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**Chairman:** Mr. Victor A. BELAUNDE (Peru).

**AGENDA ITEM 55**

**Question of Cyprus (A/3120 and Add.1, A/3204 and Add.1, A/C.1/788, A/C.1/L.168 to A/C.1/L.170) (*continued*)**

- (a) Application, under the auspices of the United Nations, of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples in the case of the population of the Islands of Cyprus;**
- (b) Complaint by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of support from Greece for terrorism in Cyprus**

1. Mr. AVEROFF-TOSSIZZA (Greece) said he had followed with great attention the statements of the representatives of the United Kingdom (847th and 848th meetings) and Turkey (849th meeting). As advocates of a lost cause, morally and juridically speaking, they had pleaded their case very brilliantly, yet they had made use, *nolens volens*, of arguments which were at variance with the tone of moderation which he had sought to preserve in his opening statement (847th meeting). He would endeavour to continue to follow that tone of moderation in view of the friendship of the Greek people for the British people, the great majority of whom favoured the Cypriot aspirations, and in view of the great efforts being made towards Greek-Turkish amity.

2. Before dealing with the main points mentioned in the speech of the representative of the United Kingdom, he would venture to make two preliminary remarks.

3. The first related to the statement made at the 847th meeting by the United Kingdom Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Noble, that, if Greece could raise its voice freely before the United Nations, it was because the United Kingdom had helped Greece in its time of need. Greece would not be so ungrateful as to ignore the help given by its friends, both large and small, in its time of difficulty; but he wished to point out that, if Greece could speak freely, it was first due to its people's resolution to defend its liberty, its fatherland and its patrimony. He reminded the Committee that his country had in 1940 taken the side of liberty,

even though it had been fully alive to the fact that the result might have been total extermination.

4. Secondly, the reference by the United Kingdom representative to a statement by Eleutherios Venizelos that there was no Cypriot question between the United Kingdom and Greek Governments (847th meeting) was not accurate. In reality, that great Greek statesman had said that there was no question of Cyprus between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of Greece; the question of Cyprus existed between the United Kingdom Government and the people of Cyprus. Those words had been uttered in 1931, after the Nicosia uprising. They were words of wisdom, and they also carried a warning. It was a pity that the United Kingdom had learned nothing from that warning.

5. Turning to the main points in the speech of the representative of the United Kingdom, he referred to Mr. Noble's assertion that Greece had helped the Cypriot struggle for liberation (847th meeting). The allegation that arms and ammunition had been dispatched by diplomatic pouch was beyond words. There had never been a diplomatic pouch, large or small, in any sense of the word; there had been only a large envelope whose volume and weight entirely ruled out its being used for the conveyance of arms and ammunition. If his Government had organized such sending of arms, there would have been, considering its marine facilities, a constant stream of arms and ammunition. The Greek Government was not responsible for any such arms, and that could be proved, not by vague allegations, but in a manner which would establish its good faith for everyone to see.

6. The motorship *Hagios Georgios* had been the only ship which his Government had been unable to intercept despite the measures it had taken all along its coasts, which extended for thousands of miles, and on hundreds of islands, in order to prevent such illicit traffic.

7. There might be public employees in Greece who had ardent desires to help their brethren in Cyprus. They might even have ignored the orders of the Government in their ardour. But he emphatically contended that, despite that ardour, his Government did not send weapons or munitions to Cyprus and that it had been busily taking special measures to prevent such shipments.

8. Referring to the Grivas diaries, on which most of the British allegations were based, he said that it seemed to him exceedingly bizarre that a man engaged in guerrilla warfare on an island equipped with all facilities to combat him would have had the time or the imprudence to write a long diary. While not alleging that the United Kingdom Government had forged the document, he asserted that there were services in the United Kingdom which in the past had been known, in certain cases, to have forged documents that that Government had utilized in good faith.

9. His delegation was in possession of documents which proved that, in four cases, at least, the British Secret Intelligence Service had endeavoured to stage shipments of arms to Cyprus which were to have been imputed to the Greek Government. The tactics were similar in all four cases. He wanted to make it clear that it was not the United Kingdom Government or its responsible services that had tried to stage fake arms shipments said to originate in Greece; but if the excessive zeal of some of the organs of the Intelligence Service had succeeded, the British delegation would probably have accused the Greek Government of those shipments.

