

JOURNALISTIC INTEGRITY AND THE “SETTING SUN”: Nancy Crawshaw and the British Information Environment in the Cyprus Emergency

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From 1955 to 1959, the British government battled an armed insurgency in their colony of Cyprus. The topic of this paper is the extent to which independent journalists like Nancy Crawshaw prevented the colonial government from dominating the information environment. This study relies on secondary work and the unpublished Nancy Crawshaw Papers found in the Special Collections section of the Princeton University Library. It will look at the origins of the insurgency and the information environment that existed in Cyprus at the time, then discuss the role journalists played in the conflict, and finally move into Crawshaw's contributions to the colonial government's inability to control the information environment. This study finds that the British failed to dominate the information environment surrounding the war in Cyprus because they assumed independent journalists like Nancy Crawshaw would support the colonial agenda. However, these journalists formed their own opinions and did not act as agents for any particular side.

The armed insurgency the British government battled in the colony of Cyprus from 1955 to 1959 was one of many the British opposed during the first two decades following World War Two. The war was initiated with and included significant propaganda from both sides, and the British struggled to control the information environment within Cyprus due to intense domestic and international pressure. Just like conflicts today in Afghanistan, Syria, and in the Maghreb, states and organizations have battled and will continue to battle over the domination of information. This is not to suggest that the battle over the information environment is a new invention, and despite the recency of world leaders decrying “fake news,” attempts by various factions to manipulate information for political and military reasons have long existed and played a key role in the outcome of conflicts. The British had effectively applied censorship to private journalists as far back as 1853 in the Crimean War.¹ Policies of censoring private journalists continued throughout the Boer War and are well known to have played a significant factor on the Homefront during World War One.² The British effectively organized the Press Corps in World War Two and journalists often felt it their “patriotic duty” to boost the morale of readers back home.³ Following World War Two the British Empire entered into a series of decolonization wars that could not be characterized as black and white as an

¹ Brian Hannon, “Story Behind the Stories: British and Dominion War Correspondents,” (PhD diss., The University of Edinburgh, 2015), 136.

² Donal P. McCrachen, “The Relationship Between British War Correspondents in the Field and British Military Intelligence During the Anglo-Boer War,” *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies* 43, no. 1 (2015): 117.

³ Hannon, “Story Behind the Stories,” 121.

absolute war against Nazi Germany. These wars of decolonization signaled the end of European empires and contributed to the “setting sun” of the global British government which had been described as “the empire on which the sun never sets.” Even in this time of decline, the British government tried to maintain dominance over the information environment. However, the Cyprus Emergency clearly shows they no longer had the control they once had over information.

An underexplored topic in the history of the Cyprus Emergency was the effect of the information environment on the British strategic outcome in Cyprus. A rich historiography exists covering loyalists and policing, ethnic organization and conflict, and international pressure on the conduct and outcome of the war.⁴ There are, however, several gaps in the historiography concerning the role of information in the conflict. One piece that is missing is an analysis of British attempts to counter misinformation or critical information, especially when it came from a non-English source. Western journalism influenced international, and especially British, public opinion, but these came largely from private British newspapers and did not always support the colonial government’s perspective. Greek and Turkish media are even less explored but still had a tremendous impact on the way their respective countrymen viewed the conflict. Finally, influential individuals such as Archbishop Makarios III petitioned on the international arena and in the United Nations and would have had some impact on outside pressure against Britain.

The influential British journalist Nancy Crawshaw covered the Cyprus Emergency from its beginning, often writing from a British perspective to an English audience. Later in the conflict, she visited United Nations as a committee member of the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace on Cyprus.⁵ Crawshaw is representative of a class of British journalists who, following WWII, were influential in shaping public perceptions of British policies abroad, yet were not always uncritical of the Colonial government. The British government failed to dominate the divisive information environment during the Cyprus Emergency because they assumed influential British journalists like Nancy Crawshaw would “toe the party line.” However, these journalists instead formed their own opinions in ways that made them independent actors and not agents of any particular side. Using Nancy Crawshaw as a case study, this paper illustrates the often tense dynamic during the Cyprus Emergency between the British colonial government, which hoped its journalists would be “good patriots,” and the journalists themselves, who sought to behave with “journalistic integrity.”

This paper seeks to first give a broad overview to the origin and situation which existed during the Cyprus Emergency, including some key players and ideas which contributed to the unrest. Following this, the information environment is characterized with a focus given to written and spoken media as a form of information distribution. Next, this paper provides a brief summary of past British war journalism and discusses how this may have contributed to the British government’s unrealistic expectation of pro-government coverage. Finally, this paper uses the experience and writings of British journalist Nancy Crawshaw to explore to what extent British

⁴ On loyalist and policing see “Allies at the End of Empire” by David Anderson and Daniel Branch, *Policing and Decolonisation* by David Anderson and David Killingray, “Toads and Informers” by David French, and “British Intelligence and the Cyprus Insurgency” by Panagiotis Dimitrakis. On ethnic organization and conflict see *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus 1954-1959* by Robert Holland, *Fighting EOKA* by David French, “The God Dilemma” by Andrew Novo, and “Newspapers, Nationalism, and Empire” by Jonathan Stubbs and Bahar Taseli. On international pressure on the conduct and outcome of the war see *Isle of Discord* by Ioannis Stefanidis, *British Counterinsurgency* by John Newsinger, *Cyprus Revolt* by Nancy Crawshaw, and *Brutality in an Age of Human Rights* by Brain Drohan.

⁵ Nancy Crawshaw Papers (hereafter NCP) 2/8, Biographical Note.

officials expected British journalist to conform to the party line, and to what effect independent journalism had on the ability of the colonial government to control the information environment during the Cyprus Revolt. In addition to Crawshaw's primary source material, the memoirs of EOKA General Georgios Grivas provide details regarding EOKA tactics and information distribution. Articles featured in *The Manchester Guardian*, *Reuters*, and *The Times* are also incorporated to connect the journalism of Nancy Crawshaw to the wider phenomenon of independent journalism during the period of the Cyprus Emergency.

