

**Between Politics and Principles:
Canadian Policy on the Cyprus Issue in the
1954 UN General Assembly**

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Greece filed its first application to the United Nations concerning Cyprus on August 24, 1954, under the title "Application, under the Auspices of the United Nations, of the Principle of Equal Rights and Self-determination of People in the Case of the Population of the Island of Cyprus." The letter of the Greek Prime Minister Field Marshall Alexandros Papagos to the Secretary General of the United Nations [UN] Dag Hammarskjöld, states, among others, that, "In view of the repeatedly and solemnly expressed will of the overwhelming majority of the people of Cyprus for union with Greece, which they regard as their mother-country, my Government, fully aware of its responsibilities to the past, present and future of the Hellenic nation and in Application of Article 1, Paragraph 2, of the Charter, which establishes the right of self-determination of people, request that the people of the island of Cyprus be allowed to express themselves on their future in complete freedom and under the auspices of the UN."¹ Further, in the same letter, the Greek government explained the rationale behind its action with references to the history of the island, the demographic situation of Cyprus, the plebiscite organized in the island in January 1950 (where 95.7% of the people voting supported union of Cyprus with Greece) and the refusal of the British government to take into con-

sideration the will of the people of Cyprus and to discuss the future of the island². In this context, the Greek Government, as the letter stated, "... feels compelled to ask the UN to redress this situation by securing acceptance of the solution required by justice, dignity and the sacred principles set forth in the Charter. It appears to the General Assembly in the conviction that the Assembly will achieve a constructive solution conducive to peace and freedom."³

Before filling the application in the UN, the Greek government attempted, in several cases, to discuss the Cyprus issue with the United Kingdom [UK]. London refused the Greek requests and claimed that there was nothing to discuss with Athens since "the affairs of Cyprus are strictly within 'domestic jurisdiction' of the United Kingdom."⁴ Due to the British reaction to the Greek requests, Athens appealed to several North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] member countries, especially to those with special relations with the UK, asking them to use their influence towards London in order to accept bilateral negotiations with the Greek government over the future of Cyprus. As a result, Canada was among those NATO member countries that had been approached by Athens.⁵

This article, based mainly on Documents on Canadian External Relations, the Diplomatic and Historical Archive of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Foreign Relations of the United States will present Canada's reaction to the Greek request, its general stand towards the discussion of the Cyprus issue in the UN and the logic behind its decisions. The presentation and examination of Canada's stand on the said issue is very important for a number of reasons and from different perspectives. First of all, it allows us to see how a country like Canada, with a straightforward position in favour of decolonisation and a record of supporting that the UN should be used as an institution to address issues related to self-determination approached the issue of Cyprus. The article shows that as Canada formulated its position in the issue of Cyprus, it realized that besides being a question of self-determination, the issue was of great concern for the Western alliance, and especially for the United States, since it had potential implications for NATO

unity.⁶ The discussion of the Greek appeal was taking place during the first years of the Cold War, with both interested parties, Greece and the UK, using the communist factor to get support for their arguments.

Furthermore, the examination of Canada's position towards the first Greek attempt to discuss in the UN the issue of Cyprus is important from the point of view of the role played by the "Old Commonwealth" states (Australia, Canada and New Zealand). Besides the fact that the three countries regularly exchanged views on the said issue, because of their special relationship with the UK, they played an important role not only during the discussions that followed the 1954 Greek application, but also during the discussions that followed the other four Greek appeals concerning Cyprus in the UN (1955, 1956, 1957, 1958). In a number of cases the "Old Commonwealth" states were asked by London and/or Washington to actively participate in the discussions of the Cyprus issue within the UN framework and put forward certain proposals that would not have a chance of being accepted if they were proposed by London or Washington. For example, during the discussions of the first Greek appeal in the UN in 1954, New Zealand "played a prominent role ... in trying to prevent the Assembly from considering further the Cyprus question."⁷ During the same period, Canada was asked by the UK to approach certain countries in order to support London's position on the Cyprus issue. In one instance, in December 1957, during the discussions following the third Greek appeal for the issue of Cyprus in the UN, Canada was "mobilized by the US Delegation and met with the British in a conference ... for the purpose of drafting amendments to the [proposed] Greek draft resolution."⁸

The first Greek appeal in the UN concerning the issue of Cyprus was covered by a number of Canadian newspapers. The Canadian press was mainly concerned with the problems that would be created for the Western Alliance from the discussion of the Cyprus issue in the UN forum. As it is stated in an article in the *Star Phoenix*, "it seems obvious no good will result by having the dispute aired at the United Nations as the Greek government proposes.

Here would be a public demonstration of dissension within the NATO alliance, giving hasty idealists another opportunity to sound off about Western colonialism, thereby giving comfort to the Soviet Union and its satellites.”⁹ In another instance an article published in *The Ottawa Journal* stated that “It is a sorry sight to see Allies arguing over a territory they need for their common defence and there must be a quick solution of their differences.”¹⁰ At the same time, the Association of Greeks in Toronto, during the discussion of the Cyprus issue in the UN, sent a letter to the Canadian Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent and the Minister of External Affairs Lester B. Pearson, stating that. “We understand that the question of Cyprus will be raised at U.N. regarding annexation with Greece—being of Greek origin, having tasted the fruits of Liberty we would like to think that Canada would see fit in considering Greece’s proposal favourably, in the same spirit as Great Britain was ever ready in helping Greece during her past trials. Cyprus being Greek territory and the population being Greek is most anxious to join Greece and become as in the past, a component part of Greece.”¹¹

Last, the examination of the Canadian involvement in the discussions over Cyprus during the 1954 Greek appeal is also important, since it marked the beginning of an active involvement of Ottawa on the issue of Cyprus: (a) in 1964 Canada was among the countries that sent, as a part of the United Nations Force in the island (UNFICYP),¹² a contingent in Cyprus, (b) in November 1967, in a joint initiative, the governments of Canada, the US and the UK, attempted to avoid a possible Greco-Turkish war over Cyprus¹³ and (c) in 1978, Canada, along with the US and the UK presented the first coordinated effort to solve the Cyprus problem after the 1974 Turkish invasion in the island (the ABC Plan).¹⁴

The Greek Government had first asked Canada in April 1954 to use its influence to persuade the UK to agree to negotiations on the future of Cyprus.¹⁵ The Greek government, according to a memorandum from the Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs Jules Léger¹⁶ to the Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester B. Pearson,¹⁷ dated August 20, 1954, had informed Ottawa that unless bilateral discussions between Greece and the

UK took place, Athens would have no other option than to appeal to the ninth session of the UN General Assembly [GA] concerning the issue of Cyprus. The Canadian reply to the Greek request was that they did not want to get involved in a dispute between Athens and London, and they “have deplored the prospect of a debate at the UN which can benefit only the communists.”¹⁸

The British had also approached Canada, since they were expecting the Greek appeal in the UN. Specifically, they had appealed in Ottawa to support their effort to block any Greek proposal to include the Cyprus issue on the GA agenda. At the same time, the British informed the Canadian government that they were against bilateral discussions with Greece over Cyprus since according to the British rationale it would be “interpreted in Cyprus as a sign of weakness and the beginning of the British withdrawal from the island.”¹⁹ The Canadians, however, were concerned with this request since a decision to support the British effort to block a Greek appeal to the UN, would be had to reconcile with past Canadian policy on similar issues, which, until then was consistently in favour of the referral of such issues in the UN for discussion.²⁰ At the same time Ottawa was also concerned that the British might revise their “policy of cooperation with the UN on colonial matters”, if the Greek appeal was successful.

