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Comment

THE REPORT from Paris that the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mr Erkin is to advise Dr Kuchuk to open talks with the President on constitutional issues provided that such talks are held within the framework of the constitution and not to bring about its overthrow should be regarded as a glimmer of light in a situation over which inflammatory propaganda on both sides has cast a deepening shadow in the past few weeks.

There is no logical reason why Mr Erkin's statement should be regarded with suspicion, since President Makarios's memorandum on proposed revisions is in no way directed towards the overthrow of the constitution and he has never at any time stated that this is his claim.

Any such move would in fact involve so many incalculable factors that it would be folly to pursue it. Not the least of these is that the down-right repudiation of the signatures appended to the London and Zurich agreements could be expected to have disastrous results so far as outside investment in the republic is concerned.

How to ease suspicion

It would be a major step forward for the representatives of the two communities to be able to come together and discuss the constitutional position generally and how best to overcome the obstacles to smooth working of the state that have arisen since 1960.

The whole dispute in Cyprus is based on mutual suspicion and the most state-manlike contribution that could be made at the present time towards full-scale conference would be a frank repudiation on the one side of any intention to seek the goal of Enosis and on the other side to eschew all idea of toktism. The President himself is on record as having stated that enosis cannot now be achieved, while partition is equally outlawed under the constitution itself.

Such a mutual declaration would pave the way to proper discussion of current difficulties, without which there is little hope of arriving at an agreed solution. That the difficulties stem from the constitution cannot be denied, nor can they be allowed to remain indefinitely an obstacle in the path of the country's progress.

Limassol road collision

A British serviceman, Brian Reece, aged 29, and his wife Irene, aged 19, were slightly injured when their car was in collision with an oncoming car on the Nicosia-Limassol road yesterday afternoon.

Today's weather

Fine and mainly sunny. Winds: light or moderate, between east and south. Temperatures: reaching about 22C. (72 F.). Maximum yesterday: 22(72), previous night's minimum: 12 (53) at Nicosia Airport.

Two dead, eight wounded

DAY OF INTERCOMMUNAL STRIFE

Shots in early hours spark train of incidents

AN UNEASY QUIET REIGNED OVER NICOSIA LAST NIGHT AND STREETS WERE UNUSUALLY DESERTED EXCEPT FOR PATROLLING POLICE FOLLOWING A DAY OF INCIDENTS OF INTERCOMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN WHICH TWO PEOPLE WERE KILLED AND AT LEAST EIGHT INJURED INSIDE THE WALLED CITY AND CONTINUED SPASMODICALLY THROUGH THE GREATER PART OF THE DAY.

The Government ordered a general mobilisation of the Police and Gendarmere and Police were issued with firearms to prevent a new flare-up of inter-communal disturbances. The towns were placed out of bounds for members of the British forces.

Shops situated on the border between the Greek and Turkish quarters remained closed as tension mounted in the capital and most Greek and Turkish police officers if they lay in the opposite quarters.

The Law Courts, situated in the Turkish sector, remained closed as Greek Judges and advocates failed to report for duty. Later Greek lawyers met to discuss the situation and said in a communique that it caused 'great anxiety' to advocates. They will discuss the developments with the Minister of Justice and the Judges of the High Court and hold a general meeting tomorrow.

Treaty of Guarantee void, says Makarios

Athens, Dec 21 THE 1960 Cyprus agreement by which Britain, Greece and Turkey guaranteed the island's independence was invalid from the time it was signed, President Makarios said in an article published here today.

He said the treaty gave Turkey no right of intervention whatever. The President in an interview with the Athens Conservative daily Acropolis said that if necessary, Cyprus would bring the issue before the United Nations to have the treaty declared void. He said the treaty contravened the United Nations Charter.

Archbishop Makarios said international jurists consulted on the matter had decided that the treaty of guarantee lacked any 'practical value'. The treaty, which granted Britain military facilities on the island, provided that Greece, Turkey and Britain guaranteed the independence, territorial integrity and security of Cyprus and also the state of affairs established by the basic articles of its constitution.

Archbishop Makarios said in the interview that if Turkey attempted a forceful intervention it would constitute an act of invasion which he shall oppose by all means. Simultaneously, we shall bring the question before the United Nations Security Council.

He said the U.N. Secretary-General U Thant will visit Cyprus next May 7. (Reuters)



PRESIDENT MAKARIOS and Dr Kuchuk speak to villagers when they visited Deftera to ascertain the relations between Greek and Turkish inhabitants yesterday.