Several words important to the argument of this paper need to be defined beforehand. The word "journalist" is used to describe someone working in some sort of paid capacity to provide information regarding a situation which is meant to be transmitted to a wider audience in written or spoken form. "Objective" is a term used in the context of journalistic reporting and refers to the reporting of facts, logic-based analysis of those facts, and limited evidence of outside biases. Finally, the phrases "journalistic integrity" and "independent actor" are used to describe a journalist writing in an objective manner, being one who does not compromise the legitimacy of their work for a larger political, cultural, or monetary objective.

Origins of the Emergency

From 1955 to 1959 an armed insurgency brought international attention to the British colonial island of Cyprus. The National Organization of Cypriot Fighters, abbreviated in Greek as EOKA, operated a largely urban guerrilla warfare campaign against the local colonial government. Their leader, Georgios Grivas, was the former leader of a Greek based, right-wing insurgency, who fought Greek communists during World War Two.⁶ EOKA received financial and public backing from Archbishop Makarios III, leader of the Church of Cyprus, and major influencer of the Greek majority on Cyprus.⁷ The situation within Cyprus bordered on ethnic civil war because of the large Turkish Cypriot minority which inhabited the island but were excluded from the goals of the Greek-minded EOKA and Cypriot Orthodox Church. While EOKA fought for the goal of *enosis*, or the acquisition of Cyprus by Greece, Turkish Cypriots originally desired the continuation of the colonial state and later, partition of the island. Before the war, the colonial police had been made up mostly of Greek-Cypriots. However, as the war dragged on, Turkish Cypriots were hired in large numbers to replace these Greek policemen who were being plagued with threat induced resignations. Religious and cultural differences isolated the Turkish Cypriot community on the island and further ingrained their idea of themselves as a helpless minority who would only be further marginalized through *enosis* with Greece. As with many anticolonial wars fought in the decades following World War II, the international and domestic information campaign was a key aspect of the war.

International influence from Greece, Turkey and Britain played an enormous role in the decision of Cypriot independence versus alternatives such as *enosis*, Turkey's acquisition of Cyprus known as *taksim*, or the continuation of the colonial structure. Ioannis Stefanidis argues that Turkey's objectives in Cyprus were the maintenance of positive Greek and NATO relations and the prevention of Greek

⁶ Nancy Crawshaw, *Cyprus Revolt: An Account of the Struggle for Union with Greece* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), 348.

⁷ Panagiotis Dimitrakis, "British Intelligence and the Cyprus Insurgency, 1955-1959," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 21, no. 2 (2008): 386. British intelligence operations discovered that contributions given to the Cypriot Church constituted the main funding source of EOKA. Grivas' financial discipline and the low operational cost of EOKA (averaging only £1,540 per month in 1956) ensured that the revolt could continue despite limited sources of funding.

territorial acquisitions on its Southern Coast.⁸ This was directly counter to Greece's desire for *enosis* and David French argues that EOKA was supported by arms shipments from Greek ships. Unlike other insurgencies the British had fought such as Malaya or Kenya, Greece held a position within the United Nations and could report the British for violations of human rights.⁹ Brian Drohan suggests the international community, and especially Greece, acted as a watchdog against human rights violations in Cyprus.¹⁰ Through a powerful state backer like Greece, EOKA acquired international sympathy and placed pressure on Britain to relinquish its colony. Following the loss of the Suez Canal in 1956, the British could not risk giving up such a strategic location in its entirety and fought for the land rights to establish permanent military bases on the island.¹¹ The British policy at the start of the conflict was the preservation of her colony. However, faced with mounting outside political pressure and difficulties in controlling the peace within Cyprus, the British opted for Cypriot independence. Throughout this process, British officials didn't expect to convince Cypriots about the validity of British policy but hoped that influential journalists would help maintain support in Britain, and to a lesser extent, convince the educated international elite who would have read British newspapers of the logic of British policy.

On January 15, 1950, the future Archbishop Makarios III held a referendum in all Orthodox churches across Cyprus in which the question of *enosis* was proposed. The 'vote' was conducted in the format of an open book at the front of every church in which its members were heavily encouraged to sign their names in favor or against *enosis*. At the referendum's conclusion, 96 percent of those who signed did so in favor of *enosis*.¹² The way this vote was conducted was clearly unfair, with *enosis* heavily associated with the Church and open books which led one Cypriot to announce, "Why should I have my windows broken...?"¹³ Instead of countering the illegitimacy of the Church's referendum, the British largely ignored the results and four years later the Under-Secretary of the Colonies Henry Hopkinson said Cyprus will "never" be independent.¹⁴ Makarios and the Greek government played off these two events masterfully, showing an international arena that even when the Cypriot people voted in favor of independence, it was bluntly denied by the British colonial empire. Regardless of the reasons for not combatting referendum propaganda more aggressively, this was a huge, but not sole example of British failure in the international information campaign and one that would haunt them in the United Nations in the coming years.

⁸ Ioannis D. Stefanidis, *Isle of Discord: Nationalism, Imperialism and the Making of the Cyprus Problem* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 207.

⁹ David French, *Fighting EOKA: The British Counter-Insurgency Campaign on Cyprus, 1955-1959* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 305, 307-8.

¹⁰ Brian Drohan, *Brutality in an Age of Human Rights: Activism and Counterinsurgency at the End of the British Empire*, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2017), 16-17, 46.

¹¹ David M. Anderson and David Killingray, eds, *Policing and Decolonisation: Politics, Nationalism, and the Police, 1917-65* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1992), 189; John Newsinger, *British Counterinsurgency*, 2nd Ed. (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 92.

¹² Crawshaw, *Cyprus Revolt*, 46-49.