When, on August 20, 1954, the Greek government officially requested²¹ that the Cyprus issue be placed on the provisional agenda of the ninth session of the GA, the UK again approached the Canadians, informing them, once more that London was against of such a development and that the Cyprus issue at the UN would be regarded from London as a “test of friendship.”²² As a result, the British Government was expecting the support of Canada as both a NATO and a Commonwealth partner.

In its evaluation of the situation, Léger claimed that the UK policy in Cyprus was based primarily on “an appraisal of the strategic value of Cyprus”²³ and there was no way for London to accept any change of sovereignty for the island. During the debate in the UN, Britain’s “first line of defence”, according to the officials of the Canadian Department of External Affairs, would be the domestic

jurisdiction clause as described in Article 2 (7) of the UN Charter.²⁴ Additional possible UK arguments against the discussion of the Cyprus issue at the UN would be in references to practical reasons such as the “futility of a sterile debate, the need for stability in the area” and the material advantages to the Cypriots from the “UK occupation.”²⁵ The Canadians though had doubts if the above mentioned British arguments would lead to the prevention of the inclusion of the Cyprus issue in the UN agenda.²⁶

Léger, in his memorandum to Pearson, had also claimed that the US position on Cyprus would be decisive on how the issue would develop. Even though the British perception was that the US would support them at the UN, the Department did not have, at that time, indications for “US commitment to vote against the inclusion of the Cyprus question on the agenda.”²⁷ The Canadian officials believed that even though the US government was “sympathetic to the UK position” on Cyprus, “domestic opposition” in the US to colonialism and “irritation about the UK policy on other matters” would, according to Léger, probably influence the US government to “withhold full support” to the British position on Cyprus.²⁸

After presenting the situation to Pearson, Léger stated in his memorandum that Canada should set as its priority to do what it could to “minimize the damage” for the Western world at the UN because the Soviet Union and its satellites would “no doubt seize the opportunity to embarrass the UK and its NATO allies, to woo the opponents of colonialism in Asia and Africa, and to exploit the rifts in NATO solidarity”, which a possible debate over Cyprus would cause.²⁹ At the same time though, Léger was concerned with Canada’s previous positions on similar issues since, in the past, Ottawa supported their inclusion in the UN agenda and their discussion in the UN framework. Therefore, the Canadian position had to be based either on political factors related to the uniqueness of the Cyprus issue (possible threat to NATO unity) or the country’s past positions on issues of self determination and decolonisation. At this stage however it was decided that there was no need for Canada to decide and it would be better to wait until the policy of the “US and other friendly governments” was clarified.³⁰

The issue was also discussed on August 27, 1954, in Ottawa between officials of the Department and representatives of the Australian High Commission. According to the relevant telegram to Canberra, the Canadians were “doubtful as to the correct course to follow” and they were anxious to get Australia’s views.³¹ They stated, as general thinking, that despite the fact that they have never previously voted against inclusion of such items on the agenda, they wanted to help the UK government and they were “concerned principally with the question of tactics.”³²

When the Canadian Cabinet discussed on September 7, 1954, the issues on that would be raised during the ninth session of the GA of the UN, it was decided that, concerning the issue of Cyprus, the Canadian Delegation to the UN should aim to minimize “embarrassment to the free world”, and its views “on the usefulness of the Assembly’s discussing the question should be determined in the light of circumstances prevailing at the time and after further consultation with other friendly delegations.”³³

On September 26, 1954, Léger sent a new memorandum to Pearson, to inform him on possible developments.³⁴ According to Léger, “the voting on the inscription issue will be close” and as a result the Canadian vote would be very important.³⁵ He repeated that if Canada was to be “guided solely by our past practice we should probably not oppose inscription of the Cyprus item.”³⁶ However, as he claimed, “on political and practical grounds, there is a strong case for opposing discussion of the issue by the Assembly” without specifically denying its competence to discuss it.³⁷

In the case the Greek attempt was successful but the competence aspect continued to be contested, Canada, according to Léger, “should abstain on the competence issue” and explain its vote by stating that, though in the past Canada usually voted in favour of the Assembly’s right to discuss similar issues, it had serious doubts whether this right extends to the Cyprus issue and it also had “grave misgivings about the wisdom of an Assembly discussion.”³⁸

One week later, on September 23, 1954, the General Committee,³⁹ decided by a substantial majority to recommend to the First Committee the inscription of the Cyprus issue on the Assembly’s

agenda.⁴⁰ Canadians believed that the large vote in support of inscription was unexpected and "due to the fact that the Arabs, and probably Iceland and some of the Latino countries, had instructions to abstain if the vote was going to be close but otherwise to support inscription."⁴¹

The next day, the issue was discussed in the First Committee which decided to adopt the recommendation of the General Committee to inscribe the Cyprus issue in the Assembly's agenda. Canada, as a member of the First Committee, voted against such a development.⁴² With a telegram to Ottawa dated September 25, 1954, the Head of the Canadian Delegation in the UNGA David Moffat Johnson explained his decision, by stating that, "It was not an easy decision. It was taken on the basis of the assumption that our vote on inscription so far as the Cyprus issue was concerned should be based upon consideration of two main elements: (a) Our view of the Assembly's competence to consider the Cyprus question having particular regard to Article 2(7); (b) Our view of the wisdom of a discussion of Cyprus in the UN at the present time."⁴³

With regard to (a), Johnson claimed that, having in mind Canada's traditional attitude in similar matters, he concluded that it was not possible to oppose the inscription of the Cyprus issue "on legal grounds of competence". However, taking under consideration the Cabinet decision on the Cyprus issue dated September 7, the departmental memorandum of September 16 (both previously noted) and the fact that in previous years the Department of External Affairs had indicated that in matters of inscription its "judgment as to the value and effect of a particular decision" must be also applied, he decided to vote against the inscription of the Cyprus issue.⁴⁴ At the same time, among the reasons that Johnson mentioned for voting the way he did was the fact that, "The form and language of the Greek item do not merely call for a general discussion of Cyprus but refer to "application under UN auspices of the principle of equal rights and self-determination." Presumably this would involve action by a UN plebiscite, which our view would most certainly have prejudged the issue and set the Assembly from the outset on the path towards intervention."⁴⁵

After the decision to recommend the inscription of the Cyprus issue in the Assembly's agenda, the Canadian officials started exchanging information and ideas over the handling of the issue in the Assembly. On October 15, 1954, Pearson informed the Canadian High Commissioner in London Norman Alexander Robertson that the British High Commission in Ottawa requested "Canadian assistance to organise support for a UK suggestion that the [Cyprus] item be disposed of in a summary manner" in order "to avoid any substantive resolution and so far as possible any debate."⁴⁶

