

APPENDIX II

CYPRUS.

Memorandum concerning the Island of Cyprus
and the wishes of the Greek inhabitants of
Cyprus for union with their mother-country
Greece.

Memorandum (concerning the Island of Cyprus and the wishes of the Greek inhabitants of Cyprus for union with their mother-country Greece.)

To the Deputies of Foreign Ministers.

This Memorandum is addressed to you in the hope that you will be able to find ways and means of placing it upon the agenda as one of the questions to be considered by you.

It is addressed to you as the Deputies of the Foreign Ministers empowered with the task of formulating the treaties of peace. It is an appeal to your humanity; a call for justice.

We cannot find any more solid or practical foundations on which to base our appeal. There are no binding declarations or agreements by the United Nations imposing upon themselves the obligation of satisfying the demands of peoples for self-determination. Article 3 of the Atlantic Charter speaks vaguely about the "right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live." But as the article does not refer to self-determination and to the changes in sovereignty that the application of that principle will involve, it cannot be advanced as a basis for our appeal. The Charter of the United Nations speaks about the "equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small", but does not touch upon the rights of dependent peoples ready and prepared to stand upon their feet and determine their own future.

We, the Committee for Cyprus Affairs, expressing the wishes of the Cypriot people, therefore approach you with the hope that whilst you will be dealing with territorial issues consequent upon the drafting of the treaties of peace and the attendant alterations in sovereignty, you will raise the question of Cyprus along with the Dodecanese, with which it is closely linked up and with which you will inevitably be dealing.

What the Cypriots Demand.

The political demand of the Greek Cypriots - who constitute five-sixths of the population of Cyprus - is "Union with Greece."

Every other consideration is subordinated to that fundamental demand.

No other solution will be acceptable to the Cypriots. No other solution can, in fact, be found.

The attachment of the Greek Cypriots to the ideal of political union with Greece is deep-rooted and unshakeable. Union with Greece represents the fulfilment of the national aspirations of the Cypriot people.

Cyprus at present is a British Crown Colony. It came under British rule in 1878 as a result of the "Convention of Defensive Alliance" between Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire which preceded the European Conference at Berlin in the same year. Cyprus was handed over to Great Britain as a military place d'armes from which the defence of the Asiatic Dominions of the Ottoman Empire could be effected.

Cyprus was, in fact, "rented" by Britain for the above purpose, an annual money tribute being paid to the Sultan. The payment of this tribute was imposed on the Cypriots. Thus Cyprus was administered by Britain but formed part of the Sultan's Dominions.

In 1914, on Turkey entering the war on the side of the Central Powers and against the Entente, Britain annexed Cyprus.

By the abortive Treaty of Sevres of 1920 and the ratified Treaty of Lausanne of 1923, Turkey renounced all rights and privileges relating to Cyprus, including the tribute formerly paid, and recognised the annexation of Cyprus proclaimed by Britain on November 5, 1914.

In 1925 Cyprus was declared a "Crown Colony."

The Cypriots were never consulted in all these changes in status effected as a result of bargain and negotiation and involving alteration in loyalties and financial obligations.

Cyprus is a Greek Island.

One of the greatest and most constant irritants to the Cypriots has been the effort ^{by} ~~of~~ the officials of the Occupying Power to deny or misrepresent their national character and national

aspirations.

That Cyprus is ethnologically a Greek island, inhabited by Greek people, cannot be denied by any honest historian or student of contemporary affairs. Five-sixths of the present population of the island (nearly 400,000) are Greek in speech, feeling, sentiments, loyalties and religion.

Since pre-Homeric times the island has been Hellenised, i.e. inhabited by Greeks, and it gradually became a seat of Greek learning and culture. Cinyras, King of Paphos, is mentioned by Homer in the Iliad as being the donor of a breast-plate to Agamemnon. The Homeric hero Teucer, brother of Ajax, founded Salamis. Greek art and culture blossomed on its shores and Cyprus, during the few centuries before the Roman conquest, became a seat of learning next only to that of Athens and Alexandria. Conquered by Cato the younger in 58 B.C. Cyprus was made a Roman province until almost the end of the fourth century A.D. when it was incorporated into the Byzantine (Greek) Empire. In its new relative freedom, as part of the Greek Christian Empire, Cyprus once more attained a certain distinguished height of culture and civilisation, and for eight centuries remained a Byzantine province, although several times during that period it was attacked and invaded by Mohammedan Arabs. In 1184 however, Isaac Comnenos, a member of the ruling dynasty of Constantinople, arrived in the island purporting to represent the Emperor, but soon revolted, declared his independence and proclaimed himself Emperor. In 1191 Richard Coeur de Lion, on the crusade to Jerusalem, landed in Cyprus, defeated Comnenos and occupied the island. The reason given for Richard's action is that his affianced bride, Berengaria of Navarre and his sister the Dowager Queen of Italy, were unchivalrously treated and insulted by Comnenos when their ships were forced by a storm to shelter at Limassol. Richard remained for some time in the island where he married Berengaria at Limassol. However, the British occupation was brief. Within twelve months Richard sold the island to the Knights Templar who, in face of the great popular opposition which they aroused by their exactions, were forced to leave ~~four~~ ~~years later~~, when Richard resold it to Guy de Lusignan, a French

