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Chairman: Mr. Francisco URRUTIA (Colombia).

AGENDA ITEM 62

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 Island of Cyprus (A/2703, A/C.1/747, A/C.1/753, A/C.1/L.124, A/C.1/L.125)

1. Mr. MUNRO (New Zealand), speaking on a point of order, said that his delegation had submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.125) reading as follows:

"The General Assembly

'Decides not to consider further the item entitled '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 Island of Cyprus'."

2. That draft was motivated by New Zealand's concern over the political consequences which would ensue from the debate on the substance of the item. At the root of the item was the Greek claim for the union of Greece and Cyprus, which was in essence a territorial claim whose prosecution was bound to adversely affect relations between Greece, on the one hand, and the United Kingdom and Turkey, on the other. It could not fail, therefore, to damage the stability and security of the Middle East.

3. The nature of the draft resolution required that it be discussed and voted upon before any discussion of the substance of the item was held. The New Zealand delegation did not desire to prevent the representative of Greece from stating his views fully at the proper stage, but it requested that priority be given to the discussion of its draft resolution.

4. Mr. KYROU (Greece) said that he was opposed to any suggestion not to consider the item. Whereas in other circumstances the healing properties of time should not be underrated, in the present case, in which all avenues to a friendly arrangement by bilateral talks seemed blocked, a decision to that effect could only exacerbate an already rankling situation. Were such a decision to be coupled with concrete assurances that the United Kingdom would agree to relax its uncompromis-

ing attitude on the implementation of the law of the United Nations in the case of the population of Cyprus, it could, perhaps, serve a useful purpose. Unfortunately, there was no evidence of United Kingdom acceptance of a move in that direction.

5. At a previous (748th) meeting of the Committee, the representative of the United Kingdom had explained his delegation's opposition to the draft resolution on the Moroccan question by the hopes of his Government and the promises of the French Prime Minister. Mr. Kyrou asked where were there any analogous promises on the part of any British political leader?

6. Under those conditions, any postponement of the item would mean a continuation of the present deadlock, with its attendant drawbacks and dangers. If the Committee failed to face up to its responsibilities, the present deadlock would become more difficult to break, and the United Nations would probably be faced with a situation requiring drastic action. For those reasons, the Greek delegation opposed the New Zealand draft resolution.

7. Mr. Kyrou recalled that at the 684th meeting, on 8 October, when the Committee had been considering the order of discussion of the items on its agenda, the Chairman had said that all the items would have to be discussed before the end of the session.

8. Rule 124 of the rules of procedure provided that when a proposal had been adopted or rejected, it could not be reconsidered at the same session unless it was so decided by a two-thirds majority, and whenever the order of discussion of agenda items had been changed at previous sessions of the General Assembly, the decision had always been taken by a two-thirds majority. The New Zealand draft resolution was directed at the reconsideration of two decisions taken during the current session, namely, the decision that certain items should be considered by the ninth session of the General Assembly and the decision that they should be considered in a certain order. According to that draft, the item on Cyprus should not only not be discussed in the agreed order, but it should be postponed or not considered at all. There could therefore be no doubt but that rule 124 of the rules of procedure was applicable to the New Zealand draft resolution, whose adoption would require a two-thirds majority.

9. Mr. SARPER (Turkey) stated that his delegation supported the New Zealand draft resolution (A/C.1/L.125) because, if the so-called Cyprus question was looked at from different angles, it should be clear that the reasons for postponing the consideration of the item were both good and justifiable.

10. As he had stated in the General Assembly on 24 September 1954 (477th meeting), his delegation would have preferred the so-called question of Cyprus not to have been brought before the United Nations. The creation of such an artificial question was a move sufficiently unwise to raise certain doubts in the minds

of the peoples of Turkey, the United Kingdom and Greece. That was especially unfortunate at a time when the friendship and alliance existing among those countries had begun to take firm root in the minds and hearts of their peoples.

11. One of Turkey's reasons for endorsing the New Zealand draft resolution was that the United Nations was not competent to consider the item. Actually, Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter excluded the possibility of discussion of the Cyprus question in the General Assembly, as well as the possibility of the adoption of any decision by the Assembly. That provision, as well as Article 51, dealing with the right of individual or collective self-defence, and Article 52, dealing with regional arrangements or agencies, were introduced by the phrase "nothing in the present Charter". It was not by accident that those had been made the opening words of Article 2, paragraph 7. If those articles were to be invalidated by haphazard misinterpretations, what would then become of the right of self-defence, for example, or, in the case of Article 52, of such arrangements as the Arab League or the Organization of American States? It was a matter of record that many delegations had voted in favour of the inclusion of the item, only because they had believed that the principle of the universality of the right of discussion should not be restricted in any way. In order to make that clear, they had emphasized the fact that their vote did not imply advance endorsement of the General Assembly's jurisdiction.