Three days later, on October 18, 1954, Léger sent a new memorandum to Pearson, offering an assessment of the effect a negative or a positive reaction from Canada might have to the British request mentioned above. According to this memorandum, the following assessment was supporting the conclusion that a negative reply be given to the UK request: (a) The UK's attempt would "probably fail" because the majority of countries had already voted in favor of including the Cyprus issue in the Assembly's agenda during the debate in the General Committee, (b) Without lobbying by the US in favor of the UK, the British attempt to dispose of the Cyprus issue had "little chance of success", (c) Canada "might succeed in persuading Brazil and Pakistan to vote in favor of a motion not to discuss or to close the debate. It is doubtful whether we would persuade any of the others, particularly Yugoslavia which probably has no desire to shake the Balkan Alliance", (d) Canada should "not overlook" its relations with Greece, and (e) Canada's decision to vote against inscription of the Cyprus issue was already a departure for its past attitude toward the Assembly's right to discuss, in particular colonial issues.⁴⁷

Concerning the arguments in favour of a positive reply to the UK's request, Léger claimed as such: (a) Consistent with Canada's belief that the "Greek appeal implies an intervention by the Assembly in the domestic affairs of the UK and that, in any event, the debate will result in nothing but harm," (b) "Already most unfortunate irritation [in the Western world] had been generated by the Cyprus discussion," and (c) According to a report from the Canadian Ambassador in Greece, although "the Cyprus exercise

has won recognition at home and abroad for the Papagos Government, it has created difficulties which may be more far-reaching than they appear. These undesirable effects were not likely to be decreased if the Cyprus issue was proceeded with". In this regard, the Greek Government "might not be too upset if the matter did subside without further repercussions."⁴⁸

Having in mind the above, it was decided that Canada would vote in favor of any UK motion not to discuss or to close the debate. However, it could not reply positively to the UK's request for assistance. The decision was based on the fact that "for Canada to canvass actively for a further effort to forestall discussion after the General Assembly had decided to place the item on the agenda would be to move too far from past Canadian policy at the UN."⁴⁹ At the same time, it was decided that Canada should "continue to consult with friendly delegations about the next phase of the Assembly discussion in the hope that some other formula for minimizing the harmful effects of the debate will emerge before the closing days of the session. By that presumably the US Government will not be preoccupied with domestic elections and will be in a position to assess its position on Cyprus."⁵⁰

The British approach regarding the handling of the Cyprus issue in the UN changed after a month. London, as Léger informed Pearson on November 30, 1954, would now like the debate on Cyprus to be held at the current session, since "a postponement would have an undesirable effect in Cyprus and that the defeat of any resolution proposed by Greece would be the result preferred by the UK."⁵¹ According to the Canadians, the UK delegation in New York had been instructed from London "to lobby vigorously against any resolution, making it clear that the UK Government" would not accept the right of the UN to interfere in the issue of Cyprus which is an internal affair of London. Furthermore, the British government did not wish its allies "to initiate or support any softening of the terms of the original Greek item, because a benign resolution might obscure the illegality and undesirability of any UN intervention."⁵²

At the same time, Léger informed Pearson that the Department of External Affairs was approached by the British High Commis-

sion in Ottawa requesting once more the support of Canada, and informing them, "in confidence, that the US had given the UK a confidential undertaking that it would actively oppose the passing of any resolution and would do all possible to keep any discussion to an absolute minimum."⁵³ The British, using the US factor and the fact that Washington promised to fully support them, had asked Ottawa "to do no less than the US has undertaken to do."⁵⁴ In this regard Léger stated in his memorandum to Pearson that "The US attitude is, I think, an important factor we must keep in mind. It would be difficult for us to take a stand that offered less support to the UK than that of the US."⁵⁵

In the same memorandum, Léger also informed Pearson that Athens was now considering a draft resolution which, in contrast to its earlier attempts, would not recommend negotiations by the parties concerned, but would seek GA "recognition of the principle of equal rights and self determination of peoples as applied, under UN auspices, in the case of the population of Cyprus."⁵⁶ According to Léger the logic behind Greece's attempt was to achieve "a change of sovereignty in respect of Cyprus." Such an effort, Léger claimed, should be taken under consideration by Canada since "During the course of the recent discussions at the UN and the lobbying behind the scenes there and in various capitals concerned, the fundamental aim to *change sovereignty* through action by the UN has emerged as the most significant element in the Cyprus issue and as the factor which tends to distinguish it from all similar issues, such as the questions of Tunisia, Morocco and even West New Guinea."⁵⁷ As a result, the "colonial and administering powers" should resist such an effort from Greece because, "in addition to its inherent dangers, the notion [of changing sovereignty through an appeal to the UN] is not supported by any text in the Charter."⁵⁸

In his memorandum to Pearson, Léger also claimed that the Cyprus issue would be assessed "not on legal grounds but in accordance with the political aims of the various voting blocs in the GA."⁵⁹ In this regard a significant factor that would influence the way the Cyprus issue would develop in the GA was the attitude of the US. As Léger mentioned in his memorandum, if the US used its

influence to oppose the passing of any resolution and "if the Turks have managed to collect their own supporters, in addition to those of the UK, there may well be a defeat of any resolution proposed by Greece."⁶⁰

Based on the above, it was decided that Canada should inform the British that it could not "give a firm commitment at this stage to vote against *any* Greek resolution but that our present inclination is to do so."⁶¹ On the same day, the Canadian delegation to the UNGA sent to the Department the text of the draft Greek resolution on Cyprus which the Greek Representative, Alexis Kyrrou handed to his Canadian colleague in the UN with the remark that it was a resolution "more than moderate to which no one could object."⁶² Following the tabling of the Greek draft resolution, "the UK authorities on strong American advice, have reconsidered for a third time, their earlier decision to work for the defeat of any resolution whatever on this item."⁶³ According to the Canadian High Commissioner in London, the Greek draft resolution was "so mildly and seductively worded" that the British were afraid that it would not be possible to be defeated."⁶⁴ As a result, London did not want the Greek draft to be put to vote and decided to work for either a "procedural resolution 'not to discuss' the item; or, in the last resort, a move to crowd the item off this year's agenda."⁶⁵

Canadians were concerned with the new UK approach to introduce a "motion not to discuss" the Cyprus issue. They would have preferred the British not to change their policy and work for the defeat of the Greek draft resolution. In their view, it would have been desirable to defeat the Greek attempt, not only because of the consequences as regards the Cyprus issue, but also because of the "unfortunate precedent which would be established" as an attempt to change sovereignty through action by the UN.⁶⁶ Ottawa believed that "for many delegations the voting on the motion not to discuss would merely be a repetition of the voting on the inscription issue" and, as a result, the British would be defeated.⁶⁷ Concerning the second alternative ("crowd the item off"), the Canadians were also concerned and believed that the only way for this option to be successful was for some delegations to support it on the basis that

"the agenda was too long, [and as a result] a specific item or items should be dropped."⁶⁸

