

WE REMEMBER DR. IHSAN ALI
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Dr. Ihsan Ali lived a life (1904-1978), full of love for his home country, Cyprus. He served as a physician for both the T/C and G/C. He was also a clever politician with a vision and showed always close interest for local and international politics.

When he returned to Cyprus as a doctor, he settled in 1934 in Paphos from where he contributed a lot for the betterment of the living conditions of the Cypriot people under the British colonial government. He regularly wrote articles about the political, social and economic problems related with the T/C. He started to write in the progressive Kemalist weekly *Ses* (Voice) in 1935 on medical matters. Later he wrote political articles in *Soz* (Word) newspaper and he became its editor-in-chief one year later. He was criticising the T/C political leadership, formed around the KATAK and he was himself the Paphos district secretary of this party. In 1951-53, he wrote in *Istiklal* (Freedom) newspaper of Necati Özkan, who was also an opponent of Dr. Kucuk's policies. Dr. Ihsan Ali was a member of the Paphos Educational Board and socially active in the Paphos Turkish Unity Club as well as a member of the Paphos Municipality Council.

When the Republic of Cyprus was established in 1960, he started to write in the weekly newspaper "Cumhuriyet" (Republic), owned by the two advocates Ahmet Gurkan and Ayhan Hikmet who in 1962 were murdered by the orders of the partitionist T/C leadership. Dr. Ihsan Ali wrote the following evaluation in his "Memoirs":

"The Zurich and London Agreements created an extraordinary (phenomenon of a) state. It was very difficult to have a harmonious co-operation of the two communities within the framework of this constitution which had no parallel anywhere in the world. Three years after the inception of the Constitution, the first bloody incidents broke out, known as "the 1963 incidents". (p.37)... The colonial power chose to sow the seeds of disruption, as it did elsewhere. The colonialists believed that they could plant those seeds through the London-Zurich Agreements. (p.37)

The percentage of Turkish public servants and policemen (30%) as required by the Constitution, was far higher than the proportion of the population, while the percentage of the Turkish forces (TURDYK) was 40 % and that of Greek Forces (ELDYK) 60 per cent. Recognition of the right of veto by the T/C Vice-President, separate courts, separate municipalities and above all, the presence of Turkish and Greek Forces in Cyprus all appeared very attractive to the Turkish side and were considered great success. However, it was the colonialists who had really succeeded. All their efforts concentrated on doing everything within their power to secure the acceptance of a constitution that sooner or later could cause a clash between the two communities. They believed that, with mutual destruction that would be created among the Cypriot people, they would secure their own military bases, which they managed to consolidate with the Zurich Constitution." (p.37)

Dr. Ihsan Ali defended his honourable struggle against the partitionist T/C leadership as follows: "One can easily understand how those people terrorised the T/C community. There is no doubt that their aim was to separate the two communities so that the situation would culminate in de facto partition. I hope that the reader will understand why I refused to cooperate with that leadership... As I did not follow the policy of the T/C leadership, I was accused of being a traitor, by those who wanted to conceal their own treason.

Even some Greeks regarded my action as strange because their fanaticism and chauvinism did not allow them to realise that I was facing the situation as a Cypriot and was concerned about the interest of the people of Cyprus as a whole. They could not appreciate this line of thought and I wonder how could the Cyprus State continue to exist if the Cypriot people are not able to realise that first of all they are Cypriots." (p.58)

Dr. Ihsan Ali was a close friend of President Makarios and he was appointed as his political adviser in 1970. After the fascist coup and the following Turkish invasion, he was one of the participants of the National Council Meeting when the basic principles were adopted in 1977. He wrote the following in his "Memoirs" in 1978 a few months before his death:

"The basic principles for the solution to the Cyprus problem were made known to Waldheim and Clifford by Archbishop Makarios. The principles had to do with the territorial percentage, return of the Greek and Turkish refugees, freedom of movement and settlement and the recognition of the right of ownership. Those principles were rejected after a few days by the T/C leadership and Turkey. (p.94)... ... For the resolution of the problem, there are some basic preconditions for the safe-guarding the independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of the Cypriot state. These are the freedom of movement, the recognition of the right of property for every citizen and the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Cyprus. These basic preconditions which are desired by the masses on both sides are not recognised by the Turkish government and the T/C leadership. Thus, the continuation of the talks with the delaying

tactics followed by the Turks aim at perpetuating the situation that prevails today. Such tactics would inevitably lead to partition and perhaps double Enosis, with the direct result of the dissolution of the Cyprus Republic." (p.100)

These thoughts of Dr. Ihsan Ali show very clearly the notion of the common homeland with Cypriot citizens as point of reference.