12. For those reasons, the Turkish delegation endorsed the New Zealand draft resolution.

13. Mr. Sarper observed that the representative of New Zealand had stated that his draft resolution was not intended to prevent the representative of Greece from presenting his delegation's views on the question. While making it clear that he also had never intended to prevent Mr. Kyrrou from fully explaining his views, Mr. Sarper reserved the same right for his delegation.

14. After a discussion on the procedure to be followed in connexion with the New Zealand draft resolution, Mr. ENGEN (Norway) moved the closure of the procedural debate under rule 118 of the rules of procedure.

15. The CHAIRMAN put the motion to the vote.

The motion was adopted by 45 votes to none, with 12 abstentions.

16. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote a motion by the representative of New Zealand that the New Zealand draft resolution (A/C.1/L.125) should have priority in discussion and vote over the draft resolution submitted by Greece (A/C.1/L.124).

The result of the vote was 28 votes in favour, 15 against and 16 abstentions.

17. After a further procedural discussion on the question whether the motion had been adopted or whether its adoption required a two-thirds majority, the CHAIRMAN pointed out that the vote had not been on the New Zealand draft resolution (A/C.1/L.125), but on a question of priority, for which a two-thirds majority was not required. If the Committee were requested to take a vote on the New Zealand draft resolution before the general debate, then a two-thirds majority would be required. If the vote were

requested after the general debate, there would be no need for a two-thirds majority.

18. He then called for discussion on the New Zealand draft resolution.

19. Mr. MUNRO (New Zealand), speaking of the draft resolution submitted by his delegation (A/C.1/L.125) and the remarks of the representative of Greece to the effect that the adoption of that draft resolution required a two-thirds majority, stated that what his delegation was asking for was a recommendation by the Committee to the Assembly that the item should not be considered further. That did not involve a reconsideration of a previous Assembly decision, and therefore rule 124 did not apply.

20. In view of his high personal regard for Mr. Kyrrou, and the friendly relations existing between New Zealand and Greece, Mr. Munro regretted that his delegation should find itself in opposition to Greece in the present matter. It was regrettable, indeed, that Greece should have deemed it expedient to bring the question before the United Nations at all.

21. The New Zealand delegation had been among the thirty which had been unable to support the inclusion of the item in the Assembly's agenda. There had since been ample time to consider whether, as the next step, a substantive draft resolution should be debated and adopted. It was on that point—a quite different question from the question of inclusion in the agenda—that the New Zealand delegation desired a recommendation in the terms of its draft resolution.

22. It must by now be clear that the motive of Greece in submitting the item was to bolster the Greek claim for the union of Greece and Cyprus. It was therefore a territorial claim, a purely political question which had to be considered in the light of all its political consequences.

23. Cyprus was an essential part of any Middle Eastern and Mediterranean defence system. The security of the area was of concern to the countries of the Middle East, and to the members of the Balkan alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the British Commonwealth, including New Zealand. Any territorial dispute among countries directly concerned with the area carried the danger of a deterioration in their own relations as well as in the stability and security of the area itself. Any public airing of such a dispute could only provide opportunities for mischief-making on the part of those to whom the weakening of the stability of the area was a desirable objective. In that respect, Mr. Munro wished to point out to the Committee that among the strongest forces of *enosis* was the Communist Party in Cyprus.

24. Mr. Munro did not wish to prevent the parties directly concerned, or any other members, from freely presenting their views on the proposal submitted by his delegation. He hoped, however, that, in the light of what he had said, the discussion of the proposal would be concluded with reasonable speed.

25. Mr. LODGE (United States) observed that the adoption of the draft resolution submitted by the representative of New Zealand did not involve, in his opinion, a reconsideration of the Assembly's decision to place the item on the agenda. Therefore a simple majority was required for its adoption. The New Zealand draft resolution did not say that the question should not be discussed; it said that the question should not be considered. In Mr. Lodge's view, there was a

very real difference between the words "consider" and "discuss". While the former involved passing judgment, the latter did not. Therefore it seemed to him that the proposal not to consider and the proposal not to discuss must be approached in fundamentally different ways.

26. The fact that the question of Cyprus had been raised in the United Nations at that time was a matter of very deep concern to the United States. It affected the interests and sentiments of nations and peoples with which the United States had the closest bonds of sympathy. Moreover, the welfare of much of the free world depended upon the maintenance of their historic friendship and mutual trust. The United States was convinced that the paramount task before the Committee was to dispose of the item so as not to impair that friendship and trust, because that continuing relationship and solidarity were vitally important to the peace and stability of the area of which Cyprus was a part. After deliberate thought and lengthy consultations with those directly concerned, the United States Government had reached the conclusion that a prolonged consideration of the question could only increase tensions and embitter national feelings at a time when the larger interests of all concerned were best served by strengthening existing solidarity among freedom-loving nations.