On a telegram from Pearson to Johnson, dated December 13, 1954, the Canadian delegation in the UN was instructed on how to handle the two possible scenarios regarding the debate on the Cyprus issue: (a) The "motion not to discuss", and (b) the Greek draft resolution. Regarding (a), despite the fact that the Canadians were not persuaded that it could be successful, they were "prepared to accept the UK assessment that several delegations may have shifted their position from that taken on the inscription issue and that, if there should be a large number of abstentions, the voting on the procedural motion might go in favour of the UK."⁶⁹ According to the Canadians, for this to happen it was necessary for the US to lobby. In any event, for Canada, it would not be difficult to vote in favour of such a motion or a resolution to stop the debate, since it would be consistent with its previous vote against inscription. Regarding (b) and in the case of a substantive debate on Cyprus, based upon the tabled Greek draft text, the Canadian delegation would vote against it.⁷⁰

Thus, the Department of External Affairs instructed its delegation in the UNGA "not to participate in the debate on substance" and "confine its remarks if at all necessary to an explanation of the vote" based, among others, on the following: (a) "reiterate in effect the arguments you have already expressed on the inscription issue", (b) restating the doubts voiced "at earlier sessions concerning attempts to have formally recognised by the GA the so called "right" to self determination when no such right is established by the Charter", (c) expression of disappointment that "the raising of the issue at the Assembly has occasioned ill feeling between member states concerned with the status of Cyprus and has an unsettling effect in the area of Cyprus."⁷¹ At the same time, the Canadian Department of External Affairs informed the British High Commissioner in Ottawa Sir Archibald Nye that Canada would vote as the UK but it would not wish to participate in the debate.

On December 14, Greece tabled first its draft resolution followed by another draft resolution tabled by New Zealand;⁷² the

second provided that the Cyprus item should not be considered further.⁷³ The representative of New Zealand, having acted after consultation with the British made a point of order by claiming that his delegation "had submitted its resolution because of its concern at the grave political consequences of a vote on the substance of the issue" and asked his resolution to be "discussed and voted on before any discussion of the Greek resolution."⁷⁴ The Greek representative reacted by stating that Greece was opposed to any plan for not discussing the issue of Cyprus and he claimed that the New Zealand resolution, if adopted, would require "a two thirds majority under Rule 124 because in effect reversed a decision of the GA which, by deciding to inscribe an item on the agenda, intended the item to be discussed."⁷⁵ The UK, US, Turkey, Pakistan, Denmark, Sweden, Brazil and Philippines supported the request of New Zealand while USSR, Poland and El Salvador supported the approach of Greece. The Canadian representative did not participate in the discussion. Then, the New Zealand proposal for priority for its own resolution not to consider further the Cyprus issue was put in a vote, and 28 countries, including Canada, voted in favour, 15 against and 16 abstained.⁷⁶

The next day, December 15, the discussion in the UN turned over to the issue, raised the previous day by the Greek representative, that the New Zealand resolution requires two thirds majority in order to be adopted. At that day, the Canadian Delegation in the UNGA informed the Department of External Affairs that the US delegation in the UNGA received instructions from Washington to support the British delegation request for a simple majority being required for the New Zealand resolution, in order to secure its adoption.⁷⁷

The issue of Cyprus and the British request for a simple majority required for the New Zealand resolution was also discussed, the same day, at a Commonwealth meeting in New York. During this meeting which took place before Johnson knew about the US position mentioned above, he stated that it was difficult for Canada to support the UK on this procedural point since he "could not recall any occasion on which the Canadian delegation had opposed" such

a stand. Indeed, as he stated at the Commonwealth meeting, Canada's "disposition in the past had been to feel that an Assembly resolution on an important subject which did not secure a two-thirds majority did not commend sufficient support to make it worthy very much."⁷⁸ However, after he learned about the US position and having in mind the instructions from Ottawa ("that Canada should not give the UK less support than the US was prepared to give"), the Canadian representative, as he stated in his telegram to Ottawa, felt that the Department would wish him to vote in favour of the proposition that the New Zealand resolution require only a simple majority to be adopted.⁷⁹

On December 17, 1954, the New Zealand draft text with the incorporation of some amendments proposed by Colombia and El Salvador was adopted in the plenary session of the GA with 50 votes in favour, including Canada, none against and 8 abstentions.⁸⁰ According to this Resolution (814 (IX)), "The General Assembly, considering that, for the time being, it does not appear appropriate to adopt a resolution on the issue of Cyprus, 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'".

Among the countries voting in favour of the resolution 814 (IX) were the UK, the US, Greece and Turkey. The Greek delegation decided at the end to vote in favor of the draft New Zealand text after the incorporation on that of the reference "for the time being." This incorporation, according to the Greek officials, was a safeguard that the Cyprus issue would be discussed by the Assembly in the future. In this regard, the Greek interpretation was that "the resolution adopted signified that the Assembly had merely postponed 'for the time being' taking any decision on a question which remains pending before the UN."⁸¹ On the other side, the British delegation claimed that by the said resolution, the Assembly "had not merely postponed consideration of the Cyprus issue but had decided that, under the prevailing circumstances, it would be unwise to bring this explosive matter into the arena of contentious debate."⁸²

Conclusion

In formulating its position over the Cyprus issue, Canada had two choices. The first one was to base its policy on political and practical issues such as the uniqueness of the Cyprus issue; the benefits for the communists from a possible debate at the UN; possible rifts in NATO solidarity and damage for the Western world at the UN; Canada's general desire to protect the UN; Ottawa's belief that the success of the Greek attempt would be used as precedent and encourage others to demand change of sovereignty through action by the UN; the position of the US; and its desire "to woo the opponents of colonialism in Asia and Africa." Canada's second choice was to remain consistent in its policies and formulate its stand based on its past policy on similar issues of decolonization and self determination during which the country was in favour of their inclusion in the UN agenda and their discussion in the UN framework.

The analysis shows that Canada's position was formulated taking under consideration political and practical reasons. The uniqueness of the Cyprus issue and the implications it could have in the Western alliance together with the fact that such a discussion, according to the logic of Ottawa, would only benefit the communists decisively influenced Canada not to support the Greek request. At the same time, the position of the US and the fact that Washington, at the end, decided to actively support the British attempts influenced decisively the Canadian approach on the issue.⁸³ As it is stated on the final assessment regarding the ninth session of the GA which was prepared by the Canadian delegation in the UNGA and sent to the Department on December 24, 1954, "The US position on Cyprus was crucial and decisive." Washington was "prepared not only to support a procedural resolution that the GA should not further consider this item but were also prepared to canvass actively in support of it."⁸⁴