As we can see it in his letters which were written to the son of his brother, Mr. Ozdemir Ozgur, and which were published in 2004 in Turkish as a book under the title "Letters from Dr. Ihsan Ali", his assessments and predictions were proven right and this shows how he was competent of the subject. In his letter of 13 May 1976, he wrote the following about a letter he sent to President Makarios:

"I have defended the thesis that the two communities can live together. If this did not bring any result, this is not my fault, but of the junta and the EOKA-B" I wrote and I stated that my position was thus very delicate, because I am a Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot side regards me as an outsider. I also isolated myself from my own community because of my faithful and serious policy (at the same time as a result of the transfer of the Turkish Cypriots to the North and because of the treachery of the Greek-Cypriot side) and because of all these, I, as a citizen who made politics for many years, don't feel myself 'psychologically' well and on the other hand, I again lost as a physician since all the Turkish Cypriots were transferred to the North. I feel myself as a pensioner. He phoned me and said that we could talk when we would meet." (p.151)

He wrote the following on 27 April 1977:

"It doesn't look like that the Cyprus problem will be solved. It seems to me that the Turks will declare a separate government. And they will allow the US to build bases in their quarter. The British have their bases in the Greek-Cypriot side that the Americans can use them whenever they want. Like they used them during the Arab-Israeli wars. In other words, the war planes took off from here and bombed the Arabs. It is cowardly that the CIA brought such a great calamity to Cyprus, though they had such an opportunity in their hands." (p.180)

Dr. Ihsan Ali looked with doubt at the solution formulas brought by the creators of the problem. Here are some quotations from the year 1978: "It's a pity that the key of this problem is in the hands of the silly Americans. And we are worried that a logical solution will not be found so easily." (p.204)

"I don't see it possible that the Greek Cypriot side will achieve successful results. What the aim and the policy of the American government are, will be realised. These dream-loving creatures have tied their hopes to their Motherland (!) which caused their own destruction. Whereas they don't know that Greece has accepted the double enosis which was proposed by the USA, but this could not be realised, because Turkey rejected it. I learned this long ago." (p.206)

"There is no hopeful sign whatsoever that this problem, that is the Cyprus problem, will be settled easily. As long as the Middle East problem continues as it is now, it looks like that the Cyprus problem, too, will still be pending. All of these are the games of the NATO." (p.211)

Dr. Ihsan Ali had seen the development of the awareness of Cypriotism as the only way out and he expressed his criticisms and views towards this end:

"The soul and the mentality carried by the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots are terrible obstacle for the establishment of an independent state as the state of Cyprus. The Turkish flag is hanged in the Turkish quarter and the Greek flag is hanged in the Greek quarter. The Cypriot flag is not seen. The Greek Cypriots celebrate 28th March Ohi Day as if it is their own holiday and the Turks celebrate 29 October as if it is their own holiday. Indeed, this kind of actions, create disgust for the future. The days which are regarded as holiday by other states are celebrated and the day of "so-called independence" does not bother anyone. Then they declare without being ashamed that they want an independent and sovereign state. I am so much afraid that this situation will end up with double enosis and then the real disaster will happen." (p.194)

If Dr. Ihsan Ali were alive, I am sure, he would state with the same clarity how he would feel embarrassed that the south of our island became a part of the EU and the north came under the control of the USA, through Turkey.

Dr. Ihsan Ali, quoted in his letter of 5th June 1972 that Makarios told someone for the second time about himself "If we also had not more, but 5-6 Ihsan Alis" (p.75)! He wrote in another letter of 1 November 1977 the following: "It cannot be an exaggeration to tell that since Makarios vanished, there is no taste anymore in this country." (p.196) I tell that, at this very moment, our Cyprus is in need of thousands of Ihsan Alis. Our task is to remain faithful to his memory and to contribute at the bringing up of new Ihsan Alis and to contribute at the reunification of our country.