nobleman and titular King of Jerusalem. The Lusignan family ruled over Cyprus from 1196 until 1489, although from 1378 to 1464 the Genoese Republic exercised a suzerainty over part of the Kingdom. In 1489 Cyprus fell into the hands of the Venetians. By that time, the Ottoman Turks had conquered almost the whole of the Near and Middle East and in 1571 they landed a considerable force in Cyprus, drove out the Venetians and occupied the island. For the next three centuries Cyprus was a "province" of the Ottoman Empire until 1878 when Britain once more assumed control of it.

Since Richard's original conquest Cyprus has endured almost eight centuries of uninterrupted foreign domination, but throughout all this period, the people have clung tenaciously to their language, national attachments and beliefs and refused to be assimilated.

British Occupation,

The second British occupation of 1878 was greeted by the Cypriots as the prelude to their freedom, i.e. their union with Greece, their incorporation into the Greek State.

The first British High Commissioner to enter Cyprus was welcomed by the ^{land on} ~~Greek Archbishop of the island~~ ^{Bishop of the ancient See of Citium who expressed} ~~with~~ ^{SDP} ~~the hope that~~ ^{at Larnaca, was} British rule would prove only an intermediate stage leading to the union of Cyprus with Greece. Since that day the Cypriot people have never failed to voice that demand.

Mr. Gladstone, when Prime Minister of England in 1881 gave, through the then High Commissioner of Cyprus, the following reply to telegrams addressed to him by the Greek inhabitants of the Island praying for the union of Cyprus with Greece:

"I have received telegrams from the inhabitants of Larnaca, Limassol and Nicosia, advocating the union of Cyprus with Greece. I wish to inform the senders of those telegrams that Her Majesty's Government fervently wish the prosperity of Cyprus, but the inhabitants must remember that the Island is occupied by England as part of the Turkish Empire by virtue of a Convention with the Porte."

In October 1881, the Greek Cypriots forwarded to the British Government a Memorial in which the following passage appeared :

"The Cypriots, mindful of their history, have never forgotten their Hellenic origin. Relying on the magnanimity of the British nation, they hope that in due time favourable consideration will be given to their aspirations. Their only aspiration is the union with their mother country Greece in accordance with the precedent of the Ionian Islands."

In 1895 the Islanders, in a Memorial to the British Government, expressed their aspirations as follows:-

"From the first days of the auspicious English occupation the Greek inhabitants of the Island have expressed the deep desire cherished for centuries for their national independence. They have not failed to express their desire in all the Memorials which were subsequently submitted, having declared that they trust the just generosity of the English nation concerning the fulfilment of so fundamentally lawful a right. On this occasion the Greek inhabitants, who form four-fifths of the whole population of the Island, proclaim together with one voice that they have but one desire - the union with their mother country Greece, being determined to resist even by force any other solution of the Cyprus question. They have no doubt that the Government of Her Gracious Majesty, which on many occasions has taken the initiative in the deliverance of the oppressed peoples, will not accept any other solution of the question."

In consequence of certain statements made in the House of Commons in 1902 by Joseph Chamberlain, then Colonial Secretary, mass meetings were held and a Memorial was forwarded to him passed by the Legislative Council of the Island. In the Memorial the following paragraphs appear :-

"What has above all affected most deeply the Greek population of Cyprus is the statement made by you in Parliament to the effect that the cession of Cyprus to Greece would not meet with our general approval, and further, that most of us would prefer to be governed by a rich Government than be annexed to a poor State. This latter insinuation has touched the most sensitive chord of the heart of the Greek Cypriots. It was therefore natural that as soon as the Greek population of Cyprus heard of this statement that they should rise in one body to protest, and declare for the thousandth time that their ardent and undying desire is to be united with Greece...Should the authorities like to put to the test this genuine desire, they have but to ask the opinion of the Greek people of Cyprus and they will get as many affirmatory replies as there are Greek Cypriots in the Island."