¹³ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, "Why Cyprus is not Handed Over to Greece: Issues in a Long-Standing Dispute," *The Manchester Guardian*, November 15, 1954,

¹⁴ Crawshaw, *Cyprus Revolt*, 76. Hopkinson claimed that he had no memory of using the particular word 'never' but nonetheless, the usage of such a word in the context of Cypriot self-determination had far reaching consequences. Soon there were massive strikes by Greek newspapers, anti-western sentiment spread throughout the island, and Makarios III even gave a speech in front of a large congregation in which he declared the battle cry, 'Enosis and nothing but Enosis.'

Since the British occupation of Cyprus in the late 19th century and the formal acquisition of the island in 1923 through the Treaty of Lausanne, tensions between the local populace and Britain had been growing.¹⁵ These tensions exploded on October 21st, 1931 when the colonial governor's house was burned to the ground. The tensions which existed in 1931 were similar to those two decades later and largely consisted of Greek-Cypriot calls for *enosis*.¹⁶ Instead of recognizing this early Greek-Cypriot goal and countering it with pro-British propaganda, the British simply increased the size of their military force on the island.¹⁷ Within Cyprus, the British did not seem to improve their relations with Greek Cypriots by the start of the Emergency and, because of this, there was a significant lack of Greek speaking workers in the colonial government in 1955.¹⁸ The Colonial Office pressured journalists to deny misinformation pushed out by EOKA, or it would remind the Cypriot elite of their elevated status due to British rule but there is little evidence the British ever conducted a large-scale propaganda campaign with the common Greek-Cypriot as their target audience. A consistent supply of one-sided information being funneled to the Cypriot masses helps explain their disinterest in remaining under British rule.

The Information Environment of the Cyprus Emergency

The information consumed by both the Greek and Turkish ethnic communities in Cyprus became increasingly polarized throughout the duration of the Emergency. Athens Radio was a Greek language broadcast that supported enosis, allowing many Greek-Cypriots to feel connected to a Hellenic culture. "Voice of the Fatherland," one of the broadcasts, was known for broadcasting proclamations made by General Grivas, often telling "students to raise the banner and to continue the struggle with zeal."¹⁹ Nancy Crawshaw wrote an article in early 1956 entitled "The Voice of Evil," in which she outlines attempts from the state-controlled broadcaster to influence the situation in Cyprus as far back as before the Emergency began. On January 7th, Crawshaw recorded a broadcast from Athens Radio saying, "until the tyrants who desecrates churches, seizes the belongings of bread-winners, and rapes virgins...is driven from the Land of our fathers...let us continue the struggle that awaits us."²⁰ In a private letter, Crawshaw questions a *Times* editorial which objected to any attempt to censor Radio Athens, writing, "we take care to see that pornography and perversion in their visual and written form are not allowed to further juvenile delinquency. Why should an exception be made of spoken word?"²¹ The Turkish-Cypriot community derived much of their information from domestic newspapers, which a senior member of the colonial administration described as "little more...than political propaganda sheets."²² Rauf Denктаş, founder of the right-wing paramilitary organization TMT, also founded the newspaper *Nacak*. *Nacak* derived its name from a traditional Turkish

¹⁵ David French, "Toads and Informers: How the British Treated their Collaborators during the Cyprus Emergency, 1955-9," *The International History Review* 39, no. 1 (2016): 71.

¹⁶ Robert Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus 1954-1959* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1-3.

¹⁷ Holland, *Revolt in Cyprus*, 3, 4.

¹⁸ Dimitrakis, "British Intelligence," 379-80.

¹⁹ NCP 20/5, Notebook #5: Second Visit to Cyprus, 1955-1956.

²⁰ NCP 24/8, "Cyprus and Its Crisis V – The Voice of Evil," *The Manchester Guardian*, February 7, 1956. Athens Radio also was known to call for the death of Greek-Cypriots who worked in the colonial government. Crawshaw quotes an example, "the punishment of the detestable special constable, who agreed to betray his country for a few pounds, is severe but just. Let his punishment be a lesson to those who forget their most holy duty (to Enosis)!"

²¹ NCP 1/6, Private Letter, 29 January 1956.

²² Jonathan Stubbs and Bahar Taseli, "Newspapers, Nationalism, and Empire: The Turkish Cypriot Press in the British Colonial Period and its Aftermath," *Media History* 20, no. 3 (Fall 2005): 286.

hatchet and intended to “reflect the identity of the newspaper as a weapon.”²³ The polarization of information existed outside of newspapers and radio broadcast as well and featured prominently in the ethnically administered schools on the island.

To appeal to the Cypriots, the colonial government allowed for the Turkish and Greek ethnic communities to run their own schools since the late 19th century. The schools received financial and educational support from Turkey and Greece and were therefore at risk of exposure to nationalistic propaganda. General Grivas found that school children were some of the most passionate supporters of EOKA and he even developed the ANE, or the Valiant Youth of EOKA.²⁴ These youth would act as messengers, members of strikes or riots, or even plant bombs.²⁵ Crawshaw wrote of Greek-Cypriot schools being tear gassed after protests became violent, mass school strikes, and even children inflicting fatal wounds on enemies of EOKA.²⁶ To a lesser extent but still significant was the propaganda provided in the Turkish-Cypriot schooling system. Rauf Denктаş, owner of the Turkish nationalist newspaper, *Nacak*, as well as a founder of the Turkish-Cypriot paramilitary organization TMT, was made inspector general of Turkish-Cypriot public schools by the Turkish government following his removal as British crown prosecutor.²⁷ It can be inferred from the domestic situation and the type of person the Turkish government placed in charge of schooling, that these schools contained a hefty amount of nationalist propaganda. By not using public schooling as a mechanism to indoctrinate a future generation of Cypriots, the British sacrificed an asset of the information campaign to the Greek and Turkish governments.