27. It was in that spirit that the United States delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution submitted by New Zealand (A/C.1/L.125).

28. Mr. NUTTING (United Kingdom) said that he wished to make two preliminary remarks. The first was that it had been the representative of Greece who had asked the Committee, after the vote had been taken on the question of giving priority to the New Zealand draft resolution, to vote immediately on the draft resolution itself, thus seeking to prevent those who supported it from expressing their views. The second was that he wished to support the views expressed by the representatives of France and the United States to the effect that a vote upon the New Zealand draft resolution did not require a two-thirds majority. He hoped that the Committee would agree that the issue was not the reconsideration of the decision to include the question in the agenda, but rather a decision, one way or another, by the Committee not to consider the item further.

29. The views of his Government on the consideration of the item were not unknown in the United Nations. They had been expressed fully by Mr. Lloyd in the General Committee (93rd meeting) as well as in the General Assembly (477th meeting). Mr. Lloyd had explained why the United Kingdom did not think that the question was a fit subject for inclusion in the Assembly's agenda. Quite apart from any issues of competence, upon which there might be disagreement, the case was one where one Member of the United Nations was seeking to transfer to itself the sovereignty over a territory held by another Member. Not only was the sovereignty of the present holder internationally recognized, but the plaintiff State had actually been a party to the treaty of peace, signed at Lausanne in 1923, which had recognized British sovereignty over Cyprus. What must be clear for all to see was that Greece was now trying to use discussion at the United Nations to mobilize international pressure in order to acquire sovereignty over the territory for itself, in contradiction

with an international agreement to which Greece itself had freely subscribed.

30. The only question before the Committee was whether it would be wise or useful to give further consideration to the item. Referring to the words "consider further", in the New Zealand draft resolution (A/C.1/L.125), Mr. Nutting said that debate had already taken place in the General Committee and in the General Assembly; there had also been debate in the Committee on the question of giving priority to the New Zealand draft resolution. Further discussion would take place in the Committee and in plenary session when the Assembly considered the report of the Committee on the item. There could not be any Government which was unaware of the issues involved.

31. The United Kingdom had carefully weighed the implications of the New Zealand draft resolution. It was not prepared to enter into a contentious and purposeless discussion on Cyprus. Nevertheless, since the item had been inscribed on the agenda, Mr. Nutting was authorized to speak on the New Zealand motion, and his Government was prepared to accept it. But if that last attempt at conciliation were rejected by the Committee, he would be unable to take part in any further discussion.

32. Any discussion of the substance of the question or any vote upon a substantive resolution would harm the interests of the people of Cyprus. But that was not all. For many years, the Greek- and Turkish-speaking populations had lived side by side in peace. The policy of the United Kingdom Government had consistently been, and remained, to assist the population of Cyprus to attain to self-government. But *enosis* did not mean self-government. On the contrary, it meant union. Agitation for *enosis* could only hamper the orderly progress towards self-government.

33. The Committee should consider the repercussions which would be felt outside the territory itself were the long debate to continue in the Committee. The Eastern Mediterranean historically was not a peaceful area. Conflicts around its shores were still within the memories of many members of the Committee. But, as a result of painstaking diplomacy and political foresight and tolerance on the part of such statesmen as Venizelos and Kemal Ataturk, a happier state of affairs had been created in the area, culminating in the conclusion of the pact entered into by Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia. The question before the Committee was whether that stability in south-east Europe should be disrupted. Mr. Nutting's answer to that question was that, in giving further consideration to this item, the Committee would be playing with fire, and the free nations of the world would be playing straight into the hands of those who sought their disunity and destruction. The Committee should weigh most carefully the political wisdom of proceeding with further consideration of the item, for impetuous action on the part of the United Nations might now release forces which, once out of control, could sweep away the endeavours of a generation.

34. Mr. KYROU (Greece), in answer to the first preliminary remark made by the representative of the United Kingdom, wished to remind him that he had only followed Mr. Nutting's own lead, Mr. Nutting having asked for an immediate vote on the New Zealand draft resolution at an earlier stage of the debate.

In his second preliminary remark, Mr. Nutting had insisted—as had Mr. Lodge—on the fact that the Chairman's decision was not correct and that a two-thirds majority was not needed to adopt the New Zealand draft resolution. Mr. Lodge had made the distinction between the words "discuss" and "consider". But how could the Committee "consider", in the meaning given to the word by Mr. Lodge? How could the Committee take a decision before, and unless, it had a full discussion on the whole matter?

35. That was why he wished to be permitted to speak at length at the next meeting to answer all arguments put forth against the discussion of the Cyprus issue.

36. The CHAIRMAN stated that his understanding was that what had been agreed upon was to have a full debate on the New Zealand draft resolution, after which it would be up to the Committee to decide whether or not it wished to consider the question further.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.