10. Referring to his draft resolution calling for the setting up of a fact-finding committee (A/C.1/L.170) he stated that the committee would be composed only of neutral and impartial members, who would be able to ascertain the facts concerning the mutual accusations and the true causes and roots of the problem of Cyprus. Such facts would have to be incorporated in a dispassionate and objective report to be presented to the United Nations. Without such a report, the First Committee would be unable to pronounce itself on the United Kingdom draft resolution (A/C.1/L.169).

11. He had in his possession 237 handwritten depositions signed by Greek detainees in Cyprus who had undergone torture, some of which was unimaginable. He would deposit those documents with the Secretary-General for the use of the Chairman of the First Committee and the President of the General Assembly, pending a careful study by the fact-finding committee which his delegation had called for. Those documents constituted grave accusations involving the heavy responsibility of the British services responsible and of those in charge of them. If the charges proved to be accurate, they would explain to a considerable extent why the Cypriot population had risen with such fanaticism.

12. The representative of the United Kingdom had invoked the Lausanne Treaty.<sup>1</sup> The representative of Greece said that he had explained at the 847th meeting why the Lausanne Treaty could not be construed as running counter to the right of the people to self-determination as nowhere, in that Treaty, was it said that the people of Cyprus were doomed to live forever in colonial servitude. The Treaty recognized British sovereignty over the island; that sovereignty, however, was over a non-self-governing territory, a colony. Therefore, it was in vain that the United Kingdom representative sought to make the Committee believe that Cyprus was part of the metropolitan territory of the United Kingdom. Under the Charter, peoples residing in Non-Self-Governing Territories had been placed under the responsibility of the United Nations. To abolish the colonial régime and guide those peoples towards self-government and independence was the sacred and primary obligation of the administering Powers.

13. After drawing the attention of the Committee to General Assembly resolution 648 (VII) in which were listed the factors which should be taken into account in deciding whether a Territory was or was not a Territory whose people had not yet attained a full measure of self-government, he said that the principal factors applied to Cyprus. What the Cypriot people asked for

was only the abolition of the colonial régime and the application of the right of self-determination. His country had no designs to annex the territory, but it had assumed the duty and responsibility of defending the freedom of the people of Cyprus. He recalled that, in accordance with Article 103 of the Charter, in the event of a conflict between the obligations of Members under the Charter and their obligations under any other international agreement, their obligations under the Charter should prevail.

14. Referring to the United Kingdom objections to the union of Cyprus with Greece, he asked whether, if that possibility were obviated, the United Kingdom Government would then be prepared to liberate the island. If so, the General Assembly would certainly be able to find appropriate ways and means to set at rest the misgivings and fears of the United Kingdom Government and to enable it, without violating the Treaty of Lausanne, to fulfil the obligations of the Charter and to restore liberty to the Cypriot people.

15. As for the United Kingdom Government's recognition of the right of peoples to self-determination, he noted that that Government had never really recognized that great principle, at least as far as the Cypriot people were concerned. During the negotiations between Archbishop Makarios and Sir John Harding, the Governor of Cyprus, the United Kingdom Government had not made it at all clear what it was prepared to recognize. The Greek Government had published a White Paper on those negotiations, which demonstrated the ambiguous proposals formulated by the United Kingdom Government. Both Sir Anthony Eden, then Prime Minister, and Mr. Lennox-Boyd, Secretary of State for the Colonies, while recognizing the principle of self-determination, had made its application subject to the United Kingdom Government's judgement alone.

16. The United Kingdom Government had for the first time revealed its intention to partition the island between the majority of its population, some 80 per cent, and the minority, 17.9 per cent. At first glance, the idea might appear simple, easy and perhaps attractive, but some things, however, were forgotten and some details were overlooked. Cyprus as a whole was a living body. It could not be cut up without being killed. No one, he warned, had the right to speak of the partition of Cyprus. Cyprus belonged to its people and to no one else.

17. Apart from the fact that the Turkish element was in the majority nowhere on the island, that it had no territorial basis at all and that it was inextricably mixed with the Greek majority element, the recognition of a minority's right of self-determination would constitute an innovation which would be fraught with the most serious international implications and consequences. It was obvious that a minority or minorities would have to submit to the will of the majority and would have to be integrated with the majority. The only question was how to guarantee the participation of all without discrimination. In the case of a plebiscite, international law reserved to the minorities only the right of option, and minority elements could always avail themselves of that right. The right, or the claim, of the minority to a distinct territorial entity was political, legal and historical nonsense. He pointed out the difficulties which would arise from the partition of Cyprus, for the conditions requisite for partition simply did not exist. For one, forced population transfers would be inhuman on a small island, especially in time of peace.