The most prevalent domestic propaganda on the island was a pro-Greek, anti-British message promoted by EOKA and the Cypriot Orthodox Church. As opposed to Athens radio or the public education program, this message was homegrown and distributed largely by non-violent supporters of the revolt. General Grivas used leaflets to call for strikes, cease fires, list the accomplishments of EOKA, accuse the British of human rights violations, and list ‘traitors’ who needed execution.²⁸ Although Makarios and Grivas had their differences, EOKA was largely the mouthpiece of the Church on the island and through its effective information distribution networks effectively crippled the island’s economy several times through organized strikes and boycotts. Crawshaw stated, “Amateurish news-handling and inefficiency characterize the Cyprus Government.”²⁹ EOKA claims of ill-treatment

²³ Stubbs and Taseli, “Newspapers, Nationalism and Empire,” 294. By the end of the war, *Nacak* was regularly publishing lines from a prominent Turkish poem which stated, “What makes a flag is the blood on it.” In addition to Denктаş, future Cyprus Vice President Fazıl Küçük owned a newspaper named *Halkın Sesi*, which received substantial financial support from the government of Turkey and would therefore be supportive of a Turkish viewpoint.

²⁴ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Mass Intimidation in Cyprus: The Tyranny of EOKA,” *The Manchester Guardian*, October 6, 1958.

²⁵ NCP 9/Press Cuttings; George Grivas, *The Memoirs of General Grivas* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1965), 173. Apart from being easily manipulatable, Grivas found school-age children unsuspecting targets and small enough to carry out daring operations. He recounts an episode in which he had a 15-year-old crawl inside a storm drain which ran in front of a police station and plant two mines. The child was the perfect size to fit inside the drain and was able to plant and later detonate the mines which Grivas claims caused “nearly twenty British casualties.”

²⁶ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Cyprus Village Under Curfew: Ordered to Pay Fine of £1,500,” *The Manchester Guardian*, December 13, 1955; NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Cyprus and its Crisis I – Mounting Hostility,” *The Manchester Guardian*, January 20, 1956.

²⁷ Stubbs, and Taseli, “Newspapers, Nationalism, and Empire,” 291, 294; NCP 21/1, Notebook 11: “Clerides on Denktash,” June 1958.

²⁸ Grivas, *Memoirs*, 88-89, 115, 124, 133.

²⁹ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Monasteries Searched in Cyprus: Inadequate Facilities Hamper Press Coverage,” *The Manchester Guardian*, December 8.

by the colonial government, “has been helped by the refusal of the authorities to allow overseas correspondents to see the conditions for themselves.”³⁰ Whether or not a legitimate grievance had been brought against the colonial government, the British did not make a sizable attempt to establish a domestic information campaign to rival that of EOKA and the Church.

Much of the pressure on the British government to change its policies, however, came from outside of Cyprus. Although the Conservative Party was in power in the British parliament during the Cyprus Emergency, there was a significant portion of the opposition Labour party which was firmly against British colonialism. Fenner Brockway’s Movement for Colonial Freedom (MCF) repeatedly brought the issue of decolonization and human rights abuses before the British and international public.³¹ Left-wing MP and member of MCF Barbara Castle, was the first to bring the Hola Camp incident, in which 11 Kenyan detainees were beaten to death by guards, to the attention of Parliament.³² The MCF and Labour’s left reminded the British public of events in Cyprus as well, with Barbara Castle even stating in 1957 that if Labour won the next election, the British government would support Cypriot self-determination.³³

While the British Labour party continued to push for a solution to the “Cyprus question” in Parliament, the Greek Foreign Minister Evangelos Averoff brought the issue to the United Nations on three separate occasions. In the United Nations, Greek sponsored resolutions surrounding Cyprus brought the issue to international attention and gave EOKA hope of eventual victory. After three annual sessions in front of the UN general assembly, Greece accomplished little tangible results largely because of a partisan voting along Western World and Communist Bloc lines.³⁴ However, by repeatedly raising the issue, Greece increased pressure on Britain to work towards a solution. With European decolonization in full swing during the second half of the 1950s, Britain was also under pressure to develop a favorable solution before newly independent African and Asian states joined the United Nations, as they would be likely to vote for Cypriot self-determination.³⁵ Internationally in the United Nations and domestically at home, Britain remained on the defensive. The Conservative government struggled to counter the information environment developed by Greece or the MCF, and it became harder to justify the retention of the Empire’s Mediterranean possession.

Journalists as Mouthpieces: British Officials’ Expectations in the Information Environment

British attempts to dominate the information environment in Cyprus were damaged by officials’ common but inaccurate belief that journalists would simply support government policy. After all, journalists had regularly rallied around the flag in the past, either because of patriotism or government-imposed press restrictions. William Howard Russell of *The Times* covered the 1853-1856 Crimean War and became the first British war correspondent to become a household name.³⁶ In response to

³⁰ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Justice in Cyprus I – An Inquiry Needed,” *The Manchester Guardian*, July 1, 1957.

³¹ Josiah Brownell, “The Taint of Communism: The Movement for Colonial Freedom, the Labour Party, and the Communist Part of Great Britain, 1954-1970,” *Canadian Journal of History* 42, no. 2 (Autumn 2007): 242-43.

³² Brownell, “The Taint of Communism,” 247.

³³ Drohan, *Brutality in an Age of Human Rights*, 57.

³⁴ Crawshaw, *Cyprus Revolt*, 229, 272, 337-38.

³⁵ Crawshaw, *Cyprus Revolt*, 272.

³⁶ Hannon, “Story Behind the Stories,” 43.

