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LETTER DATED 11 MARCH 1976 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose herewith a letter dated 11 March 1976,  
addressed to you by Mr. Nail Atalay, Acting Representative of the Turkish  
Federated State of Cyprus.

I should be grateful if this letter were circulated as a document of  
the Security Council.

(Signed) Ilter TURKMEN  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 11 March 1976 from Mr. Nail Atalay addressed  
to the Secretary-General

A Greek Cypriot priest, Papatsestos of Nicosia, is reported to have made sensational disclosures to an Athens newspaper, "Ta Nea", about Greek Cypriots "killed and buried like dogs" during the Sampson coup in Cyprus in the summer of 1974.

Papatsestos, who is described as a well-known priest in charge of the Nicosia Greek cemetery, is reported to have told a correspondent of "Ta Nea" that truck-loads of dead Greek Cypriots were hastily buried in mass graves without any record, and without any attempt to identify the bodies.

"But the most horrible experience of my life was seeing a wounded young Greek Cypriot buried alive," Papatsestos is quoted declaring. He is also quoted admitting that dead Turks were buried in the Greek cemetery.

The following are the highlights of Papatsestos' interview with the correspondent of "Ta Nea", which was reproduced in all the local Greek newspapers on 28 February 1976:

PAPATSESTOS: "Two days after the coup, on 17 July, I witnessed something which has perhaps never been witnessed by any mortal before. I saw a young Greek Cypriot buried alive. That was when two Junta officers came to my house and ordered me to accompany them to the cemetery. I thought they were going to kill me, but said they only wanted me for burying some dead people."

"In the cemetery there were two open graves and two bodies lying beside them. I went to see if I could recognize them. One was dead. But the other, a curly haired, fair complexioned 18-year-old youth was moving. Startled, I turned back and shouted, 'But Officer, this man is alive.' 'Shut up you dirty priest, or I will shut you up for good,' the Officer retorted. Then the youth was pushed into the open grave which which was filled with earth. I swear to God that they buried this youth while he was still alive."

Pointing at the cemetery, Papatsestos said: "Here the people were buried like dogs by the Junta. There were also bodies which had been dumped outside the cemetery. They were not identified, and not claimed. As a priest my conscience is troubled, but they were holding a pistol to my head at the time."

"I remember the day they first came to me. They said, 'Father, we have some dead bodies which we want you to bury.' 'With pleasure,'

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I replied and asked how many bodies they had. '77,' they said. An hour later a lorry arrived and I heard someone order, 'Dump them outside.' They were the dead bodies. They were all put in one common grave without waiting for identification by their relatives. The Junta men produced some small crosses, (seven only), wrote some names on them and put them on the grave. The Junta men scornfully called 'Muscós supporters,' persons loyal to Makarios, and wanted to bury them like dogs in a sheep-fold outside the cemetery. And this is what they did in the end. They dug two graves with excavators - one inside and the other outside the cemetery. They buried their own dead (27) inside the cemetery and others (50) outside."

TA NEA: "Father, about the young man buried alive, could he have been saved?"

PAPATSESTOS: "Of course he could have been saved. He had a wound in the right leg. I went to the hospital and asked a doctor there, if a dead man could move. The doctor laughed, I could not. But I was not the one who had buried him alive."

TA NEA: "Could you recognize any of the Junta men?"

PAPATSESTOS: "They had all come from Greece for the coup. They were looting, and they even broke into my house. They entered the houses on the pretext of searching for deserters but actually stole valuable articles from them."

TA NEA: "Have you witnessed any other atrocities?"

PAPATSESTOS: "I listened to telephone conversations between Junta men. In one case, they were talking about the people resisting at Kaimakli suburb and saying, 'Shoot them all, have no mercy at all.' I also noticed that in the hospital they were giving polluted water to the sick."

TA NEA: "Father, could you swear that you have not secretly buried dead Turks in the cemetery?"

PAPATSESTOS: "Only about ten. We did not know who they were and where they were found."

TA NEA: "How many bodies did you bury during the coup?"

PAPATSESTOS: "127. Fifty of them were collected from streets and they were buried outside the cemetery. The other 77 were buried inside."

TA NEA: "If the Turkish invasion had not taken place, would more Greek Cypriots have been killed in the coup?"

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PAPATSESTOS: "Oh, yes, many more. They wanted to kill me too. It is rather a hard thing to say, but it is true that the Turkish intervention saved us from a merciless internecine war. They had prepared a list of all Makarios supporters and they would have slaughtered them all."

TA NEA: "Now, Father, tell me sincerely, were people brutally killed in those days?"

PAPATSESTOS: "Yes, my son. Massacres were committed outside Kykko Monastery and in Limasol. I heard with my own ears the order, 'All of them to the last man must be killed tonight.' Those who have witnessed these crimes are afraid to speak. As a matter of fact most of them are Grivas supporters and they will never speak."

Finally, Papatsestos is reported to have declared that he would tell his story and worries to the Greek Premier, Mr. Karamanlis, because Makarios has done nothing about them.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nail ATALAY  
Acting Representative of the  
Turkish Federated State of Cyprus

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