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TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 360 OF 16 DECEMBER 1980.

INFO PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON, ATHENS, ANKARA AND
CBFC (ACTIONED).

VISIT OF PRESIDENT KYPRIANOU

1. THE PRESIDENT WILL SEE THE PRIME MINISTER AT A TIME WHEN HIS POLITICAL PROSPECTS ARE UNCLEAR. HIS PARTY (DEKO) HAS SPLIT RETAINING 10 AS AGAINST THE PREVIOUS 19 SEATS IN A HOUSE OF 35. THE COMMUNISTS (AKEL), GENERALLY SEEN AS RETAINING UPWARDS OF A QUARTER OF THE VOTE, HAVE WITHDRAWN THEIR SUPPORT FROM KYPRIANOU. PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, DUE NEXT YEAR, WILL PROBABLY BE HELD IN APRIL OR MAY.

2. ON THE OTHER HAND KYPRIANOU IS LIKELY TO SURVIVE HIS PRESENT DIFFICULTIES PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE STRENGTH FLOWING FROM HIS TENURE OF OFFICE. IN ANY CASE HIS POSITION AS PRESIDENT IS NOT DIRECTLY DEPENDENT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS. (PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS ARE DUE IN 1983). KYPRIANOU WILL NEED SUPPORT IN THE HOUSE TO GET LEGISLATION THROUGH WHEN, AS IS LIKELY, HIS PARTY IS IN AN EVEN WEAKER POSITION AFTER THE ELECTIONS. BUT THERE ARE SIGNS THAT HE MAY GET THIS FROM THE COMMUNISTS WHO HAVE RECENTLY MODERATED THEIR ATTACKS ON HIS ADMINISTRATION.

3. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, KYPRIANOU FACES DIFFICULT DECISIONS ON THE INTERCOMMUNAL ISSUE. THE TALKS HAVE MADE MODEST PROGRESS. BUT AFTER 12 MEETINGS THEY HAVE REACHED A STAGE WHERE WITHOUT IMAGINATION AND REALISM ON BOTH SIDES THEY MAY DEGENERATE INTO A STERILE DIALOGUE IN WHICH NO EFFECTIVE ATTEMPT IS MADE TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES.

4. KYPRIANOU HAS NOT SO FAR SHOWN EITHER OF THESE QUALITIES. HIS REACTION SEEMS TO BE A DETERMINATION TO STAND PAT ON THE POSITION THAT ANY MOVE MUST COME FROM THE TURKISH SIDE WHO, AS THE "AGGRESSORS", HAVE A DUTY TO GIVE BACK TERRITORY AND ENABLE GREEK CYPRIOT REFUGEES TO RETURN TO THEIR PROPERTY. ONLY WHEN THIS IS AGREED CAN CONCESSIONS BE CONSIDERED ON THE STRONG CENTRALISED POWERS PROPOSED BY THE GREEK CYPRIOTS FOR A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (SEMI COLON) OR A MORE FLEXIBLE APPROACH BE ADOPTED TOWARDS THE TURKISH SIDE'S PROPOSALS FOR PRACTICAL MEASURES TO EASE THE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES CAUSED BY THEIR ISOLATION. IN SHORT, DESPITE HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THE CONCEPT OF A BIREGIONAL FEDERATION, KYPRIANOU TO ALL APPEARANCES CONTINUES TO INSIST ON A RETURN TO SOMETHING LIKE THE PRE-1974 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE TWO COMMUNITIES. HE THUS DISREGARDS OR MINIMISES THE LEGACY OF DISTRUST RESULTING LARGELY FROM GREEK CYPRIOT ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS DURING THE YEARS BEFORE 1974.

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5. IN TERMS OF HIS OWN POLITICAL INTEREST KYPRIANOU WOULD NO DOUBT JUSTIFY HIS RIGID ATTITUDE AS AVOIDING ACCUSATIONS OF BETRAYAL OF VITAL GREEK CYPRIOT INTERESTS. BUT RECENT SOUNDINGS OF CYPRIOT OPINION HAVE SHOWN THAT EVEN AMONG GREEK CYPRIOT REFUGEES THERE IS NOT UNIVERSAL SUPPORT FOR AN EXTREME POSITION. BY INDICATING WILLINGNESS TO MOVE ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE AND (WITH APPROPRIATE SAFEGUARDS) ON PRACTICAL MEASURES, KYPRIANOU COULD PUT THE TURKISH SIDE UNDER STRONG PRESSURE TO MOVE ON TERRITORY. I HOPE THAT AN ATTEMPT CAN BE MADE TO GET HIM TO SEE THAT HE CAN IN THIS WAY GIVE A FRESH IMPETUS TO THE TALKS. IN THE RUN-UP TO THE ELECTIONS FLEXIBILITY OF THIS KIND COULD WELL WORK TO HIS ADVANTAGE.

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