Russell's initial coverage of the poor treatment of enlisted soldiers by officers, the British commander in the Crimea initiated some of the earliest forms of censorship such as forbidding his soldiers to speak to Russell and making him leave camp.³⁷ Following this debacle, the government realized the need to organize a Press Corps to dominate the flow of domestic and international propaganda. During the Boer War half a century later, the War Office set strict requirements on qualifying for a correspondent's license, actively restricting foreigners or those deemed pro-Boer from receiving one.³⁸ Anti-British material was censored and destroyed, and although some negative press reached Britain, journalists who wrote in a pro-British fashion were given priority over more "questionable" journalists.³⁹ World War One and Two represent an era of much more Pro-British journalism as the total war nature of both conflicts demanded more rigid censorship and more support from the home front.⁴⁰ During WWII, many journalists practiced self-censorship to ensure that the official censors would let their work pass quickly to publication. When writing about an event like the British retreat from Rangoon in 1942, a journalist who emphasized the positive aspects of the event and neglected to mention negative details such as the number of deaths would see his work gutted less and published faster than one who focused on negative aspects.⁴¹ As late as the Cyprus Emergency, British military leaders continued to believe in their ability to manipulate the press. In 1958, Major General Sir Kenneth Darling described how in Cyprus he was "deliberately cultivating the Press and using them as a vehicle (although they do not know this) for increasing my initiative and deflating EOKA."⁴² Although most journalists considered it their patriotic duty to promote high morale back in Britain, many also sought to tell the full truth through less restricted means.

Journalists often found it difficult to be independent actors during the conflicts they were writing about due to British censorship laws, and many wrote a much more personal and critical account in memoirs after the fact. Philip Woods covers this idea masterfully in his book, writing, "it was not that they gave deliberately misleading accounts, for instance reporting a defeat as a victory, but that they avoided what might be considered defeatist accounts."⁴³ George Rodger, a photojournalist for Time-Life working in Burma in 1942, focused heavily on the American Volunteer Group (AVG), or the Flying Tiger squadron. Doing so served the dual purpose of showing American support for Chinese nationalists, as well as providing some of the only positive coverage of allied efforts in early 1942.⁴⁴ Using photos of the AVG and the RAF Rodger painted a picture of Allied cooperation and military success, however in his memoir *Red Moon Rising* he expressed anger at American authorities, "who left their boys to fight crack Japanese pilots with nothing but suicide crates to fly in."⁴⁵

³⁷ Hannon, "Story Behind the Stories," 136.

³⁸ McCrachen, "War Correspondents," 101, 104.

³⁹ McCrachen, "War Correspondents," 106-7.

⁴⁰ Nathan N. Orgill, "Reawakening the Nation: British Journalism and the Interwar Debate on the Origins of the First World War," *Journalism Studies* 17, no. 4 (2016): 517.

⁴¹ Hannon, "Story Behind the Stories," 121; Philip Woods, *Reporting the Retreat: War Correspondents in Burma, 1942* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 96, 123.

⁴² Drohan, *Brutality in an Age of Human Rights*, 74.

⁴³ Woods, *Reporting the Retreat*, 8.

⁴⁴ Woods, *Reporting the Retreat*, 65.

⁴⁵ Woods, *Reporting the Retreat*, 67-68. The nature of George Rodger's career as a photojournalist meant his publications were supportive of the allied efforts. Although he could caption his photos, an editor would write the in-depth story, leaving his memoir, *Red Moon Rising*, as Rodger's only avenue to comment on British and American conduct in the War. Rodger's memoir is unique in that it does not criticize the retreat from Burma; however, it does criticize other aspects of the campaign, such as the lack of American support for the AVG.

Rodger was not alone in his criticism, of the 26 correspondents Woods covers in his book, about half went on to write critical reports of the allied handling of Burma.⁴⁶ At a time when long distance telegraph transmissions were expensive and time consuming, and readership relied on whichever newspaper published updates the quickest, journalists were unwilling to risk censorship and delay by publishing a story which may have been more accurate.⁴⁷ These journalists still strove to be independent actors, as seen through their memoirs, and help explain why journalists such as Nancy Crawshaw were willing to criticize the British Government during the Cyprus Emergency.

A Background to Nancy Crawshaw

Nancy Crawshaw was born into a well-off British family in 1914. She was privately educated in England and Germany and attended the Reimann School of Photography where she became a qualified photographer. Knowing French, German, and some Greek, she spent the early part of her career working as a journalist-photographer in the Middle East and Balkans.⁴⁸ Crawshaw's initial interest in the Hellenic world likely began when she accompanied the United Nations investigation team as an independent journalist in communist-held Northern Greece. From 1949 to 1959 in Greece and from 1954 to 1959 in Cyprus, Crawshaw was an accredited special correspondent with the *Manchester Guardian*. In 1958 she was employed by the British Foreign Office in the United States where she was tasked with providing clarity of the British situation within Cyprus.⁴⁹ Just several months later Crawshaw served as one of the two British consultants to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace regarding research in the Cyprus conflict.⁵⁰ Following the independence of Cyprus in 1960, Nancy Crawshaw would go on to deliver lectures to the Royal Naval Staff College and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, write articles for *The World Today* and *International Relations*, and even write a full-length monograph regarding the Cyprus Emergency in 1978.⁵¹

Through these employments, Nancy Crawshaw's perspective on the Cyprus Emergency was influential to both intellectuals on the subject and the common reader of the *Manchester Guardian*. Crawshaw was described by many as an expert on the Emergency.⁵² She had close connections with the British Governor, Sir John Harding, members of Parliament, and Turkish-Cypriot elites such as Rauf Denktaş.⁵³ Exchanging correspondence with influential Greek and Turkish Cypriots was a normal occurrence for Crawshaw and from 1954-1960 she was very aware of the situation within Cyprus. It can be seen through her writing that Nancy Crawshaw leaned towards the colonial government's attitude, yet her work remained relatively

⁴⁶ Woods, *Reporting the Retreat*, 4.

⁴⁷ Woods, *Reporting the Retreat*, 100; Hannon, "Story Behind the Stories," 121.

⁴⁸ NCP 2/8, Biographical Note; NCP 1/6, Past experiences and contributions, 8 April 1954.

⁴⁹ NCP 2/8, Biographical Note.

⁵⁰ NCP 1/8, Dotation Carnegie Pour La Paix Internationale, 5 February 1958.

