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Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I know of no Member of this body who is not very favorably inclined toward Greece. I know of no enemies of Greece in this body. But there are differences of opinion as to how we should face up, in our capacity as an outsider, to the situation which has developed in the Aegean, centering around the island of Cyprus.

The statement has been made that there have been no negotiations. I wish to assure the Senate that there have been talks, that the Secretary of State has carried on discussions with both the Greeks and the Turks, and that in his opinion, if he is allowed a little leeway, a little flexibility, the outlook as far as Greece is concerned is much better than it would be with the amendment which has been passed by the Senate already by a vote of 3 to 1, and which is now before us again in the form of a motion to recommit.

I would like to emphasize that in my opinion Secretary Kissinger's attitude and activity toward and in relation to the Cyprus situation has not been pathetic, nor, for that matter, has it been peripatetic. What he has tried to do is stay clear, to allow the original signatories to the treaty of 1960, the United Kingdom—which still has troops on Cyprus, incidentally, and has had since 1960—Greece, and Turkey, those three, to see if some way could not be worked out to bring about a solution as satisfactory as possible to all concerned.

I commend the Secretary of State for finally, in one instance, not advocating interference or intervention. Maybe out of that has come a lesson which will stand us in good stead in the future, if we stick with it, if we stay out of other people's business, tend to our own, render our good offices, and do what we can, through negotiations, to bring about as reasonable a solution as possible. We are not talking of war and peace in the abstract; we have been talking of war in reality, and the casualty figures, the dead and the wounded, will suffice to prove that statement.

What we are seeking now is peace on Cyprus. What we want to do is bring about a withdrawal of the Turkish forces from the island. Under the present situation they will withdraw neither in part nor in whole.

What we want to do is try to give some stability, some understanding, some prestige to the Karamanlis government, which I think has the unanimous support of the 100 Members of the U.S. Senate and the Government of the United States as well. We think Karamanlis is a great man, but we think he needs a chance to reestablish democracy in Greece, and in so doing, we have to recognize that he is being buffeted on the one hand by the right and on the other hand by the left.

So those of us—and I think this applies to all Senators, regardless of whether or not they voted for the Eagleton amendment—do have the best interests of Greece at heart, and we would like to see it restored and become once again the country it was before it was taken over by the military dictatorship.

Greece has withdrawn from NATO, to what extent I cannot say. Turkey may well withdraw from NATO if the present situation continues. But I would point out again, as I did on yesterday, that there are four factors we ought to keep in consideration in relation to the situation which might develop if this amendment holds, and if the reaction is as I anticipate it will be.

For, one, my possibility of mediation, negotiation, or talk to and among the three parties by Secretary of State Kissinger would well be negated.

Two, we find that the Turks have a thousand-mile frontier with the Soviet Union and, instead of tilting toward us, as they have for so many years, one result of this might be a tilt in the direction of their ancient adversary to the north.

Three, there is the question of a Mohammedan people, a Moslem people—that is the religion of the Turks—taking a more active interest in the situation in the Middle East and, thereby, making it more difficult for us, for Secretary Kissinger, to arrive at a peaceful understanding of the situation there and between the nations in that area. That is a most difficult, a most delicate, and a most dangerous situation still today, one which may erupt if we are not careful and do not play our cards correctly.

Then we have to consider the overall possibility. No. 4, that, as a result of this, Turkey might withdraw from NATO, and in Turkey and in Greece we have U.S. installations. What would be the effect of a double withdrawal from NATO by Greece, on the one hand, and Turkey, on the other? The effect would be to weaken the strongest link in NATO because both Greece and Turkey, if my memory is correct, have fulfilled their obligations to the hilt, and they have maintained the necessary forces on that flank to achieve security in that area.

As I have indicated, I am a friend of NATO, but I am not a friend of having so many U.S. troops and military de-