

CYPRUS, GREECE AND N.A.T.O.

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TODAY we see how the subjugated peoples fighting for their freedom tear to pieces the various war pacts of the imperialists. This process of upsetting the military alliances of the imperialists takes place even in countries with small populations, when the people are led by strong Communist Parties. The struggle of the 420,000 Greek-Cypriots for self-determination is a very telling example. It has already brought the Balkan alliance to ruin and it has cracked the eastern wing of N.A.T.O., of which Greece and Turkey are the main struts.

How did this happen? In these last few years, when the Greek-Cypriots intensified their struggle for self-determination, their brothers in Greece came out wholeheartedly on their side. Although the Athens Government wished to remain aloof from the question of Cyprus, the Greek people compelled it to raise the matter twice (in 1954 and 1955) before the General Assembly of the United Nations. There and then, the entire Greek nation saw that whilst the Soviet Union, the People's Democracies and the anti-colonial countries supported unreservedly Greece's appeal for self-determination for Cyprus, all her N.A.T.O. 'allies' (with the exception of Iceland) 'ganged up' with Britain in opposing it. This was an eye-opener for many right-wing Greeks. Indeed, as a result very large sections of the Right now saw for the first time, that the Communist Parties of Greece and Cyprus were right when for so many years they had warned the people that Anglo-American imperialists and N.A.T.O. would undermine Greece's independence, bring economic ruin upon her and attempt to strangle the Cypriots' fight for freedom.

Today, both in Greece and Cyprus, the overwhelming majority of the people are openly demanding that Greece should leave N.A.T.O. and follow a policy of national independence and neutrality. Such a slogan six months ago would have landed the 'culprit' before a court-martial on a charge of high treason! Today, not only the Left, but also political parties of the Centre and Right—the Populist Party, the Liberal Democratic Union of Mr. Venizelos, the Democratic Party, the Radical Party—publicly declare that, at the coming general election on February 19, they will put forward a policy of 'equal friendship' with all great powers. Indeed, it is around the question as to whether Greece should leave N.A.T.O. or not that the next general election will be fought. When,

on December 18, 1955, a huge demonstration in support of Enosis (Union of Cyprus with Greece) took place in Athens, some of the main slogans were: 'Let us get out of N.A.T.O.', 'Let us build the Belgrade-Athens-Cairo Axis'.

As far back as September 21, 1955, the *Daily Mail* correspondent, Mr. Noel Barber, wrote that 'in Greece, one of our staunchest allies, there is definite and serious opinion towards withdrawing from N.A.T.O. In Athens I found a well-considered belief that the eastern wall of N.A.T.O. has cracked beyond repair'. When the Turkish Government, vehemently opposed to the Union of Cyprus with Greece, organised the pogrom against the Greek minority in Constantinople and Smyrna on September 6, 1955, the *Economist* acknowledged that 'the Balkan alliance has been critically damaged'. And the *Observer* of October 30 lamented: 'Cyprus has been a deadly catalyst' . . . 'Greece is estranged from her closest allies, Britain and the United States, and Greco-Turkish friendship . . . lies in ruins'.

There are three main reasons why the British Government refuses to grant self-determination to the Cypriots: (a) no British Conservative Government has ever conceded this right to any British colony; (b) British and other foreign capitalists are making fat profits out of the colonial exploitation of Cyprus. (In 1952 for instance foreign mine-owners exported nearly £10,400,000 worth of minerals and made £5,000,000 net profit: but they paid less than £1,350,000 in wages and salaries to Cypriot workers); (c) Cyprus is being used as a military base for the 'support of the Baghdad pact and the rule of law and order in the Middle East'—as the Conservative M.P., Mr. Hugh Fraser, put it in the House of Commons on December 5, 1955. The same Mr. Fraser said also that Cyprus is a sort of 'fire brigade base'. He did not elaborate this point, but its meaning is quite clear. Now that British imperialism has lost Suez, it plans to use Cyprus as a base for an attack on the Soviet Union. From Cyprus it can also threaten or actually attack any nation in the Middle East, still under British domination, which may try to free itself. It is only a few months since British planes took off from Cyprus to bomb Arab tribes in the Aden area which had revolted against British rule. Last but not least, on January 11, two thousand British paratroopers were despatched to Cyprus to be used 'if the need arises' against the people of Jordan, and to protect 'the great British capital resources in the Middle East, in particular in the oil industry' (*The Times*, January 11, 1956).