The Resolution was as follows :-

"The Council having taken cognisance of the discussion in the House of Commons expresses its deepest regret and protests most strongly against the inaccuracies about Cyprus and the Cypriots which have been stated by the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, inaccuracies which offend deeply both us and the people whom we represent, and which affront both their personal and national amour propre."

On the 1st of December 1911 the Greek Members of the Legislative Council forwarded to His Excellency the High Commissioner a Memorial, in which the following paragraph appears :-

"Forming as we do, your Excellency, an inseparable portion of the Greek race, it is natural that we should feel in a strong and irresistible manner the desire that our fatherland should be annexed to the Hellenic Kingdom. The fulfilment of these, our aspirations, we base on the strength of our rights and the magnanimity of the British nation."

On the 8th of December, 1917, a Pan-Cyprian Assembly was held at Nicosia, and the following Resolution was unanimously adopted :

"We, the Archbishop, the Metropolitans, and the Members of the Holy Synod and the Abbots of the Holy Monasteries of the Most Holy Church of Cyprus, the Members of the Legislative Council, the Mayors, the ex-Members of the Legislative Council, Members and Deputies of the Municipal Councils, Members and Deputies of the School Committees, and Editors of newspapers, being, as we are, representatives of the whole Island of Cyprus and being assembled in the Archi-Episcopal Palace under the presidency of His Beatitude the Archbishop of Cyprus in order to hold a conference on the question of the political fate of our Fatherland, and having regard to the Memorial dated the 29th July, 1917, and addressed to the English Government by the Greek Members of the Legislative Council of the Island and the reply thereto of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies dated the 27th October, 1917, and having also regard to the fact that our Motherland Greece is now fighting by the side of the Powers which are the benefactresses of Hellenism, for the principle of nationalities,

"RESOLVE,

" (a) To become the interpreters of the most profound sympathy of the Cypriot people for the struggle of England and her Allied States, and to address a greeting of honour to the valiant armies which are fighting for the principle of nationalities and for universal liberties - that is, for principles which have been the lot of our nation from the time of its appearance in the world to the present date.

" (b) To declare that the sole strong and unalterable will of the Cypriot people is to be united to the Kingdom of Greece, the accomplishment of which union the Cypriots await with anxious expectation, being, as they are prepared, immediately their union to Greece is effected, to identify their own fate with that of the whole Hellenic nation, with which they are bound together by the indissoluble and secular ties of blood, religion, language, common history, and common struggles and sufferings, and thus to contribute under the sacred Colours of the Hellenic Motherland to the success of the great struggle for liberty, to the enhancement of the greatness of the Hellenic nation and the fulfilment of the mission which the Hellenic nation has in the world."

On the 3rd of January, 1919, a Deputation consisting of His Beatitude the Archbishop of Cyprus and the Greek Members of the Legislative Council arrived in London.

The following were embodied in a Memorial addressed to the Colonial Secretary :-

"Fulfilling the sacred mandate of our Church and native country, we have come to the Metropolis of the Empire to respectfully submit to the Government of the British nation our just claim that the principles for which the democratic peoples have fought and bled be applied also to Cyprus, by the return of the Island to their mother Hellas.

"The severance, on November 5th, 1914, of the last link with the Turks by the abolition of the Treaty of 1878, while it increased our joy, strengthened our conviction that our national rehabilitation was thus rendered easier.

"Having demanded at the very outset of the British occupation and, as you, Sir, are no doubt well aware, by many subsequent resolutions in public meetings and in the Legislative Council, their reunion with their motherland Greece, the Cypriot Greeks have thus but followed principles and proclivities which are as much yours as theirs. Nor can we recollect without feelings of deep gratitude to Great Britain her generous recognition of our national aspirations and rights by the offer made in 1915 of our native Island to Greece."

Deputations visited London placing before the British authorities the demand of the Cypriot people for national freedom.

Today, the Cypriot people, who have contributed to the maximum of their ability in the war against fascism, again demand that the freedom for which they fought and died shall not be denied them.

The demand for union with Greece is not, and has never been merely a demagogue's slogan as the representatives of the Occupying Power have repeatedly tried to prove, but is the demand of the entire Greek population of the island. Neither is it transient, the result of shallow emotionalism, as has been said, but it is a deep-rooted, fundamental demand inextricably woven into the fabric of the Greek Cypriots political life.

