I would like to say a few things about the 1960 Cyprus Accords, by which I mean the Constitution plus the three treaties which together make up the documents that gave Cyprus independence - or at least purported to give Cyprus independence. 'Purported' because, of course, these Accords were not primarily agreements between, or solely for the benefit of, the two communities in Cyprus. Although the new Republic was a party to the Accords, first and foremost they were international agreements between Britain, Greece, and Turkey devised very much with the interests of these three so-called 'guarantors' in mind.1

Yet, far from seeing the 1960 Accords as a bad thing, I am going to suggest that, to solve Cyprus's problems, what we really need is a new set of Accords.

When Archbishop Makarios began his great task of attempting to abrogate the Accords, in 1963, the external powers did relatively little to stop him. All three guarantors immediately sought to look after their own interests in the island rather than to defend the Constitution.

The British were not even prepared to object in anything but the mildest way to Mr Makarios's many subsequent illegal enactments in the House of Representatives - by 1964 an entirely Greek, and therefore unconstitutional, House.2

Yet, curiously enough, Britain never officially relinquished her belief that the 1960 Accords were legally binding agreements. While formally upholding the Accords - particularly the Treaties of Establishment and Guarantee which secured the British bases - Britain decided to take a low profile in the face of the Greek Cypriot assumption of power on the island. Her concern, of course, was that her bases would remain operational.

I am going to begin with a few observations about this Greek Cypriot take-over of the Cyprus government. It must not be assumed, however, that in doing this I am simply launching an attack on the Greek side. It seems clear to me that in the 1960s it was indeed the Greek side that caused most of the trouble in Cyprus. But, in emphasising that here I am not trying to be polemical in the sense of pro-Turkish. I have a more neutral aim in mind.

I would like to suggest something that may at first sight seem outrageous, at least to some Cypriot readers. I want to suggest that Cyprus never actually has been an independent sovereign country, that
it probably never could be and - this is the really outrageous bit - that that lack of true independence for Cyprus is not something we should regret.

First, some reminders about President Makarios's attitude to the Cyprus Constitution. Polyvious Polyviou asserts that Mr Makarios was forced to sign the London and Zurich Agreements. In 1959, the Greek government allegedly gave Mr Makarios an ultimatum: either he accepted the Agreements as they stood or Greece would abandon him, and Cyprus, still a British colony, would in all probability be partitioned between Greece and Turkey. Consequently, says Mr Polyviou, Mr Makarios eventually signed. Many other writers, especially Greek ones, take a similar view.

But, as readers of Glaucos Clerides's Cyprus: My Deposition will know, Mr Makarios himself explicitly denied that the Greek government had forced him to sign: "... no power on earth could have compelled me to sign," Mr Makarios stated on 21 May 1959; "if I had believed [the agreements] to be contrary to the interests of the people of Cyprus." Mr Clerides suggests that Mr Makarios always intended to sign the agreements but it was a natural piece of brinkmanship on his part to try to get better terms if he possibly could. This is why he pretended to have second thoughts.

I find Mr Clerides's account convincing. Mr Makarios knew in 1959 that the Greek government had obtained the best terms they could get for the Greek Cypriots. So, in one sense, his acquiescence in the Zurich and London Agreements was done freely. But, this did not mean that it was sincere. It certainly did not mean that he had given up his struggle to make Cyprus Greek. His acquiescence was just a temporary measure.

My favourite document concerning Mr Makarios's real attitude towards the 1960 Accords occurs in a 'top secret' letter he wrote to the then Greek Prime Minister, George Papandreou, on 1 March 1964. This was written at the very time the discussions were going on at the UN in New York that were to lead to Security Council Resolution 186, a resolution destined to aid the Greek side considerably in getting themselves recognised, on their own, as the Cyprus government.

This is what Mr Makarios wrote to Mr Papandreou:

"Our aim, Mr Premier, is the abolition of the Zurich and London Agreements, so that it may be possible for the Greek Cypriot people, in agreement with the Motherland, to determine in an unfettered way its future. I am signatory of these Agreements on behalf of the Greeks of Cyprus. In my personal opinion, in the conditions then prevailing, 'naught else was to be done'. But not for a moment did I believe that the Agreements would constitute a permanent settlement. It was a settlement of harsh necessity and, in my view, was the solution of the Cyprus drama which was the lesser evil at that time. Since then internationally and locally the conditions have changed and I think the time has come for us to undertake to rid ourselves of the Agreements imposed upon us... The unilateral abrogation of the Agreements without the process of law and without the agreement of all the signatories will possibly have serious repercussions. But we shall not proceed to any such action without prior agreement with the government of Greece..." [Emphases added.]