Among other political and practical reasons that influenced the issue of competence was Canadian concerns that a UN approval of the Greek resolution would be used as precedent for subsequent efforts to detach territory from one state to another through a UN

action by applying the principle of self determination. According to the Canadian assessment, the Cyprus issue, even though debated in the Assembly as a colonial question, "cannot properly speaking be considered a colonial question since what is at issue is basically the transfer of sovereignty of a colonial territory from one member of the UN to another. There is, however, little question that given the right of self determination—a right nowhere embodied in the Charter although there is a general reference to the principle—the Island of Cyprus would go to Greece."⁸⁵ In this regard, Canada which traditionally was in favour of inscribing and debating of similar issues in the UNGA, voted differently on the Cyprus issue since it approached it as a test case in an attempt to involve the UN "on a course which could do little but exacerbate relations between friendly powers and drastically reduce the cooperation between the UN and some of its staunchest supporters."⁸⁶

Indicative of the uniqueness with which the Canadian officials approached the Cyprus issue is the content of a telegram from the Canadian Permanent Representative to the UN (David M. Johnson) to Ottawa, before the relevant UN Committee started to discuss the issue of inscribing or not the Cyprus issue on the UNGA agenda. In the telegram Johnson claimed that "The Canadian Delegation may have to face a re-examination of our views of former years on the interpretation to be given to intervention in domestic affairs of states and the precise meaning of Article 2 (7) of the Charter. For although we could with reasonable confidence assert that Assembly discussion of apartheid in South Africa and even of the restless evolution of French North Africa was permissible, the attempt by Greece to detach from the UK a territory to which the UK Government has clear title raises the prospect of anti-colonial agitation in the UN on a scale never contemplated at San Francisco. Indeed, it is becoming increasingly clear that if the drift in this direction is not checked by an upsurge of robust commonsense, the colonial powers will come to regard the UN as a liability, reacting in a manner detrimental to the high aims and purposes of the UN—and to their own national interests as members in good standing of the international community"⁸⁷.

As a result of the above factors, Canada, for the first time in an issue of decolonization and self-determination, opposed its inscription in the Assembly's agenda; something which was in contrast to one of its major foreign policy characteristics which was the necessity of policy consistency.

Canada's involvement in the discussions during the first Greek appeal in the UN concerning Cyprus was the beginning of Ottawa's engagement and interest with an issue, geographically taking place in a far away area from its usual foreign policy area. It was an involvement which continued in 1964, 1967 and in 1978. Taking under consideration that the Cyprus issue was among the issues very often discussed within the UN, NATO and the Commonwealth, the three areas that Canada's foreign policy was developed, it can be concluded that Canada's involvement in the issue was unavoidable.

Notes

¹Stephen G. Xydis, *Cyprus, Conflict and Conciliation, 1954-1958* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1967), p. 567. Article 1, paragraph 2 of the UN Charter refers to the development of friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples.

²The history of Cyprus was described in Papagos' letter as follows: "Cyprus is a Greek island which has been inherited by Greeks for thousands of years. When the name of Cyprus appears in history for the first time, the island is mentioned as being Greek because of its gods and of its population. There has been no change since. The periods of foreign rule which have succeeded each other in the course of three thousand years of history have always represented only a passing, temporary and transitory element. Greece alone has been the lasting element, the unalterable factor, the only permanent reality in the island of Cyprus. It would not be enough to repeat that Cyprus belongs to the Greek world; Cyprus is Greece itself". The letter also used British census data supplied, according to which out of 511,000 inhabitants, 80.2% are Greeks, 17.9% are Turks and 1.9% others, *Ibid.*, pp. 567-571.

³*Ibid.*, p. 571.

⁴Position Paper Presented in the Office of the United Nations Political and Security Affairs, 14 September 1954, *Foreign Relations of the United States, FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. VIII, pp. 704-708.

⁵Alexis Kyrrou, *Greek Foreign Policy* (in Greek) (Athens, 1955), p. 276. It is

important to note that even though there are numbers of works concerning the Greek applications to the UN concerning the Cyprus issue, there is nothing on the Canadian approach on the issue. The published works on the issue concentrated on the role of Greece, UK, Turkey and the US. For example see Kyrrou, *Greek Foreign Policy* (in Greek); Xydis, *Cyprus, Conflict and Conciliation, 1954-1958*; Demetrios S. Bitsios, *Cyprus: The Vulnerable Republic* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1975); Evangelos Averoff-Tossizza, *The Cyprus Problem, Story of Lost Opportunities*, Vol. 1 and 2 (Athens: Estia, 1981); Ioannis D. Stefanidis, *Isle of Discord: nationalism, imperialism and the making of the Cyprus problem* (London: Hurst & Company, 1999); Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, *Britain and the International Status of Cyprus* (Mediterranean and East European Monographs, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1995). Concerning the Canadian foreign policy, and the Department of External Affairs see John F. Hilliker and Donald D. Barry, *Canada's Department of External Affairs*, (vol. 1: The Early Years, 1909-1946, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990) (vol. 2: Coming of Age, 1946-1968, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995); Stephen Clarkson (ed.), *An Independent Foreign Policy of Canada?* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968); John W. Holmes, *Life with an Uncle: the Canadian-American Relationship* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981); Davit Dewitt and John Kirton, *Canada as a Principal Power: A study in Foreign Policy and International Relations* (Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 1983); Richard Kim Nossal, *The Politics of Canadian Foreign Policy* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1989); Costas Melakopides, *Pragmatic Idealism: Canadian Foreign Policy, 1945-1995* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998).

⁶For the importance of the Greek issue for the Western Alliance and the US concerns over the Greek appeal in the UN, Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), Vol. VIII, pp. 704-753; Stefanidis, *Isle of Discord*, pp. 175-206.

⁷Xydis, *Cyprus, Conflict and Conciliation, 1954-1958*, p. 275.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 425-426. For the intervention of the Canadian representative, supporting amendments on the Greek draft resolution, pp. 430-443.

⁹"And Now Cyprus", *Star-Phoenix*, 4 August 1954.

¹⁰"Conflict on Cyprus", *The Ottawa Journal*, 28 August 1954. Similar remarks were made by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation on 20 August 1954, commenting on the Greek attempt to raise the issue of Cyprus in the UN. See also "British Embassy Attacked, 200,000 Greeks Stage Riot, Demand Union With Cyprus", *Globe and Mail*, 21 August 1954; "Britain's Rights in Cyprus, Turks Want Island Back If the British Should Leave", *The Ottawa Journal*, 1 September 1954; "Background to Cyprus (Canadian Institute of International Affairs)", *The Gazette*, 1 September 1954; "Britain and Cyprus", *Globe and Mail*, 25 October 1954; "The Island of Venus", *The Legionary*, October 1954, pp. 11-14. Copies of the articles published in the Canadian press concerning the Cyprus issue were sent to the

Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Greek Embassy in Ottawa, *Diplomatic and Historical Archive of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, file no. 97/1954/Press on Cyprus. It is worth noting that in a report from the Director of the Press and Information Office of the Royal Greek Embassy in Ottawa reference was made in a discussion with the editor of the newspaper *Le Droit* Camille L'Heureux. L'Heureux stated, as one of the reasons that the Cyprus issue would be supported by the francophone press of Canada, "the antipathy of French-Canadians towards the English", Telegram from the Royal Greek Embassy in Ottawa to the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, No. 3356, 15 June 1954, *Diplomatic and Historical Archive of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, file 97/1954.