In 1931 the Cypriots revolted against British rule and for union with Greece. The revolution was a forlorn affair. It was ludicrous to imagine that a small island could disturb the power of a great Empire. It was merely an expression of political frustration and a desperate effort to bring to the notice of the world the justice of the Cyprus demand. The revolt was not in itself an armed uprising but instead a vast national protest. Practically the whole population took part in that protest, something which demonstrated that the question of national freedom, i.e. Union with Greece, is for the Cypriots part and parcel of their lives.

The 1931 revolution was, because of the very nature of things, very speedily suppressed. The Constitution was abolished and political parties were dissolved. But the Ruling Power, evidently in recognition of the universality of the Cypriots' claim to be Greeks, to act as Greeks, to be called Greeks and of their demand for union with Greece, decreed harsh punishments for every kind of national manifestation. The carrying of Greek flags was made illegal. The Greek national colours, white and blue, were illegal. A peasant could be taken to Court if he painted the wheels of his cart white and blue - it was seditious. The teaching of Greek history was forbidden, etc.

During this war, once Greece was attacked, the Cypriots volunteered in their thousands for the British army in order to fight fascism and thus help to liberate Greece. The invasion of Greece transformed the whole character of the war for them; it became a patriotic war to which they have contributed their utmost.

Their contribution to the war alone ought to have been rewarded with the freedom which they so passionately desire. When one considers the declarations and utterances of the leaders of the United Nations about freedom, justice, right etc. then the fulfilment of the national demand of the Cypriots becomes a debt of honour to be discharged by the Occupying Power.

Cyprus' Demand Recognised by Britain.

While Cyprus was administered by Britain as part of the Ottoman Empire the Cyprus question - i.e. the transfer of Cyprus to Greek sovereignty - could be solved only by both Britain and Turkey agreeing to hand Cyprus to Greece, or as a result of some conference on an international level. But the annexation of Cyprus by Britain in 1914 made Great Britain ultimately responsible for the future status of the Island.

A year after the annexation Great Britain offered Cyprus to Greece. But the offer was conditional. Sir Edward Grey, writing to the British Representative in Athens (16th October 1915) made the following proposal on behalf of the British Government.

"Now that Serbia has been attacked by Bulgaria, if Greece is willing to come to her aid, His Majesty's Government is ready to cede to Greece the Island of Cyprus. If Greece joins the Allies for all purposes, she will naturally participate in the advantages secured at the end of the war, but the offer of Cyprus is made by His Majesty's Government independently of this consideration, and on the sole condition that Greece gives Serbia her immediate and complete support with her army."

Thus only if Greece went to the assistance of Serbia would the offer of Cyprus to her be valid. And as the Greek Government of the time felt unable to fulfil the conditions demanded by the British Government, the offer was withdrawn and never again made. This in spite of the fact that two years later Greece entered the war on the side of the Allies and rather belatedly fulfilled Grey's condition of assistance to Serbia.

The offer of Cyprus to Greece, though made by the London Government as quid pro quo was, in itself, an official admission by Great Britain that Cyprus is a Greek Island and an official acknowledgement of the justice of the demand of the Cypriot people for union with Greece. That acknowledgement was further enhanced by the fact that, for a period, the British Foreign Office seriously entertained the idea of using Cyprus as a means of sweeping Greece into the war. The Archbishop of Cyprus was to board a British warship and be landed in Greece where he himself would have proclaimed the fait accompli of Union. In that case, it was expected that the Greeks, who desired the Union of Cyprus to Greece as much as the Cypriots themselves desired it, would not have failed to rally to the Allies.

Cyprus did not figure at all in the negotiations for the treaties of peace in 1919. Venizelos, the Greek Representative, made no official demand for Cyprus. But in the memorandum of December 1919 to the "Council of Ten" which formed the basis of the Greek claims, although Cyprus was not mentioned as a Greek claim, nevertheless she was included in the table of distribution

of "the Hellenic Nation" which in itself emphasised the Hellenic character of the Island and considered it as part and parcel of the Greek world. The reason why Cyprus was not included officially among the Greek claims was that Venizelos relied on British support for the satisfaction of other and more pressing Greek demands and hoped that the Cyprus question could be solved by direct Anglo-Greek discussions and negotiations outside the conference.