<sup>1</sup> Treaty of Peace between the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Roumania and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State, and Turkey, signed at Lausanne on 24 July 1923. League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XXVIII, 1924, pp. 11 ff.

18. Lord Radcliffe's report,<sup>2</sup> concluded that it would be impossible to envisage, even within the framework of self-government or autonomy, the political separation of Greek and Turkish elements. But the United Kingdom Government followed the advice of Lord Radcliffe only when it happened to be pleasing and convenient.

19. Mr. Averoff-Tossizza did not think that Lord Radcliffe's report contained any serious proposals. In supporting that statement he quoted several passages from the Radcliffe report, particularly section D, "Governor's Matters". He did not wish to reflect upon the scientific integrity and ability of Lord Radcliffe, for he had had restricted terms of reference and had been unable to ignore the terms imposed upon him. However, those provisions were tantamount to placing all public officials under the jurisdiction, not of the local government, but of the British Governor alone. Other fundamental provisions contained in the proposals had been conceived in the same manner, and were worthy of the traditions, of the liberal colonialism of two centuries ago. It was not surprising, therefore, that the Greek Government, while reserving its position lest the Cypriots should accept those proposals, should have rejected the Radcliffe plan. He declared that no Greek Government would ever be able to accept a solution unless it was convinced that that solution was acceptable to the Cypriots themselves. The qualified representatives of the Cypriot people and his Government, eager to contribute to a solution, had recognized that a transitory period of self-government might precede the exercise of self-determination.

20. At a later stage in the debate, he would be in a position to answer all the arguments advanced by the representative of Turkey.

21. In conclusion, he said that he thought that, legally speaking, the position was unambiguous in favour of Cypriot aspirations and that no conclusion on what was happening in Cyprus was possible without careful study by a fact-finding committee.

22. Sir Percy SPENDER (Australia), after recalling that the General Assembly had at its ninth session decided (resolution 814 (IX)) that it did not appear appropriate to adopt a resolution on the question of Cyprus, and that it had at its tenth session decided (521st plenary meeting) not to include the question in its agenda, observed that Australia's interest in the question was deeply aroused by its friendship for all three parties concerned in the problem. His country's chief concern was to encourage the discovery of a solution which would work to the benefit, not simply of the principal parties concerned, but rather of the ultimate welfare of the people of the island of Cyprus. In the view of his delegation, the present state of affairs in Cyprus was not likely to contribute to a solution. His country deplored terrorism whatever might be its form.

23. He believed that negotiation was the pathway to peace. In that connexion, the question arose of how there could be negotiations when efforts towards solution made by the United Kingdom side were rejected out of hand. Such, for example, was the rejection by the Greek Government of the Radcliffe proposals with the explanation that they were not serious. In the judgement of the Australian delegation, that was hardly an attitude of mind which was conducive to a peaceful resolution of the difficulties.

24. Australia, remote as it was from the scene of the trouble, had also been much disturbed by the position of the independent Orthodox Church under the leadership of Archbishop Makarios. While it was acquainted with the idea of a church militant, it could not reconcile the idea of a church combatant with the concept of spiritual leadership.

25. Passing to the question of Greek interest in the island of Cyprus, Sir Percy noted, first, that Cyprus had not, in the previous 2,500 years, been under the direct domination and control of Greece. It had, in that vast sweep of time, been under the control of others—the Persians, the Romans, the Arabs, the Crusaders, the Knights Templars, the Genoese, the Venetians, the Turks, the English—but never the Greeks.

26. Secondly, the island was, by established international treaty, part of the dominions of the United Kingdom. Greece had no recognizable international interest in the island. If one were to concede that any nation had a recognizable interest in the territory of another because a substantial number of the people of that territory had some racial affinity with the people of the nation claiming the interest, the world would be infinitely more confused than it was at present. No such international right could be recognized for such a nation.

27. Thirdly, Greece was a party to the question merely because of its claim that the great majority of the people of Cyprus were of Greek origin. In his view, that claim was most questionable. Geographically, the island was not part of Greece.