¹¹Telegram from the Royal Greek Embassy in Ottawa to the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, No. 1153, 25 November 1954, *Diplomatic and Historical Archive of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, file 57/1954.

¹²Concerning the formation of UNFICYP it is important to mention that in 1964 Canada also played a decisive role in order for Australia to decide to send in Cyprus 40 police officers as a part of UNFICYP. Specifically, at the first UN Secretary General's request for sending police officers in Cyprus (on April 1964), Canberra replied negatively. Few days later "the Canadian Minister for External Affairs contacted, personally, the Head of the Australian Mission to the UN (given that the Minister was away on a visit to the Philippines) 'to urge that Australia reconsider its decision not to contribute police to [the] UN force' in Cyprus. According to the relevant telegram from the Australian Mission, the Canadian Minister expressed a desire 'to impress on the Australian Government his own very strong feelings on the desirability of broadening the basis of the international effort in respect of Cyprus'. The Canadian Minister also claimed that a positive Australian reply to the Secretary General's request for a police contribution, to the UNFICYP, would have a 'tremendous effect' and would influence other countries to reply positively", Nikos Christodoulides, "The Australian contribution to the United Nations Force in Cyprus", (*Greek Research in Australia, Proceedings of the Biennial International Conference of Greek Studies*, Adelaide: Flinders University, 2011, pp. 178–190). For the Canadian contingent in the UNFICYP, James A. Stegenga, *The United Nations Force in Cyprus* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1968).

¹³For the 1967 initiative of the US, UK and Canadian governments *Foreign Relations of the United States, FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. XVI, pp. 651–664; Nikos Kranidiotes, *Defenseless State* (in Greek), vol. 1 (Athens: Estia, 1985, pp. 454–467).

¹⁴For the ABC Plan, Nikos Christodoulides, *Plans for the Solution of the Cyprus Problem, 1948–1978*, (in Greek) (Athens: Kastaniotes, 2009, pp. 200–235); Paper with the title "CYPRUS" prepared by Deputy Under-Secretary, in charge of European matters, in the Canadian Department of External Affairs, Klaus Goldschlag, 13 June 1978 (copy in the British National Archives, file no. FCO 9/2724, 23 June 1978).

¹⁵Memorandum from the Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs [Jules Léger] to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 20 August 1954, in *Documents on Canadian External Relations* (hereinafter referred to as *DCER*), Vol. 20, no. 122.

¹⁶Jules Léger joined the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1940 and in 1953 he became Canada's ambassador to Mexico. In 1954 he was appointed by Lester B. Pearson, Under Secretary of State for External Affairs and in 1958 he became the Permanent Representative of Canada to the North Atlantic Council.

¹⁷Lester B. Pearson became a diplomat in 1928 and served in London and Washington. In 1946 became Under Secretary of State for External Affairs and in 1948 he was appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs. In 1957, he won the Nobel peace prize for his role in defusing the Suez Canal Crisis and the deployment of the first UN peacekeeping force Michael K. Carroll, *Pearson's Peacekeepers: Canada and the United Nations Emergency Force, 1956–67* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009); *The Blue Helmets, A Review of UN Peace-keeping* (New York: Department of Public Information, United Nations, third edition, 1996), pp. 35–37. He then became Prime Minister of Canada from 1963 to 1968. The period that he served as Secretary of State for External Affairs is considered to be the golden ages of the Canadian diplomacy; Canada increased its Diplomatic Missions abroad from 26 to 64 from 1946 to 1956, the annual expenditure of the Canadian Department of External Affairs had increased from just over \$7 million in 1946–7 to \$60.3 million in 1956–7, and during the same period, its total staff had grown from 770 to 1701, see "Punching Above Its Weight: A History of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade".

¹⁸Memorandum, 20 August 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 122. The Greek government was aware that a major argument against its attempt to get support from Western countries over debating the Cyprus issue in the UN would be the possible benefit to be gained by the communist bloc. In this regard, after filling the application, the Greek officials at the UN did not to attempt to have meetings with the Soviet bloc representatives in order to ask them to support the Greek appeal. As Xydis notes, "The Soviet bloc states were approached only at social occasions" and have been asked to refrain from speaking in favour of the Greek appeal when the Cyprus issue would be debated in the UN, see Xydis, *Cyprus, Conflict and Reconciliation, 1954–1958*, pp. 11–12 and Kyrou, *Greek Foreign Policy*, pp. 276–277 and 282–283. At the same time, when the Greek officials were asking the support of Western countries, they made references to possible gains for the communist world if the Greek appeal failed, since it would be used by those countries as a proof of their "propaganda" that the "West's incessant statements about freedom were mere cant", see Xydis, p. 12.

¹⁹Brief prepared by the Colonial Office in Consultation with the Foreign Office concerning the tactical handling of the Cyprus issue in the Assembly, Greek Item

on Cyprus, Brief for the United Kingdom delegation, 20 September 1954, copy in the file *United Nations General Assembly—Ninth Session—Cyprus*, series number A1838, control symbol 852/10/22 Part 3, Department of External Affairs in Canberra, National Archives of Australia.

²⁰Memorandum, 20 August 1954, *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 122.

²¹Kyrou, *Greek Foreign Policy*, pp. 280–282.

²²Memorandum, 20 August 1954, *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 122.

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴*Ibid.* Article 2 (7) states that “Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII”.

²⁵It is interesting to note the fact that the Canadians considered the possession of Cyprus by the British as “UK occupation”. Memorandum, 20 August 1954, *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 122.

²⁶As it is stated in the brief for the handling of the issue by the UK delegation in the UN “many influential Delegations, including those of the United States, Canada, the Scandinavian bloc and perhaps New Zealand consider that discussion in the United Nations does not connote intervention . . .”, Greek Item on Cyprus, Brief for the United Kingdom delegation, 20 September 1954, copy in the file *United Nations General Assembly—Ninth Session—Cyprus*, series number A1838, control symbol 852/10/22 Part 3, Department of External Affairs in Canberra, National Archives of Australia. In the same brief, it is mentioned that “The remaining arguments which the [UK] delegation might use are arguments of expediency. Delegations who are not convinced by the political and legal considerations displayed in the paragraphs above may perhaps be convinced that whatever the legal situation it is not expedient that the Cyprus issue should be discussed during the Ninth Session of the General Assembly. Moreover friendly Governments such as the Government of Canada who wish to support us on Cyprus but who are inhibited from doing so by their particular stand on Article 2 (7) may be able to use our arguments of expediency to defend a vote favorable to us in this particular instance . . . The major expediency argument is our strategic need to maintain a reliable base in the Eastern Mediterranean against possible Russian expansion. Debate in the United Nations will weaken our NATO front in that area”.

²⁷Memorandum, 20 August 1954, *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 122.

²⁸*Ibid.* On 20 August 1954, the US President Dwight D. Eisenhower sent a letter to the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill asking to be informed regarding the handling of the Cyprus issue in London. Eisenhower stated in his letter that his concern over Cyprus “arises out of resultant effects upon American opinion”, *FRUS*, 1952–1954, Vol. VIII, pp. 709–710.

