



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London S.W.1

13 March 1980

Prime Minister to write

MS

H.G.

Ant - 13/3

Cyprus

Dear Michael,

University Fees for Cypriot Students

During his call on the Prime Minister on 29 February, President Kyprianou raised the subject of university fees. I enclose the relevant extract from the record for ease of reference. The possibility of using aid funds or of making arrangements within the European Community to ease the students' problems was raised. We have since asked the British High Commissioner at Nicosia to follow up these points with the Government of Cyprus. Unfortunately, neither possibility appears to be a starter. Any arrangements for EC countries are unlikely to be extended to EC Associate members such as Cyprus. The use of aid funds poses obvious problems, above all the general shortage of such funds: Lord Carrington of course told President Kyprianou and Mr Rolandis that he saw no prospect of aid funds being diverted for this purpose, and we shall have to confirm this position.

Mr Rhodes has been given discretion as to how to present these unpalatable facts to the Government of Cyprus.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Peter Shaw in the Department of Education and Science.

yours ever  
Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

Would it not be necessary to approach the problem more gradually. Both sides would have to make sacrifices. President Kyprianou said that if an evolutionary approach was adopted it would be the end of Cyprus. The existing divisions would become deeper and deeper. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that the divisions already existed. The idea would be to try to move away from them. There would have to be initial compromises by both sides.

The Prime Minister said that any such compromises would have to be prepared before the talks began. They should be prepared in private. Mr. Rolandis commented that no major problem had ever been solved in public. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary suggested that, given the lack of confidence between the two sides, it might be possible initially to have the two delegations in the same building with an intermediary going between them. This was a technique which had been used frequently during the Rhodesia Conference. The Prime Minister, re-emphasising the need for careful preparation for any new round of talks, said that all options should be explored. In reply to a request from Mr. Rolandis that HMG should use their good offices, the Prime Minister said that we would do what we could to get the Turks to the table. If the talks were restarted, it would be essential to keep them going and to avoid the kind of adjournment that had occurred last June.

Cypriot students in the UK

President Kyprianou and Mr. Rolandis expressed dismay at the problems which would be faced by Cypriot students in the United Kingdom who had to pay the full cost of their education here. Mr. Rolandis said that there were 2,500 students in the country at the moment. He added that there was no university in Cyprus and that the fees for a university education in the United Kingdom could not be met by even the most prosperous Cypriot parents. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary asked whether the Cypriot Government could not subsidise their students to some extent. Mr. Rolandis said that the left wing parties in Cyprus would never agree to this, particularly as they could point out that many universities in Eastern European countries were only too anxious to educate students free of charge. The Prime Minister said

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that she was unable to hold out much hope that the Government's position would change. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that he saw no prospect of aid funds being diverted to help with the problem.

Mr. Rolandis asked whether it would be possible for any arrangements introduced to benefit students from EEC countries to be extended to cover Cypriot students. Cyprus was after all an associate member of the EEC. Mr. Bullard said that so far as he was aware no scheme had yet been agreed to cover EEC students. However, he undertook to ensure that the possibilities were investigated.

(Part of the above discussion took place over lunch. The lunch was attended by Mr. Pattie and Mr. Knighton in addition to those listed at the beginning of this record.)

The discussion ended at 1420.

*Am*

29 February 1980