28. Fourthly, the position with regard to the United Nations responsibility on the question appeared, to the Australian delegation at least, to be crystal clear. Since by treaty it was established beyond any doubt whatever that Cyprus was part of the dominions of the United Kingdom, it followed inexorably that any intervention by the United Nations into the internal affairs of Cyprus was excluded by the terms of Article 2, paragraph 7 of the United Nations Charter—however much one might seek to read down the clause—if that Article was to be given any rational meaning at all.

29. Since, however, there were a number of representatives who would not agree with that thesis, he would proceed with further observations on the matter. The sole ground—other than the alleged ethnic traditions of the inhabitants of Cyprus—upon which Greece had based its claim that the question of Cyprus should attract the intervention of United Nations was the claim that, under the Charter, the people of Cyprus had a right to self-determination. No such right was, however, to be found anywhere in the Charter. Article 55 laid down the obligation of the United Nations to promote, *inter alia*, human rights and fundamental freedoms "based on respect for the principle of . . . self-determination of peoples", a principle to which Australia adhered completely. However, an obligation to promote certain objectives based on such a principle would seem to be something quite different from a right of all peoples to self-determination. If there were such a right, it would be one which could be exercised by all peoples immediately. If it were assumed that the right to self-determination did exist, the essence of the case was to give effect to what had become for Greece the primary purpose of its own foreign policy, namely *enosis* (union with Greece), and had nothing or little to do with any right of self-determination on the part of the people of Cyprus. As in other matters in which the issue of self-determination had been raised, too often

<sup>2</sup> Lord Radcliffe, *Constitutional Proposals for Cyprus* (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956), Cmd. 42.

some of those who had raised the issue sought themselves to determine for the peoples concerned what their political destiny should be. That was not self-determination; it was determination by others. The real motivating force behind the Greek claim was the desire to assimilate Cyprus within the territory of Greece, and the entire fervent appeal to self-determination was purely tactical.

30. Although the interest of Greece in the Cyprus question had been expressed in terms of the right to, or the principle of, self-determination for the people of the island, there could be no doubt in the mind of anyone that the real purpose was to bring Cyprus within the Greek orbit. It was an example of the expansionist policies currently sponsored by the Government of Greece. The word "*enosis*" meant union and had come to be the slogan of those who wanted to see Greek sovereignty exercised over Cyprus. The claim to Cyprus on the ground that the Greek-speaking sector of the population was the largest sector was the sort of argument which, if carried through and applied elsewhere, might be put forward in an attempt to justify the annexation of Malaya by China. That sort of claim raised the very grave question of the protection of minority groups and pointed up the very legitimate interests of the Turkish Government in the future of the people of Cyprus. Turkey, after all, had had some unhappy experience with Greek attempts—some successful and some unsuccessful—to acquire territory belonging to Turkey. One could hardly expect Turkey to be unmoved by the prospect of an island within fifty miles of its southern coast in the hands of Greece, or to be unmoved by the humanitarian aspects of some 100,000 Turkish-speaking inhabitants of Cyprus passing under Greek sovereignty.

31. It was Australia's firm view that the way to political change was the way of evolution and that evolution must develop in peaceful negotiations, not in an atmosphere rendered foul by bloodshed and violence. It was difficult to see how peaceful negotiations could take place when the government-controlled Athens Radio broadcast to Cyprus propaganda which sounded curiously like that which, before the Second World War, had been directed towards the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia.

32. The United Kingdom had offered the Cypriots a constitution and a form of self-government within the British Commonwealth. At the same time the United Kingdom recognized the principle of self-determination, having regard to the international and strategic situation, which was certainly of some relevance in the present circumstances. The attainment of self-government by the people of Cyprus under the Radcliffe proposals was, in the Australian belief, only being impeded by the intervention of Greece.

33. He could imagine nothing which would be more likely to make the problems of self-government and ultimate self-determination infinitely more difficult than they were at present than if the Committee, by its action, were to give any form of support to the case presented by the representative of Greece. Nor could he imagine anything which would contribute more at the moment towards a solution than for the General Assembly to make clear that the question of Cyprus was a matter which must be settled without the intervention of the United Nations.

34. Mr. GUNWARDENE (Ceylon) stated that the question of Cyprus had caused grave anxiety to the Government and people of Ceylon, who had had a long

and treasured connexion with the United Kingdom, great admiration for Greece and great friendship with Turkey.