Determined not to give up Cyprus, the British offer the Cypriots plenty of 'solutions', all of them aiming at perpetuating imperialist rule: a colonial constitution, self-government, transfer of Cyprus to N.A.T.O., British-Greek condominium, joint British-Greek-Turkish military occupation of Cyprus, British-Greek citizenship for all Cypriots, even a brand new Cypriot flag, a sort of colour cocktail which would include the Union Jack, the Greek flag and the Turkish Crescent! All these and many more 'solutions' have been thought out by the warped minds of British imperialists. But the solution demanded by the Cypriot people, namely *immediate and unconditional self-determination*, without British bases, the Government in London refuses even to discuss.

Meanwhile, whilst British terror grows in Cyprus, efforts are being constantly made in order to enforce upon the people one or the other of the above pseudo-solutions. Already by November 21, 1955, the British Governor in Cyprus is reported to have reached a secret agreement with the leader of the Cypriot Right, Archbishop Makarios—an agreement fully supported by the Athens Government, which is ready to go to any lengths to reach a 'settlement' about Cyprus in the hope of putting a stop to the wave of anti-western feeling sweeping over Greece. This agreement provided for the immediate imposition of a colonial constitution in Cyprus. The right of self-determination would be granted 'at an unspecified date to be decided upon by the prevailing security conditions'.

Within a few hours of the British press disclosures of the main points of the agreement on December 6, 1955, the people of Nicosia came out in a heroic demonstration, led by AKEL (the Communist Party of Cyprus). Braving British tanks, the tear-gas bombs, and the machine-guns of the British Commandos, they rushed in their thousands towards the Archbishop's palace. They invaded it, shouting: 'Don't sell out'. . . . 'No colonial constitution!' . . . 'Self-determination NOW'. The British troops attacked the people. There were serious clashes. Dozens were wounded, and many arrested. But the anger of the people was such that Makarios had to abandon his 'agreement'. Next day he issued a statement denying that he had accepted the British proposals. However, the *Daily Mail* correspondent in Nicosia made it clear on December 12 that it was 'the strong pressure by the Communist Party of Cyprus that had wrecked all prospects of an early settlement of the Cypriot question between Governor Harding and Archbishop Makarios'.

It was because the AKEL Party was leading the people in their struggle for freedom and against all the compromise agreements

which the British and Archbishop Makarios were preparing to conclude, that Governor Harding suppressed on December 14 the Communist Party, and its press, and put its leaders in a concentration camp. The next day *The Times* wrote:

The reasons which prompted the Governor to proscribe AKEL are that it has become obvious that the party is doing its utmost to prevent the possibility of an agreement being negotiated between Britain and Greece on the future of Cyprus. It has constantly denounced Archbishop Makarios for reports that he was about to come to an agreement with Britain, and has demanded that he should refuse to negotiate on any basis other than that of immediate self-determination on terms which would exclude the use of Cyprus as a military base.

Governor Harding obviously believes that, having banned AKEL and having arrested its leaders, he has removed the main obstacle to a compromise 'solution' with the Archbishop (which would in fact put off self-determination for Cyprus to the Greek calends!). He will soon discover that, even though banned, AKEL is continuing to lead the united struggle of the people for national liberation and against any sell-out however attractively presented. The people of Cyprus and Greece entered the New Year determined, once and for all, to smash their chains—British colonial chains in Cyprus, American and N.A.T.O. chains in Greece.

LIGHT ON ISRAELI POLICY

S. MIKUNIS

SINCE the rulers of Israel transferred our country from dependence on Britain to dependence upon the United States we have suffered more than a few disappointments. Instead of paving a way for ourselves based on our true national interests, by planning a balanced economy (which would, amongst other things, allow for absorbing immigration), we have been held by the ruling circles in the orbit of the United States. In foreign policy, we have endangered our national security by subservience to the aggressive imperialist aims of the United States in the Middle East.

The main danger to our security, the main political and economic difficulties and the baffling 'paradoxes' in Israeli policy stem from Israel's dependence upon U.S.A. People who know that Israel is in the Middle East, in a region of tens of millions