What a very remarkable statement that is, coming from a Head of State who was referring to a very fundamental contract he had entered into, not only with the other main community on the island, but also with quite significant powers whose well-known interests he seemed confident he could somehow by-pass or confound!
As we know, this agreement was an international one: not just an informal arrangement with Dr Küçük. It was a binding covenant with the Turkish Cypriots, with Greece, with Turkey (the latter only 40 miles away and soon to have the second most powerful army in NATO), and not least with Great Britain, whose sovereign bases and electronic facilities on the island were perceived by the United States as indispensable aids in the Cold War with the USSR, a War then perhaps at its height.

The 'serious repercussions' Mr Makarios so disarmingly described as merely 'possible' have been with us to this day.

Now perhaps we could overlook the striking immorality of Mr Makarios's position as stated in this letter. Many statesmen become involved in treachery; sometimes doubtless they have little choice. For the sake of argument, at any rate, we might concede that sometimes the criteria we use to judge morality between individuals are not appropriate in the field of politics. Let us try to concede this here.

Nevertheless, what is noteworthy about Mr Makarios's stated intentions is, I think, their myopic lack of realism. Even on the most sympathetic assessment, is not the Archbishop displaying a high degree of irresponsibility here, not least to the Greek Cypriots themselves? And I want to underline the fact that he is led to this because of his nationalism.

Mr Makarios was not the only charismatic leader in the twentieth century whose personal commitment to a narrow and imperious political ideology led to a major disaster.

Did he really imagine he could get away with such clannish antics as these, simply pushing the claims of his own provincial version of Hellenism on the international stage and succeed in making Cyprus Greek - indeed in joining the whole island politically to Greece? Could he have seriously believed that Turkey, Britain and the United States would simply stand by and let this happen? Or, even that, after a hard diplomatic struggle, he could somehow have hoodwinked them into compliance?

Was it at all likely that Mr Makarios would be allowed to over-rule these powerful external interests? For Cyprus was - I must emphasise this - fast becoming of pivotal importance to the Western Alliance in the Cold War.

Well, at any rate, Mr Makarios was well aware of his country's strategic significance and his foreign policy was designed to get the best for Hellenism out of this situation. He deftly played the West against the East and managed to ingratiate himself with the increasingly influential Non-aligned countries as well.

The island already had the second largest communist party in Europe (on a percentage of population basis), and Mr Makarios was making unseemingly friendly gestures not only to the Soviets, but also to other nations from which the West tried to keep a certain distance. Since 1961, he had become a prominent figure in the Non-aligned Movement and a friend of such (in Western eyes) dubious figures as Tito and Nasser. The United States was only too aware of these disturbing affiliations and was watching developments in the Eastern Mediterranean very carefully indeed. Co-operation, rather than war, between NATO allies Greece and Turkey was then (as now) crucial for American military strategy. Needless to say, that strategy was then geared, above all, to prevent Russian incursion in the region.
and a conceivable Russian take-over of Cyprus.

But the Archbishop-President seemed pretty oblivious to these broader considerations. Or perhaps it would be better to say that, for him, the main antagonists in the Cold War were there simply to be used for his own parochial purposes. He felt special allegiance neither to the East nor to the West. His association with the Non-aligned Movement was also purely tactical. For, while fraternising with Non-aligned countries, his ultimate aim was, of course, to join Cyprus to NATO member Greece.

Hellenism was his concern and Hellenism, he ardently believed, could and should be able to prevail in Cyprus.6

There are a couple of lessons we can learn from the subsequent events on the island. One concerns the extraordinary power of ideological beliefs; and the other has to do with the way international politics operates. Both of these are exemplified in the curious fact that, despite all the formidable obstacles to his ambitions, Makarios very nearly succeeded.

There were a number of reasons for his near success.

In the crucial debate on Cyprus at the Security Council early in 1964, the Greek Cypriots were very fortunate in having a Secretary-General in office who knew and admired Mr Makarios. U Thant, the first head of the UN recruited from the Third World, saw the Archbishop as a leading figure in the Non-aligned Movement to which Mr Thant himself was deeply attached.

Here, incidentally, we meet the first impact of another political ideology on Cyprus. The ones already present, however implicitly, in the minds of Cypriots could be said to be the following: Greek and Turkish nationalism; the rather traditional Western values Cyprus had inherited largely from Britain when she was a 'Great Power'; and the much slighter injection of Marxism mediated through AKEL, the Cyprus communist party. The additional political perspective I am referring to came from the Non-aligned Movement.

Many 'Non-aligned values' (as I will have to call them for short) had been taken directly from the United Nations Charter - a document produced in 1945, sometime before the Non-aligned concept was developed. These admirable, if rather idealistic, imperatives were widely approved of formally by UN member states but only rarely adhered to in practice, especially by the Great Powers. Formulated largely by enlightened Western statesmen meeting in San Francisco at the end of the Second World War, the values enunciated in the UN Charter are still a powerful corrective to the crasser sorts of economic liberalism, the sort of outlook we would now perhaps tend to associate with the Bush administration in the United States. The real impact of these Non-aligned values in Cyprus has so far, however, been slight. Although formally deferring to them when it suited him, Mr Makarios was no more intrinsically interested in them than he was in any other Western values. U Thant, on the other hand, had responded to them with something like religious fervour.

Given his connection with the Non-aligned Movement, it is not surprising that the UN Secretary-General was predisposed to believe the trouble in Cyprus was in large part due to the machinations of NATO. Britain, Greece and Turkey, he thought, were responsible for saddling the 1960 Cyprus Republic (whose population was 80 percent Greek) with a constitution unduly favouring the Turkish 'minority', a circumstance originating in an attempt by the guarantors to balance - and indeed perpetuate - their own interests in the island. This, he considered, would
inevitably have pitted the two Cypriot communities against each other.

The same supposedly rather unscrupulous and self-serving Western powers had, moreover, in Thant's eyes, firmly bound the newly-emerged Cyprus Republic to themselves by dubious international instruments (notably by the Treaty of Guarantee) which limited Cyprus's political independence.

'Self-determination' had become a watchword of the Non-aligned nations, most of them, like Cyprus, former European colonies. And this autonomy was something the Secretary-General believed Cyprus should have.

Consequently - while condemning Mr Makarios's military attacks on the Turkish Cypriots, attacks which he found most surprising and disgraceful - Mr Thant did little to stand in the way of the Archbishop's assumption of power. A Greek Cypriot government seemed to be quite justified on majoritarian grounds; though, of course, Mr Thant realised there were good ways as well as bad ways of trying to establish it. The 1960 Cyprus Accords were, Mr Thant realised, valid international agreements. As head of the UN he could not openly repudiate them. He could however minimise their effect; and this is what he did. He played a key role in the phrasing of resolution 186 of 4 March 1964, thus making a Greek Cypriot take-over of the Cyprus government much easier.

So, despite Vice-President Küçük's frequent and impassioned letters to the Secretary-General, complaining persuasively about Greek Cypriot atrocities, the importation of foreign military personnel and arms, the passing of illegal enactments in the now wholly Greek House of Representatives, and other matters, U Thant rarely responded sympathetically to anything but the physical atrocities and the economic blockade against the Turks. Makarios's overriding goal, of making Cyprus Greek, did not strike the Secretary-General as something to worry about.

It is interesting to note, too - as a sign of what I have often referred to as the logical inconsistency in the international community's handling of the Cyprus problem, from this time onwards7 - that Dr Küçük still signed himself 'Vice-President of the Republic of Cyprus' when engaging in correspondence at the highest diplomatic levels. He continued to do this right until the end of the 1960s; and no one (apart from the Greek Cypriot administration, of course) questioned his right to use that title. Nor was there any legal ground upon which they could question it.

Nevertheless, after March 1964, the UN Secretary-General, two of the guarantors (excluding Turkey, that is), and the international community at large, saw Mr Makarios's all-Greek administration as at first the temporary de facto Cyprus government (pending a settlement between the two Cypriot communities), and gradually, after only a few years (because a settlement showed no sign of emerging), as the de jure Cyprus government. Yet the signatories to the 1960 Accords never met to repudiate or renegotiate those agreements, and Britain and Turkey continue to believe in their validity to this day.

Given these circumstances, how could a Greek Cypriot take-over of the government have happened? As we have seen, U Thant was a great help. But why did especially Britain and America, two permanent members of the Security Council, go along with this? The short answer is they found it convenient.8 The Western Powers did not believe they had much to lose by letting the Greeks run Cyprus. The Soviet Union - another of Mr Makarios's quite miscellaneous supporters - had made it clear that, for reasons of its own, it would veto any resolution that implied the administration headed by the Archbishop was unconstitutional.
So an Anglo-American draft resolution asserting precisely this had to be abandoned. The resolution that was eventually unanimously accepted, resolution 186, while intentionally open-ended about what was meant by 'the government of Cyprus', still left the solution of the Cyprus problem largely in the hands of the guarantors. This, the British and Americans thought, would give them enough leverage to prevent Mr Makarios doing anything to harm their interests. In the British parliament, grave doubts were expressed about the government's seeming to condone such a flagrant violation of the Cyprus Constitution. The dreadful consequences of leaving the Turkish Cypriots to their fate (as well as the probability of a Turkish military intervention) were mentioned by a number of MPs. But the British government's answer was always the same: the matter is now in the hands of the UN. We must exercise restraint and not assert ourselves as a guarantor. In effect, the British government had had enough trouble in Cyprus. It did not want any more.

From then onwards, the Cyprus Constitution was, in practice, 'dead and buried', as Mr Makarios himself had remarked.

Legal and other experts have differed widely in their assessment of the Constitution's viability. Mr Polyviou had no doubt that the Constitution 'was unsound and seriously defective in terms of both political balance and functional capacity'.9 In March 1965, the 'Plaza Report' described the Constitution as an 'oddity', and Plaza went so far as to say that 'the Turkish-Cypriot community obtained from the Zurich and London Agreements a series of rights greatly superior to those which can realistically be contemplated for it in the future' (para. 161 of the Report). This was music in Greek ears. But, to their disappointment, Plaza condemned enosis. So, neither side accepted Plaza's Report and he had to resign. The UN Secretary-General, who thoroughly approved of the Plaza Report, wrote later in his autobiography that 'The root of the Cyprus problem was the divisive provisions of the constitution...'. 10 Views of this kind could easily be multiplied.

But many respected authorities can be cited on the other side. For example, Thomas Ehrlich admitted that 'Communal distrust permeates the entire document [of the Constitution]'. But he went on to say that 'the settlement did represent an imaginative resolution of many difficult problems. Given patience and a spirit of compromise on each side, it might have worked...'.11 But, of course, any spirit of compromise was precisely what was lacking. Mr Clerides has also indicated that while he believes the Constitution had a great deal wrong with it from a Greek Cypriot point of view, it also had some merits and that its alleged 'unworkability' had not been demonstrated during 1960-3.12

The one thought I will contribute to this debate is this: undoubtedly, not only the Constitution, but the 1960 Accords as a whole were unsatisfactory, indeed horrifyingly so, to out and out Greek Cypriot nationalists, whether they sought enosis or genuine 'self-determination'. In 1960, Cyprus was given something less than full independence because Greece, Turkey, and Britain had so arranged things that the strategically-located island would continue to serve their - and of course NATO's - interests. If this open 'conspiracy' on the part of the guarantors effectively to retain the island to serve their own purposes was immoral or unjustified, then perhaps Mr Makarios was right, at least in principle, in trying to free the island - or at any rate his own community - from the impositions of the guarantors.

But were the guarantors really so misguided in what they tried to do with Cyprus? Take the hot issue of democracy. With two such culturally different communities, and the quite justified interest of
Turkey in the island, giving a monopoly of political power to the Greek Cypriot majority was never going to be a sensible option. Think of the tragedy of Northern Ireland, where the cultural (and especially the religious and linguistic) differences were far less.13

It is of course impossible for an Englishman, like myself, moreover, to agree with U Thant that the Western Alliance was an alien oppressor usurping a young nation's right to self-determination. For was there some other direction for Cyprus sensibly to go, apart from the West? Certainly the Accords were impositions, at least in part; but were they foolish or unjustified impositions? You will perhaps tell me that all impositions are unjustified. So let me rephrase the question: were the Accords detrimental to Cypriot interests - the interests of both communities - realistically considered?