35. He appreciated the restraint and moderation with which the parties immediately concerned in the question had presented their respective cases before the Committee. At the same time, he could not help feeling that an atmosphere had been created which was not very helpful to the solution of the problem. He realized that the question had been brought before the United Nations in an effort to place the case of Cyprus before world public opinion. He did not think that that alone would help in finding a solution of the problem. The undeniable fact remained that Cyprus was a colony of the United Kingdom and was going through an experience which had been shared by so many others, many of which had been able to achieve self-government.

36. The United Kingdom Government had shown its adherence to the principle of self-government through its extension of that right to countries formerly under its control. He could not for a moment deny the fact that the United Kingdom Government had always been responsive to public opinion. It was therefore a matter for regret that, instead of following the well-known beaten track of constitutional agitation, terrorism should have been conceived as the means by which self-government should be attained in Cyprus. Regardless of the respective claims made by Greece and Turkey, the people of Cyprus had a right to self-determination, a right which he thought the United Kingdom Government had conceded. He could understand the great anxiety on the part of Greece to make the Cypriots feel that they were also Greek and that Greece would like to have them within its Kingdom. That did not, however, provide an argument against Cyprus. The Government of Ceylon was not concerned with the annexation of Cyprus by Greece, nor would it for a moment countenance *enosis*. The representative of Greece himself had freely granted that annexation was not the aim of his Government (847th meeting).

37. With regard to the position of Turkey, he could not see how Turkey could establish any kind of claim on Cyprus in the matter of annexation. It was true that Cyprus had been under the control of Turkey at one time, but that did not establish the grounds for any claim by Turkey. The proximity of Cyprus to Turkey also had, nothing to do with the matter. The presence of a Turkish minority in Cyprus did not militate against the granting of self-determination to the people of Cyprus. He could understand Turkey's concern in the well-being of the Cypriots of Turkish origin, and its interest that there should be peace and good government in Cyprus, which was only fifty miles from its coast. But he could not countenance Turkey's having a voice in the government of Cyprus. Nor could he accept the argument that Cyprus could affect the security of Turkey, in view of the fact that Turkey was a member of the Balkan Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and considering the size of the population of Cyprus.

38. Thus, just as Greece had no right to claim annexation of Cyprus, just as *enosis* must be dismissed as something which the United Nations, the United Kingdom, or the Commonwealth for that matter, could not accept, so must be dismissed, with equal strength, any suggestion that Turkey should have a claim on Cyprus. The question of Cyprus was a matter for negotiation in an atmosphere of calm and peace between the Cypriots and the Government of the United King-

dom. Responsible leaders in Cyprus no doubt realized that only a calmer atmosphere could produce the results they wanted, and if they decided to open negotiations, possibly some good could come of them. That was the message he would like to give to the Cypriot people. The time had come for them to stop acts of terrorism, which could not be condoned in any part of the world.

39. He appealed to the Government of the United Kingdom to make a declaration to the people of Cyprus that self-government would be granted to them within a period of five years, or any other defined period. Such a declaration, together with the gesture of setting free political prisoners in due course, would be greatly helpful.

40. He appealed to the Government of Greece to exercise such moral influence as it had on Cyprus to put down the terrorism that existed and to advance the idea that the path of self-government lay in peaceful conduct.

41. The course of events amply demonstrated that the Cypriots desired to attain the right of self-determination. That was a matter which the United Kingdom Government should note. The existence of such a desire on the part of the Cypriot people could be ascertained

either in a plebiscite or through a royal commission. Such a commission could also develop a constitution for Cyprus which would confer on the Cypriots that vestige of self-government which was absent in the proposals submitted by Lord Radcliffe. The royal commission would be in a better position to discover the kind of government that the people of Cyprus desired and would also be able to study the relationship between the Turkish minority and the Greek majority. It was not impossible to conceive of a constitution that would work out the proper relationship between the two ethnic groups of Cyprus. If the presence of a minority were to be reason to deny self-government, no colony would ever be free, or at least it would take many years to achieve freedom.

42. He was not in a position to take any stand on the draft resolutions which had been submitted to the Committee on the question of Cyprus. He only wished that none of the draft resolutions existed and that the United Kingdom and Greece would find a way to settle their own differences according to their high sense of integrity and justice.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.