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BROADCAST TALK GIVEN BY THE GOVERNOR
SIR HUGH FOOT, ON THE 10TH OF JANUARY

I am going to London tonight to be present when the last London Conference on Cyprus takes place later this week.

I can't remember how many times I have been to London since I came back to Cyprus two years ago last month. My flying visits have sometimes been in a rush, and usually in times of trouble and anxiety.

But in setting out on this visit I feel more hopeful and confident than ever before. We have all worked hard over the past ten months. The Joint Council, in which Archbishop Makarios and Dr. Kutchuk and the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Ministers work week by week together with me and the members of my Executive Council, has pressed on in making all preparations in good time for the establishment of the Republic next month.

The Constitutional Commission, which has had to deal with most difficult and complicated questions, has brought its work of preparing the new Constitution practically to a conclusion. We all owe a debt of gratitude to the Members of the Commission who have worked so persistently and devotedly day after day for many months past. They have certainly served Cyprus splendidly.

The London Committee has covered all the ground to be dealt with in the Treaties. It has reached agreement on many matters, it has narrowed differences on others and it has indicated and isolated the main questions still to be decided.

Now we go to London for the culmination of all the work done in Cyprus and London in this transitional year. We are nearly home. We have covered most of the road. Now we have to go the last few difficult miles. The way we have come so far makes me confident that we shall cover these last few miles at a good hard pace.

Let me say this too about pace and timing. When I went to the London Conference of February last year I went home determined to ask for two years to establish the Republic. But I was completely convinced while I was in London that I had been wrong, and that the task had to be completed in a year. Once the main objects were agreed and set, the job had to be done at speed. We have kept up to time in all our local preparations since then - and incidentally I said farewell this morning to the Lancashire Fusiliers who are the last Regiment but one to leave the Island before Independence is declared, thirteen Regiments having already left since the London Agreement was signed last February.

Now let me say a word or two about the Sovereign Areas and about the future.

You might think to read some of the things that have been written that the British Sovereign Areas will in some way become a drag or disadvantage to the Island. In fact of course very much the reverse is true. In fact the British Sovereign Areas are not only politically but also economically a guarantee of the independence, well-being and progress of the Island.

I like to sit at the coffee shop at Kythrea and watch and listen to the water gushing out of the hill and racing off to feed trees and crops, to spread green fertility on the brown plain and to take comfort to the dry villages of the Messaoria.

In the economic life of the Island the two Sovereign Areas will be what the Kythrea spring is to the life of the whole Kythrea district. Akrotiri (with Episkopi) and Dhekelia are like springs spreading abundant supplies of good employment and commercial progress and financial activity as far afield as Nicosia and Famagusta and Paphos - indeed over the whole Island. And they are springs which will not dry up.

The Mayors of Limassol and Larnaca know better than I do how much their towns in particular have gained and will gain from the Bases - and I am sure that they specially appreciate the benefits of revenue and employment.

We have important questions about the Sovereign Areas to discuss and settle in London, but it is well to keep our sense of proportion, and to remember that the two economic springs which the Sovereign Areas provide are amongst the principal economic assets of the Island and will remain so.

Now a word about the future. Tonight I would say to everyone in Cyprus that the time has come when we can cheer up.

Of course there are still difficulties - and very real ones. Nothing worthwhile is easy. But the remaining difficulties are not large compared with those we have already overcome. We have come away from the miseries and animosities of the past. Now we have good reason to look to the exciting future with eager confidence. Why? I could set out many reasons. Let me give you just three to be thinking about.

One. We have conducted the first democratic, national elections on adult suffrage in Cyprus efficiently and successfully.

Two. Archbishop Makarios said to me recently that he is completely convinced that there must be a Public Service Commission and that it must be permanent and powerful to guard against political interference in Government appointments and promotions. I know that Dr. Kutchuk fully agrees.

Three. At the most critical time for the new Republic - that is in the first few years - there will be a flow of British capital into the Island in and through the Sovereign Areas, and in British grants and loans for Development in the Republic as well, which will guarantee a high level of employment and a high level of commercial and building activity for as far ahead as we can see. That will give the Republic time to prepare and put into effect its own Development programme, including particularly its plans for attracting new overseas capital for investment in the Island. No new Republic could hope to start with a better prospect or a firmer guarantee of willing assistance during its first formative years.

There are solid grounds for optimism. The rock on which we all rely is the fact that the three Allied Governments of Great Britain, Greece and Turkey and the leaders of the two communities in the Island remain unshakeably determined to make the Zurich and London Agreements succeed.

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Every month since last February I have reported on the good progress made to give effect to the Agreements. This month is the most important month of the transitional year. All of us who love Cyprus pray that January 1960 will be the most successful month of all.

You know that I have a favourite quotation from Shakespeare. You remember that when the people on the walls of Famagusta waited for the arrival of Othello, one of my predecessors as Governor of Cyprus, they cried:

"Give renewed fire to our extincted spirits
and bring all Cyprus comfort".

That is the call which we can make again when we celebrate Cyprus Independence Day.

The time has come to put doubts and misgivings behind us. Let everyone rise to the honourable opportunities of self-government and the adventure of Independence. More than ever I am confident that we can succeed not only in this culminating effort to establish the Republic in good time but also - and this is even more important - in giving the new Republic a good start towards stability and prosperity.