²⁹Memorandum, 20 August 1954, *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 122.

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹Telegram from Australia High Commissioner's Office in Ottawa to the Secretary, Department of External Affairs, Canberra, file *Cyprus—Union with Greece*, series number A 1838, control symbol 852/10/22, Part 2, Department of External Affairs in Canberra, National Archives of Australia.

³²*Ibid.* In reply, the Australians informed that they would, most likely, vote against inclusion.

³³Memorandum from the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson] to Cabinet, 8 September 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 119; Instructions for the Canadian delegation in the UNGA, 8 September 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 120. On the same day (7 September 1954) which the Canadian cabinet discussed and decided how the Canadian delegation should handle the issue of Cyprus at the ninth session of the GA, the Belgian Ambassador in Canada contacted officials of the Canadian Department of External Affairs, informing them on a suggestion of the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs Paul Henri Spaak, for each one of the NATO members to make separate demarches to Greece and to the UK in order to persuade them to take “action to avoid the threatened debate between NATO partners on Cyprus” at the GA. Canada's reaction to Spaak's proposal was that Canada's “present information indicates that there is no hope of avoiding the unpleasant situation which threatens at the forthcoming Assembly. We greatly deplore the prospect and have, in fact, made informal efforts to dissuade the parties from pursuing the policies which have led to the item being placed on the agenda. Our understanding is that the UK has no intention of changing its stand on Cyprus. If the Belgian government has any reason to believe that this is not so, we shall be glad to reconsider the question of an approach by the several NATO powers. As presently advised, however, we regret we can see no benefit and perhaps some harm, particularly to NATO, in Mr. Spaak's suggestion,” see Memorandum from the Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs [Jules Léger] to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 9 September 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 123.

³⁴Memorandum from the Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs [Jules Léger] to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 16 September 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 124.

³⁵In a Commonwealth meeting in New York on 16 September, the British representative informed the participants that the US would abstain on the inscription of the Cyprus issue and that it “would do its best to keep debate in moderate key and to stop passage of any resolution”, Telegram from Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations to the Minister of External Affairs in Wellington, 17 September 1954, no. 268, copy in the file *Cyprus—Union with Greece*, series number A 1838, control symbol 852/10/22 Part 2, Department of External

Affairs, National Archives of Australia. For the said issue in the same file Telegram from Australian Embassy in Washington to the Department of External Affairs in Canberra, 16 September 1954, no. 904.

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷Memorandum from the Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs [Jules Léger] to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 16 September 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 124. In a meeting between representatives of the US and British Missions in the UN, on 20 September 1954, the British officials informed that, at that time, Canada had not decided on the stance that would follow, The United States Representative at the United Nations (Lodge) to the Department of States, *FRUS*, 1952–1954, Vol. VIII, pp. 713–714.

³⁸Memorandum from the Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs [Jules Léger] to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 16 September 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 124.

³⁹Members of the General Committee were the President of the General Assembly, the seven Vice Presidents of the General Assembly and the Presidents of the seven Committees of the UN.

⁴⁰Telegram from the Chairman [David M. Johnson] of the Canadian delegation to UNGA to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 23 September 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 125; Kyrou, *Greek Foreign Policy*, pp. 285–286. According to the telegram from the Canadian delegation to the UNGA, 9 countries (Burma, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Iceland, Syria, Thailand, USSR) voted in favor of inscription, 3 countries (Australia, France and the UK) were against, and 3 countries (Colombia, the Netherlands and the US) abstained.

⁴¹*Ibid.*

⁴²Telegram from the Chairman [David M. Johnson] of the Canadian Delegation to UNGA to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 24 September 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 126. Thirty countries voted in favor of inscription (Egypt, Haiti, Afghanistan, Burma, Yugoslavia, Guatemala, Greece, Indonesia, Ecuador, Iceland, Israel, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Belarus, Lebanon, Mexico, Nicaragua, Ukraine, Uruguay, Poland, El Salvador, Saudi Arabia, USSR, Syria, Thailand, Czechoslovakia, Yemen, Philippines and Honduras), nineteen against (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, France, Liberia, Luxemburg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Sweden, Turkey, Union of South Africa, UK) and eleven countries abstained (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Panama, US, Venezuela). It is worth mentioning that the Greek government was expecting more positive votes. Its explanations for the final result were the effectiveness of the British arguments during the discussion, the energetic British backstage pressures on other delegations and the backstage intervention of the US

(Kydis 1967: 12). For the voting results and the Greek expectations see also Kyrou, *Greek Foreign Policy*, pp. 287–288.

⁴³Telegram from the Chairman [David M. Johnson] of the Canadian delegation to UNGA to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 25 September 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 127.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶Telegram from the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson] to the Canadian High Commissioner in the United Kingdom [Norman A. Robertson], 15 October 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 129. The British asked the Canadian government to approach Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Pakistan, Venezuela and Yugoslavia.

⁴⁷Memorandum from the Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs [Jules Léger] to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 18 October 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 128.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*

⁴⁹Telegram from the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson] to the Canadian High Commissioner in the United Kingdom [Norman A. Robertson], 20 October 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 130.

⁵⁰Memorandum, 18 October 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 128.

⁵¹Memorandum from the Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs [Jules Léger] to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 30 November 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 131.

⁵²*Ibid.*

⁵³*Ibid.* The British had also informed other countries for the new US approach. As it is stated in a letter from the British High Commission in Canberra to the Secretary of the Australian Prime Minister's Department, dated 25 November 1954, "I am to add for your confidential information, that the United States authorities have given the United Kingdom authorities a confidential undertaking that they will actively oppose the passage of any resolution on this question and will do all they can to keep any discussion to the absolute minimum", Letter from the office of the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in Canberra to the Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, 25 November 1954, in the file *United Nations General Assembly—Ninth Session—Cyprus*, series number A 1838, control symbol 852/10/22 Part 3, Department of External Affairs in Canberra, National Archives of Australia.

⁵⁴Memorandum from the Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs [Jules Léger] to the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 30 November 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 131.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*

⁵⁶*Ibid.* It is interesting to mention that Léger's prediction was that the Greek

resolution, it was made to "appear merely as a restatement of one of the purposes of the UN (Article 1(2) of the Charter), placed in the context of the Cyprus issue", and would have been difficult to defeat.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

⁵⁹*Ibid.* According to Léger, "the communist countries and the anti-colonial states of Asia, Africa and Latin America can be expected to support the Greek contentions".

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

⁶¹*Ibid.*

⁶²Telegram from the Delegation to United Nations General Assembly to Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 30 November 1954, in DCER, Vol. 20, no. 132. The Greek draft text read "The *General Assembly*, Having examined the item for the application, under the auspices of the UN, of the principal of equal rights and self-determination of peoples in the case of the population of the island of Cyprus, Mindful that one of the purposes of the UN, as set forth in Article 1 of the Charter, is to "develop friendly relations among nations based in respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples", *Recalling* that, by Resolution 637 A (VII) of 16 December 1952, it had been recommended that "states members of the UN shall recognize and promote the realization of the right of self-determination of the peoples of non-self-governing and trust territories who are under their administration and shall facilitate the exercise of this right by the people of such territories according to the principle and spirit of the peoples concerned, the wishes of the people being ascertained through plebiscites or other recognized democratic means, preferably under the auspices of the UN", *Taking into Account* the maturity and fitness of the population of Cyprus to determine for themselves their future status, *Express the Wish* that the principle of self-determination be applied, under the auspices of the UN in the case of the population of the Island of Cyprus".

