last decline to submit, and instead go out on the streets and pick up stones. They are beaten without let or mercy. They are imprisoned under obscene conditions, after kangaroo trials, or no trials at all. They are regularly shot at; enough of them are killed to make death as ever present and as realistic a possibility as it was in our Korean and Vietnam Wars. Many are maimed; many are disfigured for life. Yet they come out in the streets again and again, these young people, some not much more than children, and they pick up stones. What name shall we give to the trait of character that produces conduct like that?' 'The word is "courage",' he himself answered.

Charles Lund Black Jr was born on 22 September 1915, in Austin, Texas and he is survived by his wife, **Barbara Aronstein**, two sons and a daughter.

Mahmood Abdul-Haleem

Egyptian historian and scholar, Mahmood Abdul-Haleem, who wrote a three-volume history of the Ikhwan al-Muslimoon movement, died in Alexandria, 23 April 2001. He was about 85.

Maulana Abdul-Sattar Khan Niazi

Veteran leader of the Pakistan movement, Maulana Abdul-Sattar Khan Niazi, 85, died in his home district Mianwali, 2 May 2001. Brave and indomitable, in 1953, he was sentenced to death by a martial law court for taking a leading part in the movement, calling for the classification of the Qadiyanis as a non-Muslim minority. (Qadiyanis are followers of **Mirza Ghulam Ahmad**, 1835-1908, who claimed to be a prophet.) Following public outrage, Maulana Niazi's death sentence was commuted to life and he was eventually released.

Disenchanted with the Muslim League, because it was falling short of its commitment to make Pakistan an Islamic state, he had joined a party of 'ulama, Jami'atul 'Ulama-e-Pakistan, and even accepted to be a minister in the **Nawaz Sharif** government. However, if he 'failed' to get Nawaz Sharif to implement Islamic Shari'ah, it was not his failure, but the fault lay with the corruption and hypocrisy of the country's ruling elite. He himself led a clean and selfless life - and died a contented soul. (Full obituary in the next issue, *Insha-Allah*.)

Shakoor Rana

Pakistan cricket Test umpire (1974-98), Shakoor Rana, 63, died in Lahore, 9 April 2001. A Pakistan railway official, Shakoor Rana played in 11 first class games before becoming an umpire in 1974. He umpired 16 test matches and 26 one-day international matches before retiring in 1998. The most important event of his umpiring career was to make England captain **Mike Gatting** offer an unconditional apology before allowing the test match to resume. The trouble came in 1987 during the third test match at Faisalabad. With England 1-0 down in the series, Mike Gatting became rude when Shakoor Rana chastised him for 'infringing Law 42 covering fair and unfair play'. 'Mr Gatting,' he said, 'you are not allowed to move a fielder when the bowler has started his run. That's cheating.' 'You're the cheat for holding up play,' said the

England captain, jabbing his finger at the umpire's chest.

The match did not resume until a reluctant Mike Gatting had apologised in writing. 'I apologise for the bad language used during the text,' he scribbled on a piece of paper. But few in England took it gracefully. It was too much for England and they did not tour Pakistan for the next 13 years and a later day England captain, **Mike Atherton** called him a 'buffoon' at a press conference. After Faisalabad, Pakistan's own inferiority complex-ridden Cricket Board never ever let Shakoor Rana umpire a test match.

Paul Thieme

Distinguished German orientalist, Paul Thieme, 96, Professor Emeritus of Indology and comparative religion at the University of Tübingen, died in London, 24 April 2001. He had studied Sanskrit at Allahabad, India, and taught in Germany, Poland, France and the United States. During the Second World War, he acted as interpreter to the Indian leader, **Subhas Chandra Bose**, whom the Germans had put at the head of an Indian Legion.

Bose who was president of the Indian National Congress, and dissatisfied with **M K Gandhi's** attitude towards the war, had escaped abroad to push forward the liberation of India through military means. He did later raise the Indian National Army from the Indian soldiers taken prisoner by the Japanese, but died in a plane crash. Paul Thieme was awarded honorary D Litt by the Benares Hindu University and Tagore Medal by the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Saeeda Bano

The first woman newsreader on the All India Radio (AIR), Saeeda Bano, 87, died in New Delhi, 1 May 2001. She joined the service in 1945 as an announcer at the Lucknow station of the AIR, now called Akash Vani, and was promoted Urdu newsreader in 1947. Her book, *Dagar say hut kar* (Off the beaten path), in which she wrote about the innovations she made in the style of broadcasting, received the Delhi Urdu Academy Award in 1994.

Sadiq Ali

Devoted Gandhian and a former governor of Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, Sadiq Ali, 91, died in Delhi, last April. He was born in 1910 in Udaipur, in the princely state of the

same name. He worked as an office secretary to the All India Congress Committee (AICC), was elected to the Lok Sabha (1950-52) and served two terms as member of the upper house, Rajya Sabha, from November 1958 to April 1964 and April 1964 to April 1970. He also served as secretary of the AICC, from 1958 to 1962 and 1966 to 1967, and was made chairman of Gandhi Samarak Nidhi in 1968. Sadiq Ali married a Hindu lady; it is not clear whether he was buried or cremated as has happened to many people in a similar situation.

Alexei Tupolev

Russian aircraft designer, Alexei Andreyevich Tupolev, 75, died in Moscow, 12 May 2001. He was involved in the design of Tu-134 as well as Tu-160 strategic bomber. Tupolev also served as a Deputy to the Supreme Soviet (1974-89) and a People's Deputy of the USSR (1989-91).

Justice S A Nusrat, 77, former judge of the supreme court and chief election commissioner in the 1980s during the **Ziaul Haq** period, died in Karachi on 5 May 2001.

Professor Ibrahim Abu Lughud

Eminent Palestinian author, scholar and political scientist, Professor Ibrahim Abu Lughud, 72, died in Ramallah on 23 May 2001. (Obituary in the next issue. *Insha-Allah*)

Sharifa Safiyya Zabara

Sharifa Safiyya bint Muhammad bin Ali Zabara died of cancer in Maryland, USA on 1 May 2001. She was the wife of the Yemeni 'alim Sayyid Ibrahim bin Ali al-Wazir who is the head of the Supreme Council of Union of Popular Forces - a political party.

Sharifa Safiyya belonged to the sayyid family of Zabara which takes its name from Zabara a small hamlet, near San'a'. Since the 16th century the family has produced numerous provincial governors, judges, 'ulama and scholars.

Brought up in San'a', she received private education centring on the Arabic language, the Qur'an and Islam. After 1962 revolution she only returned to the Yemen for brief family visits. Sharifa Safiyya is survived by her three sons, al-Hadi, al-Mahdi and ar-Rida and one daughter, Rahma.

A B D R Eagle