Perhaps it is because I am a non-Cypriot that I am inclined to think the guarantors were, after all, broadly right in what they tried to do in the late 1950s. If they made a mistake, it was to underestimate the power - not the justice - of Greek nationalism.

For, surely, however autonomous a people might like to be, there was never any question, given the wider political realities of the day, that the inhabitants of Cyprus would be left on their own to live in whatever way they chose. For one thing, their mother countries would not have allowed that. Nor could Britain have afforded to leave the island altogether. The Soviet Union would have been there like a shot.

And there is a more important point to be made here. If the Cypriots had been left to themselves, the Turks would have been eliminated and Hellenism would have prevailed. But not for long. As a guide for the future, nationalism, whether Greek or Turkish, was never going to be the answer to Cyprus's problems. Nationalism, as a means by which people could be bound together in such a way that they will thrive effectively in the modern world, was already a dream, a dream soon to become a trauma.14

By 1960, neither colonialism nor - what may at first sight seem to be its only logical alternative - nationalism had any assured future. Not, at any rate, nationalism in the way Mr Makarios himself understood it. If we leave aside recent events in the former Yugoslavia or today in Macedonia - events that of course support my case - nationalism had already by the time of Cyprus's so-called independence done its worst in modern Europe. And the world was already too connected economically for affirmations of separateness, the illusion of being part of a superior civilisation, and indulgence in naive displays of chauvinism - all so dear to the nationalist's heart - to be anything but disastrous, however much such slogans and rituals might have, for a while, an uplifting effect on uneducated masses. Once upon a time, such sentiments may have had their uses; now they were simply obfuscating and counter-productive.

It hardly needs saying that simple-minded xenophobic sentiments still issue, at regular intervals, from both sides in Cyprus today. They have survived, in the minds of some, because of the very peculiar circumstances of Cyprus. These circumstances - historical and geopolitical - have created, on both sides of the Green Line, an unfortunate social pathology. Perhaps it is just as well that I cannot attempt to elaborate upon this point.

What remains of two different nationalisms, however, is in my view, one of the chief impediments to a Cyprus settlement. And I will end now by just mentioning the other impediment.

This is the failure of the international community to design a new set of international accords
appropriate to current circumstances. In other words, to my mind, the international community should stop hiding behind the UN Secretary-General, as it has done since 1964, and openly join the leaders of the two communities in finding a solution to Cyprus's problems that all the interested parties can agree about. I emphasise all the interested parties, not just the Cypriots.

True 'self-determination' for Cyprus has always been a diplomatic fiction, the struggle for which - by the Greeks under the spell of Hellenic ideals - cost many lives and created considerable unnecessary unhappiness. In today's world, it would be a serious misunderstanding of international politics to continue with that sort of agenda. Unfortunately, however, although the Greek side may appear to be embracing a new internationalism with their unilateral EU application, I for one will need a lot of convincing that, in reality, this is anything other than the old Hellenism in modern dress: a belligerent move on their part to try to regain Greek hegemony throughout the island, an attempt to use the EU in a bid to regain the position of supremacy they seemed to have reached in the 1960s.  

In conclusion, let me quote a short passage from the British delegate's speech at the UN General Assembly in 1958. This already tells us why Cyprus could not hope to be truly independent then - or, I would say, now.

"Three nations are concerned with the problem of Cyprus", the British delegate asserted, at the time Cyprus's independence from Britain was being seriously discussed.

"First, the United Kingdom: the sovereignty of the island is now vested in us. It is our responsibility to safeguard the peace and well-being of the Cypriots...

A large majority of the population are Greek Cypriots. In addition to their cultural and religious leanings towards Greece, they aspire towards union with Greece. Therefore, Greece has a strong interest in the island. Then there is Turkey. A considerable number of Turkish Cypriots live in the island, people who look to Turkey as their fatherland. The island is of great strategic importance to Turkey, covering its southern ports and has a long association with Turkey in the past.

It is a case, therefore - and this really cannot be disputed - of three countries having an interest in the problem. It is a tripartite problem."  