Turks charge 'distortion of the facts'

THE ALLEGATION that official reports of yesterday's incidents are 'highly distorted' and that the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation is being prevented from giving any other version than that concocted by the Ministry of the Interior was made in a lengthy statement issued by the executive committee of the Turkish Communal Chamber last night.

The statement charges that the incidents were created by so-called Special Branch officers of the Ministry who are all ex-Eoka men and that they are mercilessly hunting law-abiding Turkish citizens.

It goes on to say that these 'special policemen' refuse to produce warrant cards when asked to prove their identity and rough handle those who disobey them.

Police fired at random

Yesterday's incidents, says the Committee statement, arose out of such a search when two families of Turks, including women, were returning home to Nicosia from another town. The women refused to be searched by men, says the statement and demanded to be taken to a police station for search by female officers. While the altercation was going on about 20 people gathered at the scene.

Greek uniformed police joined the Greek civilians and fired at random into the Turkish civilians, killing two and injuring three. The statement denies that any Greek policeman was injured at this stage.

It alleges that the Greek policemen then withdrew, took up positions and fired on all vehicles coming from the Turkish quarter, including an ambulance.

It further claims that later the plain clothes Greek police went round the Turkish quarter of Nicosia firing shots at random, at the Ataturk statue, at the office of the President of the Turkish Communal Chamber, the Selimiye Mosque and other places.

The Turkish statement in its version of the incident at the Turkish Lycee denies that the

Inonu progresses towards coalition

Ankara, Dec. 21. MR INONU, leader of the Republican Peoples Party, seemed set to form a new coalition government last night after the New Turkey Party's parliamentary group voted to join such a coalition, ignoring the objections of its leader.

Mr Inonu, whose former three-party government dissolved earlier this month after election successes by the Opposition Justice Party, is now expected to have independent members joining the two parties in a new government.

The leader of the New Turkey Party had earlier opposed his party's joining the coalition because the Republican Peasants National Party had voted against participation.

The New Turkey Party's conditions for participating include the proviso that the vice-premiership should not go to a member of Mr. Inonu's party.

Earlier attempts by President Gursel towards the formation of a government were frustrated by the Premier-designate being nominated being unable to win the support from other parties which was necessary for a coalition government. (Reuters)

Cyprus football cancelled

The Cyprus Football Federation has announced that all football matches this weekend have been cancelled owing to the abnormal situation.

STOP PRESS

Mobile Gendarmerie patrol of two Greeks and three Turks was ambushed at Turkish village Aylos Sozomenos, 10 miles south of Nicosia, fired at with shotguns - late last night. All five slightly injured. One Greek admitted in Hospital for treatment.

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Official car for Grivas

Athens, Dec 21 By government order published in the official gazette, a car belonging to the Ministry to the Prime Minister's Office has been placed at the disposal of General Grivas, in honour for his services to the motherland and his struggle for the liberation of Cyprus.

Seamen's Union leader, Tony Ambatielos, jailed for the last 16 years in Greece. Ambatielos was convicted in 1947 for having helped the Greek communist guerrillas. His death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in 1952. His wife, who arrived in Greece a fortnight ago, has vainly tried to have her husband liberated before Christmas.

Mr Ambatielos told news-men today: 'My husband should be released on the same grounds as those who have been set free last night.'

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Limassol road collision (continued) A British serviceman, Brian Reece, aged 29, and his wife Irene, aged 19, were slightly injured when their car was in collision with an oncoming car on the Nicosia-Limassol road yesterday afternoon.

Greek detainees 'Freed in secret'

Athens, Dec 21 SEVEN 'political detainees' were released secretly last night and two others were set free earlier this week by the Ministry of Justice, the association of relatives of political prisoners disclosed today.

At a press conference held at noon today the association presented the released prisoners, who were all liberated on grounds of ill health and old age.

The press conference was attended by Mrs Betty Ambatielos, wife of the Greek

DIARY OF THE DAY

Following are the official versions of yesterday's incidents in chronological order: 02.10 a.m. A Police patrol stopped some Turkish Cypriots in Hermes street, near Olympiakos club and asked to check their identity cards, but they refused to present them and

started shouting, when a crowd of about 150 Turks assembled and a commotion followed. While the Police were trying to restore order, somebody from the crowd began shooting at the Police, who then returned the fire in the direction of the unknown gunman, and withdrew for reinforcements which arrived in a short time and the situation was placed under control.

Later at the scene, a Turkish Cypriot, Zakkı Halil, 25, of Nicosia, was found mortally wounded. A Turkish woman, Zalihe Hassan, 35, was also found seriously injured. She was removed to Nicosia General Hospital where she died.

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