⁶³Telegram from the Canadian High Commission in United Kingdom [Norman A. Robertson] to Secretary of State [Lester B. Pearson], 2 December 1954, in DCER, Vol. 20, no. 133. In an "old Commonwealth" meeting in New York on 9 December 1954, the UK Delegation informed the participants "that while United States would against any Greek resolution on substance, they would not feel able to oppose it actively i.e. by lobbying among Latin American delegations. Americans favour proposal for procedural motion by which it would be decided not to proceed with discussion of item", Telegram from New Zealand Permanent Representative in New York to the Minister of External Affairs, Wellington, no. 439, 9 December 1954, copy in the file *United Nations General Assembly—Ninth Session—Cyprus*, series number A 1838, control symbol 852/10/22 Part 3, Department of External Affairs in Canberra, National Archives of Australia. In the same file

see also the telegram from the Australian Mission to the United Nations to the Department in Canberra, no. 1103, dated 11 December 1954. The Australian Permanent Representative informed Canberra for the discussion at the "Old Commonwealth" meeting and the new British plan of action.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*

⁶⁵*Ibid.*

⁶⁶Telegram from the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson] to Chairman, Canadian Delegation to United Nations General Assembly, 7 December 1954, in DCER, vol. 20, no. 134.

⁶⁷During an "Old Commonwealth" meeting, dated 9 December 1954, the Canadian delegation expressed doubts "concerning desirability of limiting discussion on preventing vote on substance", Telegram from New Zealand Permanent Representative to UN in New York to the Minister of External Affairs, Wellington, no. 439, 9 December 1954, copy in the file *United Nations General Assembly—Ninth Session—Cyprus*, series number A 1838, control symbol 852/10/22 Part 3, Department of External Affairs in Canberra, National Archives of Australia.

⁶⁸Telegram from the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson] to Chairman, Canadian Delegation to United Nations General Assembly, 7 December 1954, in DCER, vol. 20, no. 134.

⁶⁹Telegram from the Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson] to Chairman, Canadian Delegation to UNGA [David M. Johnson], 13 December 1954, in DCER, vol. 20, no. 135.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*

⁷¹*Ibid.*

⁷²Kyrou, *Greek Foreign Policy*, pp. 303–304; Telegram from the New Zealand Permanent Representative in New York to the Minister of External Affairs, Wellington, 14 December 1954, copy in the file *United Nations General Assembly—Ninth Session—Cyprus*, series number A 1838, control symbol 852/10/22 Part 3, Department of External Affairs in Canberra, National Archives of Australia.

⁷³The Greek draft resolution had been amended from the one presented to the Canadians and described in footnote 62 above. Paragraphs 3 and 4 of the first draft resolution were deleted.

⁷⁴Telegram from the Canadian Delegation to UNGA to Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 14 December 1954, in DCER, vol. 20, no. 136.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*

⁷⁶*Ibid.*

⁷⁷Telegram from the Canadian Delegation to UNGA to Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 15 December 1954, in DCER, vol. 20, no. 137.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*

⁷⁹*Ibid.* Furthermore, in his telegram to Ottawa, Johnson stated that after the

Commonwealth meeting, the British representative approached him asking for the Canadian support "... on the basis that our vote might be crucial and that a procedural resolution which did not deal with the merits of the case could not really be called important although the question of Cyprus certainly was important".

⁸⁰Among the countries abstained were the Communist states.

⁸¹Xydis, *Cyprus, Conflict and Conciliation*, 1954–1958, p. 14; Kyrrou, *Greek Foreign Policy*, pp. 314–320.

⁸²Xydis, *Cyprus, Conflict and Conciliation*, 1954–1958, p. 14.

⁸³Memorandum of Conversation, by the Deputy Director of the office of Greek, Turkish, and Iranian Affairs, 8 February 1954, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1952–1954, Vol. VIII, pp. 679–680; Memorandum of Conversation by the Acting Director of the Office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian Affairs, 15 April 1954, *FRUS*, 1952–1954, Vol. VIII, pp. 685–687; Aide Memoire, The Department of State to the British Embassy, 12 July 1954, *FRUS*, 1952–1954, Vol. VIII, pp. 695–696; Xydis, *Cyprus, Conflict and Conciliation*, 1954–1958, pp. 18–20.

⁸⁴Assessment of the Ninth GA from the Canadian Permanent Representative to UN [David M. Johnson] to Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs [Lester B. Pearson], 22 December 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 210. As it is stated in the Canadian assessment, "So strong was the support of the postponement motion on Cyprus that had Kyrrou, the Greek Delegate, not shrewdly decided to support it himself, he would have been left with only the Soviet bloc, Iceland, and a handful of Arabs and Latins supporting him. Indeed from the time he had heard incredulously of the US decision to oppose rather than abstain on the Greek resolution, Kyrrou had, with a good deal of dignity and moderation, reconciled himself to being a 'good loser'". Furthermore, concerning the US–UK cooperation during the ninth session of the UNGA, in the said assessment was mentioned that "Behind the headlines, one of the chief features of the session was not the tenuous and superficial *détente*, for purposes of mutual convenience, between the US and the USSR, but the solid and real *entente*, between the UK and the US. These two delegations between them invariably have great influence in the UN but at this session of the Assembly they achieved a remarkable degree of accommodation and coordination which for the first time began to extend beyond East-West relations and into the colonial and economic fields".

⁸⁵*Ibid.*

⁸⁶*Ibid.*

⁸⁷Telegram from Permanent Representative to UN [David M. Johnson] to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs [Jules Léger] (Ninth General Assembly Preview: Political Items), 10 September 1954, in *DCER*, Vol. 20, no. 121.

International Law and Turkey's Systematic Destruction of Historic Non-Muslim and Non-Turkish Minorities

Van Coufoudakis

The rise of the Young Turks (1908) set the foundation for the destruction and removal of non-Turkish, non-Muslim communities from Turkey. Historical records document the elimination of these minorities from their ancestral homes and the destruction of their cultural heritage. Greeks, Armenians, Assyrians, Jews and Kurds have been victims of these deliberate and systematic policies. How does Turkey explain its actions? How/why have these actions gone unpunished? An examination of Turkey's deliberated and systematic policies against its ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities is critical at a time when Turkey aspires to join the EU, an organization dedicated to the rule of law, democracy and human rights. The Republic of Turkey must come to terms with its own past, with the consequences of its policies and with its legal obligations under its own constitution and the various international conventions it has freely signed and ratified during the course of the 20th century.

From the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey

The Ottoman Empire was a multinational and multi-confessional empire. Non-Turkish and non-Muslim minorities developed