Now, if we substitute America and the EU for Britain here, I think we have today at least a quaternity. They, these external powers, I believe, together with Mr Clerides and Mr Denktaş, and their mother countries, rather than just the two Cypriot leaders alone, should be actively negotiating a settlement. They are all interested parties. They should all be formally involved.

Personally, I would not want a Cyprus with 'a single political personality', if this is just a euphemism for dominance by one side. What I would like to see is a new international identity for Cyprus, designed to bridge, or considerably reduce, the historic Greco-Turkish antagonisms. Cyprus would then experience a change of status: from that of a being a perennial 'problem' to that of being a unique European asset. But for this to happen we will need a new set of international accords.

1 The Treaty of Guarantee was an agreement between 'The Republic of Cyprus of the one part, and Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom ... of the other part'. The parties agreed to co-operate to ensure respect for the state of affairs created by the Constitution and, among other things, to take measures, if necessary - either in concert or individually if need be - to ensure continuity of that state of affairs. The Treaty of Establishment was an agreement between the same parties. Most importantly, it was
concerned to establish the legal existence of the two British Sovereign Bases, which were not, of course, deemed to be part of the Cyprus Republic.

The Treaty of Alliance was an agreement between Cyprus and the two mother countries only. Britain was not formally involved in it. This Treaty was concerned with security within the new Republic, and set out the arrangements for Greece and Turkey to keep military contingents on the island, apparently indefinitely.

The Cyprus Constitution itself, to quote Necati Münir Ertekün, "took as long as 15 months to prepare by a commission of experts representing the two communities, Greece and Turkey; the legal advisor to the commission being a Swiss professor of constitutional law, namely, Prof. Marcel Bridel of Lausanne University." When the Constitution was signed, on 16 August 1960, the signatories were Makarios and Küçük and representatives of the three guarantors. See Ertekün, In Search of a Negotiated Settlement in Cyprus, Nicosia, 1981, p. 11.

So this is partly what I mean by saying Cyprus was never truly independent or 'self-determined': the 1960 Accords were all international agreements which gave the guarantors strong legal powers to, in effect, supervise the running of the new Republic according to plans they themselves had laid down. It hardly needs saying that, in today's very changed circumstances, seeing Cyprus as a properly constituted independent state has become even harder. The continuing presence of all three guarantors plus the UN, together with the striking anomaly of a wholly Greek Cypriot government for whom 37% (including the buffer zone) of the island is permanently inaccessible, are phenomena which should give those who still insist Cyprus is a bona fide single sovereign entity considerable pause for thought.

2 These matters have recently been discussed in Ahmet Gazioğlu and Michael Moran, Past-Masters of Illegality, CYREP, Nicosia, 2000.
6 Zenon Stavrinides gives a useful résumé of the doctrines of Hellenism, as these were understood in Cyprus, near the beginning of his book The Cyprus Conflict: National Identity and Statehood, Nicosia, 1976; reprinted by CYREP in 1999.
8 For a detailed discussion of the background to UN Security Council resolution 186, see the introduction to my edition of Mr Denktaş's addresses to the Security Council, Rauf Denktash at the United Nations: Speeches on Cyprus, The Eothen Press, Huntington, 1997.
9 Polyviou, op. cit., p. 21.
10 U Thant, View from the UN, London, 1976, p. 46.
12 Clerides, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 130.
13 'Democracy' is notoriously a highly emotive word without a fixed descriptive meaning. 'Government by the people' is not the same as 'Government by the majority of the people.' And, while the Turkish Cypriots are undoubtedly a numerical minority in Cyprus it does not follow from this that they are a political minority. The 1960 Accords did not see them as a political minority nor does the UN Secretary-General today. In his report of 8 March 1990 (S/21183), the then Secretary-General, Perez de Cuellar, said it was understood that the relationship between the two Cypriot communities "is not one of majority and minority, but one of two communities in the State of Cyprus." For a useful discussion about democracy see Anthony Arblaster, Democracy, 2nd edition, Open University, Buckingham, 1994.

15 There is an extended discussion about the motives behind the Greek Cypriot EU application, and the very serious trouble the EU will get itself into if it accepts 'Cyprus' (i.e., the Greeks posing as the government of both Cypriot communities) as a member before there has been a political settlement in the island, in my *Sovereignty Divided*, chapter 8 and appendices IV and VI.

16 Quoted in Ehrlich, p. 24.