

At the UN General Assembly session in October 1988, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Petrovsky recommended that UN peacekeeping operations be strengthened, consolidated and "...put on a more solid legal and financial basis" in order to be used "more extensively for the implementation of Security Council decisions as well as for the prevention of emerging armed conflicts."<sup>12</sup> External Affairs Minister Clark did not comment directly on the Soviet proposal to establish a permanent UN peacekeeping force, but did affirm Canada's interest in establishing peacekeeping on "a more professional and broader basis."<sup>13</sup>

On 3 February 1989, External Affairs Minister Clark and Defence Minister McKnight announced that Canada had accepted a request from the UN to appoint a Canadian Commander of the UN Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). Major-General Clive Milner assumed command of UNFICYP on 10 April 1989, ending his formal ties to Canadian Forces in Cyprus. He now reports directly to the UN Secretary-General. This appointment marks the second time in approximately thirty years that a Canadian has commanded a UN Force, the first was Lt. General E. L. M. Burns, who commanded the UN Emergency Force I (UNEF I) in Egypt in the mid-1950s.<sup>14</sup> In Cyprus, the Canadian contingent added 35 km of rural patrol to their duties in 1988 after Sweden pulled out the bulk of its 380 soldiers for financial reasons. Canada increased its contingent by sixty men, to make a total contribution to UNFICYP of 575 soldiers.<sup>15</sup> Negotiations aimed at a settlement of the Cyprus situation resumed in September 1988 between George Vassiliou, President of Cyprus and Rauf Denktash, leader of the Turkish-Cypriot community. An agreement in principle was concluded in early April 1989 to pull back from the Green Line (the dividing line) in Nicosia. The Commander of the Canadian Forces in Cyprus, Col. Chris Wellwoods, stated that should the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots withdraw from three sensitive positions in Nicosia, Canadian Forces would fill the gap.<sup>16</sup> Should the agreement in principle be ratified and implemented, this would allow the UN to begin to negotiate a complete demilitarization of Nicosia and eventually a comprehensive settlement of the Cypriot situation.

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Pérez de Cuellar in May 1989, Canada and seven other countries contributing troops to the UN peacekeeping force in Cyprus said that "they are bearing an unfair financial burden by having to rely on other UN members

<sup>12</sup> Letter from Vladimir Petrovsky, Deputy Head of the Soviet Delegation, to the UN Secretary-General, United Nations Document A/43/629, 22 September 1988, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> As cited in David Cox, "Defence Notes: UN Peacekeeping." *Peace & Security*, vol. 3 no. 4 (Winter 1988/1989), p. 13.

<sup>14</sup> Department of National Defence, *News Release No. AFN: 07/89* (3 February 1989).

<sup>15</sup> Major-General Edward Fursdon, "Keeping the Peace in Cyprus." *Pacific Defence Reporter*, vol. 15 no. 8 (February 1989), p. 25; and Robert McDonald, "Guarding the Line." *Maclean's*, vol. 102 no. 13 (27 March 1989), p. 24.

<sup>16</sup> "Canada Moves into Cyprus Battle Zones." *Ottawa Citizen*, 6 April 1989, p. A16.