⁵¹ NCP 2/8, Biographical Note; NCP 2/8, Mrs. N. Crawshaw, 8 November 1967.

⁵² NCP 1/6, Patrick Maitland to Alan Lennox-Boyd, 8 May 1956; NCP 1/7, The Encyclopedia Americana, 2 July 1959.

⁵³ NCP 1/1, Invitation by Harding, 13 July 1957.; NCP 1/4, Christmas Card by Denktaş. Because Nancy Crawshaw was a well-regarded journalist writing for a popular British newspaper, it seems only natural that individuals who had a stake in the outcome of the conflict would seek her attention. Governor Harding sent Crawshaw an invitation to celebrate the Queen's birthday at an official party and Crawshaw called him "splendid," Labour Members of Parliament exchanged letters with Crawshaw asking her opinion on particular matters, and Denktaş even sent her a Christmas card. Obviously, Many who she met with had an agenda in mind but nonetheless, Crawshaw maintained a relationship with some after the conflict, eventually editing a book by Denktaş and receiving New Year's Cards from the Prime Minister of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

objective compared to others at the time. Crawshaw could be described as pro-Turkish, however this may be the result of her strong anti-EOKA attitude rather than any affinity for the Turkish-Cypriot side of the conflict. The position Crawshaw found herself in the late 1950s allowed her extensive access to both the local and international players within the conflict. As the special correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*, British Foreign Office employee during the 1958 session of the United Nations, as well as other assignments, Crawshaw had the legitimacy and knowledge to claim British mismanagement of the information environment during the war. After returning from the United Nations she wrote, “the significance of U.N as a forum for anti-British propaganda does not appear to be fully understood by many British officials.”⁵⁴ The work of Nancy Crawshaw provides another facet to the study of the information environment during the Cyprus Emergency, and must be considered alongside other independent journalism to understand how the British government failed to dominate information during the war.

Nancy Crawshaw: A Case Study in Journalism

Nancy Crawshaw believed the British failed to understand the gravity international organizations had on foreign opinion, and thus, they did not dominate the international information environment. Nowhere was this more pronounced than in the United Nations. The governments of Greece and Turkey were under immense pressure from their people to present their respective viewpoints in the United Nations and it would have been difficult to silence these governments. The British failed to effectively counter these arguments which reduced their own stance in the eyes of American and other foreign powers. Crawshaw believed the British neglected the importance of the United Nations to the American perspective of Cyprus. The U.N is in America, is funded significantly by America, and attended or watched by many American intellectuals.⁵⁵ Whether due to incompetence or negligence, the British representatives failed to correct misinformation and allowed American audiences to draw many of their opinions of the conflict based on Greek viewpoints. After the fifth time the Cyprus question was brought in front of the U.N with no solution, the New Zealand delegate stated, “few subjects have been debated so extensively and with so little profit.”⁵⁶ Had Britain seen that the Cyprus Emergency was to be solved in the U.N and not on the battlefield, they may have put more effort into bringing American and foreign powers into their line of thinking. The American government would often vote alongside Britain due to a common strategic interest, but in an era of decolonization, the decision to restrict self-determination of the Cypriot people would be a difficult vote for many foreign powers.

Britain’s attempts to monopolize information were further frustrated by media figures such as Nancy Crawshaw who formed their own opinions and did not act as agents of any side. Crawshaw formed her own opinion of the states and actors involved in the conflict and in this way, did not conform entirely to British official opinion as many in the colonial administration pressured her to do. She was Anti-EOKA, not supportive of the Greek Government, and leaned against the Greek-Cypriot community. The majority of this has to do with the violence these actors encouraged and less of her disdain for Greek desires. Crawshaw used words such as “blackmail” and “insidious” to describe actions by EOKA and even titled a 1958 article “Mass Intimidation in Cyprus” as an attempt to convince English readers of the *Manchester Guardian* against the self-propagated ‘righteousness’ of the EOKA

⁵⁴ NCP 19/8, Cyprus and U.S. Opinion Report, February 1959.

⁵⁵ NCP 19/8, Cyprus and U.S. Opinion Report.

⁵⁶ NCP 19/9, Article notes and draft.

cause.⁵⁷ Crawshaw believed the larger Greek-Cypriot community was misinformed, and supported AKEL, the Greek-Cypriot communist organization, because of their aversion to violence. She hoped that “increasing numbers of Cypriots may well look to the Left in the hope of liberation from the tyranny of EOKA.”⁵⁸ Nancy Crawshaw viewed the Greek government and the state sponsored press as instigators of violence in Cyprus and in Greece. Of the Greek-Cypriot public she said, “. . . anger is accelerated further by sensational accounts of non-existent concentration camps,” and “for fifteen months prominent figures in Greece and commentators on Athens radio have been encouraging the youth of Cyprus to lawlessness.”⁵⁹ The fact that Crawshaw’s writings line up with British interest in regard to the Greeks had more to do with her preference of diplomacy over violence than active British coercion.

Nancy Crawshaw was more favorable to the Turkish-Cypriots and Turkey than to the Greeks. However, this has more to do with Turks and Turkish-Cypriots causing fewer problems for the British, as compared to Greek-Cypriot organizations such as EOKA, than for any support of Turkish desires. Her views towards the Turkish-Cypriots and the Turkish state are pragmatic. The British needed Turkish support, which was regarded by some as favoritism, to maintain order on the island because the Greeks were fully devoted to the idea of *enosis*. Although Greek-Cypriots certainly caused more mayhem in Cyprus, Crawshaw’s portrayal of the situation and not over-emphasis of Turkish violence over Greek, gave readers of the *Manchester Guardian* the idea that Greeks were to blame for the violence on the island. Headlines like “Turk killed in Cyprus: demonstrations against Greeks” frame the situation as objective, but certainly relieve Turks of any blame.⁶⁰ After the Turkish paramilitary organization TMT formed, Crawshaw wrote, “responsible Turks are deeply concerned over mob violence, perpetrated mainly by youthful hooligans which puts the Turkish community of formerly restrained, law-abiding citizens in the same category as EOKA fanatics.” The Turkish-Cypriot community on a whole was framed as “responsible” and “law-abiding,” and that unlike the Greek-Cypriots, the majority would like to see TMT disbanded.⁶¹ Crawshaw criticized both the Turkish and Greek governments but discussed the former as more negligent than malicious. When riots in Istanbul broke out in September of 1955 against the Greek minority, Crawshaw framed the situation as an emotional response against actions in Cyprus and not institutional hatred by the state and people against Greeks, even stating, “Responsible Turks, however, are deeply ashamed of the 1955 riots, and diplomatic observers are confident that these events will not be repeated.”⁶²

A summation of Nancy Crawshaw’s work shows her to be undoubtedly pro-British. She defended Britain’s record of human rights during the Cyprus Emergency, the British military policy, and frequently, the honor and dedication of the British soldier. This is not to say she was uncritical at times, such as when she often disparaged British inefficiency and lack of transparency. She wrote from the perspective of a concerned citizen, believing her country to be in the right but at times,

⁵⁷ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Mass Intimidation in Cyprus: The Tyranny of EOKA,” *The Manchester Guardian*, October 6, 1958.

⁵⁸ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Mass Intimidation in Cyprus.”

⁵⁹ NCP 24/8, “Cyprus Problem Kept Acute in Athens: Irresponsible Elements Damaging Anglo-Greek Relations,” *The Manchester Guardian*, November 13, 1955.

⁶⁰ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Turk Killed in Cyprus: Demonstrations Against Greeks,” *The Manchester Guardian*, January 11, 1956.

⁶¹ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Turkish-Greek Gulf Widening: Government’s Delay Blamed for Clashes,” *The Manchester Guardian*, June 11.

⁶² NCP 24/8, “The Greek Minority in Turkey: Future of the Patriarchate,” *The Manchester Guardian*, October 10, 1958.

lacking the competence or direction to accomplish the mission. In one article in the *Manchester Guardian* titled “Conditions in Kyrenia Castle: where troops envy the detainees,” Crawshaw described how EOKA propaganda convinced a segment of Cypriots that the prison where EOKA terrorists were held was an epicenter of torture and brutality. Her response, which dismisses this theory, claims “The detainees seemed cheerful and friendly as we toured the castle.”⁶³ Despite praising the British military policy of providing medical aid and financial assistance to communities in an attempt to win them over, Crawshaw commented, “persistent refusal to allow reputable journalists to see conditions for themselves means that irresponsible reports go unchallenged.”⁶⁴ Crawshaw praised many of the British service members’ ability to remain passive in austere settings, writing “most observers agree that the vast majority of the British soldiers have carried out their duties with patience and restraint in the face of immense provocation.”⁶⁵ Nonetheless, after EOKA propaganda alleged British human rights violations, Crawshaw noted Britain’s failure to control the information environment, suggesting “the present allegations, irrespective of whether certain cases are true or not, are part of an intensive campaign to discredit the British.”⁶⁶

The British information campaign relied on concealing and controlling the available information for distribution, which was difficult to do when journalists such as Nancy Crawshaw were British citizens writing for a British paper. Nonetheless, the British still tried appeals and persuasion to convince Crawshaw to write more positively at times when they felt she was being too critical. Crawshaw wrote her husband on September 19th, 1955 saying the RAF “says I have discriminated against them in not getting in touch.”⁶⁷ The Cyprus Administration Secretary’s Office wrote her in early 1956, “The Governor was much concerned at the strong criticisms, made in your recent articles of the Broadcasting and Information Services here,” later writing, “we take the *Guardian’s* comments very seriously.”⁶⁸ Obviously, the Colonial Office understood the importance of the information environment, especially when negative coverage was written by an English author for an English audience. A private letter sent to Crawshaw in early 1957 by the Cyprus Administrative Secretary stated, “We continue to be unhappy...about the handling of publicity at the London end,” and asked if she would “help him to cultivate useful relations with the press.” When the British failed to convince London based newspapers to capitulate and frame colonial policy in a positive light, they offered Crawshaw compensation, (“whatever you considered appropriate”), if she would persuade their work.⁶⁹ Despite her generally pro-British leanings, Crawshaw refused to take what amounted to bribes offered by the colonial government.

Nancy Crawshaw is indicative of many journalists of the era who were generally pro-British, but also had no qualms with criticizing the British government at times. The correspondent for *Reuters* in Cyprus often wrote in support for the Colonial government but did not feel the need to self-censor comments which would

⁶³ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Conditions in Kyrenia Castle: Where Troops Envy the Detainees,” *The Manchester Guardian*, November 4.

⁶⁴ NCP 24/8, “Cyprus Village Under Curfew: Some Advantages to the Inconvenience,” *The Manchester Guardian*, May 23, 1957.

⁶⁵ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Justice in Cyprus I – An Inquiry Needed,” *The Manchester Guardian*, July 1, 1957.

⁶⁶ NCP 9/Press Cuttings, “Justice in Cyprus I.”

⁶⁷ NCP 1/2, Letter to Husband, 19 September 1955.

⁶⁸ NCP 1/6, Leslie Glass to Nancy Crawshaw Correspondence, 9 February 1956.

⁶⁹ NCP 1/8, A.F.J. Reddaway personal and confidential correspondence with Nancy Crawshaw, 4 March 1957.

have been excluded just a decade prior. In response to “a storm of demands in Britain for tough, immediate action to crush terrorist,” *Reuters* quotes Major General Kenneth Darling stating, “the only terrorist I’m interested in is a dead one.”⁷⁰ However, *Reuters* was not afraid to publish dissent, such as when two “members of the British Governor’s executive council also were reported today to have threatened to resign unless Britain gave some assurance that Cyprus would enjoy the right of self-determination.”⁷¹ A *Times* correspondent wrote much in the same manner. An article entitled “British paratroops from Cyprus receive warm welcome on arrival in Jordan,” describes the happiness and humor of the British soldiers once in Jordan, but ignores the reasons why they are in good spirits in order to leave the insurgency in Cyprus up to the interpretation of the reader.⁷² The tone of most *Times* articles was authoritative and direct, but occasionally a story such as “Cyprus freedom postponed again” showed *The Times*’ willingness to criticize what this correspondent saw as the London government dragging their feet on a decided issue.⁷³ This type of journalist was not unique to the Cyprus Emergency nor to a political affiliation. While Crawshaw could be characterized as center-right, Colin Legum (1919-2003), longtime African Correspondent for *The Observer*, fit a similar mold and was much more left-winged.⁷⁴ Legum supported the Crown’s policies when he believed in their merit but in some of his articles, such as a 1999 report in *New Statesman*, he scolds the British treasury’s handling of the sale of 125 tons of gold reserve, which he argues was detrimental to the African economy.⁷⁵ The journalist, who formed and published his or her own beliefs as an independent actor, personified but in no way isolated in Nancy Crawshaw, was on the rise during the second half of the 20th century and contributed to Britain’s inability to dominate the information environment in Cyprus.

Conclusion

The British failed to dominate the information environment during the Cyprus Emergency because they assumed British journalists like Nancy Crawshaw would “toe the party line” when, in fact, they formed their own opinions in ways that made them independent actors and not agents of any particular side. Internationally, the information campaign against the British originated mainly from Greece or Archbishop Makarios and was seen in newspapers or debates at the United Nations. The Emergency put the United Nations in an awkward position because many countries, including America, did not want to take a formal vote on the issue. Crawshaw claimed this lack of American willpower to quash the thought of *enosis*, and the British inability to convince America to do so, showed British weakness in the international realm.⁷⁶ The domestic information environment was dominated by Greek actors in the form of EOKA or Greek state supported organizations. This is not to say domestic information was monopolized; the Turkish and Colonial communities wrote frequently, but these only reached select individuals because the majority of the

⁷⁰ “British Civilians in Cyprus to Arm: Governor Takes Step to Halt Terrorist Acts – 2 Airmen Slain by bomb,” *Reuters*, November 9, 1958.

⁷¹ “British on Cyprus Battle New Riots: Tear Gas Hurlled at Youths Demanding Greek Union – Building Set Afire,” *Reuters*, September 18, 1955.

⁷² “British Paratroops from Cyprus Receive Warm Welcome on Arrival in Jordan,” *The Times*, July 18, 1958.

⁷³ “Reaction from Cyprus,” *The Times*, September 24, 1958; “Cyprus Freedom Postponed Again: No New Independence Date Set as impasse Continues Over 2 British Bases,” *The Times*, February 9, 1960.

⁷⁴ André Landman, “Serendipitous Discoveries: The Elusive Bloke Modisane in the Colin Legum Papers,” *Social Dynamics* 36, no. 3 (September 2010): 453.

⁷⁵ Colin Legum, “The Sale of Gold was our Darkest Hour,” *New Statesman* 12, no. 579 (November 1999): 21.

⁷⁶ NCP 19/8, Cyprus and U.S. Opinion Report, February 1959.

population was Greek-speaking and devoted followers of Cypriot Orthodoxy. The British failed to suppress or conceal information from the local community, and by letting the governments of Greece and Turkey run Cypriot public schools, it was likely most indoctrination had already occurred. The British did not mold the international and domestic narrative of Cyprus to fit their goals and as a result, faced increasing pressure to relinquish command of the island.

The information environment in Cyprus was different from that of British wars of decolonization in Africa or Asia. The British information campaign in those wars relied on concealing and controlling the type of information available for a domestic and international audience.⁷⁷ This was difficult to do during the Cyprus Emergency because of the large number of independent actors, including journalists like Nancy Crawshaw, who were collecting and distributing information throughout the war. Crawshaw sought to write the narrative of the conflict for a Western audience, and by using her experience as a case study, it is obvious the Colonial Office actively tried to influence her writings and the writings of others. As an independent figure, Crawshaw generally disliked EOKA and the Greek government, tolerated Turkish-Cypriots because of their general nonviolence, and supported the British government. This is not to say she didn't have her public and private reservations which upset the colonial government at times. Criticism of the Colonial Government by her and others, and the government's inability or unwillingness to stop this, influenced the tone of domestic and international information.

The turbulent decades following World War Two caught most of the Western world off guard, especially in regard to the growing trend of governmental distrust and "journalistic integrity." Journalists were becoming more independent, less willing to "toe the party line," and by the American war in Vietnam, were increasingly becoming policy influencers. Nancy Crawshaw was not the first, nor the last of this type of journalists, but she represented an era of change in which colonial powers and particularly Britain could no longer hope to monopolize information distribution in their home press. Although not always the case, Crawshaw represented what we now consider superb journalism; she was critical when it was warranted but offered praise when it was deserved. This flew in the face of journalistic propaganda the British mandated in the First and Second World War, and similar behavior would surprise the French in the Algerian War and the American government in the Vietnam War. Through analysis of the Cyprus Emergency, it seems obvious that when more actors or organizations vie for control of the information environment, it becomes more difficult for a single faction to dominate information distribution. With war and conflict now being broadcasted over television and cell phones, it would not be outlandish to question if the days of information domination are a thing of the past. How this phenomenon affects people and the course of a conflict is already being played out and deserves additional examination. To conclude, further study should be devoted to the extent the information environment played in the outcome of the Cyprus Emergency. This paper has shown that the British failed to dominate the information environment for a variety of reasons including independent journalism, but this means very little unless extended to the broader context of how control of the information environment affected the outcome of the war.

⁷⁷ Newsinger, *British Counterinsurgency*, 2nd Edition.

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