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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Turkey Condemned For Demographic Changes On Northern Cyprus

Editor,

Please allow me to draw your attention to a Resolution of the Committee on Migration, Refugee and Demography of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly adopted at its recent Valencia (Spain) Meeting Condemning Turkey for the demographic changes it is implementing in Cyprus.

The resolution based on a Report of the Spanish Senator Alfons Cuco, who had undertaken an investigation in the Island, explicitly states that Turkey has brought deliberately settlers to the occupied areas in order to alter the demographic structure of Cyprus.

According to Cuco's Report in the years 1975 and 1977 there was a substantial influx of migrants, "Anatolian peasants" in the northern territories of the Island. No official data regarding the number of settlers was given to Mr. Cuco by the Turkish authorities but T/C sources contacted by the Senator estimated the number of settlers between 40,000 and 45,000, excluding the undeclared "workers" (M. Akinci, Secretary-General of the Communal Liberation Party.) In the meantime considerable numbers of Turkish-Cypriots have emigrated from the Island. Mr. Cuco considers even more serious the fact that many of the settlers were given the Cypriot nationality! "Act No 3/1975" of the so called Turkish-Cypriot Administration, an Administration set up by the occupation forces, offers naturalization to members of the Turkish Armed Forces who had served in Cyprus and to their relatives. Further more a "Regulation" of 1981 provides for the granting of the so called "Turkish-Cypriot nationality" to persons permanently resident in Cyprus for at least one year, to persons who have made or could make an important contribution to the economy, to social and cultural life, to the development of external relations or the raising of the

standard of education and to all those who have rendered services the continuation of which is vital to the "security forces"!!!

Mr. Cuco refers in his Report to the opposition of Turkish-Cypriot parties to a situation in which the Turkish-Cypriots themselves are turning gradually to a minority in their own country with far reaching repercussions regarding the present and the future not only of the community but the Island as a whole.

The Report points out that in order to complete the demographic picture of Cyprus account must also be taken of the presence on the Island of the Turkish army estimated at 30,000 men, a ratio "unique in Europe" (15 percent of the total population of the areas under occupation.)

Mr. Cuco concludes his Report stressing that the presence and "naturalization" of the settlers in the occupied area of Cyprus "indubitably constitutes a further barrier to a peaceful, negotiated solution of the Cyprus problem."

The Resolution of the Committee on Migration, Refugee and Demography of the Council of Europe calls on the European Population Committee to conduct a Census in order to estimate the exact number of mainland settlers in the occupied areas of Cyprus. At the same time the Resolution calls Turkey to withdraw its occupation forces from the island and hand over a list of all its citizens now on Cypriot territory. All naturalization, states the Resolution, should be considered invalid.

Thank you for the space offered to my letter.

Yours faithfully,
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