

~~SECRET~~

(62)

25X1

OCI-1023-74
18 July 1974

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Prospects for Ioannidis and Possible
Successors

1. The effect of the Cyprus coup on the fortunes of Ioannidis remains uncertain. On the one hand, the Greek armed forces generally share Ioannidis' dislike of Makarios, whom they have long regarded as the tool of the leftist forces on Cyprus and whose regime they consider just one step from communist control of the island. And in some quarters of the military, the success of the move to oust Makarios from Cyprus may also increase respect for Ioannidis' efficiency and competence. On the other hand, Ioannidis' failure to include a number of important Greek military leaders in the coup decision-making process, the fact that Makarios escaped death and may return at some future date, and the risks of Greek isolation on the issue have undoubtedly left a bad taste among some elements of the officer corps.

25X1

2. Ioannidis' future will depend in part on how the situation in Cyprus evolves. Whether or not he has second thoughts about Nicos Sampson as president, Ioannidis is seen as responsible for this appointment. Hence, if the Sampson regime should falter or appear to be losing control, discontent with Ioannidis would rise in the Greek military. Moreover, Ioannidis must also maintain a tight rein over Sampson in order to satisfy the more intensely nationalistic

25X1

SECRET

25X1

[REDACTED]
faction of the Greek armed forces. [REDACTED]

25X6

25X6

3. Foreign reaction to the Cyprus coup could also have great impact on Ioannidis' ability to survive. Should Turkish military intervention in Cyprus take place, it would unite the Greek military and a good share of the populace behind the government. But even in this case, Greece's inability to prevent partition of the island might eventually spur discontent with Ioannidis.

4. Another serious problem for Ioannidis is the present intense international isolation of his regime. If this should continue unabated, it might erode the confidence of some officers in the government. Indeed, should world-wide disapproval of his Cyprus policy lead to a break with arms suppliers in the West, particularly the US, Ioannidis' stock with his military supporters might drop precipitously. His position would also be affected by international pressures against Cyprus, such as continuing refusal of major states to recognize the Sampson regime, for this would call into question the success of his Cyprus policy.

Possible Successors

5. There is no obvious successor to Ioannidis, if his fortunes turn sour. It still appears likely that his replacement would have to come from the military, since the armed forces wield the power in Greece. But in a situation where Ioannidis was sufficiently discredited to be brought down, there is an outside chance that some figure from the political world--former Prime Minister Karamanlis is the obvious candidate--might be brought in as a transitional leader to a new regime. This alternative might become more likely in the event that international intervention were mounted to oust Sampson, forcibly negating Ioannidis' policies and discrediting military rule even among the officer corps.

-2-

[REDACTED] 25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

6. Even in the more likely event of a military successor, however, it is not yet possible to specify which of the several long-existing factions would supply the replacement.

7. One group, which may have been disenchanted by the way the Cyprus coup was conducted is usually described as the moderates. These officers--who probably form the silent majority of the officer corps--have long been opposed to the politicization of the military establishment and would desire that the army return to its traditional role. This element includes both junior and senior officers and is influenced by forces outside the military who are discontented with the regime. The extent of their support among important military elements is uncertain. Should one of this persuasion take power, he might under some circumstances be inclined to permit a limited return to more normal constitutional procedure in Greece.

8. A replacement to Ioannidis might also come, however, from the younger, revolutionary officers who in general share the narrow nationalistic views espoused by the present junta. These elements might be particularly aroused if Ioannidis were to acquiesce to pressures to remove the Greek officers from the Cypriot National Guard or otherwise diminish the Greek influence on the island. While these officers probably favor less Greek dependence on the West, they would probably not greatly alter Greece's overall foreign policy, at least as long as they could continue to acquire arms from Western sources. Because this group, like the preceding one, is amorphous and shifting in composition, it is not possible to determine how much of the armed forces these officers can commit. If they should come to power, however, they would probably seek to salvage as far as possible the policies followed by Ioannidis, including a hard line toward Cyprus and Turkey.

9. Total disaster from the Cyprus operation could also lead to a scramble for power between dissidents from all segments of the military. And in this situation, there could even be a succession of military coups, plunging Greece into

-3-

25X1

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

25X1

[REDACTED]

a period of great uncertainty. This outcome could lead to shifts and turns in policies toward Turkey and Cyprus, although the attention of the contesting groups would probably be focused in the first instance on their domestic struggle.

-4-

25X1

~~SECRET~~