Cyprus was never absent from the thoughts of the Greek delegation in Paris. Unofficial memoranda, personal interviews and other means of indirect approach were utilised to bring to the notice of the world the Cyprus demand. In a number of notes exchanged between Venizelos and the Italian Tittoni in December 1919 and January 1920 Italy agreed to cede to Greece all the Dodecanese Islands except Rhodes, which was to remain in Italian hands as long as Britain remained in occupation of Cyprus. Although the notes were declared by the successor of Tittoni, Count Sforza, not to be binding on Italy, nevertheless, before the Treaty of Sevres was signed, Venizelos and Sforza agreed that Greece should have all the Dodecanese Islands except Rhodes which Italy was to cede to Greece when Great Britain ceded Cyprus to Greece.

The Greco-Italian Treaty was signed on the very same day that the Treaty of Sevres was signed. ~~But~~ Neither of them ^{however} have been honoured. ~~by the signatories.~~ ^{The Allies of Greece forced her; they failed to honour their signatures they appended to the Treaty of Sevres.}

The issue that was so successfully baulked in 1919-20 ^{Sevres.} today cries aloud for solution.

We call for Justice.

The Cypriot people, in demanding Union with Greece, i.e. incorporation into the Greek State, demand nothing more than justice. This is their greatest and indeed their only strength. They hope that the declarations by statesmen about freedom and independence will be fulfilled.

During the last thirty years the world has heard many noble utterances about freedom, utterances that painted a glorious future before oppressed and suffering humanity. Unfortunately,

the majority of those hopes have not been fulfilled. They were "expectations" which turned out to be "deceptions." Many of the principles for which people fought and died have been ruthlessly sacrificed to the demands of the big Powers for prestige, security, or the maintenance of anachronistic and anti-social policies.

We make no apologies for mentioning some of these principles - the Cypriots believed in, and acted by them. If others failed, or are failing to honour them, nevertheless these principles lose none of their validity and none of their force for downtrodden humanity.

In point five of his fourteen points President Wilson told the world :-

"A free, open-minded and absolutely impartial adjustment of all Colonial claims, based upon the strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the population concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the Government whose title is to be determined."

Numbers two and three of President Wilson's four principles say:

- "That peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were mere chattels and pawns in a game, even the great game, now for ever discredited, of the Balance of Power; but that

- "every territorial settlement involved... must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the population concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims amongst rival states;

Article 2 of President Wilson's "Four Ends" enunciates the principle that

"The settlement of every question, whether of territory, of sovereignty, of economic arrangement or of political relationship, upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned and not upon the basis of the material

interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery."

The "Atlantic Charter" subscribed to by all the United Nations, speaks about wishing "to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly denied them."

Through every declaration and statement by the leaders of the United Nations during the war runs the expressed desire to see freedom prevail. That no definite or binding promises have been made in no way invalidates those declarations. The people who, through one circumstance or another, have been deprived of their freedom, will not cease to strive to regain that freedom by basing their policy on the just hope of the fulfilment of those principles. That is the strength of their case.

The reasons often advanced by the dominant Powers for maintaining their occupation of backward areas are that they do so for the benefit of the people concerned, and that they will only remain there until such time as the natives will be "able to stand on their own feet." Such an argument does not apply to Cyprus for two reasons : one, the Greek people, of whom the Cypriots are a part, have given Europe its civilisation, and two, Cyprus wishes to unite with Greece, an already sovereign state and a member of the United Nations. Article 73 of the United Nations Charter does not apply to the Cypriots.

The Cypriot people can do no more than invoke the above principles in presenting their case. They are Greeks and they passionately want to be with Greece and not under foreign domination. They have not the power to win their freedom by their own unaided efforts. They hope that the freedom for which the youth of the United Nations - including Cyprus - have fought so hard and for so long, will not be denied them.

If there are any doubts about the universality or the ardent earnestness of the Cypriots' demand for Union with Greece, a "free" referendum can dissipate all doubts.

Beyond this we can say nothing. We sincerely hope that the delegates of the Great Powers, struggling with the immense problems associated with the establishment of peace, will not fail to grapple effectively with the cause of Cyprus' freedom.

On behalf of the Committee for Cyprus Affairs

(signed)

E.E. Joannides (Hon. President)

Reverend I. Kykkotis (Chairman)

G. Clerides.)
Dr. L. Finiefs.) Vice Chairmen.

M. Economides. (Acting Secretary)

Miss D. Demetriou.

11, April 1946.

Βιβλιοθήκη Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου