

Studies in Atatürk's Turkey

THE AMERICAN DIMENSION



EDITED BY

GEORGE S. HARRIS AND NUR BILGE CRISS

BRILL

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND ITS HERITAGE

Studies in Atatürk's Turkey

The Ottoman Empire and its Heritage

Politics, Society and Economy

Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

ŞUHNAZ YILMAZ

The origins of Turkish-American relations can be traced all the way back to the visit of the frigate *George Washington* to İstanbul in 1800 and to the signing of the first bilateral treaty of commerce in 1830. Since these very limited contacts, this resilient relationship has witnessed two world wars, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of the Republic of Turkey, the transition from balance of power politics to the bipolarity of the Cold War era, the challenges of the post-Cold War and post-September 11 international context, and numerous ups and downs in bilateral relations.

This volume provides invaluable insights regarding an often neglected, yet very important period in Turkish-American relations. It puts missing pieces of a puzzle together to form a more comprehensive picture about a seminal period in the evolution of Turkish-American relations during the years between the First and Second World Wars. An intricate web of initiatives and tensions marks this crucial formative phase, which laid the basis for the extensive relationship that marked the ensuing Cold War period. The book aims to provide a better understanding of how the relations as well as the perceptions of the two countries were mutually shaped and transformed in these interwar years. Within this context, a number of crucial factors defined the course of the relationship, including tensions between domestic and foreign policy, interaction of multiple variables (political, economic, cultural, and military) in policy formation, the impact of international developments on foreign policy decisions, and finally the role played by key diplomats and individuals. The primary focus of the book is on this often neglected final aspect, which made a significant impact during the period of early contacts in Atatürk's Turkey.

The Cold War years, during which strategic and security concerns resulted in extensive ties between Turkey and the United States has been the subject of numerous studies by both Turkish and American scholars. Important among these was Oral Sander's analysis of Turkish-American relations focusing on the period from the Truman Doctrine (1947) to the first Cyprus crisis (1964). It was complemented by such works as

George McGhee's *The U.S.-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection*, which concentrated on the strategic significance of Turkish-American relations in the Cold War era, and George Harris' *Troubled Alliance*, which examined the major foreign policy issues (especially the Cyprus question) affecting relations between the two countries.¹

The period prior to the Cold War, which provided the background and the framework for extensive relations between the United States and Turkey, however, has been comparatively neglected. Although a few studies deal comprehensively with American policies toward the Middle East as a whole in this era, these studies commonly devote only one or two chapters to relations with Turkey.² Thus, rather than presenting a detailed account and analysis of Turkish-American relations, these works are more useful in setting out the broader context in which to place these relations, as well as providing valuable bibliographical guidance. There are also more specific works focusing on a single aspect of the relationship. Most significant among these are Leland Gordon's *American Relations with Turkey (1830-1930): An Economic Interpretation*; Robert Daniel's *American Philanthropy in the Near East (1829-1960)*, and James Barton's *Story of Near East Relief (1915-1930)*. These books play an important role in providing guidelines for an examination of the economic and philanthropic factors affecting diplomatic relations. However, other than Roger Trask's *The United States' Response to Turkish Nationalism and Reform (1914-1939)*, which evaluates the relations mostly from the American perspective without

¹ Oral Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri, 1947-1964* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayını, 1979); George McGhee, *The U.S.-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets* (London: MacMillan, 1990); George S. Harris, *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945-1971* (Washington & Stanford: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research & Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, 1972).

² The most significant of these studies are John A. De Novo, *American Interests and Policies in the Middle East 1900-1919* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963); Thomas Bryson, *American Diplomatic Relations with the Middle East (1874-1975): A Survey* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1977); Bryson, *Seeds of Middle East Crisis: U.S. Diplomatic Role in the Middle East during World War II* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1981). Bryson also published a comprehensive annotated bibliography, *United States-Middle East Diplomatic Relations (1784-1978)*, including unpublished Ph.D. dissertations.

using any Turkish archival sources or libraries,³ there is rather limited coverage of Turkish-American relations in Atatürk's Turkey.

The major contribution of this collection is to present a comprehensive study of the formative stage of Turkish-American relations by making extensive use of Turkish, American, and British archival sources as well as private paper collections, including Louis Edgar Browne's, Admiral Bristol's, Louise Bryant's, and Ambassador Grew's private papers, some of which are hitherto unused by other authors. The book also does an unusually good job of presenting both sides of the coin by reflecting both the Turkish and the American perspectives through tracing the footsteps of critical individuals shaping the relations.

At the time of the Ottoman Empire, political relations between the two countries remained rather limited. Economic and missionary interests served as the dominant factors shaping relations in this period. While some important contacts were established, one of the most destructive developments in this long prelude to the future of the relationship was caused by Ottoman massacres and forced relocation of the Armenians. The haunting legacy of these tragic events, when combined with the intense negative publicity by some missionary and Armenian groups, resulted in the formation of the stereotype of the "Terrible Turk" in the United States. Even after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the impact of these developments would be strongly felt by the young Republic of Turkey in its relations with the United States.

In the wake of the termination of hostilities in the First World War, the United States found itself at a crossroads. On the one hand, the administration of President Woodrow Wilson sought to pave the way to play an active role in the post-war settlement of the fate of the Middle East and had aspirations to undertake new responsibilities, including mandates through hoped-for participation in the League of Nations. On the other hand, Wilson's government faced strong pressures at home to maintain the isolationist foreign policy tradition of the United States. It was the clash of these internationalist and isolationist trends which determined the path that the United States would take at his critical

³ Roger R. Trask, *The United States Response to Turkish Nationalism and Reform, 1914-1939* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971). Roger Trask presents a comprehensive account of various aspects of Turkish-American relations. However, as reflected in the title, he focuses on the "U.S. Response" and the only Turkish primary source that Trask uses is *Djemal Pasha, Memoirs of a Turkish Statesman, 1913-1919* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1922).

juncture in history. While the isolationist current proved to be generally in the ascendant, the United States would nonetheless continue to strive to keep an “open door” abroad for its economic interests.

In the meantime, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire created a power vacuum in this region. In Anatolia, this vacuum was filled by a nationalist movement against the occupying powers. By prevailing in the end, this victorious nationalist struggle would enable the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923.⁴ The volatile period starting with truce at the end of the First World War and lasting until the reestablishment of diplomatic ties in 1927 proved to be a considerably more complex interlude in the history of Turkish-American relations than is usually recognized.

The first three chapters of the book focus on the early contacts of the Americans with the nationalists in Anatolia during the turbulent days of Turkey’s war of independence. These contacts were critical for opening the channels of communication. The following three chapters focus on the evolution and nature of official ties as shaped by prominent diplomats on both sides, a process which proved to be critical for filling the reservoirs of trust during a difficult period for the relationship. During these years, the efforts of able diplomats on both sides helped to create a Turkish-American rapprochement that under-girded amicable relations during this interwar era.

Seçil Karal Akgün’s contributions constitute two complementary chapters focusing on the contacts of Americans with the nationalist leaders in Ankara during the early days of Turkey’s national war of independence. With the emergence of the Turkish nationalist movement under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), the Turks started to regain the ability to shape the future of their country. Allied miscalculation in supporting the Greek invasion of Asia Minor produced a nationalistic backlash. As a result, Mustafa Kemal was able to rally the Anatolian Turks to resist the Greek invasion and to oppose Allied occupation. The Sultan, who became a pawn of the Allies, was discredited, and the nationalists formed a *de facto* government controlling much of Anatolia.

⁴ In addition to the emergence of an independent Republic of Turkey in Anatolia, the ultimate peace settlement at the end of the war provided for the establishment of a British mandate over Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine and a French mandate over Syria and Lebanon.

During the initial stages of the nationalist movement (1919–1922) until the decisive victory of the Kemalist forces at the battle of the Sakarya River, the Allied Powers (especially the British) for the most part underestimated the strength and determination of the nationalists. Isolated during much of their struggle for independence, the nationalists reached out to establish close ties with the Soviet Union, whose military and economic assistance they welcomed. For its part, the United States became one of the first Western powers to take the nationalist movement seriously and to maintain constant contacts with it, albeit through non-official channels. The nationalists, in return, also viewed the United States favorably, particularly because of its non-involvement in the Allied plans for partitioning the Ottoman Empire.

In charting the role that the United States would play in determining the fate of former Ottoman territories after the First World War, Woodrow Wilson's government saw itself faced with the need to be active on three fronts. In the Middle East, the Americans sent missions to collect information about the needs and wishes of different peoples of this area. With the Europeans, the American government made clear that its views and findings did not support the secret arrangements that the Western powers had sought to impose on the Ottoman Empire. And finally, in the United States, the Wilson administration had to fight a continuing battle to try to gain support for a new role in the world.

Inasmuch as the United States had never declared war on the Ottomans, its role in the post-war negotiations over Turkey was rather complicated. The Paris Peace Conference was the only venue where American representatives could participate in dealing with the future of the Ottoman Empire on an equal basis with their allies. President Wilson had indicated his interest in shaping the future of this region by declaring in the twelfth of his famous Fourteen Points that “the Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.”⁵ This gave notice to the Allies that the American view would contradict

⁵ Ray Stannard Baker and William E. Dodd, eds., *The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, 6 vols. (New York: 1925–1927), vol. 5, pp. 160–161.

their secret arrangements regarding the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire.

The dissention between the Allies over the status of their mandates in the Middle East led Wilson to advocate the establishment of an international commission to inquire about the perspective of the peoples concerned. Accordingly, two commissions were appointed to assess the pros and cons of an American mandate in the Ottoman lands. Then, when France and Britain refused to participate due to their dispute over Syria, President Wilson dispatched the American members of the commission, President Henry C. King of Oberlin College and Charles R. Crane, to the region. The King-Crane commission, officially referred to as “the American Section of the International Commission on Mandates in Turkey,” also inquired about the viability of an Armenian state under an American mandate.⁶

Akgün points out that Mr. Crane realized the significance of the nationalist movement in Anatolia for determining the future of the Turks as early as the turbulent days just before the opening of the Sivas Congress of 1919. Hence Crane requested that Louis Edgar Browne of the *Chicago Daily News* attend the Congress in order to be able to inform the Peace Conference of the decisions reached by this nationalist body. At a time when there was a significant duality of power between the Sultan in İstanbul and the nationalist movement in Anatolia, the presence of an American journalist in Sivas during the first national congress held by the Kemalists⁷ provided an invaluable international voice to the arduously struggling nationalists.

Making extensive use of the Browne Papers housed at the Hoover Institution Archives at Stanford University, Akgün presents a compelling account of Browne’s one week stay in Anatolia, which in Browne’s own words was “more or less an Arabian nights experience with pass

⁶ For the entire text of the report, see Charles R. Crane and Henry C. King, “Report of the American Section of the International Commission on Mandates in Turkey, August 28, 1919,” in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919: The Paris Peace Conference* [hereafter cited as *FRUS: Paris Peace Conference*], 13 vols. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1942–1947), vol. 12, pp. 751–863; Harry N. Howard, *The King Crane Commission: An American Inquiry in the Middle East* (Beirut: Khayats, 1963), passim. Laurence Evans, *United States Policy and the Partition of Turkey, 1914–1924* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1965), pp. 153–155.

⁷ The Kemalists had held an earlier Congress in Erzurum, with representation mainly from eastern Anatolia. But Atatürk recognized that a more comprehensive body was needed to enhance the legitimacy of the nationalist movement. At Sivas, therefore, a broader representation was assembled.

words and so on.”⁸ In this period, Browne had the chance to contact the key nationalists, including a personal interview with Mustafa Kemal, to learn more about the nationalists and to inquire about their stance concerning the mandate question. During the Sivas Congress, which started on September 4, 1919, and lasted for eight days, Browne was the only foreign observer and non-Muslim present. Because the mandate issue emerged as one of the primary points of discussion, the presence of an American journalist aroused much interest and, as Akgün pointed out, Mustafa Kemal also found his presence useful for the nationalist cause. At the end of the Sivas Congress, Browne witnessed firsthand how the Sivas resolutions, which embodied the National Pact to fight for Turkish independence, were circulated all over Turkey through a flood of telegrams lasting all night long. Indeed, before the eyes of a bewildered American journalist the transformation of a resistance movement to the basis of a nation state was taking place.

The articles Browne wrote about the Sivas Congress, Akgün makes clear, brought the nationalist movement to the attention of the world, presenting to the American press the first favorable assessment of the Kemalists. However, the first contact between an official of the United States and Mustafa Kemal would take place only with the arrival of General James G. Harbord, who arrived in Sivas on September 20, 1919, only a few days after Browne’s departure.

In her second chapter, Seçil Akgün focuses on the contacts of General Harbord and his commission who were investigating the question of an American mandate for Armenia. In September 1919, the United States sent General Harbord to the region to provide factual information to be used in assessing the prospects for an American mandate over Armenian regions. When on October 16, 1919, the Harbord Commission presented its month-long survey, it listed 14 reasons in favor of and 13 reasons against the idea of an American mandate. The Harbord report, on the one hand, stressed the humanitarian motives favoring the mandate, while on the other hand it pointed out that such an undertaking would impose a heavy financial burden on the mandatory power.⁹

⁸ *Chicago Daily News*, October 13, 1919, p. 1.

⁹ The cost of serving as a mandatory power for the Armenian region was estimated to total some \$756 million for a five-year period. For the text of the Harbord Report, see James G. Harbord to Lansing, October 16, 1919, *FRUS, 1919* (Washington: United States Printing Office, 1934), vol. 2, pp. 841–874; for a detailed account of the Harbord Mission, see also James B. Gidney, *A Mandate for Armenia* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1967), pp. 168–191.

Based on the Harbord report, Akgün also presents a detailed account of the general's meeting with Mustafa Kemal. Their discussion focused on three critical issues: the organization and strength of the national movement; its attitudes and intentions toward non-Muslims, particularly the Armenians; and its understanding of and views toward the question of assistance and mandates. Overall, as reflected in his report, General Harbord received a very cordial reception from the Kemalists who informed him that "the nationalist party recognized the necessity of the aid of an impartial foreign country."¹⁰ However, Akgün stresses that unlike Browne, who interpreted similar remarks as the Turkish desire for an American mandate, Harbord was able to grasp the thin line differentiating the Turkish and American interpretations of the term "mandate." Akgün also provides an appendix entitled "Condensed Memorandum Concerning the Organization and Points of View of the League for the Defense of Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia," which sets forth authoritatively and in some detail the aims and ideas of the Turkish nationalists at the time.

The Harbord report, therefore, did not provide sufficient justification for an American mandate. During the peace conference, President Wilson emphasized the principles of self-determination, protection of minorities, an "Open Door" for commerce and trade, and the concept of "peace without victors." Yet his vision of a Middle East settlement through open diplomacy, within the framework of a general arrangement based on the League of Nations, and his desire for an American mandate were to be dashed by hard political realities, first during his negotiations with the Allies and then by a bitter political contest at home. Hence, on June 1, 1920, the Senate by 52 to 23 votes declined the President's request for mandate authorization and refused to allow the United States to assume any political responsibility for developments in this part of the world.

Although Mustafa Kemal was the focus neither of Harbord's journey nor of his report, during the few hours that they spent together, the American general was persuaded of the non-imperialistic and patriotic nature of the nationalist movement. He also emerged with a better understanding of the capabilities and potential of its charismatic leader, whom he addressed warmly as "My Dear General" in the note following their meeting. During the critical days in the wake of the Sivas

¹⁰ Harbord Report, p. 17.

Congress, the presence of General Harbord, just like Louis Browne before him, would serve as a golden opportunity for the nationalists to convey their aims and determination to the rest of the world. That makes the account given us by Akgün of the nationalist movement and the question of an American mandate from American eyes all the more important.

In the third chapter, Howard Reed sheds light on the gripping accounts of a fascinating journalist, Louise Bryant, concerning her encounters with the Turkish people and the nationalist leaders in Anatolia during a particularly critical period in the life of modern Turkey. Based on the recently uncovered 1923 reports of Louise Bryant, donated by her only daughter, Ms. Anne Moen Bullitt to Yale University's Sterling Library, Howard Reed presents Bryant's penetrating first-hand depictions of Turkey during the year when the Republic of Turkey was founded.

Louise Bryant was one of those larger-than-life characters who flaunted custom in the pursuit of adventure. After leading a non-conventional life in the United States, in 1917 she served as a foreign correspondent reporting on the Western front during the First World War. Her second husband, John Reed, would become famous as the author of the landmark work on the Bolshevik revolution from the inside, *Ten Days that Shook the World*.¹¹ During the several months that they spent as eye witnesses to the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, they had the opportunity to interview key political leaders such as Kerensky, Lenin, Trotsky, and Chicherin as well as leading Russian women such as Alexandra Kollontai, Marie Spiridovna, and leading artists and dancers like Lunacharski and Stanislavski. After John Reed's death from typhus in 1920, Louise Bryant also met such important Turkish figures in Russia as General Ali Fuat (Cebesoy), Nationalist Turkey's ambassador to Moscow. He would serve as the Deputy Speaker of the Ankara Assembly later during the time that Louise Bryant came to Turkey as a reporter. In Soviet Russia, she also became acquainted with Enver pasha, who was in self-imposed exile after being the leader of the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress party from 1913 to 1918.

After Bryant's return to the United States from Russia, the young widow became the companion of William C. Bullitt, who had served as an important American diplomat at the Paris Peace conference in

¹¹ John Reed, *Ten Days that Shook the World* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1922).

1919. Bryant's Turkey adventure started in April 1923 when she was sent to İstanbul, traveling with Bullitt, to report on Turkey for the International News Service. On the way to Turkey, the ambitious young journalist did not miss the opportunity to become the first woman and the first non-Italian to interview Benito Mussolini. As Howard Reed observes, her next target was to have an interview with Mustafa Kemal as a part of her impressive collection of face-to-face meetings with important revolutionary leaders. Although she could not realize this goal because of Mustafa Kemal's extremely busy schedule, during the seven months that she spent mostly in İstanbul or Ankara, she had several contacts with the leading figures of the nationalist movement, such as Dr. Adnan (Adıvar) and his famed author wife Halide Edib, Fethi (Okyar), Rauf (Orbay) as well as with Ali Fuat (Cebesoy), her friend and admirer from their days in Moscow. Howard Reed argues that through these contacts she gained in-depth information concerning Turkey's domestic and international situation. When she combined these valuable insights with her own personal observations, she was able to present a compelling account of political developments, as well as of critical issues, such as the position of women in Turkish society and the significant power of leadership in creating social change at decisive moments in history.

In the fourth chapter, Nur Bilge Criss examines successive stages in the gradual evolution of diplomatic relations with the United States. Starting with the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, she carries her recital to the eventual full-time residence of the American ambassador in Ankara in 1937, an act which marked the establishment of full diplomatic reciprocity. Because the Ottoman Empire severed its diplomatic ties with the U.S.A. during the First World War and because Washington formally recognized the new Republic only in 1927, it is difficult to speak of official relations between Washington and Ankara during the period from 1919 to 1927. Nevertheless, Criss ably demonstrates that there was significant interaction through non-diplomatic channels as well as sustained economic activity. The growth of economic ties was due in large measure to the efforts of United States High Commissioner to Turkey Admiral Mark Lambert Bristol in İstanbul (1919–1927). After the formation of the Republic of Turkey, he continued to strive diligently to expand American trade in Anatolia in consonance with the "Open Door" policy espoused by Washington. In doing so, and in lobbying during periodic visits to the United States, he also worked to prepare the ground to change the prevailing negative image of the

Turks in the United States, for the cause of delay in resuming diplomatic relations lay in America, not Turkey.¹² Despite the foot-dragging that retarded Senatorial consideration of the Turco-American “Treaty of Amity and Commerce” signed in Lausanne in 1923 (and its eventual non-ratification by the Senate), Bristol was successful in negotiating a *modus vivendi* between the United States and Turkey that enabled the continuation of commercial ties until official relations were restored in 1927. Hence, despite the lack of diplomatic ties, the Americans and Turkish nationalists maintained continuous contacts from the earliest days of the Kemalist movement. Indeed, Admiral Bristol was one of the first Western officials to take the nationalists seriously. The nationalists in return were interested in keeping the Admiral informed about and supportive first of their struggle for independence and later of their newly established republic.

The year 1927 proved to be a crucial turning point in Turkish-American relations and marked the end of a decade-long break in diplomatic ties. Although the relationship with the new Turkish Republic had a problematic start due to the strong Armenian, American missionary, and Democratic Party opposition, relations began to improve rapidly once formal ties were established. Nur Bilge Criss highlights the significant contributions in the interwar era made by the first United States Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Turkey, Joseph C. Grew (served 1927–1932). Finally, during the term of Ambassador John Van A. MacMurray, the reciprocity of the recognition process was finalized, when the ambassador became a full-time resident of the capital in Ankara. Another very important point that Criss highlights in this chapter is that although the American policymakers were avowedly guided by the dictates of the Monroe Doctrine to avoid political and military entanglements abroad, the promotion of particularly their commercial interests (e.g. the support given to the American oil companies) constituted a main theme of their diplomatic activity.

Criss’ study is enriched by broad use of diaries, official correspondence, and biographies of well-known American representatives,

¹² “Famed Bristol,” *Time*, September 14, 1925, and “Paladin Departs,” *Time*, June 6, 1927. The latter article evaluated his work in Turkey as follows: “Rear Admiral Mark Lambert Bristol, for eight years U.S. High Commissioner to Turkey, put a period last week to the most imposing paragraph of hard successful work which any American has done in the Near East since the World War.”

notably Admiral Mark Bristol and Ambassador Joseph Grew. But she also has made extensive use of the records and papers of lesser-known American diplomats such as Ambassadors Robert Skinner, John Van A. MacMurray and State Department official G. Howland Shaw.¹³ That allows Criss to unravel a trenchant account of the conjuncture, processes, as well as the stages of how different shades of recognition were transformed into full diplomatic reciprocity.

In the last two chapters of the book, George Harris turns our attention to the efforts of two able Turkish diplomats: Ahmet Muhtar (Mollaoglu) (served 1927–1934) and (Mehmet) Münir Ertegün (served 1934–1944). Both made significant contributions to the enhancement of Turkish-American relations. These two chapters fill a significant gap inasmuch as the contributions of these Turkish diplomats have not generally received recognition. In fact, these figures are for the most part mentioned very briefly if at all by scholars working on Turkish-American relations in the interwar period and the early years of the Second World War. George Harris, who was attached to the political section of the United States Embassy in Ankara between 1957 and 1962 and then worked and published extensively on Turkish-American relations during the Cold War era, this time, shifts his attention to an earlier period. By pulling together additional archival material, parliamentary minutes, and press accounts, he sheds light on the lives and accomplishments of these Turkish diplomats so that “more flesh can be put on the bones of the Kemalist revolution.” He argues that although these officials have worked against significant odds, they not only influenced the decision makers in Ankara by serving as the “eyes and ears of Turkey” in the United States, but they also formed the public face of the newly established republic that policymakers in Washington came to know and appreciate. Consequently, after an initial period of difficulty, they contributed to the establishment of amicable relations between the two countries.

In Chapter Five, George Harris focuses on the first Turkish ambassador to the United States after the First World War, Ahmet Muhtar, who had the challenging task of initiating official contacts after a turbulent era. Muhtar faced the additional challenge of serving in a period during

¹³ Gardiner Howland Shaw joined the Department of State in 1917 after receiving a Master’s degree from Harvard University. He served both in Turkey and in Washington, providing continuity in coverage of the new republic. His analysis was some of the best in the Department of State.

which the “Terrible Turk” stereotype prevailed, in large part because of efforts by Armenian-Americans to blacken Turkey’s reputation. In this, these detractors were aided by the fact that Americans had very scant knowledge about Turkey. Although he lacked fluent English, Muhtar’s scholastic training in law and his diplomatic and consular experience, as well as his policymaker position at the top level, including being one of the deputies from İstanbul in the last Ottoman parliament and his membership in senior positions in the Grand National Assembly in Ankara proved to be important assets for him during his selection as ambassador to the United States. Since French was still the *lingua franca* of diplomacy, Muhtar did not have problems communicating on the official level. Harris argues that Muhtar gained the trust and support of Atatürk. In fact, as Foreign Minister Bekir Sami was often abroad for treaty negotiations or international conferences, Muhtar served as Acting Foreign Minister (also on a number of occasions even using the title of Foreign Minister as highlighted by Harris), and thus emerged as the main architect of the new nationalist foreign ministry.

Upon his arrival in New York in November 1927, Muhtar was greeted by protesters supporting the Armenian cause and had to travel to Washington with an escort provided by the Department of State. However, soon the fire of the Armenian-American protests would fade, and particularly *The Washington Post* would start to have supportive media coverage for Turkey. As highlighted by George Harris, Muhtar would quickly become an active participant in the social life and activities in Washington, and the *Post* would favorably mention Muhtar and Turkey over 300 times during the ambassador’s seven-year tenure in the American capital. Although Muhtar encountered some difficulties due to his lack of English fluency, he shattered stereotypes by representing the urban and secular face of Turkey. Establishing relations with influential members of the Congress, social leaders, and military figures, he contributed to the improvement of the relationship.

In the final Chapter, George Harris presents a detailed account of how Muhtar’s successor (Mehmet) Münir Erteğün carried the relationship to a new level, building on the base Muhtar had left. In this period, Harris argues, Erteğün not only deepened the ties and dealt with the negative effect of the Armenian issue on public opinion, but also faced the challenge of forming a smoothly functioning military supply arrangement with Washington as Turkey’s principal arms supplier on the eve and during the early years of the Second World War. His solid training in law and extensive experience as a legal adviser on

international issues, as well as his knowledge of English would prove to be important assets.

Unlike Muhtar, Erteğün was not met by demonstrations on his arrival in the United States. Moreover, through his wife, Hayrünissa Rüstem's interactions with Eleanor Roosevelt, they also established personal contacts with the Roosevelt family. Soon, they were entertaining numerous powerful figures in Washington. Harris also points out that with the initiative of Erteğün's sons, particularly Ahmet Erteğün, the Turkish Embassy became "a Mecca for Jazz enthusiasts," and even took the lead in desegregating the capital by hosting black musicians. In this period, Erteğün also worked effectively to curtail negative publicity against Turkey.

As the world moved toward a new conflagration, he strove diligently to establish ties to secure additional aircraft and other military equipment. His efforts accorded well with the direction of American economic warfare during the Second World War. Through "Lend-Lease Aid" and preemptive purchases of chrome, Washington sought to bolster Turkish resistance to Nazi Germany. The question of where Turkish chrome needed in the manufacture of steel armaments would end up significantly concerned the Allies. Hence, as argued by Harris, acquisition of war matériel increasingly became the "leitmotif" of Erteğün's tenure in Washington. In this way, he paved the way for the close ties and major economic and military assistance programs distinguishing the Turkish-American alliance in the Cold War period.

During the Cold War era, the parameters of Turkish-American relations were predominantly defined by the security interests of the international bipolar power structure. However, a thorough analysis of Turkish-American relations before the Cold War became once again particularly significant in the post-Cold War context, where again a bipolar power structure ceased to exist. Inasmuch as both the Americans and the Turks are seeking to redefine their relations based on constantly changing international dynamics, the past can provide much insight. In this respect, this collection makes a significant contribution by filling in the details of an important era in Turkish-American relations, just as a carpet mistress weaves the geometrically intricate designs of a Turkish carpet.

CHAPTER ONE

LOUIS E. BROWNE AND THE LEADERS OF THE 1919 SİVAS CONGRESS

SEÇİL KARAL AKGÜN

In the aftermath of World War I, what was left of the heartland of the Ottoman Empire, Anatolia as well as the capital city, İstanbul, was immediately occupied by Allied forces. Zones of occupation, to a large extent, reflected promises made in the secret agreements of 1915. The future status of İstanbul was unclear, but it fast became obvious that the rest of the country was slated to become a rump state in Anatolia. These prospects energized a nationalist movement to take root under the collective leadership of army commanders who had refused to surrender their arms and demobilize their men in contravention to the rules of armistice. The following episode will tell the story of the ways and means of organizing legitimate governmental bodies step by step until the Grand National Assembly of Turkey convened in Ankara in April 1920. The military aspects of the nationalist War of Independence are well known. Lesser known or studied aspects of the movement are its public relations and diplomacy, official and non-official alike.

This study addresses one of the first semi-official contacts with an American journalist, Louis E. Browne during the Sivas Congress in 1919. The founding fathers of the Republic of Turkey, under Mustafa Kemal Pasha's leadership knew well that neither peace nor war would be won by military action alone. The legitimate struggle for independence had to be made known to the outside world by whichever means possible. And, foreign journalists were a good conduit to utilize. Contact with Americans was particularly desired at a time when a U.S. mandate over Turkey's territories became an issue. Moreover, convincing Washington of the legitimate desires of the Turks was important to balance against European encroachment into heartland Anatolia. To understand these matters better, it is useful to look briefly at the background of U.S.-Ottoman/Turkish relations.

The United States of America did not have significant contacts with the Ottoman Empire until the 1820s, when American Presbyterian

missionaries started to venture into Ottoman lands with the purpose of proselytizing Muslims and Jews and reviving Christianity in the Near East.¹ Developing economic interests in the Ottoman Empire and the conclusion of an economic treaty in 1830 were the immediate outcomes of this newly acquired relationship for the United States. Emerging American interest in the Armenians of the Empire was also a product of relations established between this *millet* (religious community) and the American missionaries who were rebuffed by Muslim Turks. Americans became familiar with the Armenians mainly through the missionaries, who often stigmatized the Turks in their correspondences with their families and churches. Consequently, Americans, looking at the Ottoman Empire and particularly seeing the Armenians through the eyes of the missionaries, came to believe that there were vulnerable Christians in this distant land, suffering under Muslim yoke. American public opinion wholeheartedly supported the Armenians through the multiple tragic incidents which occurred in the Empire prior to the First World War.

By the outbreak of the Great War in August 1914, American educational and philanthropic institutions, such as kindergartens, schools of all levels, and health centers erected and operated by American missionaries and appealing mostly to Armenians, had so mushroomed that the United States on entering the war on April 6, 1917, carefully refrained from declaring war on the Ottomans for the sake of these institutions. On the other hand, as the number of Armenians brought up in missionary schools multiplied, they gradually became dependent on America for the realization of their dreams of independence. In fact, many Armenians after finding a way to the United States through missionaries' assistance, returned to the Empire with the hope of being more effective in their drive for independence as American citizens serving in American institutions.² When America's entry to war in April 1917 also brought the imminence of peace, providing representation for the Armenians during the approaching negotiations became one of the primary concerns of the United States Government.

¹ Joseph L. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), p. 4.

² Bilâl Şimşir, *Ermeni Propagandasının Amerika Boyutu Üzerine, Tarih Boyunca Türklerin Ermeni Toplumu İle İlişkileri Sempozyumu* (Erzurum: 1985), (Symposium on the American Dimension of Armenian Propaganda, and Turkish-Armenian Relations Throughout History), pp. 82-83.

The United States in the First World War

America's entry in the war in 1917 would determine the outcome of the contest and influence the course of the approaching peace. Even before entry into hostilities, however, President Woodrow Wilson's determination that the United States should play a major role in peace settlements led him on January 8, 1917, to address the United States Congress and announce a set of principles he designed to obtain world peace. One of these principles, based on the *self determination* of all nations, gained recognition as the "Wilsonian Principles" within "Wilson's Fourteen Points." Armistices and peace treaties ending the war would be prepared according to these points. The Fourteen Points included such terms as "open diplomacy," "freedom of the seas," "removal of economic barriers," and the creation of a general association of nations to assure peaceful coexistence, which in two years time, materialized as The League of Nations. The twelfth point was devoted strictly to the Ottoman Empire: "The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees."³ Ironically, this was the article on which both Turkish nationalists and the Armenians relied upon for the recognition of their self-governing nation state.

The Russian Revolution ending the Tsarist regime and the withdrawal of Bolshevik forces from the war in December 1917, after disclosing of all secret agreements by the Soviet Foreign Office in November, marked the beginning of the end of the World War. The secret agreements of 1915 included the British-French-Russian agreement regarding İstanbul (Constantinople) and the Straits of March 12 and the London Agreement of April 26, between the same powers and their new partner, Italy, recognizing Italian sovereignty over the Dodecanese Islands. Those instruments, along with the Tripartite Sykes Picot Agreement, concluded the next year on May 16 and the April 19, 1917, St. Jean

³ Joseph P. Tumulty, *Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1921), p. 59.

de Maurienne Agreement defined the spheres of influence for France, Britain, Russia, and Italy in the Middle East.⁴

The secret treaties partitioning the Ottoman Empire involved areas of American investments. Therefore, they were of extreme interest for the United States government, which was not precisely aware of them until their disclosure as Russia retreated from the war and signed the Brest Litovsk Treaty. By then, although America had been at war with Germany for some months, the United States had already started to consider ways of maintaining friendly relations with the Ottoman Empire.

The United States was not the only additional support that the Allies gained in 1917. Although Greek King Constantine managed to keep his country out of the war for three years, Premier Eleutherios Venizelos, who had a vision of Greece also lodged on the Turkish side of the Aegean Sea, sided with the Allies. He pushed Greece into the war on June 26, 1917, only a few weeks after returning to power after a coup d'état. The end of the war came a year after the Allied front was reinforced with these two new powers.

On October 4, 1918, Germany appealed for an armistice⁵ and shortly afterwards, the Ottoman Empire followed the same path. The preliminary peace terms for Turkey were elaborated by the representatives of the victorious powers in the articles of the Mudros Armistice treaty. Similar to all agreements ending the Great War, Mudros also was based on the peace principles Wilson had announced. Article 24 of the Mudros Armistice signed on October 30 was meticulously worded to provide the basis for the formation of an independent Armenian state in Eastern Anatolia. It allowed Allied occupation "in case of disorder" in Erzurum, Van, Harput, Diyarbakır Sivas, and Bitlis. These provinces were recognized in the West as the "six Armenian provinces." It formed an elaboration of Article 7 of the Armistice treaty which authorized landing on any strategic point "in the event of a situation arising which threatens the security of the Allies."⁶

⁴ Harry N. Howard, *Turkey, the Straits and the United States Policy* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp. 33–34. The last of the agreements was never ratified due to disruptions in Russia which led to the Bolshevik Revolution.

⁵ Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, Cilt III, Kısım IV* (Ankara: 1967), (History of the Turkish Revolution), p. 248.

⁶ For the text of the Armistice treaty, see, J. C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record: 1914–1956*, vol. 2 (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1956), pp. 36–37.

The Allies did not lose any time in taking advantage of these provisions to land troops in their zones of interest, although these were territories which, by tacit agreement, remained within Turkish frontiers at least for the time being. Accordingly, England and France convinced that the observation of the Fourteen Points would cost them their share of what the secret treaties provided in Ottoman lands, approached the Peace Conference very cautiously. They came to Paris to attend the Conference which convened in January 1919, prepared to present alternatives which would allow them to preserve their interests.

Among many problems the Paris Peace Conference confronted, those concerning the fate of the Ottoman Empire were some of the most intricate and perplexing. It was natural that such complex matters and determination of the destiny of this state should concern all the major world powers, including the United States.⁷ The Ottoman problems brought to the attention of the Peace Conference mainly consisted of territorial matters pertaining to the dissolution of the Empire and those concerning the future of its different elements, particularly the non-Muslims; both had been issues much debated since the conclusion of the Armistice.

Meanwhile, the Armenians within the Ottoman Empire and those of the new Armenian Republic founded in Caucasia after the Russian Revolution submitted a joint memorandum to the Peace Conference on February 26, 1919. It proposed to form an integrated Armenian state stretching from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Such a state would include not only Eastern Anatolia but also Cilicia, still regarded as a French zone of influence. This Armenian desire conflicted with British and French interests. "The way out of the dilemma of violating promises foregoing the spoils of war was discovered by General Smuts who originated the mandatory system."⁸ This suggestion, foreshadowing the placement of underdeveloped areas of the world under mandates of developed states, led England and France to propose an alternative. In order to preserve their shares in Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia, allocated to them by the secretly concluded Sykes-Picot Treaty, they

⁷ Harry N. Howard, *The King-Crane Commission: An American Inquiry in the Middle East* (Beirut: Khayats, 1963), p. 1.

⁸ Leland James Gordon, *American Relations With Turkey 1830-1930: An Economic Interpretation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1932), p. 268; Yuluğ Tekin Kurat, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Paylaşılması* (İstanbul: 1976), (The Partition of the Ottoman Empire), pp. 11-12.

introduced the idea of forming Armenian and Kurdish states in Eastern Anatolia to be administered as mandates by the Great Powers. It is a curious matter, however, that the secret treaties carefully avoided any references to reserving land for an independent Armenian state, although none of the powers refrained from using the Armenians whenever needed. For example, the French War Ministry had agreed on November 15, 1916, to establish a Legion d'Orient in Cilicia in order to benefit from the Armenians in Southern Turkey to hold on to occupied territory.⁹ The British, considering that the heavily Kurdish populated territories were part of fertile, oil-rich Mesopotamia, volunteered to take on a Kurdish mandate and suggested that the U.S.A. assume the Armenian mandate. This proposal was extended to Woodrow Wilson by the British Premier David Lloyd George at a May 1919 Paris meeting of the Big Four.¹⁰

The suggestion of an American mandate was applauded in Europe and was tentatively agreed to by Wilson, subject to the consent of the Senate. However, American public opinion was hesitant. In addition to uncertainties in the U.S.A. were dispatches to the American Peace Mission in Paris, from Admiral Bristol, the United States High Commissioner to Turkey, warning them of the Allies' motives for insisting on American mandate over Armenia. Admiral Bristol underlined that such a step would create an Armenia serving as a buffer against Bolshevik expansion towards the Transcaucasus, which was among the chief concerns of the British. He also pointed out that it would also serve Britain by securing U.S. protection for the oil resources of Mesopotamia which the British wanted under their mandate. Finally, he called attention to the fact that an Armenian mandate inevitably would bring an end to America's objection to the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire.¹¹ Accordingly, two commissions were appointed to investigate and determine the pros and cons of a mandate in Ottoman lands.

⁹ Ünsal Yavuz, "Fransız Dışişleri Belgelerinde Ermeni Kırımları Sorunu," *DTCF, Atatürk'ün 100. Doğum Yılına Armağan Dergisi* (Ankara: 1982), (The Issue of Armenian Massacres in French Diplomatic Records), p. 661.

¹⁰ Thomas A. Bryson, "Mark Lambert Bristol, United States Navy, Admiral-Diplomat: His Influence on the Armenian Mandate Question," *The Armenian Review*, vol. 21, No. 4-84, (Winter 1968), p. 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-9. Thomas A. Bryson, "Admiral Mark L. Bristol, an Open-Door Diplomat in Turkey," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 5, no. 4, (September 1974), pp. 451-58, also contains Bristol's warning that in order to avoid distortion of her interests in Turkey, the U.S.A. should avoid political entanglements there.

First, the King-Crane Commission, officially referred to as “The American Section of the International Commission on Mandates in Turkey” was appointed by the Big Four in Paris to study the mandate question in special relation to the Arab provinces.¹² This commission was headed by Henry C. King, the President of Oberlin College in Ohio and, Mr. Charles R. Crane, a Chicago businessman and a close associate of Woodrow Wilson. When the idea of appointing an American commission to investigate the problems in Syria and Palestine was decided on, Crane’s name had already occurred to Wilson. In fact, Ray S. Baker, with whom the President discussed the matter, brought to his attention that Henry King was in France at that time. The most influential factor for Wilson’s appointment of these two gentlemen to head the commission, as expressed by the President was that “he felt they were particularly qualified to go to Syria because they knew nothing about it.”¹³

Needless to say, the arrival of the King-Crane Commission in İstanbul on June 3, 1919, caused rejoicing by the Turkish supporters of an American mandate, who had founded the Wilsonian League in İstanbul. Members of this body regarded an American mandate as the only solution to “curb selfish interests of the avaricious European powers” and thus as a means to preserve the integrity and independence of Turkey. They committed themselves to persuade the Commission to

¹² Lord Kinross, *Atatürk, The Rebirth of a Nation* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964), p. 188. In fact, King-Crane Commission is the most renowned after the Harbord Commission among the inquiry commissions sent to the Near East and Transcaucasia at that time to explore the conditions of the area to determine American interests and assess the probability of a U.S. mandate.

¹³ See Howard, *The King-Crane Commission*, p. 37. The report prepared by the Commission would be favorably received by the American Delegation in Paris on August 28, 1919, and was called “a state document of very first order” by William A. Buckler from the Delegation. Nevertheless, since the Treaty of Versailles was signed before the report was presented, it was not taken into consideration then and was not even published until 1922. When the commission sailed back to the United States on September 5, 1919, Captain Yale among the members remained in Paris. He submitted a memorandum whose final section dealt with Mesopotamian oil, already a bone of contention among competing companies and interests. Yale wrote that Mesopotamian oil not only affected American industry and oil consumers, but “any decent settlement . . . arising out of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.” His proposals, quite contrary to King Crane Commission’s, appeared in the *London Times* on October 8, 1919. His plan did not receive favorable attention and Acting Secretary of State Phillips regarded his proposals futile and banned him from contacting French officials. Accordingly, Yale resigned from the Peace Commission and returned to the United States. *Ibid.*, chapter 8, pp. 257–270.

recommend that the U.S. government assume the mandate.¹⁴ Supportive İstanbul journals were filled with articles favoring an American mandate during the four days the Commission spent in this city before setting out for Palestine. Prominent members of the Wilsonian League as well as representatives of other political parties and organizations would find the opportunity to express their opinions during the interviews Commission members held at the U.S. Embassy when they returned to İstanbul from inquiries in Arab provinces in late July.¹⁵

Foreign Occupation Triggers Turkish Nationalists

Foreign occupation of various parts of what was left of the Ottoman Empire following the Mudros Armistice triggered Turkish resistance. Protests, mostly in occupied areas, gradually led to general unrest, particularly when criticisms of the Armistice by some deputies and in the press were condemned by the representatives of the Allies in İstanbul. Warnings by the British High Commissioner, Admiral Arthur G. Calthrope, concerning the welfare of the capital led the Sultan to cooperate with the occupation forces. Faced with expanded British military occupation of İstanbul on March 16, 1920, the Ottoman Parliament took a decision to recess. This left Turkish public opinion completely deprived of a national political platform.

To resist foreign occupation, Defense of Rights societies were formed by Turks under local leaders. These political and irregular military resistance groups multiplied as the Sultan and the cabinet sought to exercise power. Armed resistance to foreign invaders increased considerably after the Great Powers in Paris approved the occupation of İzmir by the Greeks on May 14, 1919. Mustafa Kemal Pasha, appointed by the Sultan to proceed to Anatolia and take under control Turkish armed resistance to foreign occupation, became the leader to centralize all local guerilla forces and start an organized military action for national independence. His military skill, deep knowledge of history, and broad vision concerning world developments led him to become accepted as the national leader of Turkey's War of Independence.

¹⁴ Ahmet Emin Yalman, *Turkey In My Time* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), p. 74. In *Vakit*, a journal published by Ahmet Emin, articles advocating an American mandate appeared regularly during the months in question.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

When Mustafa Kemal Pasha assumed this leadership, he had a single goal and a multi-step program to reach this goal, which was to obtain independence and sovereignty for the Turkish nation. Forming a national front was the first step in his program. It was with this intention that Mustafa Kemal Pasha began to organize the nationalist movement as soon as he set foot in Samsun on May 19, 1919. This hero of Gallipoli arrived in Anatolia immediately followed the landing of Greek troops in İzmir (Smyrna), which, due to Greek violence, upset the Turks more than any other foreign occupation. Therefore, his proposal to hold a general congress in Sivas to design the military and political steps of the liberation movement and determine the methodology of this process was welcomed by civilian and military officials. His Amasya Declaration at the end of June announced this congress, which, along with an earlier planned regional one in Erzurum, was intended to discuss preventing an Armenian state from being carved out of Turkey's eastern provinces.

Mr. Crane Sends Browne to Sivas

The decision to hold the Sivas Congress had already been taken when the King-Crane Commission, after its long journey to investigate the prospects for mandate, returned to İstanbul with a positive view.¹⁶ The report Commissioners Charles R. Crane and Henry Churchill King submitted to the Peace Commission in Paris on August 28¹⁷ recommended that "whatever foreign administration is brought to Mesopotamia, it should not be a colonizing power in the old sense but as a mandatory under the League of Nations, preserving its unity." In the same text, three mandates were recommended for Turkey: separate ones over each of Armenia, İstanbul, and rest of Anatolia, all under a single mandatory power.¹⁸

¹⁶ Crane, in a telegram to Wilson dated July 29, 1919, claimed that the Allies made a big mistake by allowing the Greeks to occupy Smyrna (Izmir). Hoover Institution Archives, Donald M. Brodie collection (Secretary of the King-Crane Commission), Box Mo. 1 82062-15-51.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ The King-Crane Report recommended "1) an American mandate, excluding Cilicia, which was to go with Anatolia; 2) an international İstanbul State, under a mandatory, separate from Turkey; 3) a mandatory for a separate Turkish State; 4) no territory to be set off for the Greeks, who could be given autonomy in Smyrna under the general mandate for Turkey; 5) a single general mandate for all Asia Minor (not

It was during the midsummer days that members of the commission spent in Istanbul that American mandate supporters became totally engaged in convincing the Commission as well as Mustafa Kemal Pasha that establishing an American mandate was the only means to restoring order in Turkey. More than a few telegrams were sent to this effect to Mustafa Kemal.¹⁹ Among them, the one from Bekir Sami (Kunduh), the former governor of Beirut and Aleppo, was more detailed and persuasive than the others, and coming from a person of Bekir Sami's standing, was expected to influence Mustafa Kemal. The latter lost no time in responding to it with an equally expansive one, calling attention to the threat that concessions from full independence would bring.²⁰ Halide Edip, an alumna of the American College for Girls, Constantinople, a staunch supporter of an American mandate, and one of the founders of the Wilsonian League, "broached the subject of sending an American correspondent to Sivas" during a conversation with Mr. Charles Crane. In fact, Crane himself had become convinced during his journey that to

including Mesopotamia and Syria), with Armenia, the Constantinopolitan State, and the Turkish State; 6) the United States to assume this general mandate." As to a separate Constantinopolitan State, directly under the League of Nations, administered by a permanent mandatory, the report advised: "Such a State should include Constantinople, and have the charge of its administration. This is the more demanded, for Istanbul is a markedly cosmopolitan city where the Turks are probably not even the majority. This state should also have a reasonable territory on either side of the Strait. All fortifications should be abolished. This international territory would of course be open to all people for any legitimate purpose. Like the District of Columbia in America, it would be a natural place for great educational and religious foundations so that such Moslem institutions could remain and be further built up. The Turkish population, equally of course, would be free to stay. But Istanbul would no longer be the capital of Turkey. In the administration of the State, however, all possible consideration should be given to the Moslem sentiment, and reasonable practical adjustments arranged. The Sultan might even conceivably continue to reside at Istanbul if that were desired, under the conditions named." See: Howard, *Turkey, the Straits and U.S. Policy*, pp. 74–75, also his, *The King Crane Commission*, chapters 7 and 8. The three mandates for Turkey were suggested to Wilson in May, 1919, by Henry Morgenthau, William Buckler, and Professor Philip M. Brown. They indicated that a different method of governing was required for each area. However, in order "to facilitate the economic and political development of the whole country, these three areas should be placed under one and the same mandatory power, with a single Governor in charge of the whole, to unify the separate administrations of the three States." See former Ambassador to Turkey, Henry Morgenthau, "Mandates or War?," *The New York Times Magazine*, November 9, 1919.

¹⁹ *Tasviri Efkar*, August 14, 1919.

²⁰ *Nutuk*, vol. I (Istanbul: 1963) pp. 91–95 (the speech given by Atatürk, in 1927). It will be referred to as *Nutuk* in this text. An English version under the title *A Speech delivered by Ghazi Mustapha Kemal, President of the Turkish Republic, October 1927*, was published in Leipzig by K. F. Koehler in 1929.

reach a sound decision, talking with Mustafa Kemal, who was known to be heading the movement emerging in Anatolia, was a must. His conviction was fortified during the interviews the Commission held with Cemal Pasha, the Prefect of Istanbul, Şefik Bey of Beyazid, and Rıza Bey, the former governor of Erzurum, when each spoke on behalf of either British or American mandate in the East, and recommended that the Commission investigate the problem. Mr. Crane, impressed with their testimonies, decided to send a representative to Sivas to look into the Anatolian point of view.²¹ At almost the same time, Halide Edip also wrote a long letter, even more influential than Bekir Sami's, to Mustafa Kemal. In this letter dated August 10, Halide Edip, stressing that it was not the time for adventures or useless struggles and disputes, pointed out that conditions invited enlightened Turks to compromise. Advocating and justifying an American mandate, she suggested the idea that an American journalist should attend the Congress. Calling Mustafa Kemal's attention to this possibility, she explained that "We are living through most disastrous moments. America is very amicably and carefully observing the developments in Anatolia. The Government (in Istanbul) and the British have joined hands in reflecting nationalists' struggles for independence to America as a movement designed to annihilate Christians and restore the Unionists to power. . . . We are trying to keep the American commission (meaning King-Crane) here until the Sivas Congress meets. We will probably even be able to send an American journalist to the Congress."²² Accordingly, Mr. Crane requested Mr. Louis Edgar Browne, representing the *Chicago Daily News* in the Near East to attend the Congress. Browne, in his personal papers confirms this and writes about a note he received from Mr. Crane asking him to attend the Congress to meet in Sivas and as soon as possible to inform the Peace Conference of the decisions taken by the Congress.²³

²¹ Howard, *The King Crane Commission*, p. 173.

²² *Nutuk*, p. 98.

²³ Browne Papers, Hoover Institution Archives at Stanford University. Browne's personal notes at the Hoover Institute Archives include details of his trip to Sivas as well. On the other hand, in a copy of Garegin Pastermadjian's book, *Why Armenia Should be Free* (Boston: Hairenik Publication Co., 1918), the appointment is explained as Browne was "sent to Sivas to equip U.S. officials with first hand unbiased information as to power and extent of the nationalist forces by Charles R. Crane, chief of American Mandate Commission."

Dr. Frederic P. Latimer, who personally interviewed Louis Edgar Browne's wife in 1958 while writing his dissertation entitled "Political Philosophy of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk," explained Browne's attendance to the Sivas Congress as above. Yet we must pause here to make a few more explanations about the presence of this American journalist in Sivas during the first national congress, which in most Turkish sources is considered as the first concrete step of the Turkish Revolution.

Who Was Louis Edgar Browne?

Louis Edgar Browne (1890–1951) was born in Lynn, Massachusetts. He was admitted to the Naval Academy on July 8, 1910, as a member of the Class of 1914. He followed a curriculum designed to concentrate on engineering and science. However, Mr. Browne was recommended for separation after he did poorly on a semi-annual examination in English. He chose to resign effective October 7, 1911. After leaving the Academy he started to work for the *Chicago Daily News* in 1915. He served as a war correspondent for this paper in various European countries, including Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution. After his return to the U.S.A., it was rumored, possibly due to his contacts with some of the leaders of this Revolution, that he had socialistic tendencies. However, this suspicion did not prevent his long journey to Europe starting from January 1919, during which he would attend the Sivas Congress. The pro-Turkish nationalist and pro-American mandate articles that he regularly wrote for the *Chicago Daily News* after the Greek occupation of İzmir, coupled with his previous overseas experiences as a journalist, probably constituted the major reasons for why he was chosen to be sent to Sivas from among other American journalists in the Ottoman Empire at that time. Others present in the Empire who could have been sent included Constantine Brown of the *Chicago Tribune* and Clarence Streit of *Philadelphia Public Ledger*.²⁴ Browne commented on his mission to Sivas with the following lines in his dispatch of October 13, 1919, to the *Chicago Daily News*:

Charles R. Crane, the American Commissioner sent to investigate Asia Minor, was invited to attend the Sivas Conference *as a delegate* [emphasis added], but he lacked the time and I went in his place. I had more or

²⁴ Yalman, p. 77.

less an Arabian Nights' experience with passwords and so on. I shared quarters with Kemal Pasha, Roef Bey and other undisputed leaders of the Ottoman Empire of today. I sat through many meetings of the congress, which finally requested me to inform America of the Turks' desire that the United States accept mandate for the Ottoman Empire.²⁵

None of the sources consulted concerning the King-Crane Commission mention that Mr. Crane was invited to attend the Sivas Congress as a *delegate*. Furthermore, the Amasya Declaration announcing the Sivas Congress clearly defines the delegates as "selected representatives from each province" so it seems very unlikely that a foreigner would be invited to attend as a *delegate* to this *National* Congress. Therefore, there is no reason to think that Browne was a delegate.²⁶ But was he invited? There are some sources which mention that Mr. Crane was invited to attend as an observer. For example, Akdes Nimet Kurat writes that "Mr. Crane received an invitation to attend the conference as an observer. But not wanting to attract suspicion of the Allies, he chose not to go personally, and indicating his excessive work as an excuse, he appointed a journalist, Edgar Louis Browne, [who was] in Istanbul at that time."²⁷ In fact, Mustafa Kemal in his *Nutuk* refers to Browne as "some people from İstanbul [to attend the conference], brought an American journalist named Mister Brown [sic.] with them."²⁸

Although this sounds like Browne's arrival was rather unexpected, we know that Halide Edip had written to him about this. Likewise, in a cipher exchanged between Mustafa Kemal, Kazım (Karabekir) and Ali Fuat (Cebesoy), dated August 20, 1919, there is an explanation about proposals of different political groups to invite American journalist Browne to Sivas. Ali Fuat expresses his dismay over this proposal, considering it to have been made by those suggesting an American

²⁵ Frederic P. Latimer, "Political Philosophy of Mustapha Kemal Atatürk," (Unpublished dissertation, Mic. 60-5016 Univ. Mic., Ann Arbor, Michigan), p. 50; *Chicago Daily News*, October 13, 1919, p. 1.

²⁶ An additional document supporting this assumption is in the Sivas Congress records. During the second session a request from Abdülhalik Bey, suggesting the attendance as observers of several notables of the city was discussed and the decision unanimously reached was that all discussions should take place in closed sessions and that for security, no observers should be permitted to sit through the meetings.

²⁷ Akdes Nimet Kurat, "Sivas Kongresi ve Amerikalı Gazeteci Edgar Louis Browne," *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi*, (1972), vol. 11, No. 62 (Sivas Congress and the American Journalist Edgar Louis Browne), pp. 13-16.

²⁸ *Nutuk*, vol. I, p. 90; *A Speech delivered by Ghazi Mustapha Kemal, President of the Turkish Republic, October 1927* (Leipzig: K. F. Koehler, 1929), p. 77.

mandate.²⁹ This correspondence also verifies that Mustafa Kemal was informed in advance about Browne's attendance at the Conference. Furthermore, it does not seem probable that any of the delegates would feel free to bring a visitor to the Congress, unless permitted by Mustafa Kemal.

Lord Kinross in *Atatürk, the Rebirth of a Nation*, after referring to Halide Edip's letter to Mustafa Kemal, explains Browne's presence at Sivas during the Congress as "At her suggestion an American journalist, Mr. Louis E. Browne, was sent to the Congress ostensibly as the correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News*, but in fact rather as Mr. Crane's personal emissary."³⁰ One way or the other, Browne was in Sivas throughout the Congress and repeatedly stressed that he was there only as a journalist.

Browne's trip from İstanbul to Sivas, starting on August 20, 1919, was mostly organized by Halide Edip, who assisted him in obtaining nationalists' approval, permits and the passwords essential for traveling in Anatolia in those days. She also told him that he would not have to search for anyone "officers and civilians will come to you and if you're in physical force, they will use physical force to help you."³¹ Browne was much impressed by Halide Edip, especially after their long conversation on education. He was able to understand that by an American mandate she anticipated the installation of the American educational system in Turkey. The following paragraph among his undated notes (possibly a dispatch to his journal) explains how highly he thought of her: "The nationalist movement is nominally led by two men Mustafa Kemal and Rauf, but the real power behind this movement is a Turkish woman by the name of Halide Edip, who from her little house in Stamboul is directing the movement for an American mandate. She's a graduate of the American Girls' College in Constantinople and is the greatest living Turkish author."³²

²⁹ Kazım Karabekir, *İstiklal Harbimiz* (İstanbul: Türkiye Basımevi, 1960), (Our War of Independence), pp. 128–130; Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Milli Mücadele Hatıraları* (İstanbul: Vatan Neşriyatı, 1953), (Memoirs of the War of Independence), pp. 135–136.

³⁰ Kinross, p. 188.

³¹ Browne papers, Box 1, file 3h.

³² Ibid.

An American Journalist in Anatolia

Browne's journey started from the İstanbul train station, where he was met by an agent and given as password one half of a broken pencil and a sheet of paper with an arrow drawn across to hand to the correct person to identify himself. This person, who would approach him with refreshments for the journey and secretly show him the other half of the two items under his Circassian cloak, turned out to be Osman Bey, who would accompany him to Eskişehir. There, Browne was given clear instructions on the exact place he was to await with his luggage at the Ankara train station for the French speaking Turkish officer who was to take him to Ali Fuat Pasha, the Commander of the 20th Army Corps.³³ Escaping the British officers' control was left up to his own skills. Browne did not mention encountering any problems in boarding the train, but specified in his notes that rather than in the first class compartment reserved for him, he mostly preferred to travel in the third class wooden seats which he observed to be free of lice. He also mentioned that he had a considerably more comfortable journey in the train he took from Eskişehir to Ankara, during which he had an informative conversation with four high ranking Turkish officers sharing his compartment (one of them was a general) on developments in Anatolia. He learned from them that the nationalist movement they also supported was spreading very rapidly and that 100,000 volunteers were expected to join the military forces by the end of the year. When the train arrived in Ankara, several British soldiers approached Browne, asking the reason for his trip. When they learned he was an American journalist wanting to talk to Ali Fuat Pasha, they started a prolonged conversation on the issue of mandate and they offered both to host him and to bring to him whomever he wished to interview. He was able to escape them with the help of Cami Bey, the Commander's aide de camp who escorted him to Ali Fuat's headquarters. Meanwhile, Browne learned that the Osman Bey, whom he traveled with, was none other than the Cengiz he was instructed to meet in Ankara. In fact, Cengiz was the code name of Kara Vasıf Bey, the head of *Karakol Cemiyeti*, one of the secret resistance societies.³⁴

³³ Kurat, pp. 13–16.

³⁴ Ibid.; see also, *Nutuk*, p. 101.

The strict measures and precautions taken for Browne's trip were not due to foreign occupation alone, but also to the excessive caution demanded by the Erzurum Congress which ended on August 7, 1919, with a declaration restricting nationalists' relations with the Ottoman government. As a matter of fact, the Ottoman government, sensing the rapid growth of the movement which did not at all comply with İstanbul's approach to foreign occupation, did not lose time in taking measures to prevent its further development. The newly appointed War Minister Süleyman Şefik Pasha contributed to the tensing of relations by issuing a decree on August 15, 1919, prohibiting the circulation of ciphered telegrams among military commanders unless authorized by the Ministry. Both Kazım Karabekir, commander of the 3rd Army in Erzurum and Ali Fuat, of the 20th in Ankara took the lead among all other opposing commanders to immediately repudiate the decision,³⁵ requested its annulment, took all telegraph offices in Anatolia under military control until Süleyman Şefik Paşa would retreat. Soon, they succeeded in providing for the cancellation of the order by the Minister.

Browne had a brief meeting with Ali Fuat at his headquarters, and was invited to dinner by the Pasha the same evening. The lengthy conversation during and after dinner, gave him the chance to ask Ali Fuat many of the questions he had in mind pertaining to the nature of the nationalist movement and plans for the future. He was told by Ali Fuat that the movement was not at all against the Sultan-Caliph or the Sultanate and would continue until the country was rescued from invasions. Ali Fuat, in his book entitled *Siyasi Hatıralar* (Political Memoirs), mentioned that Browne was much interested in learning the amount of arms and ammunitions in Anatolia, which were surrendered to the British according to the Mudros Armistice. He indicated that the questions, especially the specific one for Kütahya, revealed Browne's knowledge on their amount and precise storing places and that he probably sought the answer as to whether the nationalist movement would turn into an overall armed action. Ali Fuat mentioned in the same context that he did not give more details than what should be told a journalist, and assured Browne that arms were kept under sealed locks, controlled by the British and could not be shipped anywhere without their consent.

³⁵ Karabekir, pp. 148–151.

In return, Ali Fuat asked Browne what the world thought of the Turks and the nationalist movement. Browne responded by relating a personal experience while traveling from Batumi to İstanbul, when he sailed with 1,500 British soldiers and about 20–30 officers returning home following the armistice. According to Browne's story, the ship was stopped by a handful of bandits and all on board were robbed to the last penny in their pockets as well as their valuable belongings. When Browne asked the British officers he made friends with why this small belligerent group was not stopped by the soldiers, he was told that all of them were so tired of fighting constantly for four years that they preferred to lose their belongings than to endanger their lives just when they were returning home to their families. He ended his words by expressing his conviction that American soldiers would not have acted differently.³⁶ Ali Fuat, wrote that Browne's answer was enough to reveal what he wanted to learn; which probably meant that weary English soldiers tired of fighting would be to the Turks' advantage in their national struggle. Although Ali Fuat did not mention it in his book, we learn from Browne's notes that they also talked about the ciphered telegrams incident which Browne, like the British, regarded as the first step of a revolution.

In Ankara, Browne also had the chance to meet another prominent figure of the Turkish Revolution, Refet (Bele), at that time colonel, and talk long hours with him particularly on the Greek occupation of İzmir and the nationalists' approach to the Armenians. Browne noted that Refet was a very intelligent person, who like many of his associates was extremely disillusioned with the pacifist attitude of the government over the Greek occupation and anticipated its resignation in the near future. Refet appeared not to hold warm feelings for Germany, disliked England, but praised Wilson. He talked about the Ottomans' peaceful past with the Armenians and listed justifications for their forced relocation during the war.³⁷

Browne's notes bring us to the conclusion that during his one-week stay in Ankara, he sought to learn more about the nationalist movement and the intentions of the nationalists rather than the mandate question, which the main topic of interest was for Mr. Crane who sent him on this mission. However, in Sivas, he was going to find a group

³⁶ Cebesoy, pp. 88–90.

³⁷ Browne Papers, Box I.

of selected Turks who were going to play decisive roles in the destiny of the nation, all focused on the mandate question, regarding it as a vital issue awaiting their decision.

Browne left Ankara on August 26, 1919. Traveling by car he passed through Sekili and Yozgat, spending a night in each, and reached Sivas before the Conference started.³⁸ On the way to Sivas, he was able to become much better informed about the conditions of the country and, as he specified in his notes, had learned enough about the nationalist movement to suspect that it was to turn into a revolution.³⁹

Turbulent Days before the Congress

Before the first national congress could meet in Sivas, a previously scheduled local congress met in Erzurum at the end of July to express popular sentiments and to reject the idea of establishing an Armenian state in Eastern Turkey. Mustafa Kemal Pasha was invited to attend and chair this local congress. He did so. But he expanded the resolutions taken for the salvage of Eastern Anatolia to encompass the entire land. The Erzurum decisions, including the definite rejection of mandate, were actually the first draft of the document which later would be announced as the National Pact. All of the resolutions reached in Erzurum were altered to focus on nation-wide full independence and were given final shape in Sivas, before their legal announcement at the Ottoman Parliament in January 1920 as the *Misak-ı Milli* (National Pact).

Conditions in Turkey during the days leading to the Sivas Congress were probably among the most chaotic of days for Turkey: the state suffered all sorts of hardships, from economic collapse to foreign occupation. The nation was weary from continuous internal disputes, foreign intrigues, consecutive rebellions, and wars. The Sultan and his

³⁸ Frederic Latimer reported to this author the following unconfirmed anecdote: Latimer had heard that one of the Turks on this trip to Sivas repeatedly stressed to Browne the difficulty of launching an overall nationalist movement in Turkey, because the common people in general were totally ignorant of world developments and the seriousness of the current situation. To demonstrate this, Browne's companion registered their names as Lloyd George and Georges Clemenceau when they signed in at the only hotel in Yozgat. The clerk at the reception desk, without a moment of hesitation, recorded these names as if they were likely to be legitimate. That led Browne's Turkish companion to point out that organizing a popular movement in Turkey was more challenging than confronting the enemy.

³⁹ Browne Papers, Box I.

government accepted foreign occupations without protest, and agreed to stop nationalist resistance which the occupiers wanted in the first place. Many local societies were established and local congresses took place, seeking regional, but not necessarily national salvation. But finally, for the first time, a national congress was assembling with promises of sovereignty and independence. Since much was expected from this gathering, the delegates were chosen very carefully. The appearance of an American journalist in this very nationalistic atmosphere undoubtedly was met with curiosity and attracted much attention, perhaps because the general inclination was to have confidence in America's help and guidance. Many people were certain that only America could support Turkey in confronting the great powers of Europe, with their unyielding thirst for colonization. Therefore, the Sivas visit of an American would not at all be looked upon with dismay.

Before discussing this American contact with the leaders of the Sivas Congress, two points should be elaborated to facilitate understanding the nature of the Congress. First was the continuous pressure of the İstanbul government to prevent the formation of a national front in Anatolia. From the moment Mustafa Kemal set foot in Samsun, he had bombarded the War Ministry with alarming telegrams calling attention to British military reinforcements, suggestive of the expansion of their zone of influence in defiance of the Mudros Armistice. When the government attempted to temporize rather than take prompt action to stop the British, Mustafa Kemal had circulated from Havza a preliminary invitation to local authorities for collective resistance against the occupying powers. This was followed by a lengthy declaration which he prepared with his confidants Ali Fuat (Cebesoy), Refet (Bele) and Rauf (Orbay) whom he summoned to Amasya. It was approved by General Kazım Karabekir, commanding at Erzurum. This declaration, circulated at the end of June, in the name of the sovereignty of the nation and the will of the people, had also announced the Erzurum Congress and invited representatives from all provinces to attend the national congress to meet in Sivas. Needless to say, these were more than clues to Mustafa Kemal's intention to organize massive nationalist action which the Allies were able to foresee and demanded the government to prevent.

The Ottoman government became aware of Mustafa Kemal's intention to lead the growing reaction through his telegrams and declarations. Accordingly, it called him back to İstanbul. Increasing appeals from İstanbul, to which Mustafa Kemal did not respond, followed him from

Havza to Amasya. And by the time he reached Erzurum to attend the Congress, these appeals took the form of a warning that he would be dismissed from the army. He met this challenge by resigning all his military ranks, positions and obligations on the eve of July 7, 1919, “in order to work for the national cause as a simple citizen.”⁴⁰ Yet, the government continued to pursue Mustafa Kemal stripped of military uniform and even attempted to arrest him for “disobeying orders” before the Sivas Congress opened. The final attempt to prevent the upcoming Congress was to inform Mustafa Kemal through a telegram to Reşit, Governor of Sivas, that the French were threatening to occupy the city in case the meeting materialized. But nationalist sentiment had reached so high a pitch that none of the attempts of the İstanbul government to disrupt the Congress stopped Mustafa Kemal, who ignoring all obstacles, followed the planned procedures and gave his final response by chairing the Sivas Congress. He was careful, however, not to appear disloyal to the government, so he fulfilled the existing legal requirements by officially notifying the Governor of Sivas of the Congress and its proceedings.

In addition to attempts to block the nationalists, the government sought to discourage the brain trust of the movement assembled in Sivas by stimulating a Kurdish rebellion in the neighboring provinces and carrying it into Sivas to crush the Congress. Nevertheless, with the determined and timely preventive action of the nationalists, all such attempts remained futile.

The second point which requires further explanation is connected with the general inclination to accept the American mandate. Not many, even among the nationalists, believed in the probability of full independence, so starting from the Erzurum Congress, much correspondence took place between Mustafa Kemal and various military and civilian supporters of the nationalist cause trying in vain to persuade him to consider accepting the idea of mandate. From key supporters of mandate, such as Kara Vasıf, Bekir Sami, as well as Esat Pasha (Işık) and Halide Edip, many claiming to support the nationalist movement conveyed individual messages as well as collective reports personally or through Ali Fuat, explaining that an American mandate was the only way to defeat British intentions toward Turkish territories. Their

⁴⁰ Mahzar Müfit Kansu, *Erzurum'dan Ölümüne Kadar Atatürk'le* (Ankara: 1966), (With Atatürk From Erzurum Until His Death), p. 131.

suggestion was that the Sivas Congress should meet at once, decide on requesting an American mandate, and in order to gain time, hand an appeal to the King-Crane Commission, which was still in İstanbul, to be delivered to the United States Senate.⁴¹ Even the fact that the Erzurum Congress resolutions definitely opposed a great power mandate did not terminate discussions in İstanbul or Anatolia during the time from the closing of this Congress to the opening of the Sivas Congress. Therefore, the idea of mandate formed a large portion of the matters debated during the Congress. There was much “serious discussion and reference to the interviews which had taken place with the King-Crane Commission, and a feeling on the part of some that the Turkish nation could survive [only] as an independent entity under a properly administered mandate.”⁴²

The Sivas Congress

The Sivas Congress which lasted eight days opened on Thursday, September 4, 1919. The only high school building in town served as the meeting place for the Congress. Schools were closed for summer, so this made the multiple classrooms in the building available and facilitated the conversion of the schoolhouse into a congress hall. One of the two big rooms of the entrance floor was reserved for security personnel, the other served as the dining hall, while the rest of the classrooms were used by the clerks. The first classroom by the staircase on the second floor, which was converted into a private room for Mustafa Kemal, was furnished to serve as a bedroom as well as a reception or a study room. Rauf Bey was also given a private room. The large meeting room next to Mustafa Kemal’s, with school desks in the center, circled by additional chairs was used for deliberations. The rest of the classrooms with several beds in each were also turned into bedchambers for some of the other delegates; a few chairs were placed in the rooms to provide the minimum necessity to be used for private conversations. Numbers of residents contributed to the furnishing and Şekeroğlu İsmail Efendi, from a family of the oldest residents of Sivas, hosted twenty delegates in his home. The people of Sivas were extremely excited to be hosts

⁴¹ *Nutuk*, vol. I, pp. 90–103. The King-Crane Commission left İstanbul on August 21, 1919.

⁴² Howard, *The King Crane Commission*, p. 293.

to such an important meeting and organized outdoor celebrations on the eve of the congress.⁴³

Only 29 delegates from various parts of the country were present at the opening session. Louis E. Browne, who traveled to Sivas to closely observe the sessions from the beginning to end, was the only foreign observer and the only non-Muslim present. He was well received by the attending members and by Mustafa Kemal Pasha, who found the presence of a foreign journalist quite useful for the cause.

Also present at the opening session were five members of the Representative Committee established at the end of the Erzurum Congress, including Mustafa Kemal and Rauf Bey. This delegation was composed *ad hoc* by Mustafa Kemal,⁴⁴ who deemed it essential that Erzurum's representatives attend the Sivas Congress. The aim of the Congress was to design the newly initiated movement, provide nation-wide cooperation by assembling the irregulars, and publicize Turkish determination for independence.

After strenuous debate, Mustafa Kemal Pasha was finally elected against three dissenting votes⁴⁵ to chair the congress. In fact, intense lobbying had taken place opposing the selection of Mustafa Kemal to preside. Even his close associate Rauf Bey had not refrained from suggesting to him not to run for the chair.⁴⁶ This must have been due to Rauf's wish for someone supportive of the idea of mandate to preside in order to maneuver the delegates to accepting it, since Mustafa Kemal Pasha was known as an opponent. It was clear from the opening session that the mandate issue was going to be one of the primary points of discussion. Therefore, the presence of an American journalist was a matter of curiosity and interest for all.

During his first few days in Sivas, Browne came to realize that he was believed to have been officially commissioned by Washington to work to secure a mandate for the United States. He even heard rumors that he was thought to be authorized to bring a team of 50,000 workers from the U.S.A. to serve this cause.⁴⁷ Rauf Bey and Rüstem Bey, the

⁴³ Kansu, p. 206; Mahmut Goloğlu, *Sivas Kongresi*, (Ankara: Başnur Matbaası, 1969), (The Sivas Congress), p. 22.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁴⁵ *Nutuk*, p. 88. However, Türk Tarih Kurumu publication *Sivas Kongresi Tutanakları* (The Minutes of the Sivas Congress) compiled by Uluğ İğdemir, Ankara, 1969, p. 1, specifies that Mustafa Kemal was unanimously elected to chair the Conference.

⁴⁶ *Nutuk*, p. 87.

⁴⁷ *Nutuk*, p. 104.

former Ottoman Ambassador in Washington, had excellent command of the English language; therefore the three often discussed the matter at length. Rauf Bey, who served as an interpreter in most of the discussions with the delegates concerning "mandate," explained to Browne that the Turks were totally unable to comprehend this foreign term and feared of becoming trapped into an engagement they did not understand.

Despite Browne's repeated assurance that he was not an official representative of the United States and was there only as a journalist, he was constantly asked whether America would accept being a mandatory power. (He reported this in a number of undated but numbered draft telegrams probably intended either for the *Chicago Daily News* or Admiral Bristol, the U.S. High Commissioner to İstanbul at that time).⁴⁸ He had to repeat this to Mustafa Kemal Pasha several times also, even during the lengthy discussion when he interviewed him.

This interview was held on the eve of September 7, just before the mandate issue was brought to discussion. It consisted of a private conversation in which Mustafa Kemal Pasha confided to Browne his conviction that the opposition he encountered in chairing the congress, including Rauf's, was stimulated and continued by those favoring the acceptance of a mandate he was known to oppose. In return, Browne assured Mustafa Kemal Pasha that he was not at Sivas to persuade anyone to accept an American mandate; as a matter of fact, he was there without any official affiliations. He also clarified that he personally was against such an arrangement and that his opinion was not different from that of his government and countrymen who were believers and defenders of democracy and stood firmly against the application of enslaving measures to other nations. Browne also explained to Mustafa Kemal Pasha that he, as well as Americans in general, found the word *mandate* alien and would not even be able to define it if asked. Through the advancing hours of the evening, the question of the mandate remained the main topic of conversation between the two.⁴⁹

The following lines Brown drafted presumably after the interview may be one of the explanatory telegrams he cabled to his newspaper or to Bristol concerning the interview:

Moustapha Kemal told me he intended try induce Congress resolve open categorical invitation to the United States to accept mandate Turkey. He

⁴⁸ Browne Papers Box I; Latimer, p. 54.

⁴⁹ Kansu, pp. 232–33.

stated that while delegates unanimously favor American mandatory and unanimously seeking some means inviting United States become Turkey's guardian, there appears to be objection to the word 'mandate.' He states that substitution not intended as limiting mandatory power but only to sugar coat a term which will which will violently agitate the ever present Turkish armor proper [sic]. Moustapha says National Force will accept with thanks any conditions the United States chooses suggest but some of those conditions should be disguised because of excited state Turkish mind...Roeuf Bey endorses above expressions with following remarks "Turkey lost war consequently expects some territorial curtailment such as Mesopotamia⁵⁰ or Syria but we feel we should not lose both. I signed Armistice and know what Calthrope promised. The British have lied and we spreading fact broadcast Turkey. Continued presence of British and Greek troops Asiatic Turkey in the event United States refusing mandate will develop in call for general mobilization by authority of Force National. We have tremendous force left can have army two fifty thousand former soldiers in rifles and ammunition to equip that force. Frankly unless the United States comes to our aid it means another war."⁵¹

Mustafa Kemal, in his *Nutuk* did not go into details of Browne's interview other than what he related to the Congress on September 8, 1919, when the topic of mandate was discussed. He only said, "I deemed it suitable to personally talk with the journalist Mister Brown [sic] who had come to Sivas. He is an intelligent young man one can easily communicate with."⁵² But Browne's cable sent on the day following the interview includes the following lines:

Moustapha told me "Turkey desires America come our aid word mandate foreign Turkish language and we unable use unknown term therefore delegates invite assistance. Should United States accept I assure you that Turkey will accept any terms United States demands. Congress unable ask directly for United States because first we doubt whether America will accept second if we mention United States and the United States should decline, English go before Mohomedan world say that Turks themselves admit incapacity government. We will not stand for the English we will accept American mandate but will fight English until end even though it cause another European war." September nine

⁵⁰ Probably meaning "Mesopotamia."

⁵¹ Browne Papers, Box no. I, The text is given as it is in the files at the Hoover Institution. Latimer also used the same texts in his dissertation, pp. 54-55, however he reproduced the few spelling mistakes in the original documents.

⁵² *Nutuk*, p. 103.

The Mandate Question

The mandate issue was brought into discussion on September 8, 1919. Rauf, whom the majority believed to be a mandate supporter, had invited a group of delegates to his room in the morning to assure them to the contrary. A petition signed by Bekir Sami and 25 delegates brought the mandate issue into discussion in the afternoon. The petition, accenting the necessity of accepting the mandate, was prepared to indicate its expected contributions. These ranged from the assistance of the mandatory power to the evacuation of the occupied territories and from acceptance of national organizations to assuring worldwide recognition of national sovereignty. These expectations included mandatory assistance with population exchange and the transferring of the patriarchates to related countries for the solution of the minority problem. Help was also expected to prepare the ground for Turkey's admittance to the League of Nations.

As soon as the petition was read, hands went up, but before giving the floor to anyone, Mustafa Kemal Pasha as chair, chose to relate his conversation with Browne the previous evening. He told of Browne's assuring statements that he did not have any official instructions nor was he officially authorized to convey a message concerning mandate, that he was totally uninformed of the rumored 50,000 American workers, scheduled to come to Turkey, and was in Sivas on a totally private basis. He also reported that Browne, commenting that Americans might not even accept a mandate, very carefully expressed certainty that like him most of the Americans did not even know what the term *mandate* meant. Further, Browne conveyed his interpretation that 'mandate is whatever you say it is'. Mustafa Kemal Pasha concluded his words by clarifying that he shared the details of this conversation to prevent continuation of misleading assumptions concerning Browne's presence in Sivas or on American mandate. He even gave a brief intermission for the stirred up members to evaluate the matter over among themselves.⁵³

When discussions started following the ten-minute break, it soon became apparent that there was full agreement concerning the economic weakness of the country. After one of the speakers pointed out that total funds in the state treasury would not cover more than the interest

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 239–240; *Nutuk*, pp. 88–104.

on state debts, all members admitted that the state was economically handicapped and therefore, applying to a foreign power for financial support was inevitable. However, there was obvious uncertainty about the meaning of mandate. Therefore, the speakers mostly tried to clarify its definition and scope. The aim of the nationalist movement was to obtain total independence for the Turks, but whether mandate would restrict this or not was open to discussion. Most of the participants agreed that in case the American Congress agreed on accepting a mandate, the degree of independence recognized would be left up to the mandatory power. Those from İstanbul and its surroundings favored accepting an American mandate rather than one by Britain, France or Italy. The U.S.A. was believed not to hold imperialistic ambitions in the East and would be ready to leave when her mission was accomplished. Several speakers voiced this through different explanations. For example, Kara Vasıf, one of the staunch supporters of an American mandate, was very persuasive with his logical explanations. His wholehearted assurances that United States and Turkey could negotiate on all points from economic to social when left alone, and thus that Turkey would be relieved of all other foreign threats received many approving nods.

Another delegate who shared this view was Refet Bey. In his lengthy speech advocating an American mandate, he was critical of those concerned about restrictions that a mandate would impose on independence. His argument was that France and Britain, interested in Syria and Mesopotamia were counting on American supremacy in Transcaucasia, to serve as a buffer against Russian expansion, a serious threat for their zones of interest. According to Refet, to secure this protection, these two states offered the U.S.A. a mandate over eastern Anatolia annexed to Armenia and over İstanbul, which in fact, was the gateway to Transcaucasia, and assumed this would, like “a gilded pill,”⁵⁴ bring an instant relief to their fears of Russian intervention. He claimed that the U.S.A., sensing the intrigue involved, declined the offer, so the mandate proposal was altered to cover an autonomous Armenia and current Ottoman territories. Refet continued his explanations by claiming that when the U.S.A., in order to protect her investments, appeared ready to accept an Ottoman mandate encompassing pre-war frontiers which included French and British zones of interest these states withdrew their

⁵⁴ This is Kinross’s interpretation of the term “yaldızlı hap” Refet used (*Atatürk*, p. 186).

offer and suggested that American public opinion ought to be consulted “before being burdened with such a responsibility.” He stressed that in order to relieve Turkey from the intrigues of these states, the United States government, currently at the point of deciding whether a mandate proposal should be taken to the U.S. Congress, ought to be persuaded to accept the Turkish mandate. Pointing out that Americans were not familiar with Turks, Refet suggested that a committee composed of enlightened Turks, well informed about conditions, should be sent to Washington to explain and publicize the Turkish case. The alternative he proposed in case the first suggestion was not found agreeable was to invite some experts from America to view in place the popular and nationalistic character of the movement in Turkey which had no intentions other than Turkish independence.⁵⁵

It is difficult to determine how aware Refet or the delegates were of British involvement in Mesopotamian oil, although they were cognizant of the British scheme to secure from the Soviets London’s activities and investments there, by hiding behind an American mandate. In fact, fear of losing these areas was one of the reasons why Britain chose to take the Sultan under control and neutralize the Ottoman Parliament in December 1918, when the Armistice and foreign occupation started to be debated. As Turks became more aware of foreign intentions, armed resistance increased turbulence over Ottoman territories. Many Turks were convinced that rivalries for these territories were not likely to cease unless the United States accepted an Anatolian mandate, even if it was for the sake of her investments and the political expectations of the Armenians. With these considerations in mind, an important portion of the delegates in Sivas shared Refet’s opinion that in order to end French and British territorial hegemony and regain independence, the U.S.A. had to be persuaded to assume the mandate she no longer appeared enthusiastic to accept.

Nevertheless, despite the vast number of pro-mandate delegates, it became more obvious during the afternoon discussions that the term *mandate* was not explicit enough for anyone, and that individual conversations with Browne had neither explained what it was, nor given assurance that the U.S.A. would accept such a task. Although the delegates almost unanimously appeared to favor American mandate, Mustafa Kemal Pasha was particularly reluctant about it. Suspicious

⁵⁵ İğdemir, pp. 57–60.

that mandate would involve political restrictions and concessions from independence he preferred to use “American assistance” for foreign aid, which all members agreed was essential. As a matter of fact, only the night before, one of the delegates, a young medical student named Hikmet had severely objected to mandate and had won Mustafa Kemal’s admiration by saying that Turkish youth would react even to Mustafa Kemal if he supported a mandate. Each of the speakers following Refet made clear that requesting foreign aid was inevitable, stressed that this could best be acquired by accepting the mandate of a non-belligerent power, and expressed preference for an American mandate. However, they all seemed uncertain whether the U.S.A. would assume such a responsibility. Many were concerned that the good relations between the two countries would be tarnished should Washington choose to decline an Ottoman mandate.

The proposal to invite an American delegation to Turkey to determine the feasibility of a mandate was drawn up by Rauf at Browne’s suggestion. During his address on September 9, Rauf summarized the lengthy conversation he had with Browne, who repeated that he was there only as a journalist and his words did not reflect the opinions of his government or of his people. What Browne stressed was that all Americans he met in Turkey regarded a U.S. mandate as essential and feared that the peace terms suggested for Turkey would cause in the Near East disasters similar to those recently experienced in the Balkans. Therefore, to avoid turmoil a probable disintegration would bring, he suggested Turkey should appeal to the U.S. government and request to be placed under a single American mandate. Rauf, continuing his speech, told the delegates that over this suggestion, he reminded Browne such a proposal would be considered by the U.S.A. only if extended by the Ottoman Parliament; and that in case the nationalists delivering it were refused, they would lose prestige and support and the country would be divided. This time, it was Browne who pointed out that without serious aid, Turkey would be divided anyway, so they did not have much to lose and that the Representative Committee, which had a more or less legal status, should apply to the U.S. Congress and invite a commission to observe Turkish developments in place. The proposal to send a formal message to the U.S.A., requesting a commission was accepted by majority vote.⁵⁶ Accordingly, the following telegram was written and given to Browne to take to Washington:

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 74–75.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE OF THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA

The National Congress of Sivas, representing the entire Mohammedan population of European Turkey and Asia Minor and composed of delegates representing every province and state in said portions of the Ottoman Empire, assembled on September 1919 for the purpose of securing the fulfillment of the wishes of the population of the Empire with the protection of all minorities, and, with life, liberty and justice and inviolability of property right guaranteed for all,

The National Congress of Sivas by unanimous vote on September 8, 1919 passed a resolution outlining the desires of the majority of the population of the Ottoman Empire and embodying the principles which will guide the future action of the Congress at Sivas, the central committee which it will elect from among its members before dispersal, and all of the subsidiary organizations within the frontiers of the Empire.

In accordance with the said resolution of policy, the National Congress of Sivas, this day, by unanimous vote, requests the Senate of the United States of America to send a committee of its members to visit all confines of the Ottoman Empire for the purpose investigating with the clear vision of a disinterested nation conditions as they actually are in the Ottoman Empire before permitting the arbitrary disposal of the peoples and territories of the Ottoman Empire by a treaty of peace.

In the name of the National Congress of Sivas⁵⁷

The signatories were President: Mustafa Kemal Pasha,
Vice President: Huseyin Rauf
2nd Vice President: Ismail Fazıl Pasha, retired general and the two secretaries were İsmail Hami and M. Şükrü.

Although Browne did not specify it in his notes, Mine Erol claimed in her book on the American mandate that he [Browne] wrote the English version of the letter.⁵⁸ As it can be seen, the text was very meticulously worded not to include the word mandate. But it expressed readiness to accept American aid. The Sivas Congress discussed other matters during the following two days and terminated on September 11, 1919. The declaration the Congress issued on the closing day actually foreshadowed the statement of the basic political principles to be pronounced

⁵⁷ Browne Papers, Box no. I, folder ID 15, Outcard No. 196. General James G. Harbord attached this request he learned about in Sivas to his report titled "Report of the American Military Mission to Armenia" as Exhibit F (p. 40).

⁵⁸ Mine Erol, *Türkiye'de Amerikan Mandası Meselesi 1919-1920* (Giresun: n.p. 1972), (The Issue of an American Mandate for Turkey), p. 95.

as the National Pact under the roof of the Ottoman Parliament which, with the prodding of the Representative Committee, reassembled in January 1920. Browne cabled the decisions of the Sivas Congress in the following text:⁵⁹

No. 1 [second digit illegible] Congress unanimously voted adopt Erzeroum Congress resolution copy of which I sent you from Angora period Delegates discussed several days question mandate decided unanimously they wanted the U.S.A. to take mandate practically on America's own terms period Terms period Committee informed me that if Sivas Congress can assured the U.S.A. will accept mandate Congress immediately pass resolution to be broadcasted Turkey particular Mohammedan world general effect that Turkey incapable of proceeding without assistance and Sivas Congress and National force decided invite the U.S.A. come Turkeys assistance in every section national life. period Lacking this assurance congress accepted resolution Erzeroum Cong. (sic) period Nevertheless Congress voted invite senate of the U.S.A. to send delegation of American senators Turkey to "investigate conditions with clear vision of disinterested nation before permitting arbitrary disposal of territories and peoples Ottoman [Empire] by treaty peace" this invitation coupled with reaffirmed resolution Erzeroum Congress can be taken as direct invitation to America.

As previously mentioned, there was no common understanding between Browne and the Turks either about the meaning or about taking a decision for the mandate. The Turks sought financial aid, but did not want to enter any binding agreements requiring territorial concessions or obligations restricting their economic and social independence. This, Browne must have understood, especially after sitting through some of the meetings during the days of the Congress and particularly after his interview with Mustafa Kemal. However, his statement that the Turks agreed to an American mandate is explicable only by assuming that as a journalist, he may have been less impartial and more after some stirring news. Nevertheless official contacts between the two countries on the mandate issue were to be pursued by General James G. Harbord, who visited Sivas in the week following the termination of the Congress. His visit will be treated in the following chapter.

⁵⁹ This telegram was one of the series of numbered telegrams on the subject among Browne's papers. See Frederic Latimer, p. 55.

Aftermath of the Congress

During the Congress, Mustafa Kemal Pasha was constantly in touch with local nationalist groups. They reported to him that the Sultan and Damat Ferit cabinet were in full cooperation with the representatives of the Allies in İstanbul, trying to stop the Congress, and that British troops were being reinforced with the intention of preventing the national struggle. A number of intercepted telegrams verified this. There were also conspiracies to appoint the Harput (Elazığ) Governor, Ali Galip to incite a Kurdish uprising, crush the Congress, and arrest Mustafa Kemal and the delegates. In spite of being informed of all plots to sabotage the proceedings, Mustafa Kemal was not discouraged. Avoiding frontal attacks on the Sultan, he targeted the cabinet, claimed that the Sultan was deceived and separated from the people by the government which had lost the confidence and support of the nation, and therefore, was no longer legal.⁶⁰ Hence, forcing the cabinet to resign became one of the primary objectives of the Congress. At the same time, fearing the government might carry out its intention to raid the Congress, drawing up resolutions and broadcasting them became one of Mustafa Kemal's chief concerns. Accordingly, the Congress issued a final declaration on September 11, 1919, confirming the territorial integrity of the Ottoman State within the boundaries determined by the Mudros Armistice and preponderantly populated by Turks.

The Sivas Declaration accepted non-Muslim elements within national frontiers, but specified that they would not be allowed privileges which could threaten social equality or application of governmental decisions. Obedience to nation's will and adherence to the Sultan-Caliph were included in the document, which called for the immediate meeting of the Ottoman Parliament to provide legal sanction for the Declaration. Centralization of the scattered Defense of Rights societies under the name of Anatolia and Rumelia [i.e., Thrace] Defense of Rights Society, and the establishment of a Representative Committee, entitled to act on behalf of the people were also included in the declaration. It was underlined that the elected Representative Committee was to "pursue developments towards the sacred cause and conduct the affairs of the

⁶⁰ Mustafa Kemal in *Nutuk*, pp. 88–115, provided the details of the Sivas Congress, including the obstacles created by the Damat Ferit government.

nation,” meaning that it was to act as a government as long as disagreement with İstanbul continued. Although there was broad inclination to accept a United States mandate, the 7th Article of the final declaration of the Sivas Congress spelled out its definite rejection by clearly stating that “scientific, industrial, economic aid of a state not bearing imperialist aims” was welcome, providing that “the integrity of the nation and full independence of the state in foreign and domestic affairs was observed.”⁶¹

In the afternoon of the same day, from the small room which served as the telegraph office, above a shop near the schoolhouse, Mustafa Kemal launched his battle of telegrams informing the Sultan, the Prime Ministry and Army commanders of the Congress proceedings as well as the obstructionist attempt of Ali Galip. A telegram was sent directly to the Sultan, notifying him of the resolutions of the Congress and assuring him of the full obedience of the nationalists. The telegraph contained complaints about the Interior and War Ministers’ plot to raid the Congress and their attempts to dismember Turkey by inciting Kurds to rebel. The Sultan was notified that the Ottoman government which supported this plot had lost the confidence of the entire nation including the military wing and that until the cabinet was replaced by one composed of “men of honor” respectful to the state and the nation, loyal to the Caliphate and Sultanate, all communications with the capital would be broken.⁶²

⁶¹ İğdemir, pp. 113–115. Articles 6 and 7 read as follows: “Article VI—We await a decision which will conform with right and with such justice as will annul the initiatives that are contrary to our historic, ethnic and religious rights, a decision relative to annulling of the Project of the separation of our territory within the line of demarcation traced by the armistice treaty, 30 October 1334, and inhabited by a preponderate majority of Mussulman population having an intellectual preponderance and economic superiority and forming an absolutely indivisible brotherhood which is inseparable of race and religion. Article VII. Our people honor and respect humanitarian and contemporary purposes and take in consideration of scientific, industrial and economic needs; in consequence whereof, on condition that the interior and exterior independence of our people and of our State, and on condition that the territorial integrity of our country shall be conserved intact, we will accept with pleasure the scientific, industrial, and economic assistance of every State which will not set forth imperialistic tendencies with respect to our country and which will respect the principles of nationality within the limits indicated under article six. We await in the name of the preservation of humanity and universal peace the urgent signature of a peace based on the aforementioned equitable and humanitarian conditions which we consider to be our greatest national objective.” Eliot Grinnel Mears, *Modern Turkey* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1924), p. 628.

⁶² *Nutuk*, vol. 3, pp. 975–977.

This undoubtedly was an ultimatum renouncing the government and the Grand Vizier (Prime Minister). Upon Mustafa Kemal's request, all military commanders sent similar telegrams to the Sultan although none received replies. Next, addressing Damat Ferit, Mustafa Kemal initially in a respectful tone requested to be put in direct contact with the Sultan. When the Grand Vezir did not reply, the telegrams turned into ultimatums. As the hours went by, Mustafa Kemal ordered the Telegraph Directorate in Sivas to stop all correspondence between Anatolia and İstanbul. The same order was extended to the 20th, 15th, 13th and 3rd Army Commanders, with a warning that telegraph officers who disobeyed would be taken to court martial and punished severely. Mustafa Kemal made clear to all that communications would not resume until a new prime minister was appointed and a government holding the confidence of the people replaced the existing one. Meanwhile, the Representative Committee was to act as a provisional government.⁶³

Browne, much impressed by the flood of telegrams which lasted all night long and put Mustafa Kemal Pasha in touch with the rest of Anatolia, explained his sentiments in a dispatch as follows: "For many minutes the telegraph wire sizzled with Turkish expletives... the Interior Minister Adil called Mustafa Kemal Pasha and Rauf criminals and traitors and they, in return, accused Adil of being sold to the British for a pittance." Browne, noting how meticulous Mustafa Kemal Pasha was in planning his approaches, reported that he continued "as though he were conducting a battle in the field, swiftly drafting telegrams, dryly commenting on the replies, pacing up and down, smoking and talking and consulting with Rauf and the others while the crowd waited outside for some announcement as to what was afoot."⁶⁴

Browne was equally impressed to observe that the nationalists, to refrain from creating a public debate on the issue, pretended to know nothing about the complicity of the Sultan, decided not to attack him and accused only the Premier, Ferit Pasha and his government. Actually, what Browne witnessed that evening, as the Sivas resolutions constituting the National Pact were circulated all over Turkey, was the transformation of a revolution into the basis of a nation state.

On the other hand, the British High Commissioner Admiral Sir John de Robeck was instantly informed of the developments by the Grand

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 978–980.

⁶⁴ Kinross, p. 193.

Vizier in person, who expressed “his growing attention to the increasing importance of the movement under Mustafa Kemal.” Admiral de Robeck related the developments in Sivas to Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary with the remark “it is steadily moving in direction of an independent Republic in Anatolia.”⁶⁵

To attract such attention to the newly emerging Turkish independence movement was exactly what Mustafa Kemal wanted. Admiral de Robeck’s assumption of an approaching republic perhaps was even more than what Kemal sought at that time. Nevertheless, allowing a foreign journalist to share that vital evening in the small room turned into the headquarters of his “battle of telegrams” can be interpreted as a clear indication of Mustafa Kemal’s wish to make the movement gain world-wide recognition. Browne was an observer in this room for long hours as the chain of telegraphs eventually brought the rupture of relations with the İstanbul government. Damat Ferit resigned on the eve of September 30. The letter explaining the conditions in detail to the Sultan, which the Representative Committee asked Browne to take along when he left Sivas, according to Ahmet Emin Yalman, became the drop which overflowed the glass.⁶⁶ Such a letter to Vahdettin has not been found, so we cannot assume we know what it contained if there was one. However, we can confidently claim that the “last drop” for the fall of the cabinet was more than the letter. İstanbul certainly followed all developments and the success of the Sivas Congress. Consequently, there were the telegrams Mustafa Kemal circulated on behalf of the Anatolian and

⁶⁵ Bilal N. Şimşir, *İngiliz Belgelerinde Atatürk-British Documents on Atatürk*, vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1973), pp. 103–104.

⁶⁶ Ahmet Emin Yalman, *Yakın Tarihte Gördüklerim ve Geçirdiklerim*, (İstanbul: Pera Turizm ve Ticaret A. Ş., 1970), vol. 2, (Witnessing Contemporary History), p. 37. Browne’s notes do not refer to any letter he was asked to deliver to the Sultan. Sina Akşin, *İstanbul Hükümetleri ve Milli Mücadele*, vol. 1 (Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1998), (İstanbul Cabinets and the National Struggle), p. 533. contains a reference to Ahmet Emin Yalman’s book, which mentions Mr. John Brown from *The Chicago Daily News* taking such a letter from Sivas to İstanbul (p. 37). However, Akşin writes that it was Louis Edgar Browne. It must be borne in mind that there were two journalists from Chicago: Louis Edgar Browne from *The Chicago Daily News*, and John Brown, as Akşin wrote on p. 120, from *The Chicago Tribune*. However, there is reason to believe that Ahmet Emin Yalman is confusing these journalists, for in his book, *Turkey In My Time*, he mentions Constantine Brown from *The Chicago Daily News* (p. 77). The letter that Mine Erol mentions undoubtedly is the one found among Browne’s papers, addressed “To the President of the Senate of the United States of America.”

Rumelian Defense of Rights Representative Committee addressed to the Defense of Rights Society in Sivas as well as to Allied representatives and embassies in İstanbul announcing that it was hazardous for Muslim and non-Muslim citizens as well as for Damad Ferid to remain in office. Ferid, by violating the constitution was proven to be a traitor. With a reminder that all communications between İstanbul and Anatolia were discontinued until a responsible and trustworthy cabinet assumed office, the nation was asked to forward complaints in regard to this cabinet to local authorities.⁶⁷ Apart from this effort to channel public opinion against Damat Ferid, it is very likely that Browne related the power of the nationalists and the ring of respect around Mustafa Kemal to some influential people in İstanbul before his departure for Paris on October 1, 1919. And what he conveyed was “firsthand news” by someone who was not a Nationalist or a Unionist, in fact, not even a Turk; therefore, it is possible to claim that the impressions he related probably had an effect on the fall of the Cabinet.

Damat Ferit’s resignation was the first victory of the nationalists against Ottoman administration and Browne was able to observe it on the eve of “the battle of telegraphs.” His dispatch from Paris on October 11 to the *Chicago Daily News* which was published on the front page on October 13, gave a vivid description of what he witnessed during the long hours of reciprocal telegrams:

I have never heard of more efficient communications than I have witnessed that night. Within half an hour, Erzurum, Erzinjan, Mosoul, Diyarbekir, Samsun, Trabizond, Angora, Malatya, Kharput, Konya and Brusa were all in communication. Mustafa Kemal sat at one end of the wire leading to all these places, and at the other end sat the military commanders and civil authorities of the respective cities and villages. The whole situation was explained and with one exception Anatolia ordered Mustafa Kemal to use his own judgment and go to the limit. Konya responded that owing to the presence of Italian troops in the city it had to be neutral.⁶⁸

In the same report, Browne also gave a brief explanation of the developments of the Congress in Sivas and what followed:

⁶⁷ *Atatürk’ün Tamim Telgraf ve Beyannameleri* (Ankara: 1964) (Atatürk’s Dispatches and Public Statements), pp. 86–87.

⁶⁸ Browne’s Papers, Box 1 File 14.

NEW TURKEY FORCED AS SULTAN FAILS
TO YIELD TO ULTIMATUM

Louis Edgar Browne Hears Anatolian Leaders Order Mohammed VI
to Rush to Stamboul Telegraph Office and Accept
Demand of Nationalists

On the Rejection of Demands Asiatic Turkey is Cut Off; French Induce
Sultan to Dismiss Cabinet after He had Lived for Ten Days in
Hourly Fear of Assassination

Paris, October 11, 1919

The new Turkish cabinet is the result of a widespread but bloodless revolution in Anatolia, headed by General Moustapha Kemal Pasha and Roef Bey. These leaders, acting in the name of the national congress of Sivas, gave the sultan one hour to get out of bed, proceed across Istanbul to hear and accept the ultimatum of the Sivas Congress. Ultimatum went into effect. Anatolia severed all relations with Sultan and Cabinet. Finally Damat Ferit dismissed...

The national congress of Sivas, to whose will the Sultan has just stopped to offer a compromise, demands four things, the most important of which is an American mandate for the entire Ottoman Empire. The second is an immediate general election to enable the formation of a parliament so that the Turkish people can express their sentiments and control the activities of the sultan. The third is to safeguard the territorial and political integrity of the Turkish nation and the fourth to secure by negotiation or by war the departure of the Greek forces from Smyrna.

Browne's Assessment

After what Browne personally observed in Sivas, he evaluated the resignation of the Damat Ferit cabinet as a "bloodless revolution" and included this remark in his cable of October 11 from Paris, after the fall of Damat Ferit. He wrote "Mustafa Kemal Paşa and Rauf, President and Vice President of National Congress of Sivas are the actual rulers of the Turkish Empire since the fall of the cabinet." We learn from Browne's notes that he was able to convey his convictions to General Harbord, who at the beginning of his assignment to investigate a possible American mandate was not as knowledgeable or experienced as Browne concerning the Turks or the mandate issue. He informed Harbord that "Turks desired American mandate for the Ottoman Empire as a whole on the grounds that Turkey, which had fallen behind her sister nations in the West, could not recover without political instructions and economic assistance from some territorially disinterested nation."

He also informed the General of what he had learned concerning the Armenians, stressing that all censuses—even those taken by Russia and France before the war—indicated that there was a Muslim majority in the six eastern provinces which Armenia claimed.⁶⁹

Browne's long conversations with Miss Grafam, an American missionary who was in Sivas for many years, undoubtedly contributed to the formation of his opinion concerning Turco-Armenian relations. He had learned from Miss Grafam, who had won the hearts of the Armenians in Sivas, that many had confided their jewels and valuables to her during the 1915 incidents. She informed him that many of the Turks in Sivas were against transporting the Armenians and had shielded them. She underlined that "Turks were unable to govern the Armenians, therefore resorted to cruelty, and that unless Armenians were given a place apart from the Turks, the war would not have helped the question at all." She admitted that Turks also had suffered much during the war, but pointed out that they were supported by the government however inefficient so their destitution was not to the degree of the Armenians.⁷⁰

In the articles Browne wrote after his return to the United States, he recommended a mandate for Turkey, indicating the Turks' preference for an American mandate. Browne, though from the vantage point of Europe, must have exchanged opinions with some of his associates on the mandate issue to update himself of the current feeling of his compatriots. For example, it was from Paris that he cabled his associate, Herbert Carey from the Associated Newspapers on October 17, 1919, to say that "Every American in Turkey feels that the United States ought to take a mandate over the Ottoman Empire as a whole. They all detest the Armenians and have as little to do with them as possible, and any mention of a mandate for an independent Armenia causes hands of protest."⁷¹

Carey's response of November 1 was expressive of his own sentiments as he wrote:

Now for your question: You cannot imagine the vigor with which American opinion repels any suggestion of a mandate, be it Armenian, Turkish or what not. We are thoroughly fed up with the war over here. The time to have stuck us with a mandate was at the beginning of the Peace Conference. Then we were still wide eyed, juvenile, and credulous.

⁶⁹ Ibid., Box 1 File 3 K—dispatches.

⁷⁰ Ibid., File 5.

⁷¹ Ibid.

We believed that the Allies were just as altruistic and generous as we were. Now we have learned, somewhat to our hurt, perhaps certainly to our distaste, but eventually to our betterment, I hope, that the Allies are calm, businesslike cent-per-cent people, who had just as leave make a profit out of us as out of any one else. As we are the only ones who can pay, the Allies seem to be trying to cash it on us first. As a consequence, there is a decidedly cold feeling toward both England and France I will not say unfriendly one, but we are assuredly of a disposition to look at least twice before we leap once. . . . But there will not be any mandate for anyone, I think you may be sure of that. . . . I believe that there will be a very positive rebellion against the Wilson administration if an attempt is made to shove Armenia down our already raw throats. You haven't been home since the realization of what war taxes and war prices mean has come home to us. We do not want Armenia at the price of more taxes. Not even if 'the heart of the world should break.' If we had been offered something out of which we could make a profit, it might have been possible to entrap us into a future participation in European affairs. But to shove off the deadeast horse in the stable on us and to link us forever in an alliance to protect G[reat] B[ritain] and France from Germany—no Louis, we are not having any.⁷²

Publicizing the Turkish Nationalist Movement

Browne's presence in Sivas and the bridge he formed between Anatolia and the world with his articles and news reports was deeply appreciated by the Turkish nationalists, ardently wishing the world to be informed of their cause. Conversations with Browne served as an assurance to most of the members of the Sivas Congress that their aim could be understood by a foreigner and that undoubtedly boosted their self confidence. They displayed their appreciation by devoting an entire column to express their gratitude to Browne in the second issue of the newspaper which, according to the decision taken during the Congress, started to be published in Sivas on September 14, 1919. Mustafa Kemal Pasha under a *nom de plume* regularly wrote the editorials in this journal, entitled *İrade-i Milliye*, meaning Nation's Will.⁷³ The translation

⁷² Ibid., outcard n. 102.

⁷³ *İrade-i Milliye*, meaning "The Nation's Will," was the first journal of the national front. It was merged into *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, published in Ankara from December 1920 to 1934, as a semi-official paper of the Ankara government. Its name meant "National Sovereignty." It was continued under the title *Ulus* (Nation) after 1934 as the organ of the Republican Peoples Party.

of the article written for Browne, with the heading *Teşekkür* meaning *Gratitude*, follows:

A representative of the American press, Mr. Browne was in Sivas as the guest of the national organization for two weeks. He was in constant contact with Mustafa Kemal Pasha and Rauf Beyefendi, the former Minister of Marine as well as with other members of the Sivas Congress and held interviews with Mustafa Kemal Pasha. He became familiar with the legitimate aims of the Sivas Congress, understood the importance of the Congress and the national organization, and sent reports to announce and correctly inform the foreigners of these aims and intentions. We, therefore, regard it a duty to extend our gratitude to him.⁷⁴

The dispatches of Louis Browne from Paris made headlines in the *Chicago Daily News*. On October 13, approximately one month after the Sivas Congress' closing, its success was on the front page of the *Chicago Daily News*, under the heading "New Turkey Forced as Sultan Fails to Yield to Ultimatum."⁷⁵

"Louis Edgar Browne Hears Anatolian Leaders Order Mohammed VI to Rush to Stambul Telegraph Office and Accept Demand of Nationalists."

Charles R. Crane, the American Commissioner sent to investigate Asia Minor, was invited to attend the Sivas conference as a delegate, but he lacked the time and I went in his place. I had more or less of an Arabian Nights' experience with passwords and so on. I shared quarters with Kemal Pasha, Roef Bey, and other undisputed leaders of the Ottoman Empire of today. I sat through many meetings of the Congress, which finally requested me to inform America of the Turks' desire that the United States accept the mandate for the Ottoman Empire.

Browne's dispatch continued: "On Rejection of Demands, Asiatic Turkey Is Cut off; French Induce Sultan to Dismiss Cabinet after He Had Lived for Ten Days in Hourly Fear of Assassination"

The new Turkish cabinet is the result of a widespread but bloodless revolution in Anatolia headed by General Moustapha Kemal Pasha and Rouf Bey. These leaders, acting in the name of the National Congress of Sivas, gave the sultan one hour to get out of bed, proceed across Istanbul to end of telegraph wire in Stamboul to hear and accept the ultimatum of the Sivas Congress.

⁷⁴ *İradei Milliye*, 17 September, 1335 (1919) TİTE Archive.

⁷⁵ Browne Papers, Box 1F.14, No. 39; Latimer, p. 59.

The national congress of Sivas, to whose will the Sultan has just stopped to offer a compromise, demands four things, the most important of which is an American mandate for the entire Ottoman Empire. The second is an immediate general election to enable the formation of a parliament so that the Turkish people can express their sentiments and control the activities of the sultan. The third is to safeguard the territorial and political integrity of the Turkish nation and the fourth, to secure by negotiation or by war the departure of the Greek forces from Smyrna.

What Browne wrote about the Sivas Congress brought the Turkish nationalist movement to the attention of the U.S.A. Browne's observations and impressions were the first favorable remarks in the American press concerning the movement. American public opinion, accustomed to hearing about Turkey in connection with the Armenian massacres of 1915, was able to learn that the only aim of the newly emerging movement was to acquire sovereignty and independence within Turkish frontiers. Browne's acknowledgement that the action was not at all an anti-Christian movement, nor did it include displays of antagonism to Armenians somewhat mollified Americans, eager to be assured of the safety of Christians in Turkey. However, the official contact with the United States which Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the Sivas Congress sought would be obtained through General James G. Harbord, who arrived in Sivas on September 20, 1919, only a few days after Browne's departure.

CHAPTER TWO

THE GENERAL HARBORD COMMISSION AND THE AMERICAN MANDATE QUESTION

SEÇİL KARAL AKGÜN

Foreign occupation of Ottoman territory starting in November 1918 met with growing resistance because the Turks considered it as violation of the Mudros Armistice. Resistance, in turn, increased Armenian fears of being subjected to violence in eastern Turkey and Cilicia, areas which the Great Powers regarded as prospective territories of the proposed independent Armenian state. Meanwhile, problems between Georgia, Azerbaijan and the Armenian Republic, the three neighboring states which emerged after the Bolshevik Revolution, as well as concerns for possible Turkish retaliation against the Armenians, particularly after the scheduled evacuation of the British troops from Batum, raised the specter of extensive disruptions in eastern Turkey and Transcaucasia.

When appeals for help to Christians in these areas reached the Paris Peace Conference, Herbert Hoover, then Head of the Near East Relief organization, in June 1919 sent Major Joseph Green to investigate the situation. He was joined by Colonel William N. Haskell, recently appointed as the Allied High Commissioner for Armenia by the Council of Delegation Heads in Paris. These two officers sent alarming reports from the Caucasus and eastern Anatolia concerning threats ranging from famine to the possibility of Turkish invasion. Their words stirred up not only members of the Peace Conference, but President Wilson and those Americans anxious to extend a helping hand to Armenians. Admiral Bristol's warning that some points, such as the imminence of Turkish invasion were exaggerated, did not serve to ease the tension. On the contrary, Bristol's reactions made it seem imperative to send a commission of inquiry rapidly to report on the actual situation and also explore the conditions for an American mandate. Nevertheless, it was not until August 1, 1919, that Wilson sent a telegram instructing the American Mission in Paris to dispatch a mission to the Ottoman Empire and Transcaucasia under the leadership of Major

General James Guthrie Harbord to find out on the ground what was happening.¹

General Harbord's name to chair the mission had been suggested to Wilson by Henry Morgenthau, the former American Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, and by Herbert Hoover. In his book *The Ordeal of Woodrow Wilson*, Hoover wrote that when he learned of Wilson's wish for the United States to have a mandatory role in Armenia and İstanbul, he believed that the President was not sufficiently informed of the conditions in the area. He thus suggested that a competent mission be sent to investigate the area under the leadership of General James G. Harbord.

Fifty-three years of age at the time, Harbord, who had been reappointed Chief of Staff of the American Expeditionary Force on May 26, 1919, had successfully served as a Major in the United States forces in the Philippines and also commanded the U.S. troops in Europe in Soissons and Chateau Thierry.² These overseas experiences undoubtedly played an important role in his nomination. Consequently, General Harbord was appointed chairman of the second of the two American missions (the first was the King-Crane Commission) to inquire about the possibility of an American mandate in the Near East and Transcaucasia.

The Harbord Commission, officially named "The American Military Mission to Armenia," was sent out at President Wilson's direction to examine the mandate question from the point of view of American interests and responsibilities. The commission was composed mainly of army officers and included Brigadier Generals Frank R. McCoy and George van Horn Moseley, Colonel Henry Beeuwkes from the Medical Corps, Lieutenant Colonels John Price Jackson (Engineer), Jasper Y. Brinton (judge advocate), Edward Bowditch, Jr. (Infantry), Naval Commander W. W. Bertholf, Major Lawrence Martin from the General Staff, Major Harold Clark (Infantry), Chief of the Far Eastern Division, American Commission to Negotiate Peace, Captain Stanley K. Hornback from the Ordnance Department, Mr. William B. Poland, Chief of American Relief Commission for Belgium and Northern France, Prof. W. W. Cumberland, economic advisor to the American

¹ James Gidney, *A Mandate for Armenia* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1967), pp. 168-171.

² Gidney, p. 171.

Commission to Negotiate Peace, Mr. Eliot Grinnel Mears, trade commissioner from the Department of Commerce as well as other officers, clerks and interpreters.³

Orders for General Harbord's new duty were officially forwarded to him with the mandate to "proceed without delay on a Government vessel to Istanbul, Batum and such other places in Armenia, Transcaucasia, and Syria, as will enable you to carry out instructions already discussed with you. It is desired that you investigate and report on political, military, geographical, administrative, economic, and other considerations involved in possible American interests and responsibilities in that region."⁴ In fact, the objective of this mission was to "establish facts which could be used as basis for United States policy and action in the mentioned area particularly with a view to the question of assigning parts of eastern Turkey to an Armenian state as well as deciding on American mandate." The mission was to seek accurate and sufficient information for the Peace Conference to be able to compose a peace treaty to be presented to the Turks. Therefore, the resolutions reached would also determine more or less the part United States would play in the settlement of the Turkish case at Paris.⁵ However, neither the words "Armenian state" nor "mandate" appeared in the official instructions.

Before General Harbord and his colleagues sailed from Brest on August 24, he spent some time in Paris to gather reliable information on conditions in the region the commission was to tour. Since he was not familiar with the Turks or Armenians, he consulted those recognized as experts on the area, only to learn that most of the people presented to him were "experts on paper." In other words, some had not been "nearer to Armenia than the Congressional Library and yet others who had approached as near as France, but almost no one who had recently visited the Near East."⁶ General Harbord, admitting his prejudices at the beginning of the journey, "literally dreamed Armenia and massacres." Slowly he came to realize that only the personal observations and experiences of the Commission would supply concrete evidence sought. He

³ Maj. Gen. James G. Harbord, *Conditions in the Near East—Report of the American Military Mission to Armenia* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), p. 3 (henceforth *Harbord Report*).

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Frederic P. Latimer, "Political Philosophy of Mustapha Kemal Ataturk," *Mic.* 60–5016 Univ. *Mic.*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, p. 63.

⁶ Maj. Gen. James Harbord, "Investigating Turkey and Transcaucasia," *World's Work*, vol. 40, no. 1, (May 1920), p. 35.

had the chance to talk to the head of the Armenian Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, Boghos Nubar, whom Harbord held in high esteem. To General Harbord's question of how recently Nubar had been to Armenia, the latter stated that he had never been there.⁷

General Harbord arrived in İstanbul on September 2, 1919, with 46 members of the commission that he, after consultations, had personally selected. By that time, the American Ambassador Abram I. Elkus had long since left the Empire following his country's entry into war and the United States was represented by a High Commissioner and a Consul General in İstanbul. Diplomatic transactions with the United States of America were conducted through the Swedish Minister, as the representative of a neutral state.

As the mission was to tour in a country that was considered hazardous, providing for the safety of the staff was seen as a challenging task. Harbord had learned that the İstanbul government exercised no authority in the areas they were to tour; instead, nationalists who were resisting foreign occupiers were in control. Hence, he did not officially contact the Ottoman government, but approached the Swedish Minister to secure "official courtesy," as a precaution. He also applied to the İstanbul representatives of what he called the "Nationalist Party"⁸ in this truly delicate situation.

The mission was to focus on, as Harbord wrote, "Armenian vilayets of Turkey and Russian Armenia" [the new Armenian republic founded after the disintegration of the Transcaucasus Federation which had been established after the Bolshevik Revolution] and observe whether Turks were massing troops in that region. After four days spent in İstanbul, Harbord split the commission into two groups: One was to travel southwards and the other, after collecting information on subjects such as Ottoman finances, commerce and trade, was to proceed to the Black Sea and go to Tiflis, Baku, and Erivan for similar inquiries. The entire tour of the Commission was to last one month. Information collected

⁷ Ibid., p. 36. Boghos Nubar Pasha (1851–1930) was son of Nubar Pasha, three times prime minister of Egypt. He was educated in engineering and public works in Egypt and France. Boghos Nubar was appointed by the Catholicos in 1912 to be head of an Armenian delegation in Paris to coordinate pro-Armenian activities and publicize the Armenian case. In 1918, he helped set up the largely Armenian Legion d'Orient. In 1919, he became president of the Armenian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference. www.armenian.history.com/Nyuter/BIOGRAPHY/htm.

⁸ Ibid., p. 37. The Nationalist Party Harbord refers to in his report was not yet a political entity but was seen as a prestigious *national front* by most people in Turkey.

during this extensive tour constituted the data for a report which was highly influential in the determination of United States policy in the Near East. The report contained important references to the Harbord-Mustafa Kemal Pasha meeting in Sivas on September 21, 1919.

The group scheduled to visit Sivas was composed of 36 men. They first traveled by the Baghdad Railway to Cilicia, and after stopping at Adana for two days, proceeded via Aleppo to Mardin, where the railroad ended. There started the motorcar part of the journey in seven automobiles, with two of them carrying gasoline and food supplies. Their itinerary included the six Turkish provinces intended to be part of the Armenian state under American mandate. However, it was not possible to reach Van and Bitlis by car and the climatic conditions did not permit horseback traveling. Nevertheless, these places had been inspected earlier on horseback by Captain Niles whose report Harbord had consulted.⁹ Therefore the journey was planned to cover only four *vilayets*: Diyarbakır, Sivas, Erzurum and Mamuretül Aziz (Elazığ). After visiting these four provinces and several others on the way such as Maraş and Malatya, the group was to travel through Kars to Erivan, then, to Tiflis with some side trips in various directions.¹⁰ During visits to these places, the Harbord Commission interviewed representatives from all other sovereign governments in that region as well as individual Turks, Armenians, Greeks, Kurds, Tatars, Georgians, Russians, Persians, Jews, Arabs, British, French, and Americans domiciled in the country.¹¹

Sivas Hosts General Harbord

Even before arriving in İstanbul, the Harbord group was aware of the Turkish nationalist resistance to foreign occupation. Its members were also informed about the conference in Sivas, although they were wrongly told that it was a Pan-Turanian and Pan-Islamist movement designed to unite all Turks and Muslims for the common cause of protecting the Caliph in his ancient post at İstanbul. They were told that Mustafa Kemal, a most reputable general, the hero of the Gallipoli campaign

⁹ Harbord briefly refers to the Southerland Niles report on the 2nd page of his report.

¹⁰ Harbord, "Mustapha Kemal Pasha and His Party," *World's Work*, vol. 40, (June 1920), p. 176.

¹¹ *Harbord Report*, p. 2.

who had resigned from his military position to lead the nationalists, was to chair the conference in Sivas. Moreover, they were informed of the steadily increasing power of the nationalists, who on orders from Sivas, had cut off all telegraphic communications between Asia Minor and İstanbul and that the Ottoman government exercised no authority in the areas they were to visit.

Harbord recognized that the nationalist movement was an important factor in evaluating the Turkish case. Hence, during the few days he was in İstanbul had made the necessary arrangements for a meeting in Anatolia with Mustafa Kemal, who was rapidly winning the hearts of the Turks and the respect of foreigners. Once the tour started, Harbord immediately noted that the entire hierarchy, civil and military, all over Turkey was committed to the nationalist cause led by Mustafa Kemal. All orders were received from Sivas, not İstanbul, all civil and military authorities obeyed the nationalist chief rather than the Sultan-Caliph or the Prime Minister. Fears of the group about safety and how they would be received by the locals were overcome through his orders. Mustafa Kemal, keenly following every step of the mission from the moment of its arrival in İstanbul, had instructed all military and civilian nationalist units included in the itinerary to give the American mission a good reception wherever they went.¹²

During the journey, Harbord and his team became convinced that Mustafa Kemal's directions played an important role in the hospitality they received in the provinces they visited. Thus, Harbord was to note later in his report that "we met with nothing but courtesy, kind curiosity, and genuine hospitality." And as the journey went on, Harbord became more convinced that "no mission looking into conditions in the Near East could disregard the nationalist movement or its leader."¹³ Before arriving in Anatolia, he had been made aware that "the nationalist movement had been the cause of much apprehension on the part of those interested in the fate of the Armenians, to whose safety it has been supposed to portend danger."¹⁴ So to reach his own verdict, he looked forward to meeting the 38-year-old "former" general, considered a rebel by his own government.

¹² Fethi Tevetoglu, "Gn. Harbord Raporu," *Türk Kültürü*, vol. 80, (1969) (The Harbord Report), pp. 529–30.

¹³ Harbord, "Mustapha Kemal Pasha," pp. 176, 185.

¹⁴ *Harbord Report*, p. 17.

What Harbord sought to learn from Mustafa Kemal was the characteristics of the nationalist movement and the path it sought to follow; whether a) it was antagonistic to all non-Turkic elements; b) its Turanian and Islamist aims which he had been told about, intended belligerence to non-Muslims, namely Armenians and Greeks; and c) the American missionaries and their institutions and whether all American investments in Turkey were targets. Equally important was learning Mustafa Kemal's point of view concerning two recent historical events. The first of these was the atrocities Turks committed, particularly during the 1915 forced relocation of Armenians from the war zone. The second was the Greek landing in Smyrna, which was a clear violation of the Mudros Armistice, and the shape Turkish resistance to it would take. It was obvious that Kemal's extreme influence over the nationalists made him able to speak for their cause. Accordingly, the meeting was of major importance for the report to be submitted to the U.S. Congress. In Sivas, more or less the locus of nationalist political power, he would meet the key person to inform him of the Turkish view on both of these issues.

Lieutenant Colonel Kani Bey who greeted Harbord as the Commission approached Sivas, accompanied by a captain and a lieutenant from the group preceded Harbord to inform Mustafa Kemal and his colleagues that the American Commission of inquiry would soon be arriving in Sivas. The local Sivas paper, *İrade-i Milliye*, reported on the brief meeting Mustafa Kemal Pasha and Rauf Bey had with two officers of the Commission on the Congress premises as it announced the forthcoming visit of the awaited guests.¹⁵ At the end of a two day journey from Malatya, General Harbord and the group accompanying him arrived in Sivas about noon on September 20¹⁶ or approximately a week after the Congress had adjourned and Browne departed.

The Harbord Commission members had completely abandoned their fear of being mistreated by the time they reached Sivas. Selected members of the Representative Committee, including Rauf Bey, Bekir Sami Bey, Rüstem Bey, as well as prominent civil and military officials of the city greeted the group at the outskirts of the town and entertained them in the tented pavilion specially erected for the occasion. Mustafa

¹⁵ Harbord, "Mustapha Kemal Pasha," pp. 182, 183; *İrade-i Milliye*, September 17, 1919.

¹⁶ The date is given in error as the 22nd in *Nutuk*, p. 172.

Kemal, at Harbord's request, was not present at the elaborated welcoming ceremony. "As I did not wish our official welcome to be complicated by the presence of the leader of a movement almost revolutionary toward the İstanbul government, an intimation was sent that we did not wish Mustapha Kemal Pasha to be featured on the occasion,"¹⁷ wrote Harbord, who was already informed by Browne of the details of the Congress and Turks' desire for an American mandate "on the grounds that the country which had fallen behind her sister nations in the west, could not recover without political instructions and economic assistance from some territorially disinterested nation."¹⁸ Harbord, however, after talking with Mustafa Kemal, was going to think differently from Browne, who was not able to grasp the thin line differentiating the Turkish and American interpretation of 'mandate.'

Harbord had the chance to talk with Bekir Sami, Rauf and Rüstem beys during the official lunch given by the Governor. Rüstem Bey, in fluent English, explained to him details of the nationalist movement which alarmed the government and told how he and Rauf Bey had traveled from İstanbul to Sivas in disguise, with false papers to avoid being intercepted by government agents. Harbord was impressed to learn that Bekir Sami Bey had resigned his post as governor rather than carry out the orders to relocate Armenians in 1915. Since learning about the condition of Armenians was Harbord's primary motive, he paid utmost attention to any news concerning them. In fact, before starting the Anatolian tour, his ears were full of contradictory claims concerning Turco-Armenian relations, most of them on Turkish belligerence towards Armenians. But during his journey to Sivas he had come to realize that Armenians were not at all the focus of these Turks, struggling for independence. Furthermore, he learned that the Turks, just like the Armenians, had also suffered from the deplorable incidents of past decades.¹⁹ In fact, he underlined this in the report he prepared at the conclusion of his mission. "There is much to show that, left alone, and without official instigation, the Turks and the Armenians have hitherto been able to live together in peace. Their existence side by side on the same soil for five centuries unmistakably indicates their interdependence and mutual interests."²⁰ Accordingly, Harbord's major

¹⁷ Harbord, "Mustapha Kemal Pasha," p. 186.

¹⁸ Browne Papers, Box I, File 3K dispatches.

¹⁹ Harbord, "Investigating Turkey," pp. 185-186.

²⁰ *Harbord Report*, p. 10.

reason for coming to Sivas was to learn the intentions of the nationalists regarding this issue from the highest authority of the movement.

Harbord's Meeting with Mustafa Kemal

The meeting with Mustafa Kemal, which took place at the teachers' clubhouse following lunch, was attended by Generals Moseley and McCoy; Rüstem, Rauf, and Bekir Sami beys from the nationalist committee; and the group interpreter Hüseyin [Pektaş] Bey. General Harbord described Mustafa Kemal in his article in *World's Work* as "very neatly dressed in civilian clothes and even refrained from wearing the fez Turks normally wore indoors too." He was a "slight, erect, soldierly looking man of thirty eight, with cropped brown mustache, cold gray eyes, lighted brown hair brushed straight back, high cheek bones." He added the assumption that Kemal probably had Circassian or other blood in his ancestry and noted that at first, he thought the string of prayer beads he continually drew was indicative of the strain he was under, but later learned that he was "suffering from malaria and had high fever during the interview."²¹

Meeting Mustafa Kemal particularly with the Armenian question in mind,²² Harbord started the conversation by asking about nationalists' aims and intentions which were not favorably reflected to the outside world by the Sultan's supporters. He referred to Clemenceau's words in Paris to Damat Ferid only a few months earlier to illustrate for Mustafa Kemal the general standing of Turkey in the world. In June, when the Turkish case was presented at the Peace Conference, the French Foreign Minister had openly stated:

²¹ Harbord, "Mustapha Kemal Pasha," pp. 185-186. Lord Kinross elaborated this scene and wrote that after Harbord asked Kemal what he expected to do, now that the congress was over, he "with a gesture of nervous tension pulled the string apart, and the beans were scattered allover the floor. Picking them up one by one he remarked that there was the answer to the general's question. He meant to draw the pieces of his country together, to save it from its various enemies, to make of it an independent and civilized state." Lord Kinross, *Atatürk, The Rebirth of a Nation* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964), p. 189.

²² Harbord wrote his impressions of Mustafa Kemal, the Turkish nationalistic movement, and his evaluation of the Armenian question in a lengthy article based on his tour of Anatolian and Transcaucasia, published in *World's Work* the year after his mission was completed.

There has been no case found either in Europe or in Asia or in Africa in which the establishment of Turkish rule in the country has not been followed by a diminution of prosperity in that country. Neither is there any case to be found in which the withdrawal of Turkish rule has not been followed by material prosperity and rise in culture. Never among Christians in Europe, nor among the Moslems in Syria, Arabia, or Africa has the Turk done other than destroy what he has conquered. Never has he shown that he is able to develop in peace what he has gained in war. Not in this direction do his talents lie.²³

Harbord mentioned this to make Mustafa Kemal understand that whatever the nationalists tried to achieve would not be trusted or supported by the West, which did not think highly of the Turks. He also explained how the movement caused apprehension among those interested in the fate of the Armenians and that it was looked upon as a serious threat to their safety. Harbord, after bringing up these points, was eager to learn the true intention of the nationalists.

Mustafa Kemal, paying very close attention to the General's comments, started his explanation noting the injustice done to Turks by allowing the Greek landing in Smyrna and by overlooking the atrocities Greeks committed there "under the eyes of allied representatives and under the guns of their fleets." He told Harbord about the gradual development of the nationalist movement, which he said was strictly a self defense action against the widening invasion, designed to liberate the occupied zones. His opinion was that the current deplorable condition of the country was due to intrigues of the foreign powers to which the Ottoman government acquiesced in order to stay in power. He explained the nationalists' determination to rescue the country from these conditions, all the while confirming obedience to the Sultan. Yet he made clear that they were determined to get rid of the Ottoman government. He mentioned the decision taken by the Sivas Congress to stop all communications between Anatolia and İstanbul until the government fell. Indicating his disapproval for the ill treatment of the Armenians during their removal from the war zone in 1915 by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) which 'had usurped the government,' he complained that "murders and other crimes were committed in America, France and Britain however, no nation but the Turks stood accused of the murder of 800,000 of its own citizens." Harbord found Mustafa Kemal inclined to balance the Armenian atrocities of 1915 against the

²³ "Mustapha Kemal Pasha," p. 187.

massacres by the Greeks committed in İzmir. However, Kemal assured Harbord that people in the nationalist movement had no intention of committing violence against the non-Muslims. Furthermore, as Harbord wrote, “he promised to allay Armenian fears by an announcement to that effect—a promise which he kept.”²⁴

During the two and a half hour meeting with Mustafa Kemal doing most of the talking, Harbord tried to understand the Turkish case, nationalists’ solidarity behind their cause, and their readiness to resist the Ottoman government as well as the Allied powers rather than submit to agreements dictating anything less than independence. Mustafa Kemal, as Harbord noted, responded very easily, fluently, and in orderly fashion as he explained the only aim of the nationalists was to secure the territorial integrity of their land, independence of their state, and sovereignty of their nation. He accepted the necessity to apply for help to a disinterested power. In fact, he noted that the Sivas Congress had passed a resolution to cable the President of the United States asking him to send an investigating committee to this effect.

Harbord was impressed by Mustafa Kemal’s confidence as he, completely stripped of his official rank and authority, challenged the Ottoman administration. Accordingly, Harbord felt obliged to reveal that he felt sincere patriotism in him when he shrugged off Harbord’s warning that “nations as well as individuals could commit suicide,” meaning that this unlimited confidence without the support of a Great power could bring the Turks to their end. Because they “could not win with Germany and Austria on their side, they had little prospect of surviving a contest undertaken alone against the allies.”²⁵ Harbord’s belief

²⁴ Ibid., p. 188.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 188. In fact, the British representatives in Turkey were taking into account that the nationalists were considering armed action. A message General F. Milne, Commanding the British Black Sea forces, in a memorandum to the War Office in England on October 20, 1919, read “on the Nationalist movement in Turkey, which in my opinion an accurate and balanced account of events much misinterpreted in Europe, but the military importance of which is essential, should not be underestimated... In the first place, the movement has consolidated public opinion in Turkey, and now that its supporters hold the reins of power, will do so still more... In the second its leaders have been coquetting with the idea of armed resistance. No one can be better aware than they themselves that, in doing so, they are playing with fire and risking a disaster to their country. It was, however, necessary for them to adopt this attitude for two reasons:—a) Because it serves as a veiled threat, which they believe will influence the Peace Conference. b) Because the organization of the populace in a military way is the normal method of political agitation in Turkey. Military organization is the only organization which the Turks understand and the steps taken by the Nationalist Party

in Mustafa Kemal's patriotism and confidence was enhanced when, upon being asked what he intended to do if, despite every sacrifice and effort, the nationalists could not succeed, Mustafa Kemal Pasha looked at him unbelievably and said merely that a negative conclusion was impossible as long as the nation wholeheartedly fought for its own freedom, sovereignty and independence. Losing could only be probable in the case of the death of a nation.²⁶

Before ending the interview, Harbord asked Mustafa Kemal Pasha to send him a written statement of what they talked about to be used as an addendum to his report. This statement, written with the approval of the Representative Committee,²⁷ was provided to Harbord on his return from Transcaucasia, in Samsun on October 15, 1919. It included all the points the two generals had talked about during the Sivas meeting, was provided in an official statement of ten articles. Harbord attached this to his report as Exhibit C (see appendix) and summarized the nationalists' approach to mandate with the following quotation from Mustafa Kemal Pasha:

The Nationalist Party recognized the necessity of the aid of an impartial foreign country. It is our aim to secure the development of Turkey as she stood at the armistice. We have no expansionist plans, but it is our conviction that Turkey can be made a rich and prosperous country if she can get a good government. Our government has become weakened through foreign interference and intrigues. After all our experience we are sure that America is the only country able to help us. We guarantee no new Turkish violence against the Armenians will take place.²⁸

are admirably calculated to bring all the political power into their hands, and to make the results of the coming elections a mere instrument of their will... It is therefore advisable to contemplate a situation in which the use of military force may become necessary, and to consider it in the light of possible decisions to be arrived at by the Peace Conference... I do not desire in any way to influence these decisions, but it is proper to point out that the force required to enforce the peace terms will vary greatly according to the nature of these terms... The three main questions, on which Mustafa Kemal and his followers in their defense of the integrity of their country declare a *non possumus*, are the question of Smyrna, the question of Armenia, and the question of Thrace... In the Armenia [case], the crux of the question is that there are very few Armenians, and that the more grandiose schemes for the creation of an independent Armenia would require large forces." F.O. 406/41 pp. 393-394, No. 177/1, in Bilâl Şimşir, *British Documents on Atatürk*, vol. 1, 4 vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1984), pp. 255-256.

²⁶ *Nutuk*, vol. I, pp. 172-73.

²⁷ Bekir Sıtkı Baykal, *Heyeti Temsiliye Kararları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1974), (Resolutions of the Representative Committee), p. 7.

²⁸ *Harbord, Report*, p. 17.

These pithy sentences were designed to address the major concerns of the United States. The nature of the nationalist movement, willingness of the nationalists to accept foreign aid, and their non-belligerent approach to non-Muslims were outlined in ten articles and were summarized in the above statement.

Atatürk's Report on the Harbord Meeting

General Harbord left for Erzurum after spending the night in Sivas. Mustafa Kemal, on September 21, 1919, cabled Kazım Karabekir to inform him of the meeting. The cable may be taken as an indication of the close coordination the Representative Committee wanted to establish among all civilian and military units in regard to General Harbord's questions and Mustafa Kemal's responses. It read as follows:

1. The organization and current power of the National Front.
2. Our point of view concerning non-Muslim elements, particularly the Armenians.
3. Our opinion concerning aid and/or assistance.

The summary of my detailed response to these questions was as follows:

1. The National Front was the natural, country-wide organization of the people disturbed over unjust treatment. All [our] defensive organizations were brought together as the Anatolian and Rumelian Defense of Rights Committee during the Erzurum and Sivas Congresses. This organization has immense power and is effective throughout the Motherland. We have no desire of any territorial claims other than those assigned by the Armistice.
2. We bear no evil sentiments or intentions of violence towards the non-Muslims and of course, the Armenians in our country. On the contrary, we are completely respectful of their rights. Any contradictory implications are no more than rumors instigated by the British.
3. In accordance with the first article of our Declaration, we confess that we are in need of assistance of a disinterested powerful state and nation and will gladly accept it. The General appreciated our national intentions and efforts and displayed sincere agreement as he encouraged us by saying 'If I were a Turk, I would have acted

in the same manner.’ He particularly requested the conversation should remain confidential. Today, he left for Erzurum via Erzincan. It was recommended that he should talk to you. He mentioned hearing of an armed force of 40,000 men, assembled in Erzurum with Turanian intentions, ready to attack the Armenians. He was told that such rumors were groundless, definitely did not reflect the truth, and furthermore, the entire armed forces in eastern provinces did not surpass ten thousand men. It is recommended that you be in touch with Hüseyin Bey, accompanying the General along with the Erzurum Central Committee and also point out the still existing signs of atrocities committed there by the Armenians. Hüseyin Bey has been given the necessary information and instructions.²⁹

Harbord’s Letter of Thanks

The Harbord-Mustafa Kemal meeting was one between two generals of two different countries thousands of miles apart in location and of two different cultures, and a century apart in advancement. But it concluded as one of two colleagues, understanding each other. As a matter of fact, Harbord wrote a kind letter of courtesy to Mustafa Kemal Pasha before his departure from Turkey, thanking him for sending the written statement he requested.

On Board, *U.S.S. Martha Washington*, October 9, 1919.

My Dear General: I acknowledged receipt at Sampsoun of your letter setting forth the aims of the party of which you are the chief. I thank you for it. In our journey after leaving Sivas we were recipients of many courtesies from your people.

I have been informed by members of my mission who have traveled through Malatia, Kayseriya, and Marsovan that the Armenian people in those regions are still very apprehensive of danger from the Nationalist movement, and that some are leaving their homes again in consequence of threats from their Turkish neighbors. I found similar uneasiness in other places. I again invite your attention to the keen interest America has in the safety and welfare of these people, as shown by President Wilson’s cable to the Turkish Government, and suggest wider circulation of the

²⁹ Kazım Karabekir, *İstiklal Harbimiz* (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1960), (Our War of Independence), p. 225; Kinross wrote this as “If I were a Turk I would have joined you—stood next to you,” p. 190. Ahmet Emin Yalman in *Yakın Tarihimiz*... wrote to the same effect, “Had we been in your place we would have done the same thing.” p. 43.

information that your organization is in no way inimical to the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire, as I understood from your case.

Please accept my thanks for your courtesy to my party, and believe me,

Very truly yours

JAS. G. HARBORD

Major General, United States Army

Gen. MUSTAPHA KEMAL

Representative of the Committee for the Defense of Turkey, Sivas, Turkey.³⁰

It must be remembered that when Harbord first set foot in Turkey, he had referred to Mustafa Kemal Pasha, introduced to him as an ordinary rebel outlaw, as a “former general.” Naturally, Mustafa Kemal Pasha was not the focus of Harbord’s journey, neither of his report. However, during the few hours they shared, with his wide knowledge and clear explanations, Mustafa Kemal had won the respect and confidence of the American general. The interview was very effective in persuading Harbord of the non-violent, non-imperialistic aims and the patriotic character of the nationalist movement. Accordingly, Harbord, still reluctant to accept that Armenians would not be molested, applied to and confided in Mustafa Kemal for assurance of their safety. The ending of the letter “and believe me” probably was to express the understanding the two generals shared of what each sought from the other.

The first of the three conclusions Harbord reached from his interview with Mustafa Kemal Pasha was that the nationalist movement, as Kemal assured him, did not portend violence to the non-Muslim races of the Empire. (Kemal kept his promise to allay Armenian fears by an announcement to that effect.) The second was that although Mustafa Kemal stated that Turkey was ready to accept the mandate and assistance of a disinterested big power, preferably the U.S.A., Harbord was able to recognize that the Turkish understanding of *mandate* differed from theirs, and reflected this as “Turks conceive it as advice and assistance from a big brother with such slight exercise of authority as not to interfere with their interior government or their foreign relations.”³¹ The third was his conviction that Mustafa Kemal ‘was not a cheap political adventurer, and that he was a military leader of proven

³⁰ *Harbord Report*, Exhibit D, p. 38.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17; Harbord, “Mustapha Kemal Pasha,” p. 186.

skill,' and that the nationalists had to be considered in the settlement of the Turkish question.³²

The Harbord commission returned to İstanbul on October 11, and after several interviews with different groups to add to the final report, sailed for Marseille on October 15. On the same day, The United States Radio Press broadcast a report from İstanbul on Harbord's Anatolian tour. Many references were made to Harbord's supportive contacts with the American missionaries, mostly women, stationed at the branches of the American Commission for the Relief of the Near East, such as schools, hospitals, workrooms 'caring for thousands of orphans and widows.' Included in the news were Mustafa Kemal's explanation, basically to the effect that the nationalists a) aimed only to safeguard and develop Turkey, with the aid of an impartial foreign country, which they prefer to be the U.S.A.; b) targeted the current government, because it was committed heavily to foreign intrigues and interference, and even received payments from the British who intended to destroy Turkey; c) did not have any expansionist plans, nor ties with the Unionists, and had given assurances that no new Turkish violence would materialize against the Armenians. Rauf Bey had added to these that America was the only hope of the Nationalists "otherwise we fight it out."³³

As it was mentioned earlier, the Harbord Commission was ostensibly commissioned to explore conditions for a U.S. mandate, but actually concentrated on determining American interests in the areas suggested for mandate. The Sivas meeting General Harbord had with Mustafa Kemal Pasha was most illuminating in supplying the facts for the rapidly growing Turkish Nationalist Movement. This meeting led Harbord to include his convictions on two important points in his report; one for general consideration and the other, for the United States administration. The first of these two points Harbord underlined in the report was that the nationalist movement, particularly with the solidarity provided by the Sivas Congress, definitely had to be considered in preparing peace terms with Turkey. The second, for the United States, invited the same attention before entering into any obligation in Turkey.

General Harbord reflected the conclusions the Commission reached at the end of the month-long inquiries in Anatolia and Transcaucasia

³² Harbord, "Mustapha Kemal Pasha," p. 188.

³³ FO. 406/ 41, p. 299, No. 140/5 in Şimşir, *British Documents on Atatürk*, vol. I, pp. 170-171.

in the lengthy report he wrote, and forwarded it to President Wilson to be submitted to the Congress.³⁴

*Significant Points of the Harbord Report*³⁵

General Harbord highlighted in his report the demographic distribution of the Turks and Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, the characteristics of the nationalist movement which he saw gradually spreading over the entire nation; and the nationalist approach to a U.S. mandate. Since America's major concern was Armenians, it was specified in the report that even before the war the Armenians were far from constituting the majority in the region claimed as Turkish Armenia.

The report, which did not recommend an independent Armenia on Turkish territories, suggested a single mandate, if any were to come about, to encompass the whole of what was left of the Empire rather than split it into Turkish and Armenian zones. Yet, Harbord made clear that he did not regard the Ottoman Empire capable of self administration. It can be understood by reading the report that until Turkey reached administrative maturity, he was personally more inclined to recommend a mandate for altruistic reasons more than any other reason, although he did not reach a definite judgment on this. Fourteen reasons were given for and thirteen against the acceptance of mandate in the report to be presented to the U.S. Congress. The reasons listed under the affirmative column were mostly based on moral values while the negative reasons involved the factual, some with figures.

Harbord stated in the explanatory parts of the report that "incorporating Turkish territory in a separate Armenia was unwise," no matter what the aspiration of the Armenians were, and that problems could be avoided by the consolidation of the mandate region under a single power. Otherwise "the inevitable jealousies, hatreds, exaggerated separatist tendencies, and economic difficulties would compel failure." He

³⁴ The official title of the report was *Conditions in the Near East—Report of the American Military Mission to Armenia*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920). It consisted of four sections: a) history and the present situation of the Armenian people, b) the political situation and suggestions for readjustment: c) the condition and problems involved in a mandatory: d) the considerations for and against the undertaking of a mandate. In addition, there were 7 exhibits (A–G). The Table of Contents added to the report included 12 items, A–L each covering a separate sub-report written by different authorized members of the mission and item L, Bibliography.

³⁵ *Harbord Report*, pp. 6–18.

wrote, "Under one mandatory they will be neighbors. Under two or more, they will be rivals, their small differences subjected to the interminable processes of diplomatic representation, with the maintenance of duplicate and parallel establishments in many lines of government activity." He pointed out that for the U.S.A., assuming mandatory power in Transcaucasia and Armenia without keeping control of Anatolia, İstanbul and Rumelia would mean undertaking it under most unfavorable and trying conditions, since such a scenario would multiply the cost, endanger the maintenance of law and order and security of life and property, and accordingly, bring doubts about ultimate success. He noted that transport lines had made İstanbul a commercial center for centuries and that many well-informed businessmen believed it was still destined to become the third most important commercial city in the world. So, Harbord strongly recommended that a mandate include this city as he pointed out "Without dependable centralized control of İstanbul, a power exercising mandate in Armenia would be crippled in administration, restricted in trade development, ridden by concessionaires, dependent on Turkish discredited diplomacy for redress of local boundary grievances and in extreme case practically cut off from communication with the western world."³⁶

Factual parts of the report included statements such as,

On the Turkish side of the border where Armenians have returned, they are gradually recovering their property, and in some cases have received rent for it, but generally they find things in ruins and face desultory assistance as the Turkish Government can afford. Things are a little if any better with the peasant Turks in the same region. They are practically serfs, equally destitute, and equally defenseless against the winter. . . . Not over 20 percent of the Turkish peasants who went to war have returned. The absence of men between 20 and 35 is very noticeable. Six hundred thousand Turkish soldiers died of typhus alone, it is stated, and insufficient hospital service and absolute poverty of supply greatly swelled the death lists.³⁷

The report contained evaluations such as "We saw nothing to prove that Armenians who have returned to their homes are in danger of their lives, but their natural apprehension has been greatly increased by unbalanced advice given by officers on the withdrawal of foreign troops from certain regions. The events at Smyrna have undoubtedly

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 7-15.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

cheaped every Christian life in Turkey, the landing of the Greeks there being looked upon by the Turks as deliberate violation by the Allies of the terms of their armistice and the probable forerunner of further unwarranted aggression. The moral responsibility for present unrest throughout Turkey is very heavy on foreign powers.”³⁸

Impartiality that Harbord carefully tried to preserve was apparent in more than a few sections of the report, such as where poverty and poor health conditions of the Armenians was brought up, but added to it was that “the Turks in the same region were practically serfs equally destitute.” Similarly, it was brought up in several places that Turks were not the only ones responsible for cruelty. For example, the report stated: “In the territory untouched by war from which Armenians were deported the ruined villages are undoubtedly due to Turkish deviltry, but where Armenians advanced and retired with the Russians their retaliatory cruelties unquestionably rivaled the Turks in their inhumanity. The reconstruction of this country will be little short in difficulty of its original reclamation from virgin wilderness in the days when the world was young.”³⁹

The part of the report which reflected Harbord’s impressions of Mustafa Kemal and the Nationalist Movement summarized the objective, power and determination of the nationalists as follows:

The aim of the Nationalist, or the National Defense Party, as its adherents style it, as stated by Mustapha Kemal Pasha, its head, is the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Empire under a mandatory of a single disinterested power, preferably America. The mission, while at Sivas, had a conference with the chiefs of this party, which held a congress at Erzurum in July and one at Sivas in September. This movement has been the cause of much apprehension on the part of those interested in the fate of the Armenians, to whose safety it has been supposed to portend danger. The leader, Musatpha Kemal Pasha, is a former general officer in the Turkish army, who commanded with distinction an army corps at the Dardanelles, and appears to be a young man of force and keen intelligence. He is supposed to have resigned from the army to lead this movement. It is sought, as a means to its end, the overthrow of the Ferid Pasha cabinet, which has since fallen claiming that it was entirely under the influence of one of the great powers which itself desires a mandate for the Empire. While professing entire loyalty to the Sultan the Nationalist leader had gone to the extremity of cutting all official telegraph communications

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 10, 11, 17.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 8, 9.

between the capital and the interior, pending the removal of the cabinet. The fall of the Damad Ferid Pasha ministry would seem to put the Empire behind the movement, for the Turkish officials in the interior were already identified with it.⁴⁰

These words indicate the impartiality of ‘The Harbord Report’ as it was popularly called, although it generally focused on the Armenians, their deprivations and deplorable condition. In any case, it may be asserted that the Harbord mission did accumulate accurate data on what the Great Powers sought and conveyed a view of the Turkish nationalist movement and latest developments within the Ottoman state.

The British Factor

The days following the Sivas Congress and Harbord’s visit corresponded to the time the Ottoman government, encouraged by the British, attempted to compromise with the Nationalists. The Allies, particularly the British, due to their involvement in the Mesopotamia mandate and the resulting oil conflicts with the United States, paid close attention to the Sivas Congress, the effects of the declaration issued, and the Harbord Commission’s journey.

British representatives in İstanbul, hoping that an agreement favorable to their interests would be reached, informed London that “a communication was sent by the Government to the Nationalists at Sivas that the Cabinet would resign, unless its authority is recognized notably in matters concerning composition with tribal chiefs and nomination to administrative positions.” At British request, Damat Ferid awaited 3–4 days before resigning on September 28.⁴¹ The resignation undoubtedly was the initial victory of the Sivas Congress. To the contrary, not wanting to admit the popular growth of the nationalist power, British representatives tried to conceal it by messages underestimating Mustafa Kemal’s role in ordering the good reception the Turks gave General Harbord and his team in all the places they visited. This was transmitted

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 17. (Harbord attached to the report as Exhibit C the statement he requested from Mustafa Kemal Pasha; as Exhibit D, his own letter of October 9, 1919 to Mustafa Kemal Pasha; as Exhibit E, Declaration of the Sivas Congress and as Exhibit F the letter of the National Congress of Sivas addressed to the Senate of the United States of America requesting that senatorial committee visit and investigate conditions within the Ottoman Empire.

⁴¹ Şimşir, *British Documents on Atatürk*, pp. 122, 126–131, from D.B.F.P., vol. IV, pp. 788–791, No. 533.

to London as “The impressions regarding the strength of the Nationalist Forces which is said to have been created among the members of the Harbord Mission is due, according to the account given by a Turkish Staff Officer, to a trick played by the Nationalist leaders. Bodies of men and encampments which had been already seen by the mission were transferred after its passage through one district to another part of the country which it was to visit.”⁴²

Correspondence of the British representatives in İstanbul with London indicates that they were apprehensive about the positive relations the Americans established with the Turks would lead them to be cautious toward the British.⁴³ The assuring messages of Browne and the Harbord Commission informing Americans that the true character of the nationalist movement was not belligerent to non-Muslims in Turkey magnified the same apprehension and even resulted in changes in reports to London.

The following points from a message of October 18, marked *Secret*, to Lord Curzon from the British High Commissioner Vice Admiral Sir John de Robeck, claiming “England is practically the only nation which has kept aloof from all the intrigues which are going on in Turkey” are very expressive of British sentiments toward the nationalists and the Americans: in fact, the numbered points started with a remark on General McCoy, a member of the Harbord Commission. The same message included a meeting of McCoy with Mr. Hohler:⁴⁴

2. The interview was fortunate, as General McCoy is an eminently sound and sensible man, and able to take a somewhat larger view than the majority of his compatriots who visit the Near East. . . .

8. I do not think the Americans are following any definitive line out here at present, but as individuals, they take colour from their surroundings. Very few of them have any previous knowledge of the Near East, of the Committee of Union and Progress, or the political history of the past ten years. In fact, they are “green”, easy for the Nationalists to spoon-feed and ready to raise such catchwords as independence and self-determination.

⁴² Ibid., p. 248.

⁴³ The British High Commissioner Admiral Calthrope informed General Milne of the Grand Vezir’s statement that the government after Mustafa Kemal’s resignation from the army no longer had any official relations with him and all military and civil officials were informed that he (and others refusing to return to İstanbul) were to be treated as outlaws. See: Şimşir, *British Documents on Atatürk*, p. 43.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 163.

9. A certain number, chiefly trade representatives, some missionaries and young officers, desire to see an American mandate over the whole of Turkey, for the respective purposes of money, security and progress, and Imperialism.

10. The American journalist is, of course, a law unto himself, out for sensation, and with a very superficial judgment of, or regard for, facts. Their utterances are taken very seriously by the Nationalists, and one individual of this breed recently persuaded the Sivas Conference that the nationalist movement was wholly patriotic, and had the complete endorsement of everyone except England.

11. The anti-British colour shown is really more a reflection of Nationalist ideas than anything else, though there is, of course, a certain amount of hereditary jealousy. I am inclined to think that, in a good many cases, though the voice may have a strong Yankee twang, yet the sentiments are those of Mustapha Kemal and his party. The opportunity of giving another twist to the British lion's tail is, in fact, too good to be missed.

Nevertheless, regardless of British assertions, members of the Harbord commission present at the Sivas meeting with Mustafa Kemal in particular had developed their own ideas concerning the nationalists and their leader. In fact, General McCoy, returning to İstanbul after the Sivas meeting, admitted to his old friend, Mr. Hohler from the British High Commission, that starting the tour, "he had been prepared to find greatly suffering Christians, but not to discover that the Turks had suffered quite as much or more" and that "he was very agreeably surprised by the tranquility prevailing in the interior." Although McCoy thought that this was probably due to Turks' "over-exhaustion" and the vacuum resulting from the high death toll of Turkish men on battleground and commented that "it would be long before they raise their heads," like Browne and Harbord, he too admitted the wrong done by allowing the Greeks to occupy İzmir. McCoy attributed the nationalist movement to this "unwise decision" also. Meanwhile, he expressed his favorable impressions of Mustafa Kemal whose patriotism he appreciated, with special references to his hospitality, but also called attention to British violations of the armistice.

Hohler's responses to McCoy were defensive and biased against the nationalists: he told his old American friend that the British were the last to object to patriotism. However, they knew from experience that Turkish patriotism was very apt to take the direction of wiping out Christians. Not trusting Mustafa Kemal, whom he regarded to be on an identical path with the Unionists, he tried to persuade McCoy that the British occupation was in strict conformity with the terms of the Armistice which allowed occupation wherever danger to the Christians

was found. Hohler stressed “trusting Turks with Christians was no more than the fox with the geese.” He explained that non-Muslims still existed in Anatolia “by the sufferance and good will of Mustapha Kemal.” However, they were “new hostages in his hands to secure benevolence of the Peace Conference.” McCoy’s positive impressions did not change Hohler’s obsession that Turkish patriotism was of an anti-Christian character.⁴⁵ As a matter of fact, the British were at once informed about the Harbord Report which did not meet their expectations. Sir Eyre Crowe’s remark when he transmitted a summary of the Harbord Report to the Foreign Office on October 17, 1919, that it did not go further than the recommendations of the King-Crane Commission⁴⁶ was a clear revelation of discontent.

It was on October 19, only a few days after the above mentioned U.S. Radio Press report, with the same fears, was transmitted to London, that a memorandum with Andrew Ryan’s (dragoman, translator, intelligence agent at the British Embassy) explanation that due to the latest developments, “the National forces had changed their character from that of an insurgent body, which the Central Government desired to repress, to that of troops recognized by the Government” was sent by Admiral de Robeck to Curzon.⁴⁷

Yet, it must be noted that the British, like the Americans, justly referred to the Turkish resistance movement in the interior as “*the Nationalists*” rather than “*outlaws*” as they were characterized by the Ottoman government.

Harbord Report in the U.S. Senate

The Harbord Report, because it presented both pros and cons caused disillusionment among American Armenophiles in Turkey. Although it was dated October 16, 1919, it was sent to the Senate only on April 3, 1920, when, according to the *New York Times* of April 6, it was “several months after it ceased to have any practical value.” Debates on the report started shortly before the Allies met first in London,

⁴⁵ FO. 406/41, pp. 294–95, No. 141/1 in *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁴⁶ Harry N. Howard, *Turkey, the Straits and the United States Policy* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 80.

⁴⁷ FO. 406/41, p. 299, No. 140/5, in Şimşir, *British Documents on Atatürk*, pp. 171–172. Ryan’s memorandum also said that the national forces, estimated around 40,000 were “therefore to be held to form part of the military forces of the Government.”

then at San Remo, to determine the peace terms to be presented to the Ottoman Empire.

While Wilson waited for the right moment to present the report to the Congress, delay in concluding a treaty with the Ottoman Empire invited severe criticisms in France and Britain, which were eagerly awaiting the Ottoman treaty to confirm their interests. The press, particularly in Britain, lost no time in criticizing the government because the Armenian Question was still not solved.⁴⁸ The pressing request of the House of Commons from the British Premier to solve the Armenian problem was also in the daily papers. Pressure started to wear out the glamour of the Armenians and the mandate issue to the point that Sir Eyre Crowe, then Deputy Undersecretary of State was noted to have said on April 8, 1920, "There is no doubt that the Armenians are chiefly responsible for the crusade the Turks started against them." Even Lord Curzon, the Foreign Minister, stated that he had in his possession papers relating to a series of very savage and bloodthirsty attacks made by Armenians conceivably under provocation. He commented that "the Armenians are not innocent lambs".⁴⁹

The San Remo Conference which started on April 18, 1920, was designed to prepare resolutions over matters pertaining to the Kurdish and Armenian elements of the Ottoman Empire. The Christian world expected from the Peace Conference an expanded Republic of Armenia encompassing eastern Turkey, under American mandate. This was despite the fact that neither the Armenian Republic nor the Republics of Azerbaijan and Georgia were recognized by any other power except for the government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. That fact was glossed over in the Harbord Report as,

The Armenian Republic seeks at the Peace Conference a union with the Turkish Armenians and the creation of an Armenian State to include Russian Armenia and the six Turkish Vilayets (Van, Bitlis, Diyarbekir, Kharput Sivas Erzerum) and Cilicia, to be governed by a mandatory of the great powers during transition state of a term of years in which Armenians of the dispersion may return to their homes, and a constituent assembly be held to determine the form of the eventual permanent Government.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ *The Manchester Guardian*, April 22, 23, 1920.

⁴⁹ Salahi Sonyel, "Armenian Deportations: A Reappraisal In the Light of New Documents," *Belleten*, No. 141, (January 1972), p. 65; PRO FO. 371/5043/E 1714 House of Lords Debate March 11, 1920; Seçil Akgün, *General Harbord'un Anadolu Gezisi ve Raporu* (İstanbul: 1981), (General Harbord's Anatolian Trip and Report), p. 153.

⁵⁰ *Harbord Report*, p. 12.

In San Remo, the Allies struggled to formulate adequate terms to impose on the Ottoman government which also was preparing for the settlement. Determined to involve the U.S.A. in the Armenian mandate, they formally invited Wilson to the Conference on April 25, 1920. However, by that date, the United States Senate had already announced that America would not be officially represented at the peace discussions in Europe.⁵¹ Although Wilson refused official attendance, Britain and France, well aware of the President's sentiments, asked him to personally determine the Turkish-Armenian frontier to secure America's commitment. He gladly accepted this task officially given to him by the Paris Peace Conference, but met unexpected resistance at home, especially by his political opponents.

In Washington D.C., discussions of United States assuming responsibility over Armenia largely focused on the Harbord Report, but there were two other dimensions of major importance. These were the approaching elections and oil interests in the Middle East. Bitter complaints by some senators that the President endangered the Armenians' case by submitting the report months after it was given to him, certainly were not favorable for Wilson's approaching presidential campaign. Therefore, when Wilson conveyed the San Remo proposals concerning an Armenian mandate and the determination of the Armenian frontiers to both houses of the Congress for approval on May 24, 1920, he carefully loaded his message with Christian sentiments in order to win the hearts of the American people. However, his political opponents disregarded the philanthropy involved and harshly reminded him that the French and the British took away the most fertile provinces, the rich oil wells and copper mines. In fact, pointing to Britain's acquisition of the Mesopotamian mandate as "better places," Wilson was even cynically questioned by some of the Senators on whether he intended to exchange mandates with Great Britain "to provide the transfer of the oil fields of Persia to America, and Armenia to the British."⁵² The mandate, by many was regarded as "no more than British imposition on the United States." This was a view Admiral Bristol had voiced before, and which, in the course of time just as in the case of his other warnings, had gained more adherents. Consequently, on May 28, two days after the opening of the debates of the Senate Resolution declining to

⁵¹ Leland James Gordon, *American Relations With Turkey 1830-1930* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1932), p. 30.

⁵² Gidney, p. 208; (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Ohio, 1968), p. 228.

grant the President permission to accept the mandate, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, who introduced the resolution, commented:

Northern Armenia is just at the point where attacks are made. England is there holding Mesopotamia; France is holding Syria; Italy has a great block of territory in the neighborhood, and Armenia is the point at which they must be protected, and not merely from the Turks but from the Kurds, and the Georgians—and there has already been fighting with the Georgians. It is the crossroads, as I have heard it described by somebody, there are three banks and a poorhouse there, and we have been given the poorhouse.⁵³

The general atmosphere of the Congress was supportive of the Armenians, but wary of mandate. Yet, it was impossible not to notice contempt rising among some senators not only toward the mandate, but even towards the Armenians, when they learned through the Harbord Report the responsibilities and obligations United States would assume. Actually, the report posed very serious problems for United States to consider, which involved heavy risks whether the mandate was accepted or not. The number of lives to be sacrificed and the amount of dollars to be invested in the Armenian cause left to America to resolve was brought up by one senator after the other. Senator James A. Reed of Missouri even stressed that the Armenians themselves had been guilty of massacres “so that it is a case of eastern barbarism on both sides” and complained that United States was asked to assume control because all other countries responsible for the problem declined to take control because it was expensive.⁵⁴

Even U.S. discovery of opportunities for new economic investments, particularly in the oil rich areas was not sufficient to develop a favorable approach to accept an American mandate, for the Harbord Report made clear the very high cost of such an assumption as well as the economic, social and political obligations and responsibilities it would bring to the United States. Following the debates, and undoubtedly, with the inspiration from the Harbord Report, on June 1, the Senate, by 52 to 23 votes declined the President who requested mandate authorization, and refused to permit the United States to assume any responsibility in the area.⁵⁵

⁵³ Thomas A. Bryson, “Mark Lambert Bristol, U.S. Navy, Admiral-Diplomat: His Influence on the Armenian Mandate Question,” *The Armenian Review*, vol. 21, no. 4–84, (Winter 1968), pp. 9–16.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 227–232.

⁵⁵ Akgün, p. 158.

Conclusion

Although some regarded it bizarre, during the critical days following the Sivas Congress General Harbord, like Louis Browne before him, were objects of curiosity in Turkey, but both were accepted gracefully and treated well by the Turks. Those favoring mandate looked upon them as the means to assure American mandate, while the opponents of mandate were sure that these men could convey to the U.S.A. that the Turks were aiming at full independence, and therefore, a mandate (a euphemism for colonialism) would not be accepted.

For Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the nationalists, the presence of especially General Harbord in Sivas was an important asset for the credibility of the nationalist movement. To announce the movement, its aims and determination to the world, through the meetings with Americans offered a ready made opportunity the nationalists could not easily have achieved on their own. These visits assured that the outside world was aware of the nationalist movement, was able to observe the path it would follow, and eventually would have to consider it when preparing real peace terms with Turkey. These sojourns were among the very few joys Turks lived during the tense Sivas Congress days. Moreover, both Browne and Harbord, particularly during one-on-one talks with Mustafa Kemal and his colleagues, encouraged and motivated the Turks as they agreed and reasoned with their cause.

On the other hand, the fruitless mandate recommendations of Browne and the result of the Harbord Report would in the end disillusion the pro-American mandate Turks. Some members of this group, not confident that Turks could accomplish their goal even without entering under a mandate were going to think differently during the advancing years of the Turkish Independence War. However, some people continued to refrain from embracing the nationalist movement to the point of choosing to leave Turkey upon the success of the movement. Their departure was probably somewhat due to the fact that they could not tolerate Mustafa Kemal's leadership and success, fearing that it would turn into another dictatorship like that of Enver Pasha of the CUP. However, both Browne, as discussed in the preceding chapter, and Harbord and his mission were able to understand and evaluate Mustafa Kemal's outstanding qualities even at the very beginning of the nationalist movement for which he would be recognized as Atatürk, Father of the Turks. Indeed, by addressing Mustafa Kemal as "My Dear General" in the note following their meeting and by writing the appreciative lines on Kemal's qualifications in the report, Harbord probably

became the first prominent Western figure to praise Mustafa Kemal. And this was a useful early step for one who at the time was considered an outlaw in the eyes of the Ottoman government, but in a few years became the founder of modern Turkey and the first President of the Republic of Turkey.

Regardless of ethnic enmities, considering that there had been twenty odd Kurdish insurgencies during the War of Independence, and the burden of the Armenian massacres, the founding fathers of the republic named the new state the Republic of Turkey—not the Turkish Republic. As Feroz Ahmad aptly reminds in *Turkey, the Quest for Identity*, the nationalists were well aware that Turkey was a geographical entity, and not an ethnically defined one.⁵⁶ Fault-lines, embedded in history, however, were to haunt the Republic in the years to come.

⁵⁶ Feroz Ahmad, *Turkey, the Quest for Identity*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003), p. ix.

CHAPTER THREE

TURKEY AND HER NATIONALIST LEADERS AS SEEN IN THE 1923 REPORTS OF LOUISE BRYANT¹

HOWARD A. REED

Few of us know about Louise Bryant's 1923 eyewitness reports on Turkey's people and their nationalist leaders. That is because her papers were lost and forgotten for decades, only to be rediscovered recently. The following account is mainly based on those records of Louise Bryant (1885–1936) which were long thought lost. Fortunately they had been preserved by her only daughter, Ms. Anne Moen Bullitt. Ms. Bullitt donated this collection of her mother's significant papers as well as those of her father, former Ambassador William C. Bullitt, to Yale University's Sterling Library in 2004–2005. Those archives became accessible to researchers only the following year. As one of the first scholars to use Bryant's reporting on Turkey, it is a privilege to share some of her first-hand sympathetic, yet trenchant views on Turkey in 1923.

Louise Bryant seemed forgotten for decades after she gave up her notable journalistic career for motherhood and a new married life around 1924. She did so shortly after leaving Turkey, where she spent months in 1923 reporting for the International News Service. After retiring from journalism, she faded from view.

More recently, however, Ms. Bryant has become the subject of several biographical treatments. In 1973, Barbara Gelb published *So Short a Time: A Biography of John Reed and Louise Bryant* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co Inc., 1973). That work said little about Bryant's time in Turkey, instead focusing mainly on her career and brief marriage from 1915 until her husband John Reed's death in Moscow in 1920. The 1981 movie "Reds," featuring Diane Keaton as Louise Bryant, was based on Gelb's book. On the other hand, Virginia Gardner's study, "*Friend and Lover:*" *The Life of Louise Bryant* (New York: Horizon

¹ An earlier version of this paper was presented at a conference on Turkish-American relations co-sponsored by Boğaziçi [Bosphorus] and Harran Universities in İstanbul and Şanlıurfa, Turkey, June 5–10, 2006.

Press, 1982) includes data on Bryant's time in Turkey, but says virtually nothing about her observations as a journalist there. In 1996, Mary V. Dearborn, who published *Queen of Bohemia, The Life of Louise Bryant* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1996) also shed light on Bryant's career. But neither these books nor the movie "Reds" used Louise Bryant's papers deposited at Yale.²

Louise Bryant's Life

Louise Bryant was born in California, graduated from the University of Nevada, and began her career as a writer, reporter and suffragette in Portland, Oregon, early in the twentieth century. She performed as an actress and wrote plays for the famed Provincetown Players in which she acted with her second husband, John Reed, and lover, Eugene O'Neill. Reed would become famous as the author of the classic *Ten Days that Shook the World* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1922) on the Russian revolution and O'Neill would emerge as a famed American playwright in his own right. In 1917, Louise Bryant was a foreign correspondent reporting on the Western Front in the First World War. Then she and John Reed spent several months as eyewitnesses to the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. They both interviewed Kerensky, Lenin, Trotsky, Chicherin, peasants and others. Louise met ladies such as Alexandra Kollontai, Marie Spiridovna, leading artists and dancers like Lunacharski and Stanislavski. Both traveled widely and wrote major books on their experiences in Bolshevik Russia. John Reed died of typhus just after his return to Moscow from Baku in October 1920 and was the first of two Americans to be buried in the Moscow Kremlin.

In Russia in 1921, Louise Bryant also met several important Turkish figures. She became acquainted with Ali Fuat [Cebesoy] Pasha, War College classmate and long time associate of Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk]. Ali Fuat had been appointed Nationalist Turkey's Ambassador to Moscow in November 1920. He arrived at the Soviet capital in February 1921 and served there until May, when he felt obliged to quit his post in the wake of an incident in which his military attachés were accused of conducting a botched espionage operation against the Bolshevik

² My thanks to Ms. Cynthia Ostroff, Manager, Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Library, Yale University, Mr. William Massa, and their associates for their kind help with Louise Bryant's key papers.

regime.³ He then returned to Ankara to become Chief of the Defense of Rights Society when Mustafa Kemal Pasha left that post to become non-party President. On December 13, 1922, he was elected Deputy Speaker of the Assembly and he occupied that key position throughout the period that Louise Bryant reported on Turkey in 1923.⁴

While in Russia, Bryant also met Enver Pasha, long a rival of Mustafa Kemal and head of the Committee of Union and Progress Party from 1913 to 1918. Enver and his cohorts Cemal and Talat Pashas had led the ill-prepared Ottoman Empire into the First World War on Germany's side in late October 1914. After Turkey's defeat in 1918, the three fled İstanbul before the Allies occupied the city. Enver Pasha eluded Allied agents in Riga and lived for a time in Russia, where he kept in touch with Ali Fuat. Enver Pasha was then trying to organize widespread Muslim cooperation with the Bolsheviks to undermine British, French, and other colonialist influence in Africa, Asia, and especially India. He was killed by the Bolsheviks in Central Asia in 1922 where he was taking part in the Basmachi revolt.⁵ Bryant devoted a chapter to Enver Pasha in her second book on Russia called *Mirrors of Moscow* (New York: Thomas Seltzer, 1923). Her first book, *Six Red Months in Russia: An Observer's Account of Russia Before and During the Proletarian Dictatorship* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1918), had appeared before Enver Pasha arrived in Moscow. When the two met, he taught her the classic Muslim salutation, "As-salam aleikum" and its response, "Wa aleikum salam," signifying "Peace be unto you, and unto you be Peace" to use as a password with Muslims she might encounter. He also taught Bryant to count from one to ten in Turkish! Bryant visited Baku, Bukhara, and Central Asia while in Russia. These were all centers of Turkic activity in the Soviet state.

Between 1918 and 1920, Bryant spoke on national lecture tours in support of women's suffrage, to advocate better American understanding of Bolshevik Russia and solicit urgent help for its post-war starving millions.

³ Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Moskova Hatıraları* (İstanbul: "Vatan" Neşriyatı, 1955), pp. 329–345.

⁴ Fahri Çoker, *Türk Parlamento Tarihi: Millî Mücadele ve T.B.M.M. I. Dönem, 1919–1923*, vol. 3 (Ankara: Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Vakfı Yayınları, 1995), pp. 75–76.

⁵ See Stanford J. Shaw, *From Empire to Republic*, vol. 5 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2000) pp. 2197–2199.

Life with William Bullitt

Following John Reed's death, Louise Bryant returned to the United States and became the companion of William C. Bullitt, an affluent Philadelphian who had been an important United States diplomat at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. He had also been sent to Moscow to meet Soviet leaders, but he soon resigned from the Department of State in protest to the terms of the Versailles Peace Treaty and devoted himself to writing. In 1920 he divorced his wife and pursued Bryant.

At this time, as an established journalist, Bryant was sent to İstanbul to report on Turkey for the International News Service. Bullitt accompanied her on this assignment. She reached İstanbul with Bullitt on April 22, 1923, by train from Venice. On the way, Bryant had become the first non-Italian and first woman to interview Benito Mussolini and obtain a signed statement of policy from him in Rome in January 1923. She next interviewed Gabriele d'Annunzio, Italian poet and fascist revolutionary in Fiume. And in Turkey she would be eager to try to add an interview with Mustafa Kemal to her collection of face-to-face meetings with important world revolutionary figures.

After some weeks at the Tokatlian Hotel in Pera, Bullitt [later nicknamed "Bulut" (or Cloud) Pasha by Turkish friends] moved with Bryant into the famed Köprülü-zade Fadıl Bey yalısı. This mansion had been a 17th century masterpiece, but was then a decaying waterfront residence in Anadolu Hisarı on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus. Louise Bryant kept a room as an office in the Tokatlian Hotel, where she befriended Ernest Hemingway, then reporting on Turkey for the *Toronto Star*.⁶ Meanwhile Bill Bullitt kept busy writing what became a best-selling novel lampooning his own upper-class, Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphian society's foibles. His book was entitled *It's Not Done* (New York: Harcourt Brace & World, 1926) and sold over 150,000 copies after its appearance in 1926, to the embarrassment of many in Bullitt's rarified circle. Bullitt also supervised a bevy of Turkish servants, several dogs and sheep on the substantial waterfront property. "Bulut" Pasha's Albanian butler served cocktails to them and guests at their mansion. The butler moved with them to Paris in the autumn of 1923. Louise Bryant, already in advanced stages of her pregnancy, and William Bullitt were married in Paris in December 1923. Bill Bullitt and his new bride

⁶ See Ernest Hemingway & William White, *Ernest Hemingway's Complete Toronto Star Dispatches, 1920-1924* (New York: Scribner's, 1985).

rejoiced at the birth of their daughter Anne on February 24, 1924, in their rented Paris residence.

While in İstanbul, the Bullitts had befriended ten-year-old Refik İsmail, orphaned in Edirne during the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913. They supported him during their stay in Turkey. They formally adopted Refik in 1926. He lived with the Bullitts as a cherished family member in Paris and their summer home at Ashfield, Massachusetts, in the Berkshires. They also sent him to boarding school. Alas, to date, I've been unable to learn what became of Refik İsmail later, especially after the Bullitts were divorced at Bill's instigation in 1930. Bill got custody of their only child, Anne, partly because Louise had contracted Dercum's disease which led her to drink alcohol heavily in vain efforts to relieve the intense pain of that incurable malady. Despite repeated pleas to her former husband and to Anne's Irish nanny, Louise never saw her daughter after the divorce. Louise Bryant died alone of a brain hemorrhage in 1936 in Paris. Bullitt meanwhile had become Franklin Roosevelt's Ambassador to Russia, and later served as United States Ambassador to France prior to its fall to the Nazis in 1940.

Impressions of İstanbul

Louise Bryant reached İstanbul on April 22, 1923. She spent most of the next seven months there or in Ankara. Bryant's first impressions of İstanbul were mixed. She found the great mosques "truly lovely." She visited Sancta Sophia [sic] and found the nearby Cisterns (Binbir direk) "most thrilling." The grand bazaar intrigued her. She and Bullitt danced to a "splendid orchestra" and enjoyed fine Turkish wine (which surprised her)—all on their first day in the city. That night, Bryant noted: "I don't know why, but Constantinople [İstanbul] has always seemed farther away than China or India—and more romantic. Almost an unattainable pleasure to go there. But here I am... It isn't as colorful as Bokhara nor as picturesque as Tunis. It would be downright disappointing if one didn't feel that—it is a place one has to dig down into to know. There is too much newness and crumbling oldness all stuck together on the surface."

The next day, April 23, 1923, they called on Dr. Adnan [Adivar], representative in İstanbul of the Ankara Foreign Ministry after the nationalist victory culminating in the regaining of Greek-held İzmir [Smyrna] on September 9, 1922. Adnan and his wife Halide Edib had fled from İstanbul to Ankara in 1920 to join the nationalists there. He

had directed a hospital in the former Turkish capital during the war and married Halide Edib in 1917. She was the first Turkish woman to speak at public rallies in support of the 1908 revolution advocating restoration of the Ottoman Empire's first Constitution promulgated by Sultan Abdul Hamid II (reigned 1876–1909) in 1876 but abrogated within fifteen months. Halide Edib had been the first Turkish Muslim lady graduate of Constantinople Girls' College, founded by Americans and headed by Mary Mills Patrick. Dr. Patrick was single, and an independent lady who boldly bicycled around İstanbul at the turn of the twentieth century. Her Ph.D. thesis had been on Sappho, the ancient Greek lady poet. After the Armistice, Halide Edib headed the Wilson Society promoting national self-determination and continued as an active leader of women's rights, a mother, and famed author. She had served as a sergeant under Mustafa Kemal at the front in the War of Independence. Adnan was then a leading member of the National Assembly, serving as Deputy Speaker and Minister of Health. He had just returned from Ankara. He briefed Bryant on the nationalists' dire situation complicated by Allied demands at the Lausanne Peace Conference, plus disorganization, poverty, refugees, confusion in Allied occupied İstanbul and a war-ravaged Anatolia.

That same day Bryant and Bullitt took a ferry ride on the Bosphorus. She wrote: "it was entirely disappointing. The 'palaces' are all wooden... not lovely and suggest New Jersey or Coney Island or abandoned fair grounds." Five days later, on April 28, Bryant was more positive as she again rode up the Bosphorus to Bebek to call on Dr. Watson, Dean of Robert College. It was the first American college founded abroad in 1863, during the American Civil War. Yankee missionary Cyrus Hamlin started the college with the financial and moral support of Christopher Rhinelander Robert, a Christian philanthropist and businessman of New York City. Hamlin lost a finger to a buzz-saw while helping to construct the College's first building on its hilltop campus in 1871. Hamlin Hall still serves, but as part of Boğaziçi University since 1973, when Robert College moved to its current campus in nearby Arnavutköy, where the American Research Center in Turkey's İstanbul office is also located. After calling on Dean Watson, Bryant wrote: "Took the boat to Bebek around half hour. Climbed the hill to college. Most wonderful garden. The swallows. The wisteria over the streets. The Judas trees against the Bosphorus and the nightingales—one cannot ask for much more even in spring." Her sentiments probably moved Bill Bullitt to rent the Köprülü yalı and estate on the Asian shore opposite Robert College. On May 25, Louise wrote happily: "Heard boy playing flute on hillside—lovely

in the morning—sunlight on the water—red poppies—only place still pastoral—the charmed days. Custom of taking a spoonful of rose marmalade and water in the morning before coffee.”

On April 25, two days after first meeting Dr. Adnan, Bryant wrote: “Shirt of Flame [Halide Edib’s famous account of the Turkish nationalist struggle to repulse invading Greek forces and regain control of Anatolia, Turkey’s homeland] most astonishingly clever nationalist propaganda. Splendid settings. Second part not so good.”

From her first days in İstanbul, Bryant expressed concern for the desperate condition of orphans and the poor whom she saw everywhere neglected. She wrote on April 28 that İstanbul was occupied by the French, Pera by the British and that the Americans and Italians were there “through courtesy to allies.” Bryant added: “Amazing that they take no interest in cleaning city. Children perish in doorways. A terrible condition in which those who occupy are indifferent and Turks are helpless. The money they could spend on rescuing their people they will have to spend perhaps in paying for an unwelcome army of occupation.”

Ankara

On her tortuous way to Ankara early in June, Bryant met and photographed wandering groups of starving Turkish peasant children. Their parents had been killed ten months before during the hasty retreat of the Greek army invaders who burned towns and spread death through their scorched earth policy as they withdrew 300 miles from central Anatolia in ten days between August 31 and September 9. The Greek army was pursued by Turkish forces under Mustafa Kemal Pasha. İzmir was liberated on September 9. On September 13, it was devastated by a great fire which swept through large parts of the city. How the fire began is still disputed, but it dealt a terrible blow to Turkey’s second city and port. On that trip, which took four days to cover some 400 miles, Bryant had to travel by boat to Mudanya, from there by rail to Bursa, and then about 100 miles by truck to finally reach the train for Ankara. She found much of the Anatolian plain a “vast armed camp.” In Ankara she also saw much poverty, adults and children in rags, many living “in hovels” just above subsistence levels, using the simplest of traditional tools and ox carts for mobility.

Bryant was the only foreign correspondent to venture to Ankara in June 1923. She had excellent connections there as Dr. Adnan and Ahmet

Emin [Yalman], editor of the İstanbul daily *Vatan* (Homeland), who had earned a Ph.D. at Columbia University's School of Journalism in 1917, recommended her to colleagues. Her most important contact in Ankara was Ali Fuat [Cebesoy], friend and admirer from his days as Ambassador in Moscow. Because of Ankara's dire shortage of housing, Ali Fuat lived alone in two small rooms. He confided to Louise that he used the first as a guest-living room and slept in the second. He told her that he kept a picture of Mustafa Kemal in the living room and one of her in his bedroom!

Bryant met with other significant members of the National Assembly, including Hüseyin Rauf [Orbay], the Prime Minister, and his successor Fethi [Okyar], and others. On the American side, she met Consul Blake (who had earlier served in Algeria and Morocco) as well as the new informal United States Representative in Ankara, Mr. Robert Imbrie, and his wife, Katherine, whose presence in Ankara had been arranged by Admiral Mark Bristol, American High Commissioner based in İstanbul since 1919. From these contacts Louise learned that Rauf admired America. He reminded her of Texans. She was impressed that he and Fethi spoke good English, perfected while prisoners of the British in Malta for some months after the Armistice. Ali Fuat and the other two all welcomed her to their plain offices and Fethi's home. They lunched or dined with her and colleagues at one or two of the simple restaurants available in provincial Ankara.

Once or twice, Bryant saw Mustafa Kemal and aides eating in the same modest facility with its dull fare of mutton or goat meat in various guises. She also saw him and his young wife, Latife [Uşakizade] Hanım on June 11, 1923, at an Agricultural Fair where Latife wrote in the guest book, "A nation which lives by the plow will never perish," and Ali Fuat distributed prizes under the watchful eye of Mustafa Kemal. Rauf urged Kemal to grant Bryant an interview and asked to see the list of questions she had prepared to raise with him. Latife also interceded on Bryant's behalf, without success. Louise was informed that Mustafa Kemal told his aide (probably Salih Bozok) that should he ever have a spare hour, an interview with Bryant was to be set up. The overworked Kemal, who was not well at that time, never granted Bryant an interview.⁷

⁷ Many sources report that Louise Bryant actually interviewed Atatürk, but the Yale papers show definitively that no such interview took place.

Shortly before Bryant reached Ankara on June 9, 1923, the American press ran the following story on May 28.⁸ “Robert Imbrie, described as ‘delegate of the American High Commission to Angora [sic]’ lives with his wife in a railway passenger car, which he has converted into a ‘model apartment.’ Angora has no decent hotels and there is a dearth of houses, so when 35 representatives of European business interests in Turkey announced their intention of going to Angora to settle directly the economic clauses of the [Lausanne] peace treaty, the Turkish Government was worried. The Imbrie scheme gave them an idea. They are fitting up a train of passenger cars as living quarters for the busy business delegates.

“The Imbries are the center of much admiration in Angora social circles. The wife of Mustapha [sic] Kemal Pasha is a frequent visitor to the perambulating residence of the United States Representative. She even expressed a desire to have the apartment given to her in the event that Mr. and Mrs. Imbrie be unfortunately compelled to leave!”

A curious note in an article entitled, “Blood, Power, and Hypocrisy: The Murder of Robert Imbrie and American Relations with Pahlavi Iran, 1924” states: “In July 1923 Imbrie was recalled to Washington to answer charges, most notably that he had endangered the life of Louise Bryant, widow of John Reed and wife of William Bullitt, by denouncing her to the Turks as a Bolshevik.”⁹ This report must have been exaggerated as far as the Turks were concerned, because Bryant did not encounter any problems in meeting important personages.

Ali Fuat [Cebesoy], Fethi [Okyar] and Rauf [Orbay] briefed Louise Bryant frankly on key elements of Turkey’s domestic and international situation at that awkward juncture between the death throes of the once great Ottoman Empire and the birth of the new Turkish nationalist regime. Turkey was soon to gain international recognition by the Lausanne Treaty and become a republic led by Mustafa Kemal.

⁸ “A Box Car,” *Time*, May 28, 1923. Katherine Imbrie went on to assist the Turkish ambassador to Washington starting in 1928, especially in handling the Armenian issue. See Chapter 5 below.

⁹ Michael P. Zirinsky, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (August 1986), pp. 275–292.

Position of Women

Always interested in women's status, Bryant noted that the Calif's [sic] wife presented Kara [Black] Fatma, a heroine of the nationalist war of liberation, a jeweled necklace. Bryant learned that Anatolian peasant women working in a field would protect their modesty by raising their skirts over their faces if surprised by a male passerby. In Ankara, Louise heard more about the heroic efforts of peasant women to get ammunition and supplies to their sons, brothers, and husbands defending Anatolia during their independence war. One rainy day an officer came upon a mother nursing her baby as she trudged along a muddy road behind an ammunition cart covered with a canvas tarpaulin. When the officer told her to cover herself and the baby with the tarpaulin, the woman refused, saying, "No, our men must have dry ammunition."

Bryant reported that a luncheon of the Ladies' affiliate of the Turkish Red Crescent [Muslim equivalent of the Red Cross] was attended by male officials in April 1923. She claimed that it was the first occasion in Turkish history that women and men had lunched together in public. That summer, a group of Turkish boarding school girls were reprimanded for listening to the latest American Jazz records on a victrola! To the best of my knowledge that was the first notice of that preoccupation among Turkish youth.

Bryant observed on June 16, 1923, that "Halideh Hanoum [sic] (Halide Edib) does not represent feminism as much as she represents individual freedom. She proves that even in Turkey a woman can by great personality overcome religious and social prejudices. Mrs. M. K. [i.e., Latife, Mustafa Kemal's wife] does not represent anything. She is a woman who has married a great man.¹⁰ She herself has not evinced any sign of greatness." The next day she added, "This is the birthday of Madam [sic] Mustapha [sic] Kemal. She is having a party. İsmet [a mutual friend of Latife Hanım and Bryant who was fluent in English and helped her in Ankara] will go and has sent her chocolates from Constantinople.—Halideh Hanoum remains in spite of other superior official positions—The Woman of Turkey. She is a character who can marry as many times as an American actress—can do new fashioned

¹⁰ Louise Bryant used this same theme, expressed in similar language, in her article in *The Nation*, "A Turkish Divorce," August 26, 1925, reporting on Latife's divorce from Mustafa Kemal on August 5, 1925.

things in an old fashioned country and still keep her position. She is the first novelist of Turkey [sic] no man is her equal in contemporary literature.”

“She is a person of great energy, demanding and taking a full life with apologies to no one—she has two grown sons in an American Agricultural School in one of the western states.”

Mustafa Kemal

In a final effort to get an interview with Mustafa Kemal, Louise Bryant went again to ask Zia Bey, the Ankara railway station-master for his renewed help. Zia Bey told her that “Kemal [Pasha] works very hard...he comes at one to his office in the [railway] station [also housing the telegraph office vital for official and private communications because the mails were not operating] and works until ten o’clock at night.” She added, “These officials are all overworked as the best of the Russians were and are in the same danger of breaking down, especially since everyone is inflicted [sic] with malaria and other fevers and live in discomfort.” Bryant thus alludes to fleas and other insects which were omnipresent in Ankara that summer and caused her acute discomfort. She continued: “Note: The incessant wind of Angora [sic] gives one a restless spirit. Even the summer days are never calm—July and August are unbearably hot—winter bitter cold with much snow—and no fuel or coal or oil or wood.”

She wrote: “I am convinced, after knowing Lenin and Mussolini and Mustapha [sic] Kemal that individuals make movements. It doesn’t matter whether a man is a Bolshevik or an anti-Bolshevik or a devout nationalist—if he is strong he will maintain the movement. Movements do not succeed by themselves except in secure states like ours where there is no menace of trade unions or poverty—Must[afa] Kemal is the most absolute of these three dictators, and therefore, the least secure...” “Enver [Pasha] once described him [i.e., Mustafa Kemal, whom he knew very well] to me thus: ‘He has no warmth—therefore he has no friends—He has followers because he is trusted and feared. He has no grace, so cannot ‘charm’ [you] out of your estimation [sic] of him. However, he has magnificent balance of judgment in war and state.’”

Bryant described a scene in Ankara as she took the train back to İstanbul on June 19, 1923. “Along the streets go peasants—veiled women on foot or on donkeys. The herds are driven out in the morning—goats

and cows and buffaloes. At night they come back, are separated and go to lodge in the houses scattered in the town—lodged often better than the delegates [i.e., to the National Assembly].”

At the public fountains soldiers wash their dishes, and women wait patiently until they can get a turn—They carry heavy buckets of water—To the Turks of the upper class labor is still a thing to be despised, to lose class over. They refuse to tell servants—‘go, I will help you.’ There are no foreigners except a few men who have come to look after the old Company’s buildings before the war—about six altogether, English and Americans. Then there are the Russians and the Frenchmen, quite a crowd at the Embassy, and the Afghans [and] Persians who do not seem foreign being Mussulmans....

Through it all and above moves Mustapha Kemal—A lone figure because he does not have friends—All fear him, as is the way of Turkey always with rulers. He is more of a dictator than Lenin or Mussolini. Everything is decided by him and ratified by the Assembly. No Minister can oppose him—even in his own party—without being dismissed. Fortunately for Turkey, he is as great a statesman as he is a soldier. Nevertheless, there is danger in such power. When one looks out the window at the primitive certainties—the peasants with their enormous woolen belts and the men who work in the road to the accompaniment of drums—it is Medeval [sic]—far removed from Lausanne and the intrigues of Europe but as enmeshed with its own small town philosophy and gossip as the tiniest village in America.

Role of Patriots

As we recall those crucial, formative months prior to the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, we can also remember the dangerous, testing years when patriots like Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, George Washington, and others struggled for freedom. Their vision and sacrifice and that of those who rallied to them led to the liberties enshrined in the United States Constitution which influenced that of the Republic of Turkey. We also need to remember dedicated patriots striving for freedom in Turkey during the century and a half since the fledgling United States and far-flung Ottoman Empire concluded their first Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1830–31. Each of us can make our own list of patriots who stand out. Mine includes Mustafa Reşit Pasha, Namık Kemal, Ziya Gökalp, Halide Edib, İsmet İnönü, Mahmut Makal, Halikarnas Balıkcısı [The Fisherman of Halicarnassus—now Bodrum—real name, Cevat Şakir Kabaağaçlı], his talented niece Şirin Devrim (Trainer), Aşık Veysel, Bülent Ecevit, Turgut Özal,

İhsan Doğramacı and their worthy supporters. Each in his or her unique way has helped to advance the universal dream of a commonwealth serving free individuals where the affirmation that “all men are created equal” and Atatürk’s dedication to “Peace at Home, Peace in the World” uplift us all.

CHAPTER FOUR

SHADES OF DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION: AMERICAN ENCOUNTERS WITH TURKEY (1923–1937)

NUR BILGE CRISS

Scholars dwell more on explaining the origins and conduct of wars than how they end, though it is the latter that shapes the lives of future generations. Peace treaties, whether dictated or negotiated, and recognition of new states *de facto* or *de jure* resonate on future relations. The way in which dialogue is carried out by representatives, until and even after formal diplomatic relations are established, can make or break relations. This study addresses the end of the First World War and the interwar years when diplomatic relations were restored between Turkey and the United States. Diplomatic recognition is identified as an act by which one state acknowledges the legitimacy of another, thereby expressing its intent to bring into force the legal consequences of recognition. An important component of diplomatic recognition is reciprocity. Although ambassadors were exchanged in 1927, a missing component of reciprocity was that an American ambassador did not take up full time residence in Turkey's capital, Ankara until 1937. Therefore this study secondly accounts for the conjuncture, processes as well as stages, until Washington accorded diplomatic reciprocity to Turkey. Diaries, official correspondence, and biographies of U.S. representatives who are better known, such as Admiral Mark L. Bristol, Ambassador Joseph C. Grew and lesser known diplomats such as Robert Skinner, John Van A. Mac Murray, Howland Shaw, Wallace Murray, and Jefferson Patterson, who served in Turkey, enable us to draw a reasonably coherent picture. A glimpse at the domestic situation in Turkey of the 1930s through U.S. records and the eventual full time residence of the American Ambassador in Ankara by 1937 reveal how shades of recognition were transformed into full diplomatic reciprocity.

October 29, 1923 marks the declaration of the Republic of Turkey, three months after the Lausanne Peace Treaty was signed between the former Allies of the First World War and the Government of the National Assembly of Turkey. Since the United States and Ottoman

Empire had not declared war on each other and that the former had chosen to be an “associated” and not an “allied” power,¹ there was no peace to be made between them. However, a formal relationship had to be resumed after the Ottoman government had severed diplomatic relations with the United States in April 1917. The interregnum from 1919 to 1923 did not allow an official diplomatic relationship to resume because a state of war and foreign occupation of Turkey continued. Only after the Lausanne Peace Treaty was signed between the Allies and the Government of the National Assembly of Turkey on July 24, 1923, did the United States attempt to resume ties by treaty with the new political body in Turkey. Hence, on August 6, 1923 a “General Treaty” or the “Treaty of Amity and Commerce” as it is generally referred to was signed in Lausanne by Joseph C. Grew, then U.S. Minister in Switzerland, bearing the signatures of İsmet Pasha (İnönü), Dr. Rıza Nur and Hasan (Saka) on Turkey’s part.² But by 1927 the U.S. Senate had denied ratification of the treaty. Nonetheless, after an exchange of notes for a *modus vivendi*, ambassadors were exchanged the same year, and slightly reworded treaties of “Commerce and Navigation” and “Establishment” were ratified respectively in 1930 and 1932. It was not until 1937 that an American ambassador, John Van A. Mac Murray, took up full time residence in Turkey’s capital Ankara, although all other major countries had established embassies and ambassadors in Ankara by 1931. An exception was Italy, which moved its embassy permanently to Ankara in 1941. However symbolic the American move may have been, it sanctioned complete diplomatic recognition after a fifteen year interval. These shades of recognition then turned into a fully fledged relationship with complete official reciprocity.

This study initially explores the diplomatic conduct of two significant personae who helped shape the future relations between Turkey and the United States; High Commissioner Admiral Mark Lambert Bristol (served in İstanbul, 1919–1927), and a career diplomat Joseph

¹ John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security and the American Experience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 25.

² Fahir Armaoğlu, *Belgelerle Türk-Amerikan Münasebetleri (Açıklamalı)*, (An Annotated Documentary Record of Turkish-American Relations); (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1991), pp. 89–109; See “Proces Verbal of the American-Turkish Commercial and Consular Convention” The Papers of Mark Lambert Bristol (1868–1939) (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress Manuscript Division) “General Correspondence” Box 61, August 6, 1923, (Henceforth, Bristol Papers); “America To Sign Separate Treaty with Kemal Pasha,” *Christian Science Monitor*, June 27, 1923.

C. Grew, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary (served also in İstanbul, 1927–1932). These two representatives are important for having initiated a favorable relationship between the two countries against many odds. Bristol definitely held an intermediate status. Ambassador Grew, having been originally commissioned during a recess of the Senate in May 1927, was subject to confirmation by the Senate in April 1928. It was widely believed that he was given the Turkish assignment to get him out of town.³ Consequently, after almost one year Grew would still face a somewhat uncertain confirmation process to extend his term as ambassador. That gave his initial year as ambassador a somewhat ambivalent atmosphere.

The paper also probes the oft spoken American isolationism for the purpose of aligning political rhetoric with reality. By the turn of the 20th century, the United States was a world power; not only did Washington dominate its own hemisphere, but it was accepted as a Great Power by the Old World. Inspection of the U.S. State Department's Chiefs of Mission List shows that although ministers and envoys had been routinely assigned to major countries until the 1890s, subsequent chiefs of mission in the most important countries held the title of ambassador.⁴ Other powers accepted American representation at the ambassadorial level, a privilege which was not necessarily granted to just any sovereign country. Joining the First World War, albeit for reasons of its own, also brought the United States into the affairs of Europe. Moreover, we see that neither the State Department nor the American business world was isolationist during the interwar period. In regard to the aftermath of war, Ambrosius wrote, "At the same time interdependence among nations precluded the United States from maintaining its traditional isolation from the Old World."⁵ The victorious European Allies grudgingly allowed each other spheres of mandate and influence as was the case with Britain and France in the Near East. The United States had to push its way to take a position in the same territories in the name of Open Door policy, an abstract principle of international conduct at that time. In essence:

³ Waldo H. Heinrichs, Jr., *American Ambassador: Joseph C. Grew and the Development of the United States Diplomatic Tradition* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown & Co., 1966), pp. 109–125.

⁴ In 1893 ambassadors were sent to London, Paris, and Berlin.

⁵ Lloyd E. Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson and the American Diplomatic Tradition; the Treaty Fight in Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 290.

American interests [in the Near East] were too extensive to permit indifference to the actions of the European Powers. Near East Relief was still active; American missions faced a period of reconstruction and adjustment to Turkish, Persian, and Arab nationalism; commercial interests anticipated lucrative developments in the area; and above all, the United States had become vitally interested in Middle Eastern oil to protect and foster these interests the government had to devise an effective policy.⁶

By 1921, according to a Department of Commerce report, American oil company holdings in Asia Minor (Standard Oil Company of New York) amounted to 2,000 square kilometers.⁷ This concession had been extended to Standard Oil in 1914 and because of the war a caveat was added that the company would be allowed to hold on to their rights until a full year after the war ended.⁸ That date would have officially expired at the end of 1919. But even by 1921 the Commerce Department upheld these rights, at least on paper.

Further, during and after the First World War, the United States had become a creditor nation in regard to Europe. Measures also were envisaged for German economic recovery so that it could start paying annuities against reparations. In 1924, an international commission headed by an American banker, Charles G. Dawes, recommended the solution that large loans should be made to the German government. Short-term loans raised in the United States were of particular help. “In 1929 the solution of the reparations question was taken a stage further with a second expert plan, drawn up by a committee under the American Owen D. Young, which finally envisaged an eventual end to the reparations—though not until 1988.”⁹

Consequently, the United States secured itself an international position with a say so over foreign affairs, even though it was not a member of the League of Nations. Private companies and private persons were involved outside direct U.S. governmental representation in these endeavors, but diplomatic representatives were always there to help, although they were careful to ensure the soundness and credibility of the

⁶ John A. DeNovo, *American Interests and Policies in the Middle East, 1900–1939* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1963), p. 127.

⁷ Stephen J. Randall, *United States Foreign Oil Policy since World War I, For Profits and Security*, 2nd ed. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005), pp. 24–25.

⁸ Hikmet Uluğbay, *İmparatorluktan Cumhuriyete Petropolitik* (Oil Politics from Empire to Republic) (Ankara: Ayraç Yayınevi, 2003), pp. 225–226.

⁹ James Joll, *Europe since 1870, an International History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), pp. 288–289.

American firms. One repeatedly encounters the statement that the United States had no political interests in Europe or the Near East. This may be true only to the extent that one looks at isolationism as being diametrically opposed to political/military intervention. "While it is true that isolationism as a doctrine was born with our eye on Europe [it] did not have the same connotation for Asia or Latin America" the diplomat, Charles Bohlen, recounted.¹⁰ Nevertheless, there are other venues of involvement and government/business relations are political by nature. Therefore, to categorically label the United States as isolationist may be a misnomer. Whether Turkey fell within the sphere of Europe or Asia at this point in time is debatable, because geographical depictions are usually determined by the powers that be. In all likelihood Turkey remained in the twilight of geography in the 1930s. Turkey belonged to Eurasia in terms of German geopolitical understanding, but the U.S. Department of State classified it within the Near East.

Another point this essay emphasizes is an insight into Turkey during the interwar years through American diplomatic records. Turkish historiography takes it for granted that the republican regime, once promulgated, was also established. Ankara then began progressive modernizing reforms. Domestically speaking this was true enough. But, there were also three major Kurdish insurgencies between 1924 and 1938 which upset stability.¹¹ Moreover, outside Turkey's borders there was ambivalence toward Ankara. As Barlas observed,

During the meeting between Mussolini and Chamberlain in September 1926, they agreed on the probable eventual collapse of the Kemalist regime in Turkey and Italian intervention in Anatolia. But the British Foreign Secretary would tolerate Italian intervention in Asia Minor only after the collapse came about.¹²

Mussolini believed that the Mosul issue¹³ between Ankara and London would lead to war between the two and then to Turkey's collapse; this would then provide Rome with the excuse to colonize Anatolia from

¹⁰ Charles E. Bohlen, *Witness to History, 1929–1969* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1973), p. 33.

¹¹ *Genelkurmay Belgelerinde Kürt İsyanları* (Kurdish Insurrections from the Records of the General Staff) 2 vols. (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1972).

¹² Dilek Barlas, *Etatism and Diplomacy in Turkey, Economic and Foreign Policy Strategies in an Uncertain World, 1929–1939* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p. 140, fn. 79.

¹³ Mosul, the oil rich area of Iraq-under-British mandate remained a contested issue and was not solved at Lausanne. The parties, Turkey and Britain, either had to negotiate a solution or bring the problem to the League of Nations. Since negotiations led

the staging point of the Dodecanese Islands.¹⁴ Italy had occupied those Aegean islands during the 1912 Libyan war with the Ottoman Empire. Rome began militarizing the islands as of 1923 for an eventual invasion of Anatolia which Mussolini regarded only as a geographical area. It was in this precarious atmosphere that American encounters with Turkey began anew.

Historical Background

Ottoman-U.S. relations date from the 1830s. Relations were based on trade and the American Protestant missionary presence in the fields of health and education in the Empire. The Ottoman Empire and the United States became virtual adversaries after the latter joined the First World War, but they did not declare war on each other. Although there are multifarious reasons why the Ottomans entered the Great War, a major reason was to abrogate the capitulations, extraterritorial economic, financial, trade and judiciary privileges granted to foreigners¹⁵ since the 15th century. These privileges, once granted from a position of strength, had become a burden as well as liability by the 19th century. Consequently, war presented an opportunity to abrogate them. The Ottomans expected this conflict to be of short duration just like everyone else did in Europe.

In 1740, in return for French mediation during a two front war with Russia and Austria, the Ottomans had to assent to a provision that no changes in capitulatory treaties could be made without French consent.

nowhere, the second option came into play and the League awarded Mosul to Iraq in 1926.

¹⁴ Dilek Barlas, "Friends or Foes? Diplomatic Relations between Italy and Turkey, 1923–36." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36 (2004), pp. 231–252; 232–233; Yücel Güçlü, "Fascist Italy's 'Mare Nostrum' Policy and Turkey." *Bellekten* LXIII: 238 (December 1999), pp. 813–845.

¹⁵ Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 83–84. "The modern connotation of this term is capitulation in the sense of 'surrender,' and the capitulations are seen as an example of the unequal treaties imposed by stronger on weaker powers during the imperial expansion of Europe. The origin of the Middle Eastern capitulations is, however, quite different. The term had nothing to do with surrender, but derives from the Latin *capitula*, referring to the chapter headings into which the texts of these agreements were divided. They date from the time, not of European, but of Muslim predominance, when the Islamic states were at the height of their power, and European merchants and their diplomatic representatives came as humble suppliants." The Ottomans referred to these contracts as *imtiyazat-ı ecnebiyye* (privileges extended to foreigners).

This rule carried over to capitulatory treaties with new powers when initiated or renewed with the old ones.¹⁶ In the 19th century the Ottomans were diplomatically rebuffed every time they tried to change the capitulations.

Unilateral abrogation of the capitulations came as early as September 10, 1914, nearly a month before the Empire became militarily involved in the war. This caused much concern to the Americans in Turkey. An editorial in *The Outlook* read, “Americans have in Turkey several hundred educational and philanthropic institutions, including ten colleges, twenty high schools, and twelve hospitals.”¹⁷ Though the article conceded that abrogation of capitulatory treaties was the sovereign right of the Ottomans, it suggested that a new treaty should be concluded with Constantinople to protect U.S. citizens who worked in those institutions. “The United States from time to time voluntarily yielded some of these extra-territorial rights at the request of Turkey and as a matter of fairness; but the European countries, as a rule, have been loth [sic] to release Turkey from any of her engagements without a substantial quid pro quo” wrote an American missionary.¹⁸ “American business firms did not take the news so calmly; MacAndrews and Forbes and Standard Oil cabled in frantically that customs duties would certainly go up. And on October 1, customs duties did indeed go up—from eleven percent to fifteen percent.”¹⁹ The U.S., along with the other powers, protested the decision.

While the Empire was still officially neutral in early October 1914, Reverend Herrick observed, “Meanwhile the Turks are asking one another if the present clash in Europe is not the very opportunity they have been waiting for to free themselves from the domination of foreign powers...” In an effort to reassure his compatriots, he added, “I unhesitatingly reply that Americans in their persons and as regards their institutions in that country are not endangered. Americans are no strangers

¹⁶ Reşat Arım, *Foreign Policy Concepts: Conjunction, Freedom of Action, Equality* (Ankara: Foreign Policy Institute, 2001), pp. 11–12.

¹⁷ “The Turkish Question,” *The Outlook*, vol. 108:4, (September 23, 1914), pp. 157–159.

¹⁸ Frederick D. Greene, “Turkey’s Declaration of Independence,” *The Outlook*, vol. 108:4 (September 23, 1914), pp. 161–163.

¹⁹ Howard Morley Sachar, “The United States and Turkey, 1914–1927: the Origins of Near Eastern Policy” (Unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 1953), p. 47.

in Turkey... They know we have no designs against their country.”²⁰ Accordingly, the European crisis presented the United States with the opportunity for capital investment in the Near East, but this was not meant to be.

İstanbul severed diplomatic relations with the United States on April 20, 1917, presumably under German pressure. The Ottoman Foreign Minister, Ahmet Nesimi Bey (Sayman) apologized for this act, and promised that the American schools and other institutions in Anatolia would remain undisturbed. The last American Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Abram I. Elkus transferred all business with Americans to the neutral, Swedish Minister in İstanbul before his departure. There was a resolution put forward in the U.S. Senate in support of a declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire. However, President Wilson and his Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, with cooperation of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, managed to block such resolutions from reaching the floor. Lansing’s apparent argument was that since the Armenian and Syrian refugees received supplies worth one or two million dollars per month which were distributed by the American missionaries, this line of supply would be lost if a state of war existed between the United States and Turkey.²¹

Two months after the Mudros Armistice Treaty was signed (October 30, 1918) on the British destroyer *Agamemnon*, the U.S. administration sent Lewis Heck as Commissioner, followed by George Bie Ravndal in February 1919, and restored commercial relations with the Ottoman Near East. Both gentlemen were subsequently appointed as members of the Turkish-American Trade Commission. The Ottoman parliament and other institutions remained intact, however weakened, until April 1920.

On March 16, 1920, the Allies occupied Istanbul *de jure* under the auspices of Britain. The city had been occupied *de facto* two weeks after the Mudros armistice was signed in November 1918. Prior to the second occupation, the Ottoman parliament was comprised of Nationalist deputies from Anatolia who adhered to the National Oath (Misak-ı Milli)²² drawn up by consensus at the Sivas Congress in 1919. The Oath

²⁰ George F. Herrick, “The Turkish Crisis and American Interests,” *American Review of Reviews*, vol. 50 (October 1914), pp. 475–476.

²¹ Sachar, p. 58.

²² It is also called the “National Pact.”

did not draw specific boundaries but claimed that territories which had a majority of Turks and Kurds should be independent and sovereign. The Oath also vouched for a struggle for independence. Passage of this Oath was instigated by the rising star of Turkey's war of independence (1919–1922), Mustafa Kemal Pasha.

The British had no intention of closing down the Ottoman parliament, but a single act resulted in self-abrogation of the parliament. British soldiers walked into the parliament and arrested two deputies, Rauf Bey (Orbay), Mustafa Kemal's representative, and Kara Vasıf Bey, leader of the first underground resistance group in Istanbul, *Karakol*. This action took place after the Edirne deputy Şeref Bey (Aykut) read the National Oath in the parliament and the resolution was accepted by majority vote. Şeref Bey was also arrested, among others, and sent to exile in Malta. The parliament took a decision to close in protest.²³

This act provided legitimate and legal grounds for Mustafa Kemal Pasha to promulgate the National Assembly in Ankara on April 23, 1920. From then on, this Assembly would be the parliament which spoke on behalf of the nation, and one under whose auspices the command of the Turkish military forces was bestowed upon Mustafa Kemal. He was to win the war against Greek invaders by 1922. The conflict with Greece was actually Britain's proxy war against the Nationalist movement and forces.

Political/Diplomatic Relations (1919–1932)

In January 1919, Rear Admiral Mark L. Bristol was appointed as Senior Representative of the United States to İstanbul under Allied occupation. "In dealing with the representatives of the Allies in Constantinople Admiral Bristol soon found that he was placed at a disadvantage because his position as Senior United States Representative was not as exalted as that of High Commissioner which was held by them."²⁴ Bristol requested to assume the same title from the State Department, which was granted. His instructions from then on were to be communicated from the State

²³ Nur Bilge Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918–1923* (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 1999).

²⁴ Henry P. Beers, "United States Naval Detachment in Turkish Waters, 1919–24," *Military Affairs*, vol. 7:4 (Winter 1943), pp. 209–220; 213.

Department through the Navy Department. Bristol's earlier career in Turkey has been studied by other scholars.²⁵ Both Trask and Bryson agreed that the goodwill and fairness that Bristol exhibited towards the Turkish Nationalists laid the foundations for sound relations between the two countries.

Aside from academic studies about him, there is an essay among the Bristol Papers, written by Walter S. Hiatt upon the termination of Bristol's duties in Turkey and his assignment as Commander of the Asiatic Fleet. "Bristol-Sailor Diplomat" renders a telling account perhaps for all time. "The great lesson of the East is patience, the realization that if you plan carefully and wait long enough you will get what you are planning for" said Bristol. "If world peace is to be maintained, if we are to avoid suicidal wars, there must be a keener consciousness of the fact that people are just people the world around, and stick closer to the old international conception of a family of nations. As Americans we have the great duty to continue actively to exercise our moral credit and character." Hiatt added ironically, "A queer lot, these men who go to sea in the Navy. It must be the sea and the distance from home that keeps their ideals and their patriotism at high pitch, seasoned out of theory by the constant presence of fact."²⁶ In other words, the admiral remained above armistice politics. The mariner diplomat did not approve of what he termed 'European intrigues' over the Near East nor did he join the British in deploring the Turkish nationalists.

As early as August 1919, Bristol wrote,

The reports of disturbances in Asia Minor are being exaggerated. I hardly believe the Turks are planning any immediate outbreak but are organizing for a defensive action against the partitioning of Turkey... I have a feeling that in the Greek, Armenian and certain foreign quarters, there is a tendency to expose the organization in Asia Minor as evidence that massacres are about to take place. It is not conceivable that the Turks would be so foolish. The present Turkish [Ottoman] government is opposed to this organization and there is some belief that the opposition is directed

²⁵ Sachar, p. 58; Peter Michael Buzanski, "Admiral Mark L. Bristol and Turkish-American Relations, 1919-1922" (Unpublished dissertation, University of California, 1960), Courtesy of Dr. George Harris; Roger Trask, "The United States and Turkish Nationalism: Investments and Technical Aid during the Atatürk Era," *Business History Review* vol. 38 (Spring 1964), pp. 58-77; Thomas A. Bryson, "Admiral Mark L. Bristol, An Open Door Diplomat in Turkey" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 5 (1974), pp. 450-467.

²⁶ Walter S. Hiatt, "Bristol-Sailor Diplomat," Bristol Papers, General Correspondence Box 61, n.d.

or at least encouraged by foreign interests, also it is thought that the government is sympathizing with the organization secretly, and outwardly pretending to suppress it.²⁷

Bristol's outlook regarding the Nationalists varied from the other Allies more often than not, because he saw them as patriots,²⁸ instead of as Bolsheviks, Unionists (members of the Committee of Union and Progress who ruled from 1913 to 1918), or as enemies of the West. The following excerpt from an American popular magazine, on the other hand drew an exotic picture of Mustafa Kemal Pasha.

A Spanish Jew by ancestry, an orthodox Moslem by birth and breeding, trained in a German war college, a patriot, a student of the campaigns of the world's greatest generals, including Napoleon, Grant and Lee—these are said to be a few outstanding characteristics in the personality of the new “Man on Horseback” who has appeared in the Near East.²⁹

Journalistic speculation made Mustafa Kemal Pasha a “Spanish Jew by ancestry” because he was born in Salonica (Thessaloniki) which was the largest Jewish metropolis in Europe between 1492 and 1913 until the city fell to the Greeks in the Balkan Wars. He was never trained in a German War College except that cadets at the İstanbul War Academy where he studied had Prussian instructors. However, he was presented as an enigma simply because nobody in the West expected Turkey to survive let alone produce a leader like Mustafa Kemal. In a letter to Sir Cecil Crowe, the British Ambassador in Paris, Admiral Richard Webb, Assistant High Commissioner in 1919, had written “The situation in the interior, due practically entirely to the Greek occupation of Smyrna, is getting more hazy and unsettled. Were this anywhere but Turkey, I should say we were on the eve of a tremendous upheaval.”³⁰

At the Conference on Near Eastern Affairs (The Lausanne Peace Conference) of 1922–1923, a significant issue was the abrogation of the capitulatory rights. The Turkish delegation at the conference was so adamant about abrogation that the conference broke up once over the issue, but reconvened. So great was the burden of judiciary, financial and

²⁷ Bristol Papers, “War Diary,” August 17, 1919.

²⁸ Nur Bilge Criss, “Images of the Early Turkish National Movement (1919–1921)” in *Historical Image of the Turk in Europe: 15th Century to the Present*, ed. Mustafa Soykut (İstanbul: The ISIS Press, 2003), pp. 259–285.

²⁹ “The Sort of Man Mustafa Kemal Is” *Literary Digest* (October 14, 1922), pp. 50–53.

³⁰ E. L. Woodward and R. Butler, eds., *Documents on British Foreign Policy (1919–1939)* Series I, IV (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 733.

economic capitulations that the issue was non-negotiable for the Turks. Evidence has only recently been coming to light about the opportunity for unilateral abrogation as a major factor in explaining perhaps the major reason why the Empire joined the “Great War”³¹ in the first place. “The price of Turkish assistance on the side of the Central Powers was their consent to the abrogation of the capitulations.”³² Consequently, however late in coming, Germany honored its commitment on January 11, 1917, followed by Austria on March 12, 1918. Bolshevik Russia was to repudiate the Ottoman capitulations in the Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality signed with the Ankara government in 1921.³³ However, interpretations of international law were not clear about abrogation of capitulatory rights. Where did the United States stand on this issue?

A legal opinion forwarded by Lucius Ellsworth Thayer, early in 1923, was that “Economic freedom is essential to the progress of any nation; and in view of modern conditions there seems to be no good reason to further insist upon privileges, originally necessary for the very existence of trade, which have now become particularly offensive as an instrument of economic enslavement.” The author, however, stated “Whether any of the judicial privileges may be safely surrendered, is very questionable.” Thayer recommended that foreign jurists remain at Turkish courts at least during the transitional period culminating in total judiciary reform.³⁴ At first, Ankara would have none of this during the Lausanne negotiations. However, İsmet Pasha gradually consented to legal counselors from countries which remained neutral in the First World War. These counselors would reside in İzmir and İstanbul to consult on commercial cases for a period of five years. Although few and far between, criminal court cases of U.S. citizens in Turkey became an issue in relations.³⁵ Judicial concerns were obviously not forsaken lightly,

³¹ Mustafa Aksakal, “Defending the Nation: The German-Ottoman Alliance and the Ottoman Decision for War” (Unpublished dissertation, Princeton University, 2003); Mehmet Emin Elmacı, *İttihat-Terakki ve Kapitülasyonlar* (The Committee for Union and Progress and Capitulations) (İstanbul: Homer Kitabevi, 2005).

³² Lucius Ellsworth Thayer, “The Capitulations of the Ottoman Empire and the Question of their Abrogation as it Affects the United States,” *The American Journal of International Law*, vol. 17:2 (April 1923), pp. 207–233; Alfred L. P. Dennis, “The United States and the New Turkey” *North American Review* (June 1923), pp. 721–731.

³³ Thayer, p. 228.

³⁴ Thayer, p. 231.

³⁵ Orhan Duru, *Amerikan Gizli Belgeleriyle Türkiye’nin Kurtuluş Yılları* 4th ed. (Turkey’s War of Independence in American Documents) (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası

especially in the absence of treaties. American missionary schools were another issue.

James Levi Barton, the Secretary of the American Board, was sent to the Lausanne Conference to lobby against any abandonment of the special privileges which Americans hitherto had enjoyed in Turkey. But he came away convinced that the only alternative to abandoning mission property and work in Turkey was to accept the new order. Upon his return to the United States, Barton became a leading advocate of Kemal's Republic. He exposed the myths and exaggerations of earlier anti-Turkish propaganda; he heralded the reforms instituted by the Kemalists; and he mobilized leaders of missionary, church, philanthropic and educational organizations to support ratification of the Lausanne Treaty.³⁶

Only after the Lausanne Peace Treaty was signed by other powers did the Americans assent to sign the "other" Lausanne Treaty.³⁷ Ratification of the treaty in the U.S. Senate was another matter. According to a message from Ankara forwarded by the American Embassy, Constantinople to the State Department, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tevfik Rüştü (Aras) had "intimated... that they would not present our treaties to Assembly for ratification until our Senate had ratified or at least [sic] seemed to be on the point of ratifying them."³⁸ Meanwhile, a fierce debate erupted in the United States for and against ratification. Edward M. Earle addressed the American liberals, stating:

If the Turks achieved a victory over Allied and American diplomacy at Lausanne, it was partly because they had a case which merited more respect. The Lausanne peace is a severe blow to Western imperialism in the Near East and as such should be welcomed by liberals everywhere.³⁹

Kültür Yayınları, 2006), pp. 188–190; Joseph C. Grew, *Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904–1945*, 2 vols. (London: Hammond, Hammond and Co. Ltd., 1953) vol. 2, pp. 754–763.

³⁶ Robert L. Daniel, "The United States and the Turkish Republic before World War II: The Cultural Dimension" *Middle East Journal* 21:1 (Winter 1967), pp. 52–63; 54–55.

³⁷ John M. Vander Lippe, "Öteki Lozan Antlaşması: Amerikan Kamuoyunda ve Resmi Çevrelerinde Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri Tartışması" (The 'Other' Lausanne Treaty: Public and Official Debates over Turkish-American Relations), in *70. Yılında Lozan Barış Antlaşması* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1994), pp. 61–92.

³⁸ Bristol Papers, Official Correspondence, Box 61, From: Shaw To: the Department of State, December 12, 1924.

³⁹ Edward Meade Earle, "Ratify the Turkish Treaty!" *The Nation*, vol. 118: 3055 (January 23, 1924), pp. 86–87.

A group of prominent Americans residing in Turkey sent a letter to the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, urging ratification. The letter was signed by Gates (Robert College); Adams (Constantinople Girls' College); Fowle (American Mission Board); Bergeron (American Express); Baker (YMCA); Woodsmall (YWCA); Correa (Standard Oil); Damon (Vacuum Oil); Heck, Edgar Howard; Nelson (American Hospital); Stem (Gary Tobacco); Johnstone (Alston Tobacco); Day (Standard Commercial); and Hare (Secretary, Chamber of Commerce).⁴⁰ Ratification did not take place mainly because of a purely religious reading of the Armenian-Ottoman conflict between 1915 and 1917. This issue will be addressed subsequently when the debate over ratification in the United States is discussed.

The Nationalists' success, however, caused concern about the future status of the 'West' in the 'East'. "The return of the Turk to Europe—the pivotal fact in all the Near-Eastern muddle—came about very simply. It was the old story of a group of strong men defying their fate" wrote an observer.⁴¹

The settlements following that war [Turkey's War of Independence] awakened the East to the full realization of Western weakness and folly. Rejuvenated Turkey is the result, and the inspiration to further revolt. One cannot, therefore, see bright prospects for the West if the Turkish experiment succeeds... Western prosperity (and perhaps much of what we call Western civilization) has been built up largely on two things, the development of the New World and the exploitation of the Old. If, instead of continued control in the East, the West must face a series of successful revolts; if it must readjust itself to trade with many countries puffed up with pride... And yet, if the Turkish experiment does not succeed, the West must bear the subsequent strain... Let the West look to itself if the prizes of Turkey are again to be had for the taking!⁴²

The Eastern Question had not yet been settled in the anonymous author's mind, because the new republic was considered an experiment in nation building, and not a very promising one at that. Ankara thought differently.

On October 29, 1923 when the Republic of Turkey was proclaimed, Adnan Bey (Adıvar), Representative of Ankara's Foreign Ministry in

⁴⁰ Bristol Papers, Official Correspondence, Box 61, January 8, 1927. Raymond Hare would eventually return as American ambassador.

⁴¹ "Turkey and the East" by an Observer, *Atlantic Monthly* 132 (October 1923), pp. 546–555.

⁴² "Turkey and the East," *Ibid.*, p. 555.

İstanbul, discussed the title of High Commissioner (HC) with Bristol. The Admiral argued that HC was a legal title. Adnan Bey stated that HC was not a diplomatic title. Bristol said he was not there in a formal diplomatic position and that diplomatic relations did not exist between the two governments. Adnan Bey asked why Bristol could not be called “representative” and the High Commission the “American Embassy”. Bristol maintained that he had been commissioned by the President. Bristol was already using Embassy stationery in communications with Adnan Bey and was signing his name only,⁴³ but he did not bring this point up and Adnan Bey also avoided it.

On November 19, 1923, Adnan Bey brought up the title HC again on the premise that the Acting British HC, Henderson, had told him that he and other HCs were willing to change their titles if Bristol agreed to change his. Bristol jokingly said, “Why yes, they are willing enough to throw it all off on me.” Bristol argued that it was impossible to change his title because it was recognized as such by the U.S. government as well as the President for his representative in Turkey. Bristol added in his diary, “I did not point out to him that I was no longer using any title in communicating with him. I do know that Henderson signs himself as Acting High Commissioner, though the Turks address him as Representative of Great Britain.”⁴⁴

Less than a month later Adnan Bey once again brought up the subject stating that the British, French and Italian HCs had agreed to change their titles to Representative, which was the case. The Prime Minister, İsmet Pasha continuously asked Adnan Bey what Bristol was going to do in regard to this change. Ankara was very sensitive about the issue. Bristol once again referred to American Law.⁴⁵

In the meantime, problems with diplomatic recognition continued. In a report marked “confidential” dated March 28, 1924, Bristol referred to this ambiguous issue over Giulio Montagna’s status. Montagna was the Italian Ambassador as well as Diplomatic Representative of Italy in Turkey. Ronald Lindsay was simply “His Britannic Majesty’s Representative” without the word “diplomatic” attached to it. “The Italian government hoped that it would be possible to arrange for the diplomatic Mission to Turkey to remain in Constantinople and if it did, he,

⁴³ Bristol Papers, “War Diary,” October 29, 1923.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, November 19, 1923.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, December 5, 1923.

Montagna, would be accredited as Ambassador. If however, it was necessary for the Mission to be located in Angora, he would be recalled and a Minister or a diplomatic official of lower rank than Ambassador would be sent.⁴⁶

Bristol sounded out Rauf Bey (Orbay) by asking, "Why are the Allies holding back from appointing Ambassadors or Ministers and resuming regular diplomatic relations with Turkey? ... Rauf Bey replied, "I think the reason is this, France and Great Britain expect something to happen in Turkey, that is, some reaction to take place, and they are waiting to see what is going to happen before they commit themselves."⁴⁷

Diplomatic ambivalence continued through 1925 and 1926. A message from the State Department to the American Embassy, Constantinople informed, "British representative at Constantinople to inform Turkish Government March 1st, provided Italian and French representatives receive similar instructions, that these three governments will appoint ambassadors to Turkey."⁴⁸ By April 1925, the State Department instructed the "undesirability of suggesting resumption of diplomatic relations at present time... President requests that Admiral Bristol remains in Turkey as High Commissioner."⁴⁹ Nonetheless, Bristol was addressed as "Mr. Representative" every time he held a meeting with the Turkish Foreign Minister or the Prime Minister. In regard to his request about purchasing a building in Ankara, Bristol was informed "The Department regrets to inform you that it has not been possible to secure an appropriation for the acquisition of a house at Angora."⁵⁰

In September 1925, after seven and a half years of absence Bristol visited the U.S.A. He spoke favorably about Turkey's progress, advised ratification of the treaty as well as advising that representatives of foreign trade from the U.S. should equip themselves with information of foreign lands.⁵¹

Against the letter of support for the treaty written by Mary Mills Patrick, President Emeritus of Constantinople Girls' College, David H. Miller (Chair, American Committee Opposed to the Ratification of the Lausanne Treaty) asked why the U.S.A. should be bound by what the

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, March 28, 1924.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, December 10, 1924.

⁴⁸ Bristol Papers, Official Correspondence, Box 61, February 22, 1925.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, April 3, 1925.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, March 12, 1925.

⁵¹ "Admiral Bristol Says Turkey is Advancing," *New York Times*, September 13, 1925, p. XX8.

Allies acceded to at Lausanne while America was not a part of the conference. The most favored nation clause in the treaty was of no consequence since the U.S.A. had such a small volume of trade with Turkey. Moreover, the Lausanne Treaty (with the Allies) repudiated the Wilson award to Armenia, therefore the U.S.A. should not be an “accessory” to what the writer called “the Kemalist junta.”⁵² “If there was ever a psychological moment not to sign a treaty of amity and commerce with Turkey, it is now” wrote a missionary medical doctor, who had served in Turkey before. He invited the European nations to unite and reverse their Lausanne Treaty and settle “the status of the Near East once and for all.”⁵³ He may have had personal reasons to object. “Mission medical work was crippled when all foreign doctors who had not practiced in Turkey prior to 1914 were denied licenses.”⁵⁴ The Foreign Policy Association, while having reported favorably for ratification of the treaty, claimed to have represented both favorable and unfavorable views, and denied interference in the controversy.⁵⁵

At issue was the forced relocation of the Armenian population from northeast, east and central Anatolia to the Syrian province in 1915 because of the revolts instigated by Dashnak militia (Dashnaksutiun, the Armenian revolutionary federation) who infiltrated Turkey in 1914 before the Russian army’s advance and occupation of the eastern provinces during the war. Revolts ensued in 1915. The CUP government decided to relocate the Armenian population, a centuries old Ottoman practice applied to populations perceived to partake in revolt against the central government. Relocation on foot resulted in the deaths and murder of still very controversial numbers of people. The idea was to deter further revolts, but the state either did not or could not provide for the safety of its subjects at a time when the Empire was fighting a war on multiple fronts. This was a mutually destructive episode as well as a horrid case of rebellion, retaliation, retribution, and falling prey

⁵² David Hunter Miller, “Against Lausanne Treaty,” *New York Times*, November 3, 1925, p. 24.

⁵³ Wilfred M. Post, “The Treaty of Lausanne,” *New York Times*, December 18, 1925, p. 22.

⁵⁴ Daniel, p. 55.

⁵⁵ James G. McDonald, “Treaty with Turkey,” *New York Times*, May 28, 1926, p. 20; “The Lausanne Treaty; Should the United States Ratify It?” [Discussed by Hon. James W. Gerard, Prof. Edward M. Earle, Rev. Albert W. Staub, Prof. A. D. F. Hamlin, Dr. James L. Barton, Henry W. Jessup et al.] (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1924), pp. 1–31.

to marauders. On the one hand was the moral obligation and responsibility of the Ottoman government for the safety of all its subjects. Conversely, there was the moral irresponsibility of a non-state actor, the radical Armenian Dashnak party and its militants. Juxtapositions involved in the matter would later prove irreconcilable.

After the war, accounts were settled immediately with those who were held responsible for the decision to relocate the Armenians. In 1921, Talât Pasha, the former Minister of the Interior was assassinated in Berlin, followed by the assassination of Said Halim Pasha, the former grand vizier. Cemal Pasha, the third of the CUP triumvirs, was assassinated in Tiflis in 1922. Dr. Azmi and Dr. Bahaeddin Şakir, from the inner circle of the Committee for Union and Progress were also killed by Armenian gunmen in Germany. In Turkey, Dr. Reşid, the governor of Diyarbakır, held responsible for the massacres in his district, committed suicide before he was apprehended in 1919. Among hundreds of district administrators accused of criminal negligence under custody in İstanbul under Allied occupation, the district administrator of Boğazlıyan, Yozgat (Kemal Bey) and Urfa (Nusret Bey) were tried in an Ottoman military court, and executed. The Sèvres Treaty of 1920 which remained unratified, nonetheless stipulated in Article 230 that the Ottoman state had to turn over persons who were accused of having committed collective murder to the Allied courts.⁵⁶ In contrast, there was only one reference to this issue in the Lausanne Treaty of 1923; persons accused of upsetting the peace in eastern Turkey were to be included in a general amnesty.⁵⁷ Signatories to the Hague peace conference of 1907 had agreed on inserting the category of war crimes into the agreement, and the Ottoman Empire was a signatory. However, at the time trying people for war crimes was still accepted as the sovereign right of a country where such crimes were committed. Crimes against a country's own subjects or citizens did not come under the jurisdiction of international law, nor was there a mechanism to enforce it. Consequently, the moral dimension of the tragedy was the only venue left to the anti-Turkish lobby in the U.S.A. to put pressure on the Congress against ratification of the treaties. Additionally, "though American missionary and educa-

⁵⁶ *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Çöküş Belgeleri (Mondros Bırakışması ve Sevr Andlaşması, İlgili Belgeler)*, comp. Seha L. Meray and Osman Olcay (Documentation of the Mudros Armistice and the Sèvres Treaty) (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1977), pp. 113–114.

⁵⁷ Levent Yılmaz, "Akıl Tutulması-1-2," *Radikal*, January 30 and 31, 2007.

tional activity in the Ottoman Empire continued to expand, American influence in the late 19th century was overshadowed by the inflow of British, French, and eventually German capital for major investments in [the] development of transport and industry. The US avoided political investment in the 'Eastern Question' and American popular attitudes became increasingly colored by missionary orientation to the Christian minorities, especially the Armenians."⁵⁸

The Armenians were a special case for the American missionaries, because it was among this community that they had been most successful in managing conversions from the ancient Gregorian faith to Protestantism. In the 19th century, the Sublime Porte (Ottoman government) had recognized the Protestant Armenian *millet* (Ottoman categorization of peoples according to congregations) along with the Catholic and Gregorian Armenian *millet*. Hence, the construction of the mutual massacres of 1915–1917 for the Americans was one of a Muslim-Christian conflict, while the Ottoman government regarded it as treason because of Armenian insurgency and collaboration with the Russians with whom the Empire was at war.⁵⁹ At first, the Ottoman government exempted Catholic and Protestant Armenian communities, families of artisans, along with families whose male members were serving in the Ottoman army, and those who converted to Islam, from forced resettlements. However, with ensuing panic in the government when Russian armies were fast approaching its borders, collective punishment was meted out to the Armenian population by forcing them to relocate in the prohibitive climate of the Deir ez-Zor desert lands. A disproportionate number of these people either died or were massacred on route. This was not only a matter which scandalized the Americans,

⁵⁸ Paul Henze, "Turkey, the Alliance and the Middle East, Problems and Opportunities in Historical Perspective" Working Paper No. 36, International Security Studies Program, The Wilson Center (December 1981), p. 4; Robert L. Daniel, "The Armenian Question and American-Turkish Relations, 1914–1927," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (September 1959), pp. 252–275; George A. Plimpton, "The United States and Lausanne Treaty," *New Orient*, July 1926, pp. 20–24; Robert F. Zeidner, "Britain and the Launching of the Armenian Question," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 7 (1976), pp. 465–483; Mark Malkasian, "The Disintegration of the Armenian Cause in the United States, 1918–1927" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16 (1984), pp. 349–365; Levon Maraşlyan, *Ermeni Sorunu ve Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri, 1919–1923* (Originally entitled Economic Influences on U.S. Policies Toward Turkey and Armenians, 1919–1923) (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2000), courtesy of the Author.

⁵⁹ Tevfik Çavdar, *Talât Paşa* (Talât Pasha, a Biography) (Ankara: Dost Kitabevi Yayınları, 1984), pp. 371–378.

but many Turks who turned against the Committee for Union and Progress government.

There was another party, according to Admiral Bristol, who clandestinely lobbied against ratification of the treaties: the British, but for a different purpose.

When Negley Farson, representative of the *Chicago Daily News* visited Bristol, the Admiral gave him an article from the *New York Herald*, that he stated “was an evidence of the propaganda which the English foreign office is putting into the American Press... There are quotations in this article said to have come from English diplomats. It is a very clever quotation as it is sure to appeal to the American public and in the second place by using the words ‘mad dog’ carries the gravest kind of insult to the Turks.”⁶⁰ According to the Admiral, Britain was trying to influence American public opinion to destroy any sympathy there might be in the U.S. in case the League of Nations delivered an unfavorable decision regarding Turkey’s claims on Mosul. London might also have found it expedient to block any official treaty between Turkey and the U.S.A., to keep the latter outside that geography.

Despite rejection by the U.S. Senate of the treaty, the American Embassy in Constantinople found it beneficial to publicize favorable criticism that appeared in the American press, with examples from *New York Times*, *New York World*, *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, and *New York Herald Tribune*.⁶¹ The *New York Herald Tribune* wrote “Seldom has a decision in foreign affairs been taken with more emotions and greater disregard for realities” which reflected the views of the other papers above. On January 20, 1927 Bristol visited Ankara, apprehensively at first, because of non-ratification. Before he met with the Turkish Foreign Minister, Tevfik Rüştü Bey [Aras], he was conveyed a message through Reşit Bey, owner of *L’Echo de Turquie* that all Americans, official as well as private persons would “receive the same courtesy and consideration which had been accorded to us in the past.”⁶²

However, resumption of diplomatic relations could not be delayed any longer as far as the Secretary of State was concerned. He instructed Bristol to sound out the Turks about the resumption of diplomatic and

⁶⁰ Bristol Papers, “War Diary,” January 26, 1926.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, January 22, 1926.

⁶² Bristol Papers, “Confidential Diary,” January 20, 1927.

consular relations on the basis of an exchange of notes. He added, "If the Government of Turkey fears that the Government of the United States at some future time might endeavor to revive the capitulations, you should inquire very discreetly whether that fear might not be allayed by including an understanding on the above exchange of notes."⁶³ By February 1927, notes were signed and exchanged. These notes did not have to be acted upon by either legislature. Accordingly, "Turkey and the United States of America are agreed to establish between themselves diplomatic and consular relations, based upon the principles of international law, and to proceed to appointment of Ambassadors as soon as possible."⁶⁴ *L'Echo de Turquie* wrote,

Mr. Coolidge, a clear sighted and experienced statesman, took the initiative to renew with us relations in spite of the vote of the Senate... Our Minister of Foreign Affairs has fulfilled all our expectations, he knew what line of conduct he should take in order to change failure into success... While speaking of the last phase of Turco-American relations it is impossible not to mention Admiral Bristol. It must be recognized that a part in the honor is due to the Honorable Admiral Bristol who has won the respect and affection of all those who have come in touch with him in Turkey.⁶⁵

At the end of March, Bristol was assigned as Commander-in-Chief of the Asiatic Station following Admiral Williams' retirement. In April, Joseph C. Grew, a prominent diplomat who had served as Undersecretary of State was assigned as Ambassador to Turkey. Why was Turkey being honored by a first rate diplomat? There were multiple reasons for this assignment.

Grew was appointed Undersecretary of the State Department after the Rogers Act established the Foreign Service in 1924. Integration of the former Consular and Diplomatic Services raised difficult issues. Within three years there was serious debate over career diplomats who were promoted twice as fast as consular members while Grew served as chairman of the Personnel Committee. Bureaucratic infighting boiled over into the press. According to Grew's biographer, "a news service

⁶³ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, (1927) Vol. III (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1942), From: The Secretary of State To: High Commissioner in Turkey, January 27, 1927, 711.672/550.

⁶⁴ Armaoğlu, pp. 110–112.

⁶⁵ Bristol Papers, Miscellany, Box 91, Transl. *L'Echo de Turquie*, "Turkey and America" March 19, 1927.

feature writer directed public attention to Grew. He pictured Kellogg (Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg) and Grew feuding and Grew “doggedly fighting appointment as Ambassador to Turkey.” Grew and Wilson [another colleague] were accused of being heads of an inner circle of social diplomats which has set the well-to-do diplomats over the hard working consuls.”⁶⁶ Consequently, though Grew’s appointment as Ambassador to Turkey was perceived as yet another self-promotion by some in the Congress, it was “time for him to leave,” and “Kellogg, who was glad to see him go, to be sure, but loyal and kindly too, was undeterred.”⁶⁷

Another plausible reason why Grew was chosen to fill the post of Ambassador in Turkey was because he had been the U.S. Minister in Switzerland who negotiated the American version of the Lausanne Treaty in 1923 with İsmet Pasha, now Prime Minister in Ankara. Secretary of State Kellogg remarked at Grew’s farewell luncheon, “It is appropriate that he should represent this country in Constantinople, the gateway to the East.”⁶⁸ While the statement pointed to the fact that the Administration and the Department were far from being isolationist, Kellogg still had Constantinople in mind, and thus stood short of fully recognizing the new capital of Turkey. The Turkish-American relationship, however, had come a long way from U.S. representation by a High Commissioner to Ambassador. Taking up residence in Constantinople did not seem peculiar to Grew while he kept on referring to the rented building in Ankara as the “American Embassy.”⁶⁹

Meanwhile, Grew waited anxiously for eleven months for confirmation of his Ambassadorship by the Senate, where there was opposition to his appointment. “I did not wish to be withdrawn from Turkey,” he noted in his diary.⁷⁰ Confirmation at long last came in April 1928. But this was a re-confirmation following the first one, because one motion and a resolution had been submitted to prevent it.

“In time, living away from the capital became embarrassing... The government badly wanted Ankara accorded the prestige of ambassadors in residence, and İsmet himself inquired when the United States

⁶⁶ Heinrichs, p. 122.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁶⁸ “Mr. Grew’s Speech at the Farewell Luncheon” *The American Foreign Service Journal* (April 1927), p. 239.

⁶⁹ Grew, *Turbulent Era*, pp. 718–719.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 744.

would build a permanent Embassy there.”⁷¹ By 1931, the American and Italian Ambassadors were the only ones left residing in Constantinople. There is no indication from his official correspondence or diary that he asked the State Department to initiate appropriations to purchase or erect a permanent building in Ankara. He may have had his own reasons. Ankara’s altitude was not favorable to Mrs. Grew’s health. He had access to the business world in Constantinople, which was lacking in Ankara. Keeping his distance from Ankara seemed more expedient. But, more than everything else, the family loved Constantinople. Though a personal and not a professional choice, official premises in Palazzo di Corpi in Pera and a home on the Bosphorus at Yeniköy were incomparable in beauty to the unattractive Ankara. That said Grew probably did not want to take another risk of being turned down this time by the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The Ambassador worked to reconcile missionary schools with the cultural nationalism of new Turkey. He was successful in this endeavor by convincing the few remaining missionary schools to cancel religious instruction and remain as an educational model to be emulated. Sensing that the Turkish Government valued American education, he did not try to overplay his hand about the schools.

Meanwhile, signing Treaties of Arbitration and Conciliation became a trend in international affairs. Although Turkey signed such treaties with a number of countries, including Italy, Ankara became immediately suspicious when Washington proposed such a treaty. The pro-Armenian platform in the Democratic Party in the United States caused Turkey to be leery of a treaty, because it feared that Washington just might use it on behalf of the Armenian-Americans. There was considerable property in Turkey, taken over from Armenian ownership after a certain period of time under the Abandoned Properties Law. Ankara found the “domestic jurisdiction” term in the draft treaty proposal ambiguous as to whether or not this term might allow American or Turkish jurisdiction to handle potential claims from U.S. citizens. Howland Shaw, Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs told the Turkish Ambassador Ahmet Muhtar Bey that the Department could not possibly change the language of the proposed treaty, because all these treaties had to be uniform in order that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee should not take the Department of State to task as to why the treaty with Turkey

⁷¹ Heinrichs, pp. 152–153.

was differently worded.⁷² Ankara complied, and the treaty was signed on March 23, 1928. Claims based on the treaty followed after it was signed in December 1928. Although the treaty is not recorded in the series on Turkey's Treaties, it shows up in the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series.⁷³ Therefore, it seems that the agreement never reached the point of ratification. The claims issue dated back to the U.S.-Turkish negotiations in Lausanne where Grew was unable to extract a commitment from İsmet Pasha for compensation regarding damage and loss to American-owned property during the war. The issue was left outside the treaties signed in 1923, to be negotiated at a later date.

In 1934 the Turkish Government agreed to pay to the American Government the sum of \$1,300,000 covering claims of American citizens arising during the World War and in the years immediately following. During 1937, the United States Government came to the conclusion, after exhaustive examination, that no more than \$900,000 in legitimate American claims had been clearly established. As a voluntary act, the American Government released Turkey from its obligation to pay approximately \$400,000 of the sum agreed. The Turkish Ambassador, in expressing deep appreciation for this generous act, stated that it was 'unprecedented' in international relations.⁷⁴

It is not clear how these claims were managed by the U.S. government domestically, but the general principle being that American businesses abroad were there on their own cognizance, the chances are that the administration was only a facilitator and not a party to the claims. And, given Ankara's stance it is doubtful that any claims by Armenian-Americans would be allowed in the diplomatic negotiations traffic. Hence, claims died a natural death.

Grew displayed overt support to Atatürk's reforms. On September 13, 1928, he reported, "We are the first Embassy to use the Latin characters on our automobile tags; as soon as the Ghazi's fiat went forth to the country, I promptly gave orders to have all the Embassy tags brightly painted: 'U.S.A.-Amerika Sefâreti-359...' and took particular pleasure in pointing them out to Rouschen Eshref so that the Ghazi might

⁷² National Archives, State Department Records, Decimal File 711.6712A/36, Memorandum of Conversation with Ahmed Mouhtar Bey, Turkish Ambassador, July 21, 1928.

⁷³ *Foreign Relations of the United States* [henceforth FRUS] (1934), vol. II, pp. 940-950.

⁷⁴ State Department Records, Report from the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Decimal File (illegible), April 5, 1938.

promptly learn of it.”⁷⁵ There were also a number of American advisors invited to Turkey and employed to report on agricultural methods and the economy.⁷⁶ Another area of mutual interest was aviation.

In March 1929, a representative of the Curtiss-Wright Aeroplane Company, Mario Calderera arrived in Ankara. Turkey’s contract with the German Junkers Company to build motors and airplanes had come to a halt, but it needed to be officially annulled before any other contract could be made.⁷⁷ Calderera inquired of the Turks if the Aero-Expresso Italiano could service flights between İstanbul and İzmir, but was told that since the latter was in a military zone, this would not be possible. The Aviation League spokesman, however, contended that should an American company obtain such a contract to establish airlines in Turkey, the rules regarding military zones would not count. “In view of this attitude... I am inclined to question the advisability of the Curtiss Company’s being represented in Turkey by a former Italian navy officer, who, himself, stated to me that he was not averse from assisting Italian interests in Turkey as well as American interests, since he believed that no conflict could arise between the two”⁷⁸ wrote the second secretary of the American legation, Jefferson Patterson, in Ankara. Patterson reminded Calderera that the Turkish officials obviously wanted American rather than European enterprise (like Aero-Expresso Italiano) to develop Turkey’s civil and military aerial establishment. Patterson also thought that Calderera’s citizenship and past affiliations as a naval intelligence officer prejudiced the Turks against the Curtiss Company.

In his meeting with the President of the Aviation League Fuad Bey (Bulca), Calderera suggested that a Turkish military commission visit the United States at the expense of the Curtiss Company to view their resources. On March 21, 1929, Calderera met with the Chief of the Turkish General Staff, Fevzi Pasha (Çakmak), who was interested in establishing a modern aviation school and air station near Eskişehir. While Patterson accompanied Calderera during his visit to the General Staff, he was instructed by his ambassador to “make it clear to Fevzi Pasha that Mr. Calderera represented a private American concern, in

⁷⁵ Grew, *Turbulent Era*, p. 790.

⁷⁶ Trask, “The United States and Turkish Nationalism: Investments and Technical Aid during the Atatürk Era.”

⁷⁷ Jefferson Patterson, “Diaries,” (Washington, D.C.: The Library of Congress Manuscript Division) Box 1, Folder 1, pp. 170–171.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 171–184.

the negotiations of which the American Government had no special interest.”⁷⁹

In 1929, a Turkish aeronautical mission went to the United States to study American aviation and report on the possibility of purchasing equipment.⁸⁰ The following year a team from the Curtiss-Wright Export Company made aerial demonstrations in Turkey for the military market.⁸¹

The Turkish Aviation League representative Ahmet Emin Bey, however, “urged the Company [Curtiss-Wright] to send a properly qualified representative to Turkey, in order to institute direct negotiations with the authorities.”⁸² Obviously, Calderera who was an Italian citizen and a former officer, introduced to Turkey through the Paris branch of the American company, was not deemed trustworthy either by the Turkish authorities or the American diplomat.

German companies which relied on government subsidies could no longer compete effectively in the face of government cuts because of the world economic crisis. However, the French were not affected by the crisis and attempted to consolidate strategic air routes. A representative of the Compagnie Internationale de Navigation Aeirene asked Ankara for permit to have the airplanes service between İstanbul and Paris, renew flights between İstanbul and Ankara, and extend its service to Aleppo in Syria-under-French-mandate. However, “the Turkish military authorities had expressed themselves unwilling to have any foreign aerial service [read European] prolong its activities either to Ankara or across the country. Accordingly, it would seem that the Curtiss Company had a better chance of invading this hitherto reserved field than any of its European competitors.”⁸³

In March 1931, two American civilian aviators, Russell Boardman and John Polando set a world record which would stand for eighteen months, by flying non-stop from New York to İstanbul. In practice, the pilots served as goodwill ambassadors when Grew received and publicized the flight, while Mustafa Kemal Pasha honored them with an invitation. During the 1930s, there was increasing interest in Ankara

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

⁸⁰ Stuart Kline et al. (comp.), *A Chronicle of Turkish Aviation*, (Istanbul: Havas, 2002), p. 162.

⁸¹ Patterson, p. 165.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Box 1, Folder 2, p. 331.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 338.

about modern aviation, and consultants were invited from the United States to make feasibility studies on suitable airports and to map air routes. The Vice President of Curtiss-Wright Company reported that Turkey was on its way to build its air transportation according to American standards.⁸⁴ The development of commercial and military aviation subsequently began by initiating contracts between the Government of Turkey and Curtiss-Wright Company.

In December 1929, Grew reported to the Secretary of State about the protocol signed between Ankara and Moscow to extend for two years the Turco-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality of 1925. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ankara made a declaration to the United States that:

In the protocol which we have just signed with Mr. Karakhan containing provisions as to securing the consent of the other party before concluding political arrangements which go beyond normal agreements, we have only Europe and Asia in view and we have been influenced by geographical position . . . In any case, the negotiations which have taken place, with our neighbors, the Soviets are limited to the relations of our two countries and in the protocol which has been signed no country has been particularly envisaged and it in no way applies to America.⁸⁵

Grew advised that this declaration should be accepted in good faith, and his counterpart in Washington, D.C. Ahmet Muhtar Bey reiterated the same points to the Secretary of State.⁸⁶ The intent was to reassert that this treaty did not present any obstacles to developing sound relations with the United States which did not recognize the Soviet Union at the time.

During Grew's tenure, a Treaty of Navigation and Commerce in 1930 and another of Establishment and Residence in 1932 were ratified. In January 1932, he received word that he was appointed to Japan.

Meanwhile, Grew's daughter Anita was to wed the diplomat, Robert McCalla English. The civil ceremony took place at the Pera Municipality where the governor of Istanbul, Muhiddin Bey (Üstündağ) and the British Ambassador were witnesses. The church wedding was performed by

⁸⁴ Kline et al., p. 180.

⁸⁵ *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, Vol. III, 1929 (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1944), From: Grew To: the Secretary of State, December 20, 1929, p. 843.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Declaration Made by the Turkish Ambassador (Ahmet Muhtar) to the Secretary of State on January 2, 1930, p. 845.

Dr. Caleb Gates, the President of Robert College. Since Embassy regulations required that weddings in the Embassy had to be held in accordance with the local laws Grew thought that the governor of İstanbul exaggerated when he interpreted this as a friendly gesture by the U.S. Ambassador.⁸⁷ But this obviously meant something more than just complying with the law of the land. One would seriously doubt that double wedding performances would have taken place in the Old Turkey, but now this occasion was a gesture respecting the Republican Civil Law by the American Ambassador. The marriage called for an enthusiastic reception in more ways than one. These may have been symbolic gestures but they meant a lot. Other American records of the 1930s permit a recapture of the mood and attitude of the Turkish people as well as the domestic situation interpreted by the American representatives.

Turkey in the 1930s through the Eyes of American Officials

From April through July 1930, the İstanbul Embassy reported on the arrest and trial of spies and communists. These observers were not sure, however, whether these alleged communists were genuine or just ordinary people who dared criticize the dire economic situation and unemployment. Given the attitude of the authorities that only spies and communists would say things like that, and coupled with secret trials, consular members had a point in questioning the nature of these arrests.⁸⁸

Regarding the closure of Fethi Bey's (Okyar) Liberal Republican Party on November 17, 1930 which Grew defined as an experiment with a little bit of democracy, he reported "The Ghazi, Fethi and even İsmet did not know the state of opinion in Turkey, had no idea apparently of the strength of resentment which was gathering momentum underneath... The new Party had become a clinical thermometer for taking the political temperature of the country and there could be no doubt of the fever which it registered."⁸⁹ Mustafa Kemal, after a three-month

⁸⁷ Grew, *Turbulent Era*, pp. 911–913.

⁸⁸ Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Turkey, 1930–1944 (American Library Microfilm Collection, Ankara), (henceforth, State Department Records) Decimal File 867.9111/272/274/275/280, April 22, May 6, May 20 and July 14, 1930.

⁸⁹ State Department Records, Decimal File 867.00/2049, From: Grew To: the Secretary of State, December 3, 1930.

long tour of the country, saw that reform in the Republican People's Party was necessary. But his solution was to reshuffle people who held positions in the Party and the Parliament through new appointments and elections.

In March 1931, a report from the American Consulate in İzmir was entitled, "Is Turkey Threatened with Bolshevism?" A Turk had informed the government that given desperation stemming from unemployment, starvation and opposition to the tax collectors, a Bolshevik revolt only awaited its leaders in İzmir. The leading dailies in the city, *Yeni Asır* and *Hizmet* also carried editorial comments about the Bolshevik danger. According to the American Consul, there was no discernible unrest or mass demonstrations. Instead he pointed to external conditions which might push Turkey to "succumb to the wiles of the Siren of the Steppes." One would be deliberate Soviet expansionism. Secondly, because Turkey was isolated as a result of the recent rapprochement between France, Italy, and Great Britain, there were rumors that all three had agreed to a re-partition of Turkey. If that was the case, Ankara would probably seek support from the Soviet Union and thus adopt Bolshevism. Lastly, if the "Turkish experiment" failed and disorder along with the threat of foreign intervention ensued, Turkey just might join the Bolsheviks.⁹⁰

The Ankara Government, however, had been sensitive to communist infiltration ever since 1919. In January 1928, an American diplomat in Ankara, reported that

More than 100 Hungarians (some 50 of them having been employed on various construction projects in and about Angora) belonging to the so-called Angora Guild of the Hungarian Communist Party, were arrested by the Angora authorities. Of these all but 30 have been released and it is thought that those still in the custody of the police will be deported from Turkey... The Hungarian Minister, Hertelendy confirmed the case and said that those 30 men were members of a communistic organization formed under the direction of a Bolshevik agent operating from Vienna, and that of these nine would almost certainly be obliged to go to Soviet Russia, since his own Government was not likely to admit them to Hungarian territory.⁹¹

According to the Hungarian Minister, the Soviet Embassy in Ankara was not involved in this affair, because Moscow had chosen Vienna as

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Decimal File 867.00/2060, From: Herbert S. Bursley To: the Secretary of State, March 23, 1931.

⁹¹ Patterson, "Diaries," Box 1, Folder 75, pp. 82-83.

the center for propaganda among the Balkan states, including Turkey. Consequently, Ankara remained vigilant towards any kind of communist propaganda by foreign or native elements, though sometimes it was difficult to distinguish between genuine communists and those who were openly critical of the government.

On January 16, 1932, Grew reported:

On New Year's Eve Ismet Pasha gave to Miss Ring, the correspondent of the ASSOCIATED PRESS, the enclosed message of greeting to the American people which was no doubt published in the United States, although possibly in abridged form. So far as I am aware, this is the first time that the Prime Minister has ever given such a message to any foreign press agency, unless in connection with some international event such as the signing of a treaty or on the occasion of the visit of some foreign statesman.

Signals of friendship and good neighborly relations signified Turkey's foreign policy in the 1930s. At a press conference upon his return to the United States, Grew emphasized this point. He said that:

One of the greatest and most moving things he ever saw was the change from Lausanne with Venizelos on one side and Ismet Pasha on the other side of the table belaboring each other with angry words. Then, after centuries of intermittent warfare, the Turks and Greeks decided to patch up the old quarrels, an agreement was arrived at, and Venizelos had the courage to pay a visit of courtesy to Angora. When he arrived he met a genuine welcome. There were Greek flags about the town and a triumphal arch bearing the word 'Welcome' in Greek—something incredible three or four years ago.

The American diplomat did not refer to the fact that behind the Greco-Turkish rapprochement lurked the common perception of threat from Italy. Above and beyond altruism and noble intent was Mussolini's shadow. The Ambassador added that while Turkey received much criticism about the Greek-Turkish population exchange in 1925, it was seldom known or acknowledged that this was not a Turkish idea, but that it was initiated by Fridtjof Nansen, the High Commissioner of the League of Nations for Refugees.⁹² This was not entirely correct. Nansen was only a facilitator for the mutual Greek and Turkish intent to exchange populations.⁹³ Thus Grew's era of U.S. diplomacy in Turkey ended.

⁹² State Department Records, Decimal File 711.67/79, January 16, 1932, From: Grew To: the Secretary of State.

⁹³ Onur Yıldırım, *Diplomasi ve Göç; Türk-Yunan Mübadelesinin Öteki Yüzü* (Diplomacy and Emigration; the Other Face of Turkish-Greek Population Exchange) (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2006), pp. 75–93.

A very bizarre encounter, this time instigated by a Turk with Wallace Murray of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, took place in March 1932. A former Turkish Army Captain, who had previously served as Secretary of Legation and Military Attaché in 1930 in Vienna, called on Murray in Washington, D.C. He initially requested an appointment with the Secretary of State, but was intercepted by the chief, Division of Near Eastern Affairs. The visitor's message went as follows:

The Turkish people are in the grip of a merciless dictatorship which is slowly bringing the country to ruin... Although Kemal government would not voluntarily throw itself into the arms of Russia, the eventual Sovietization of Turkey is inevitable unless the present leaders of the country are overthrown and a new regime established capable of saving the country from political and economic disaster... A fantastic feature of his plan is the admission into the United States of some fifty to sixty thousand Turks who may become organized into a conquering host to overwhelm the present dictators of Turkey. More fantastic still is the idea of this person that after the overthrow occurs, an American should be elected President of Turkey.⁹⁴

The informant added that he was not betraying his country and was not out for any personal gain. His closing remarks were that he would like to see Abdülmecid Efendi, the former caliph-in-exile to become Honorary President of the Republic, with an American in actual presidential authority. Murray at first thought that the man was insane, but gradually was convinced that he was very serious.

One week later Murray informed G. Howland Shaw, American Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim* in İstanbul about the visit and conversation. Murray jested "If of the two of us he turns out to be the rational one and I the irrational one, and if his plans materialize, I warn you in advance that I intend to propose your name as the first American president of Turkey."⁹⁵ The Turk would return to Vienna and pretend he was studying there before going home so that Ankara would be under the impression that he had been in Vienna all along. It was not lost on Murray that this person may be financed by the former caliph Abdülmecid to take upon such an expensive journey to the U.S.A. "Be that as it may, I should not like to be in his boots if the Turks ever find out about it" he concluded.

⁹⁴ State Department Records, Decimal File 867.00/2064 ½, From: Wallace Murray To: the Secretary of State, March 10, 1932.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

On the one hand, a number of opportunistic people claimed money, property or other privileges in the name of one or the other member of the dynasty in exile and this may have been just a much more ambitious attempt of the same sort. In essence, several Muslim Congresses met outside Turkey in 1924, 1926, 1931, and 1935 in search of a new caliph, but could not agree on a candidate. Therefore, the issue became moot.⁹⁶ On the other hand, there are some clues from the British archives that indicate demarches from the former caliph Abdülmecid exploring whether he could be reinstated as sultan/caliph especially as Atatürk's health deteriorated in 1938. Abdülmecid himself and a nephew of the last sultan Vahideddin, Prince Sami (Mediha sultan's son, Vahideddin's sister) directly sought British help to have the dynasty reinstated. Consequently, one cannot dismiss the possibility that the former anonymous Turkish officer who traveled from Vienna to Washington, D.C. in 1932 was on Abdülmecid's pay. That seems not only possible but even plausible given the following reports.

Prince Sami who resided in France requested that he and his family be given asylum in England (provided that the British government would underwrite their expenses) in a letter to a member of the British Foreign Office. He also stated that the Germans backed the former caliph Abdülmecid. Moreover, he claimed that Atatürk, İsmet İnönü, and Turkey's ambassador to London, Fethi Okyar were pro-German, the last two supported the Islamic movement, and were prepared to restore Abdülmecid (presumably when Atatürk died) under Germany's protection. However, many officers in the army were pro-British, happened to be friends of Sami's father (actually his step father, Damad Ferid Pasha), and were working to establish a political party in Turkey. Sami, therefore, could be of service to Britain. This demarche was not received favorably either at the Foreign Office or by Britain's ambassador in Ankara, Sir Percy Loraine.⁹⁷ There was no love lost between

⁹⁶ Martin Kramer, *Islam Assembled, the Advent of Muslim Congresses* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986); Mim Kemal Öke, *Hilafet Hareketleri* (Movements for the Restoration of Caliphate) (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1991).

⁹⁷ PRO, FO 371/21934, April 4, 1938, in Erdoğan Karakuş, *İkinci Dünya Savaşı Öncesi İngiliz Belgelerinde Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri (1938-1939)* (Turkey's Relations with Britain in British Records on the Eve of World War II) (İstanbul: İQ Kültür ve Sanat Yayıncılık, 2006), pp. 238-240.

the families of Abdülmecid and Vahideddin and this rivalry continued even in exile.⁹⁸

The other demarche came through somewhat circumstantial evidence, but it is on record nonetheless. In 1938, the British Prime Minister's Office requested an opinion from the Foreign Office about a letter received from Abdülmecid who resided in France. The letter was not available in the archives. However, the reply to the Prime Ministry referred to the claims of the former dynast on the Ottoman sultanate and caliphate and advised against establishing an official tie with the claimant especially at a time when the President of Turkey was seriously ill. The Foreign Office advised to treat the reply letter as a matter of courtesy and thank its author for his expressions of goodwill.⁹⁹ Abdülmecid returned to his favorite occupation which was painting and today he is only remembered as one of the pioneers of European-style painting, as well as a composer of classical music and a poet.¹⁰⁰ Ankara must have had reason not to trust the former caliph because as soon as Abdülmecid took up residence in Nice, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs opened a consulate in the city whose only mission was to watch him.¹⁰¹ While the nascent Republic tried to consolidate its authority at home and deter threats from all venues, an unlikely U.S. Ambassador attracted American military attention to Turkey.

The new non-career American Ambassador and former general, Charles H. Sherrill replaced Grew, but he was to spend only one year in Turkey, "ignorant of his post" as he admitted in January 1933.¹⁰² But he had able assistants to brief him. Before Sherrill left Washington for Turkey, he suggested to the U.S. Army Chief of the Staff, General Douglas MacArthur that he might be interested to include Turkey on his agenda while visiting Prague, Vienna and Budapest. Sherrill cleared the potential visit with Ankara and was told that President Mustafa Kemal would receive MacArthur at his summer residence in Yalova, near Istanbul.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ Murat Bardakçı, *Son Osmanlılar* (The Last of the Ottomans) 6th ed. (İstanbul: Gri Yayınları, 2004), pp. 117–122.

⁹⁹ PRO, FO 371.21935, October 7, 1938, in Karakuş, p. 256.

¹⁰⁰ Günsel Renda et al., *Hanedandan bir Ressam, Abdülmecid Efendi* (Abdülmecid Efendi, A Painter from the Dynasty) (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2004).

¹⁰¹ Bardakçı, p. 126.

¹⁰² State Department Records, Decimal File 867.00/2099, December 27, 1932.

¹⁰³ From: Sherrill To: The Secretary of State, July 1, 1932, *Ibid*, Decimal File 867.2257–22–164.

Arriving in Turkey on September 25, 1932, MacArthur was cordially received by his Turkish interlocutors both in Istanbul and Ankara. On September 27, Mustafa Kemal received the American general not in his summer residence, but at the Dolmabahçe Palace in Istanbul with due honors. The next day MacArthur laid a wreath at the Monument of the Republic in Taksim which bore the inscription “In token of the admiration and high esteem of the American Forces for Gazi Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish Army.”¹⁰⁴ MacArthur was on a fact finding mission in Central Europe and the Balkans where he carried out military diplomacy as well.

Upon further communist arrests in 1933, the Istanbul Consulate/Embassy reported “Today a communist sentiment is any sentiment Main Street disapproves or even does not understand... A government possessing the authority to punish communist sentiments after trials in secret enjoys a dangerously wide authority to repress criticism by labeling as communistic anything which it deems unpleasant.”¹⁰⁵

In June 1933, the romantic communist poet Nazım Hikmet (Ran) was arrested for alleged communist sentiment because of a book of verses entitled “Telegrams Coming during the Night.”¹⁰⁶ This was not the first, nor the last time Nazım Hikmet would be arrested.

In fact, there was ideological communist agitation by members of the illegal Turkish Communist Party (TCP), especially for the purpose of infiltrating the Turkish Armed Forces to prepare the young cadets for a future revolution. Poetry and literary circles fed seemingly symbolic but very tangible ideological dissention in tandem with directives from the Komintern. TCP members were also active among the workforce in the cities.¹⁰⁷

While communist activism¹⁰⁸ remained an abstraction for American observers, aggressive Italian intentions remained a fact. Howland Shaw

¹⁰⁴ State Department Records, Decimal File 867.20111/8 From: Shaw To: the Secretary of State enclosing the Account of General MacArthur’s visit, September 29, 1932.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, Decimal File 867.9111/398, May 3, 1933.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, Decimal File 867.00B/81, June 14, 1933.

¹⁰⁷ “Tek Parti Döneminde Toplumsal Mücadeleler” (Social Movements during the One Party Regime) *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi* (The Encyclopedia of Socialism and Social Movements), Fascicle No. 26 (December 25, 1989) (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları).

¹⁰⁸ Aclan Sayılğan, *Solun 94 Yılı, 1871–1965* (A history of the Left 1871–1965) (Ankara: Mars Matbaası, 1968); Saim Göksoy and Edward Timms, *Romantic Communist, the Life and Work of Nazım Hikmet* (London: Hurst and Company, 1999); George Harris, *The Communists and the Kadro Movement; Shaping Ideology in Atatürk’s Turkey*

reported from İstanbul on September 1, 1934 that a certain Hüseyin Hüsnü Pasha, Commander of the İzmir province had sold the military plans of that area to the Italians and at once fled to Rhodes. The Pasha, as a working member of the Turkish General Staff, was privy to the military operational plans.¹⁰⁹ Later, he was assassinated for high treason by two Turkish cadets sent to Rome under the guise of learning Italian to attend the law school there.

Meanwhile, Mussolini sent agents to Marmaris (a coastal town in southwest Turkey) to study the geographical layout for a potential invasion. His fiery speeches about Italy's "historic objectives," meaning the resurrection of the Roman Empire and reference to the Mediterranean as "mare nostrum" generated a formal note of protest from Ankara.

On another occasion, when Italy's ambassador mentioned Italy's claim to Antalya, Atatürk rose, excused himself, left the room and returned shortly thereafter in the uniform of a Turkish marshal. 'Now please continue', he invited the startled ambassador.¹¹⁰

There was another reason why Atatürk disliked the fascists who transformed a democratic nation into bullies. "The victorious Pasha, he had become the civilian President. Mussolini, a political agitator, had put on the uniform and airs of a generalissimo."¹¹¹ Mussolini emerged as a threat to world peace as of the 1920s.

This became particularly obvious in the eastern Mediterranean where encouragement was given by Mussolini to anti-democratic forces in Egypt and anti-French rebels in Syria and the Lebanon. Moreover, he was still hoping to establish an Italian settlement on the mainland of Asia Minor. He admired the Turkish ruler Kemal Pasha—an admiration not reciprocated—but was ready to stake a claim if Kemal fell from power, and in the meantime proceeded to fortify the islands of Rhodes and Leros off the Turkish coast.¹¹²

(İstanbul: The ISIS Press, 2002); *Türkiye Komünist Partisi Merkez Kurulu 1920–1921 Dönüş Belgeleri—1*, Osmanlıca'dan çeviren Yücel Demirel (The Central Committee of the Turkish Communist Party) (İstanbul: TÜTSAV Yayınları, 2004).

¹⁰⁹ State Department Records, Decimal File 867.000/3006, From: Howland Shaw To: the Secretary of State, "Strictly Confidential" September 1, 1934.

¹¹⁰ Brock Millman, "Turkish Foreign and Strategic Policy 1934–42," *Middle Eastern Studies* 31:3 (July 1995), pp. 483–508, esp. 486.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Denis Mack Smith, *Mussolini*, 5th ed. (London: Butler and Tanner Ltd, 1998), p. 153.

In 1933, a Foreign Service officer, Robert P. Skinner, was appointed ambassador to Turkey. He reported favorably on the patriotic spirit of the Turkish Government, especially its efforts “to lift up the masses” so that future generations may take over and operate in a truly democratic spirit. Skinner found this to be “the most interesting aspect of Turkish political life.” Howland Shaw wrote, “It is easy enough to say that in Turkey the government is a dictatorship and that its fundamental policy is nationalism, but these simple generalizations fail to give an accurate picture of the complex reality.”¹¹³ After a promising start with liberal parliamentarianism, Kurdish rebellions and domestic reactions to the regime forced the government to adopt heavy-handed means. But the modernizing reforms continued. Shaw concluded that “The Turkish Revolution has shown characteristics differing widely from those to which other recent revolutions have accustomed us. A very practical genius with a very marked ability to develop has evidently been at work. That is why Kemal Atatürk’s place in history is secure.”¹¹⁴ According to one scholar:

The new Turkey is the work of Mustafa Kemal. But that he was able to achieve it is due entirely to the fact that he knew how to give concrete shape to forces and tendencies which for a quarter of a century had been striving to manifest themselves in the life of the east, and that without pause or hesitation or scruples he pressed them forward to fulfillment.¹¹⁵

These assessments made in 1935 obviously compared Turkey’s government and leaders with the totalitarian and aggressive foreign policies of many a European country and Stalin’s Soviet Union.

However, the Turkish government was not entirely successful when it came to purchasing war matériel from the United States. By 1935 Washington had developed a policy not to encourage American firms to sell arms and ammunitions to foreign countries. U.S. records reveal that machine tools for repair, tractors, and army trucks were also considered as war matériel. The U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull’s response to Ambassador Skinner who cabled that the Turkish Government wished to purchase Sperry anti-aircraft searchlights worth \$700,000 “provided Export-Import Bank will grant credit” was negative. Hull did not look

¹¹³ State Department Records, Decimal File 867.01/204, From: Robert Skinner To: the Secretary of State, enclosing Shaw’s memorandum, July 13, 1935.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Hans Kohn, “Ten Years of the Turkish Republic,” *Foreign Affairs* 12 (October 1933), pp. 141–155.

favorably upon any agency of the government which would finance the sale of arms or any other item that had to do with war on behalf of a foreign government.¹¹⁶

On another occasion, Turkey's Prime Minister İnönü requested Skinner to urge his government to authorize an American manufacturer to deliver two Martin bombers a month (of the 16 to be purchased) to Turkey. The U.S. War Department had ordered the manufacturer that out of four bombers produced in one month, only one bomber could be made available to Turkey.¹¹⁷ The Acting Secretary of State replied: "Decisions in regard to the manufacture of military equipment manufactured according to specifications under the control of the War Department is a matter within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Secretary of War. I cannot with propriety volunteer advice to the Secretary of War in such a matter."¹¹⁸ It appears that the U.S. administration did not totally cut off orders contracted prior to 1935, but would not allow initiation of new purchases or increase the volume of former purchases. The Acting Secretary of State reminded Skinner in no uncertain terms about the broader policy involved in prohibiting the sale of arms to foreign countries lest, in case of war, the United States would be criticized for assisting in military preparations of the one side or the other.¹¹⁹

In May 1935, Henry S. Villard of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs stated in a memorandum that the Secretary of the Turkish Embassy expressed the desire of his government to purchase a number of B10B Martin bombers from the Glenn L. Martin Company. According to the Turkish diplomat, the U.S. War Department had initially authorized the sale of these planes, "but it now appeared that the War Department was purchasing so many of the planes in question that deliveries could not begin." The Turkish diplomat urged the State Department to use its "good offices" with the War Department to authorize the firm to export the planes. However, the company could only export surplus planes, and there were none left. The State Department could not possibly impose on the Department of War to release the company from

¹¹⁶ *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers*, [henceforth, *FRUS*], Vol. I, 1935 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1953), From: Skinner To: the Secretary of State, January 14, 1935, and Hull's reply, January 15, 1935, p. 1049.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, From: Skinner To: the Secretary of State, February 21, 1935, p. 1049.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, From: William Phillips To: Skinner, February 23, 1935, p. 1050.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, From: William Phillips To: Skinner, March 18, 1935, p. 1050.

its obligation to service the United States.¹²⁰ The Turkish Embassy was duly informed.

In June 1935, the Turkish Embassy in Washington, D.C. informed the State Department that the Turkish General Staff wanted to invite an experienced American General Staff officer to serve as an instructor to the Army Air School and teach tactics and organization in the Air Force.¹²¹ Wallace Murray, then Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, wrote to the Turkish Ambassador, Münir Erteğün that the State Department had been informed by the U.S. Army Chief of Staff that “there is, unfortunately, no legal authority for compliance with such a request.”¹²² This request from Turkey was a sign that Atatürk and his Chief of the General Staff, Fevzi Çakmak had decided to steer away from the Prussian/German military officers re-employed in the Turkish War Academy or at least balance the presence of those instructors with American officers.

Turkish-German relations had been restored in 1924. Concomitantly, many officers of the German Army were relieved of duty in compliance with the Versailles Treaty. Many had joined the *Freikorps* (the militia which suppressed the attempted socialist revolutions of 1918–1919). Others such as the former Colonel Hans Rohde sought and found employment at the Turkish War Academy on a contractual basis. Having served in Turkey during the First World War, Rohde and his colleagues spoke fluent Turkish, and had many personal contacts among Turkey’s military establishment. The Turkish Army was still being trained according to Prussian formation and tactics, a process which would continue until after the Second World War. Hence, it is plausible that Atatürk and Çakmak wished to change this trend as a deterrent against German influence. Turkey’s President had already expressed his views about a resurgent Germany to General MacArthur in 1932. It was, therefore, only natural for him to reach out to the United States in this matter because the latter was a politically disinterested country. On the other hand, by requesting only one American General Staff officer, Turkey would keep the United States politically disinterested, unlike in

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, Memorandum by Mr. Henry S. Villard of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, May 20, 1935, p. 1051.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, From: the Turkish Embassy To: the Department of State, June 6, 1935, p. 1052.

¹²² *Ibid.*, From: Wallace Murray To: the Turkish Ambassador (Munir), June 24, 1936, p. 1053.

Latin America and the Philippines where the U.S. Army had authorization to send military instructors and advisers.

The same year, Ambassador Skinner advised his government to initiate discussion with Ankara about mining and purchasing chrome “before the Turkish authorities have come to the conclusions themselves or have committed themselves even tentatively to foreign interests.”¹²³ Skinner stated that chrome was indispensable for steel production, the known sources of supply were few, and were mainly in British hands. In the recent past, the British sought to tie Turkish production in a world cartel and may renew their efforts while the Turkish government was trying to cancel leases held by foreign companies. Skinner advised the Department that should chrome mining become totally nationalized, the U.S. could work through the state-owned *Etibank*.

Chrome was listed by the U.S. War Department as a strategic asset and “as one of the four mineral commodities constituting the first priority class for stock-pile reserves.”¹²⁴ In 1934, of the 119,844 metric tons of chrome mined in Turkey, 28,730 tons were sold to the U.S.A.; followed by 16,060 tons of the 150,472 production figure in 1935; 19,400 of the 163,880 tons produced in 1936; and 29,391 tons out of 192,508 tons produced in 1937. The estimated figure for 1938 purchase by the U.S. was 205,000 tons.¹²⁵ Although the worldwide production of chrome declined in 1938, production in Turkey continued to increase.

The principal producers of chromite in Turkey are the Société Anonyme Turque des Chromes de l'Est à Guleman [Elazığ] (State), Société Minière de Fethiye (French), Société Turque de Minerais (Swiss-German), and Société Anonyme Turque de Chrome (Turkish).¹²⁶

Trade in chrome was later to assume an important dimension in Turkish, German, and Allied country relations during the Second World War.

In 1936, a professional documentary film photographer, Julien Bryan, who later gained fame as a filmmaker for the “March of Time” project, filmed Atatürk in Ankara and in İstanbul in a domestic setting

¹²³ State Department Records, Decimal File 867.6359, CHROME/1, From: Skinner To: the Secretary of State, July 25, 1935.

¹²⁴ Robert H. Ridgway, “Chromite” (Washington, D.C.: US Bureau of Mines and Minerals Yearbook, 1939), p. 594.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 597, 599.

¹²⁶ Ridgway, *Ibid.*, pp. 601–602.

where the President played with his adopted daughter, Ülkü.¹²⁷ Bryan “visited and photographed peoples in the Orient, Siberia, Soviet Russia, and every part of Europe. He showed these films in theatres throughout the United States. while lecturing on such topics as ‘Turkey Reborn,’ ‘Poland Today,’ ‘Modern Finland,’ and ‘Inside Nazi Germany.’”¹²⁸ In April 1937, Atatürk received a letter from President Roosevelt who expressed his delight at the Turkish President’s achievements after having watched Bryan’s documentary film at the White House.¹²⁹

In March 1936, a new American Ambassador, John Van A. Mac Murray was appointed to Turkey, where he served until 1941. His tenure marked the end of shaded recognition when in 1937 he took up full time residence in Ankara. By 1936–1937 both Roosevelt and the State Department must have realized that it was no longer expedient that the American Ambassador should remain in İstanbul. Maintaining two embassies in Turkey gradually became a problem. Beginning with Ambassador Skinner, American diplomats felt that the situation caused inefficient use of personnel. Skinner was also disturbed “because the United States looked less responsive to Turkish nationalism than most other nations.”¹³⁰ The American ambassadors could not even host their guests in style when compared to their colleagues from other nations. Mac Murray urged the State Department to build a new building in Ankara and even wrote a personal letter to President Roosevelt about this matter. He referred to the İstanbul Embassy as “the most blatantly un-American residence in which a representative of the U.S.A. ever had to live.”¹³¹ Indeed, the building was a charming replica of an Italian palazzo but there was nothing American about it. However, the political conjunctures of the times plausibly had much to do with the move.

In the first place, the Republican regime was entrenched. Secondly, clouds of war were gathering in Europe with the first display of international groupings formed during the Spanish civil war (1936–1939).

¹²⁷ Haldun Derin, *Çankaya Özel Kalemimi Anımsarken, 1933–1951* (Memoirs from the Presidential Secretariat, 1933–1951) (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995), pp. 111–112.

¹²⁸ Jane M. Loy, “The Present as Past: Assessing the Value of Julien Bryan’s Films as Historical Evidence,” *Latin American Research Review*, vol. 12:3 (1977), pp. 103–128, esp. 106.

¹²⁹ Yurdağül Yüksel, “Atatürk ve Roosevelt” (Atatürk and Roosevelt), *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi*, vol. 44, 1999, pp. 1–6; Derin, *Ibid.*, p. 113.

¹³⁰ Trask, *The United States Response to Turkish Nationalism*, p. 81.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

And, perhaps more importantly the Fascist and Nazi leaders made no secret of their intentions. Even though the liberal leaders in Western Europe did not take them seriously enough and tried to appease the Italian and German dictators, Americans may have had a different reading of the times.

When Mustafa Kemal held an interview with the American general, Douglas Mac Arthur in 1932, he had stated that Germany was likely to start a war that would engulf Europe and probably draw the Soviet Union and United States into war. It was not difficult to see the revisionist aura in Germany even before Hitler's advent to power. In 1922, Germany and the Soviet Union had signed the Rapallo Treaty during the conference on the European economy in Genoa which contained a secret clause that German soldiers and officers could train in the Soviet Union. German engineers could build weapons there under cover. Even if Mustafa Kemal may not have been privy to this information, he sensed that Germany would not stand the *diktat* of the Versailles Treaty much longer. "By 1938, Germany was overtaking Italy as first among Turkey's potential enemies. The watershed event was the anschluss of Austria-noted in Turkey as 'une sorte de boulevard des États danubiens et balkaniques'"¹³² Ambassador Mac Murray's reports to the State Department between 1936-1942 dwelled mostly on Turkish-German relations, the Soviet Union, and on Turkey's probable position in the Second World War.¹³³

In summer 1936, the US Ambassador reported on Nazi activities in Turkey in a "Confidential" dispatch to the State Department. Accordingly, the Nazis held a plebiscite on a German vessel which hosted 500 of the 1,000 adult Germans residing in Turkey. The outcome was questionable. However, because "the Nazi Party Chiefs completely dominate the Colony... 99 per cent of the Germans in Turkey have officially adhered to the Nazi Party or to other Nazi organizations (minus the German Jewish academicians in exile who were hosted at the universities of Ankara and Istanbul)."¹³⁴ The German Cultural Associations, the *Teutonia* and *Ausflugsverein* became all-German associations with no foreign participation. Only the German High School remained international.

¹³² Millman, p. 487, fn. 27.

¹³³ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy during the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

¹³⁴ State Department Records, Decimal File 867.00 NAZI/1, From: J. V. A. Mac Murray, To: the Secretary of State, July 14, 1936.

Ironically 30 per cent of its students were made up of Turkish Jews. The local Turkish branch of the Gestapo was headed by the German Consul General, Dr. Axel Toepke. Military training of German males of the colony continued in the *Teutonia* Club as well as in the former German Embassy in Istanbul. The Gestapo branch collected funds from German businesses in Istanbul under threat of unfolding their firms by reporting to the Turkish Government of their unreliability. So far Nazi activities focused on the German colony. Nazi propaganda would later reach out to former pan-Turkists, some journalists and even military officers.¹³⁵ These people were mostly Turkic émigrés from Russia/Soviet Union, remnants of the Committee for Union and Progress of World War I, and Germanophiles.

As early as 1934, “A Treatise on German Propaganda in the Near East” defined the Balkans as a bridge to Anatolia and the latter as a highway to the entire Near East, including Egypt. Moreover, this geography was depicted as part of the German *Lebensraum* (living space). Accordingly, cultural propaganda, specifically through education would prove lasting as opposed to economic incentives, which may be temporary.¹³⁶ Promotion of pan-Turkism under the aegis of Germany was to follow. However, pan-Turkism or pan-Turanism was totally rejected in Atatürk’s Turkey and its proponents were extradited, settled in Germany and waited for a return. That opportunity came in 1941, but that saga remains outside the confines of this study. Meanwhile, Hitler’s Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels and his staff were going to extremes in identifying both Atatürk and Hitler as national heroes,

¹³⁵ Günay Göksu Özdoğan, “II. Dünya Savaşı Yıllarındaki Türk-Alman İlişkilerinde İç ve Dış Politika Aracı Olarak Pan-Türkizm” (Pan-Turkism as a Domestic and Foreign Policy Tool in German-Turkish Relations during World War II) in Faruk Sönmezoglu ed., *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, 3rd ed. (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2004), pp. 131-147; Emrullah Tekin, *Alman Gizli Operasyonları ve Türkler* (German Secret Operations and the Turks), 2nd ed. (İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2002); *Hitler’in Türk Dostları: II. Dünya Savaşındaki Gizli Belgeler ve Yazışmalar* (Hitler’s Turkish Friends) (İstanbul: Düş Yayınları, 2006); Jacob Landau, *Pan-Turkism in Turkey: A Study of Irredentism* (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1981); Cemil Koçak, *Türk-Alman İlişkileri, 1923-1939* (Turkish-German Relations, 1923-1939) (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1991).

¹³⁶ Mithat Atabay, *II. Dünya Savaşı Sırasında Türkiye’de Milliyetçilik Akımları* (Nationalist Movements in Turkey during WWII) (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2005), pp. 247-252, quoting from Herbert Melzig, *Yakın Şarkta Alman Propagandası Hakkında bir Muhtıra* (A Treatise on German Propaganda in the Near East) (Ankara: Alaeddin Kırıl Basımevi, 1940).

thus equating them.¹³⁷ There were frequent references in the Nazi dominated news media in Germany to the solidarity and brotherhood in arms between the Germans and Turks in the First World War. This was a myth, because most, if not all Turkish officers resented being under German command in that war. Mustafa Kemal was foremost among them. Germans at the time also complained that Turkish staff officers did not share information with them, thus making collaborative planning difficult. In 1937, highly sanitized memoirs of General Hans Guhr were published in Breslau which not only overemphasized the smooth relations between the Turkish and German military officers. The book also reads as if there was not a single speck of dust in the air during war.¹³⁸

In 1933, numerous German professors among whom were scientists, doctors, attorneys, philologists, composers, dramaturgists, architects, city planners, and economists took refuge in Turkey. All were accommodated in the newly forming or reforming Turkish universities, conservatories and performing arts. Some were German Jews others were not Jewish. They had either lost their jobs because they had not become Nazis or in the case of the Jewish scholars they were treated as outcasts.

Starting in 1937 German propaganda activities in Turkey increased considerably, with emphasis on anti-Semitism, as was the case with similar German propaganda efforts, but with much less success due to strong opposition on the part of the Turkish public and government. The German Information Office was opened in the center of old Istanbul, on the Divanyolu near the Aya Sofya and Sultan Ahmed mosque and the city's publication center at Cağaloğlu. Nazi propaganda also was published in the subsidized German-language daily newspaper *Türkische Post* as well as in pro-Nazi daily *Cumhuriyet*, owned and edited by Yunus Nadi, who was provided special business concessions in Germany to secure his editorial support for Turkish cooperation with the Axis.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Johannes Glasneck, *Türkiye'de Faşist Alman Propagandası* (German Fascist Propaganda in Turkey) translated from the German by Arif Gelen (Ankara: Onur Yayınları [1966], n.d.), p. 15; Wolfgang G. Schwantz, ed. *Germany and the Middle East, 1871-1945* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2004).

¹³⁸ Hans Guhr, *Anadolu'dan Filistin'e Türklerle Omuz Omuza* (Als Türkischer Divisionskommandeur In Kleinasien Und Palastina [Breslau, 1937]), translated from the German by Eşref Özbilen (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2007).

¹³⁹ Stanford J. Shaw, *Turkey and the Holocaust, Turkey's Role in Rescuing Turkish and European Jewry from Nazi Persecution, 1933-1945* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 1993), p. 21.

According to a report from the U.S. Embassy in İstanbul, this connection of Yunus Nadi had resulted in nicknaming him as ‘Yunus Nazi’ among many Turks.¹⁴⁰

The State Department may have been urged to follow Nazi activity as well as the Turkish Government’s attitude straight from Ankara at the ambassadorial level. Whether because of the need to gather better intelligence and/or to elevate the American Ambassador from his isolated residence in Istanbul, Mac Murray took up full time residence in Ankara. This move culminated in full reciprocity with Turkey after two decades of ambiguity.

A report from the Division of Near Eastern Affairs in April 1938 informed that Atatürk wanted to purchase a private American yacht, *Savarona* that was for sale, which the German government was also interested in buying. It said:

When the German authorities learned that Atatürk was contemplating the purchase, the Germans made an immediate bid for the vessel, Kemal learned of this bid and is reported to have expressed in strong terms to the German Ambassador in Ankara his resentment against the German action. The United States Maritime Commission refused to sanction the transfer of the vessel to German registry, for the unexpressed reason that the vessel would not be used for war purposes, and subsequently sanctioned its transfer to Turkey.¹⁴¹

Atatürk was happy to acknowledge the goodwill shown by the United States. After his death, the yacht served the next President, İnönü, and in 1951 *Savarona* was turned over to the Turkish Naval Academy and served as a school ship as well as the symbol of goodwill embassy of the navy cadets when they called on foreign ports.

In conclusion, American encounters with Turkey passed through various stages of recognition coupled with ambivalence and ambiguity to diplomatic reciprocity. Diplomats of both countries displayed much goodwill and effort to this end.

The United States recognized the Soviet Union in 1933 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt “decided to end the sixteen years of estrangement-an ‘anomaly’ he termed it-between the two countries and extend

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 22, quoting from Wallace Murray’s report.

¹⁴¹ State Department Records, Decimal File (illegible), Report by the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, April 5, 1938.

diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union.”¹⁴² The American Ambassador took up residence in Moscow, not in the former imperial capital, St. Petersburg, by then named Leningrad. There was an added incentive for this recognition. The export vector of ‘Red Oil’ as it was termed by a Russian expert recently¹⁴³ was one factor and the Pacific issues another. Washington had kept the idea of most favored nation near and dear instead of reciprocity in trade because the U.S. overproduced commodities except for oil.¹⁴⁴ In the aftermath of the Great Depression, however the Roosevelt administration reversed its commercial policy and adopted reciprocity in 1934.¹⁴⁵ The force of diplomatic reciprocity also began to prevail over its foreign relations during the interwar period. United States’ encounters with Turkey were not an exception in its overt manifestation of totally breaking away from rhetorical isolationism.

In Turkey’s case, full reciprocity was extended not by the lure of a precious commodity like oil, but the Nazi threat, as well as a change in the outlook of U.S. foreign policy makers and diplomats to exert U.S. prestige and influence abroad, hold Ankara’s pulse, use the personnel efficiently, and enhance economic interests.

In the first place, global economic conditions as well as incremental change in U.S. foreign policy during the interwar years present a larger picture as to why Washington became more serious in according diplomatic recognition in this case to the Soviet Union and full diplomatic reciprocity to Turkey in 1937. Alongside the political conjuncture of the 1930s were considerations about political economy.

Before it was disrupted by the 1929 world economic crisis, the new world order was in a transition from the imperial system of Britain to the corporate power of the United States.

In contrast to the pre-war period, the British share of the world export value was continuously declining, whereas the United States became a net creditor and possessed a large share of the world’s gold. Moreover, the Federal Reserve Board in Washington D.C. and the Federal Reserve Bank in New York wielded enough power to intervene effectively in the international financial market. By the mid 1920s, New York surpassed London

¹⁴² Bohlen, p. 12.

¹⁴³ Vladimir Kostornichenko, “The Export Vector of ‘Red’ Oil” *Oil of Russia* (International Quarterly Edition) 2 (2006); <http://www.oilru.com>, accessed October 18, 2006.

¹⁴⁴ Samuel Flagg Bemis, *The United States as a World Power* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1936), p. 266.

¹⁴⁵ Samuel Flagg Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1950), 3rd ed., pp. 740–742.

as a source of funds invested abroad. The United States had already begun to control markets overseas, from Latin America to Europe.¹⁴⁶

The “conservative internationalism’ or “independent internationalism” of the 1920s began to change as of 1933 with President Franklin D. Roosevelt. “When Roosevelt took office, however, conditions had changed. Depression caused business to look at every country of the world, no matter how unlikely, as a possible outlet for American goods.”¹⁴⁷

Secondly, Europe was mired in crisis caused by the Fascist and Nazi dictators, and a new war loomed. The U.S.A. had to devise a new outlook on world politics as well as define its place in it. This meant to become more active in the foreign policy sphere. Since the 1980s, American historiography no longer depicts the interwar period as one of isolationism; there was too much human energy, productivity, and entrepreneurship in the United States even in the shadow of the Great Depression to abandon worldwide interests. In fact, the Great Depression may have been a catalyst to explore markets abroad for the products that the American people could not afford to purchase at home.

Thirdly, American diplomacy became more professionalized during the era under discussion. “Lausanne was a major event in Grew’s career” wrote his biographer. “The first phase introduced him to the broader aspects of European diplomacy. At the same time it widened his diplomatic horizon to include hitherto ‘backward’ people who were insisting on being treated as players rather than pawns in the game.”¹⁴⁸ If there was one criticism to be made about his diplomatic style, Grew was not interested in intelligence. He reported on domestic political issues, but stayed away from gathering intelligence, because “He did not see the United States as an integral element of international politics.”¹⁴⁹ Another American diplomat, Howland Shaw, in contrast to Grew, encouraged the Embassy to gather, analyze, and interpret intelligence when he served as Chief of the Near Eastern Division at the State Department. During his assignment to Turkey as Counselor of the Embassy, Shaw studied almost all aspects of the Turkish system and enlarged his contacts. “Shaw represented the trend in the Department of State toward a more scholarly formulation of foreign policy, based

¹⁴⁶ Dilek Barlas, *Etatism and Diplomacy in Turkey*, pp. 3–4.

¹⁴⁷ Robert D. Schulzinger, *U.S. Diplomacy since 1900*, 5th ed. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 156.

¹⁴⁸ Heinrichs, p. 62.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

on intensive training of Foreign Service Officers in the languages and cultures of exotic but important countries.” According to him, “the best way to determine political trends and policies was to analyze the underlying social, intellectual, and economic currents.”¹⁵⁰ This proved not only useful to the United States, but to future researchers when such documentation became declassified.

A fourth and a major reason why America’s foreign relations had to rely on gathering intelligence was the perception of threats emanating from Europe which would soon upset world peace. Diplomacy could no longer only rely on information received from governments nor could it remain an intellectual exercise. In the late 1930s as well as during the Second World War Turkey was depicted as a ‘listening post’ in U.S. diplomatic parlance on account of its proximity to the Soviet Union as well as Germany.

Concomitantly, upholding and enhancing American national prestige through representation in style was an underlying factor in promoting recognition or reciprocity. Behind that was the unexpressed drive to assert America’s place in world affairs and be informed about other countries’ position on the eve of another world war.

Starting with the mariner diplomat Admiral Bristol, diplomacy was not only carried out by professionals, but between the Presidents of Turkey and the United States. Congratulatory correspondence between Atatürk and Roosevelt abounded on every occasion possible.

Historical coincidences with reference to leadership profiles also played a tacit, but strong role in the evolution of Turkish-American relations. Although the mood of the country was an important component in American foreign policy making, “So far as individuals make policy, the balance of influence in the United States is always tipping, now this way or that, now to the executive, now to the legislature, and rarely to the professional diplomat.”¹⁵¹ During the timeframe covered in this study, Presidents Warren G. Harding, Calvin Coolidge, and Herbert Hoover had chosen to delegate authority in foreign policy making largely to their Secretaries of State; Charles Evans Hughes (1921–1925), Frank B. Kellogg (1925–1929), and Henry L. Stimson (1929–1933). Franklin D. Roosevelt, on the other hand, exercised personal influence

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

¹⁵¹ Dexter Perkins, “The Department of State and American Public Opinion” in Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert (eds.), *The Diplomats 1919–1939* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press [1953] 1981), pp. 282–308, 283.

on U.S. foreign policy. This is not to say that these American statesmen ignored the Senate Foreign Relations Committee or the legislature, but they influenced the course of U.S. foreign policy making. This factor, coupled with the credible and respectable figure of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Turkey contributed to cultivate the relationship.

Turkish-American relations had come a long way from the tobacco, raisin, wool, and opium merchants as well as Protestant missionaries of the 19th century to being virtual adversaries in the First World War, until full diplomatic reciprocity was established in 1937. Even though Atatürk never visited the United States, the very thought of friendship with a powerful nation who did not bear the stigma of imperialistic designs in past history must have been welcome to him as far as Turkey's national interests were concerned. In retrospect, balancing its Euro-Atlantic relations has been a constant in Turkish foreign policy, but this fact has not been so far acknowledged for having been initiated in Atatürk's Turkey.

Palazzo di Corpi remained as the residence of the U.S. Consul General in İstanbul, while an ordinary looking chancery on its grounds processed visas in the former capital city. The American Embassy was housed in center city Ankara, Kızılay, in a building which later accommodated the U.S. Information Service until 1975. In 1954, a new embassy building was erected on Atatürk Boulevard in the Kavaklıdere district on land donated by the Democratic Party government. It faced the Soviet Embassy across the street throughout the Cold War. Whether spatial accommodation of both embassies was symbolic of according a somewhat equal acknowledgement of Turkey's contemporary and former ally is an academic question, however interesting.

CHAPTER FIVE

REPAIRING TURKISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR: AHMET MUHTAR IN WASHINGTON

GEORGE S. HARRIS

Turkish diplomats have not generally received due recognition for their role in shaping and executing key policy decisions. Particularly in treating the Atatürk era, the focus of historians has been on the leaders in Ankara who were designing a new foreign policy for a state which was undergoing rapid transformation. And up to now the contributions of Turkey's diplomatic corps have been illuminated largely by brief curriculum vitae published by the Foreign Ministry, occasional memoirs, and a few collections of biographical sketches which sometimes do not even address the main activities of these senior officials. Thus it seems useful to pull together additional archival material, parliamentary minutes, and press accounts to examine the lives and deeds of selected diplomats to shed more light on their activities. In so doing, more flesh can be put on the bones of the Kemalist revolution. And as one recognizes the depth of talent available to the Ankara leadership, the reasons for the success of modern Turkey become clearer.

In addition, a better understanding of the first ambassador Turkey sent to Washington after the First World War helps to account for the warmth of the alliance with the United States that formed the basis of Turkey's post-Second World War foreign policy. Although working against considerable odds, his efforts created the face of Turkey that American policymakers came to know and like. As the eyes and ears of Turkey in the United States, he also influenced the decision makers back in Ankara. Accordingly, this senior Turkish ambassador, along with often unusually effective American representatives in Turkey, contributed to the great intimacy that developed between these two countries after the middle of the twentieth century. It was a remarkable achievement starting from the low point reached in January 1927, when the United States Senate failed to ratify the bilateral treaty that Berne Minister Joseph Grew and then Turkish Foreign Minister İsmet (İnönü) had signed in Lausanne in August 1923. Both governments had hoped that

that treaty would lead in short order to restored diplomatic relations and also importantly would have provided for furthering American commercial and educational interests in Turkey.¹

The course that frustrated these expectations and obliged the United States and Turkey to delay the exchange of ambassadors until the fall of 1927 has been studied in a previous chapter and, in any event, to recapitulate at any length would take us too far afield from the subject at hand. In brief, it is rich in missed opportunities and in essence can be summed up as the triumph of domestic politics over real politik. Republican administrations in the United States in the 1920s wished to reestablish ties with Turkey to protect American interests, but were reluctant to risk the presence of a Turkish ambassador in Washington because of fear of violence in those years from Armenian-Americans who objected to legitimizing in any way the modern Turkish Republic. The Armenian cause was taken up with enthusiasm by some prominent Democratic Party figures, who made it an issue to be played out in a contest between the Republican and Democratic parties. As a result, the Democrats, although not in a majority in Congress, nonetheless had the votes to block the two-thirds favorable vote in the Senate needed to ratify the Grew-İnönü Treaty. That instrument was destined to remain in limbo.

It was against this background that the American and Turkish governments prepared in 1927 for an attempt to circumvent the rejection of the treaty by the Senate and exchange ambassadors, thereby ending this hiatus in official diplomatic relations. Thus immediately after the United States Senate failed to ratify the treaty signed nearly four years earlier, Admiral Mark Bristol, who had the title of United States High Commissioner in İstanbul in February 1927 negotiated a *Modus Vivendi* with Turkish Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüştü (Aras) to exchange ambassadors. This instrument was designed as an executive agreement of limited scope, hence was not intended to be brought to the Senate for ratification. Although that reasoning would be subject to legal challenge by Armenian interests, the courts in the United

¹ This treaty should not be confused with the Lausanne Peace Treaty signed in July 1923 that ended the state of war between the European powers and Turkey and established the borders of the modern Turkish state. As has been pointed out in an earlier chapter, the United States had not been in a state of war with the Ottoman Empire or the successor Turkish state, hence did not need to make peace. Accordingly, it merely sent observers to witness the process of peace-making at Lausanne, but did not sign the multilateral Lausanne Treaty.

States would consistently uphold its validity as legitimizing the right to exchange ambassadors.²

Even as this instrument to exchange ambassadors was being signed and Turkey was preparing to send Ahmet Muhtar as Ambassador in Washington, some Armenian-Americans were still hopeful that they could steer America to sponsor the creation of an Armenian state out of Turkish territory. In the 1920s most Americans knew little about Turkey. The press still almost universally styled Ankara “Angora” and İstanbul was frequently called “Constantinople.” The latter city was even still regarded by many Americans as Turkey’s capital. Occasional journalists called Turkey the Ottoman Empire long after the Republic had come into being. Women were often thought to live in the harem, and in dress and in attitude Turkish people were regarded as Orientals, very different from Europeans. The stereotype of the “Terrible Turk” still ruled the minds of many decision makers in the United States capital. Thus there would be much work for Muhtar to do in the rather parochial and domestically-focused city that Washington was in that era.

*Ahmet Muhtar (Mollaoğlu) Diplomat-Politician*³

To educate Americans that a revolution had oriented Turkey to aspire to become a Western-leaning, modernizing state and to enlist American support for this endeavor, Atatürk picked Muhtar Bey, as he was known all his lifetime. In some ways this was a risky choice. Muhtar was not prepared by education to assume the post of ambassador in English-speaking Washington. He had been brought up with French as his major foreign language in addition to his native Turkish. It is questionable how much English he ever could manage.⁴

² An instrument calling for recognition of the Republic of Turkey would have had to go through confirmation in the Senate. But the two countries did not consider that a formal act to renew mutual recognition was necessary, and thus all that was required was merely to authorize an exchange of ambassadors. Such an action customarily did not require Senate approval in the United States. Only when an actual person was named by the United States President for an ambassadorial position did the Senate become involved.

³ Basic biographical and career data is drawn from his file numbered 315 in the Turkish Foreign Ministry personnel archives. He or his relatives took the family name of Mollaoğlu at about the time of his death.

⁴ As late as 1931 he was said to possess no English. See “Capital’s Bloc of Unattached Chiefs of Mission Rapidly Mounting to Double Foursome,” *The Washington Post*, August 16, 1931, p. S 1.

On the other hand, his scholastic training in law and his on-the-job experience in diplomatic and consular work worked in his favor. He had had two assignments abroad as a junior diplomat from 1898 to 1906, before returning to the Ottoman capital, where his service in the Advisory Chamber brought him to the attention of senior officials and he rose rapidly. His Foreign Service career was not derailed at all by the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. In fact, he was posted to Budapest as Consul General and in October 1911 he served simultaneously as Chargé in the Turkish Embassy in Vienna. He was next named Ottoman Minister in Athens in May 1912.

Then in common with the experience of many of his contemporaries, his professional life suffered dislocations attendant on the First World War and he was put on suspense pay at one-third of his regular salary for a time. Yet he seems to have continued to go to work in the Foreign Ministry and apparently spoke out in April 1917 when the Ottoman authorities were considering their stance toward the United States, which had just entered the First World War. He was said by American diplomats to have strongly opposed a break in relations at that time, although his counsel was not heeded.⁵ His standing was such, however, that he was eventually returned to active duty and sent as Ottoman Minister to Kiev in 1918. At his own volition, he ended this assignment the following year apparently because he did not see the Ukraine as a viable state. Yet already he had attained the stature to be elected in December 1919 as one of the deputies from İstanbul in the last Ottoman parliament.⁶

Ministerial Puzzle

Parliamentary life allowed Muhtar to experience policymaking at the top level. Although he had the reputation of enjoying gracious living that made foreign observers wonder how he would stand the rude conditions of Anatolia, he made his way to Ankara when the Sultan prorogued the Ottoman Assembly on April 11, 1920. He endured the

⁵ US National archives, record group 59, decimal file 701.6711/213, telegram from Constantinople, November 9, 1927, and file 701.6711/213a telegram from Washington, November 29, 1927.

⁶ Fahri Çoker, *Türk Parlamento Tarihi: Millî Mücadele ve T.B.M.M. I Dönem, 1919-1923*, vol. 3: *I. Dönem Milletvekillerinin Özgeçmişleri* (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi Müdürlüğü, 1995), pp. 497-498.

rigors of life there, continuing to represent İstanbul in the first Grand National Assembly. Indeed, he came to the attention of Atatürk from the very beginning of parliamentary life in Ankara. And his experience in diplomacy would be put to use without delay.

Within weeks of the opening of the Ankara Parliament on April 23, 1920, the newly appointed Foreign Minister Bekir Sami (Kunduh) left to negotiate a treaty to solidify relations with Soviet Russia. First Rıza Nur, then Atatürk himself, acted as Foreign Minister for the absent Bekir Sami. But as the press of business increased, on July 17, 1920, the Cabinet informally designated Muhtar to cover the Foreign Ministry.⁷ Then as the likelihood that Bekir Sami would not soon return became apparent, in August 1920 it seemed appropriate to regularize Muhtar's status. Accordingly, on August 10, 1920, at Atatürk's request, the Ankara Assembly in an all but unanimous vote authorized Muhtar to be Acting Foreign Minister until Bekir Sami was back on the scene in Ankara.⁸ Accordingly, much of the responsibility for creating the new nationalist Foreign Ministry lay on Muhtar's shoulders.

Bekir Sami, who continued to have the title of Foreign Minister, would return to Ankara at the end of 1920 to resume his duties, but in February 1921, he departed again for a conference in London. At this point, on February 8, Atatürk proposed that the Assembly elect one of two candidates as Acting Foreign Minister: Muhtar and Beyazıt deputy Dr. Refik (Saydam). Although Refik was close to Atatürk, whom he accompanied to Anatolia to start the Struggle for Independence, he immediately withdrew in favor of his more experienced colleague. Then Parliament proceeded by a show of hands to elect Muhtar to "the Foreign Ministry," in the words of the presiding officer "by a huge majority."⁹ Muhtar would serve in this capacity until Bekir Sami returned in mid-April 1921 to exercise his responsibility as Foreign Minister. Bekir Sami evidently remained Foreign Minister all this time he was on the road. But on return, he found himself harshly criticized in Parliament for exceeding his instructions in negotiating with European powers. He resigned on May 8, 1921, though his resignation was

⁷ Hamid Aral, *Dışişleri Bakanlığı 1967 Yılığ* (Ankara: Ankara Basım ve Ciltevi, 1968), p. 165.

⁸ T.B.M.M., *Zabıt Ceridesi*, Devre I, İçtima Senesi I, vol. 3 (Ankara: T.B.M.M. Matbaası, 2nd ed. 1941), pp. 151, 167. On August 10, 1920, Muhtar was approved as Acting Foreign Minister by 158 votes of the 160 deputies present and voting.

⁹ T.B.M.M., *Zabıt Ceridesi*, Devre I, İçtima Senesi I, vol. 8 (Ankara: T.B.M.M. Matbaası 2nd printing, 1945), p. 154 (session of February 8, 1921).

not announced until May 12 in closed session of the Assembly. And on May 16, 1921, Yusuf Kemal (Tengirşenk) was elected Foreign Minister in his place. From then on, Muhtar would never again exercise Cabinet responsibility.

Herein lies a puzzle. Later Atatürk would attest in the Letter of Credence which Muhtar presented to President Coolidge in 1927 that Muhtar had been not merely *Acting* Foreign Minister, but Foreign Minister in his own right.¹⁰ That claim does not accord with the chronology sketched out above or with the official parliamentary history published by the Grand National Assembly, however. This record indicates that Bekir Sami remained Foreign Minister from his original appointment in May 1920 until he resigned in May 1921, to be followed by Yusuf Kemal Tengirşenk eight days later (during which interregnum Fevzi pasha Çakmak served as Acting Foreign Minister). Of course, much of the time that Bekir Sami had the title of Foreign Minister, he was out of Ankara traveling to negotiate treaties or attend international conferences. Tengirşenk, who followed him as Foreign Minister, then served in that capacity until he resigned in October 1922 in favor of İsmet İnönü in order to allow the latter to be elected Foreign Minister the next day to be able to represent Turkey at Lausanne. There is no place in this chronology for Muhtar to have been more than Acting Foreign Minister; hence, it seems that President Atatürk was exaggerating Muhtar's status by calling him a former Foreign Minister to give him more stature in Washington.

On the other hand, Muhtar did claim for himself the title of Foreign Minister in official correspondence even before the vote in February 1921 whose terms could have suggested by a loose reading that he was somehow head of the Foreign Ministry and not merely "Acting." In fact, at times he was listed as full Foreign Minister in the minutes of some closed sessions of the Assembly. For example, in the records of a closed session of Parliament on October 10, 1920, there is a report of a telegram signed by Ahmet Muhtar simply as Foreign Minister, though he clearly had been voted only Acting Foreign Minister by that time. He

¹⁰ Bilâl Şimşir, *Atatürk Dönemi-İncelemeler-* (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2006), pp. 180–181, published the text of Muhtar's Letter of Credence in both Turkish and its certified French copy. Nuran Dağlı & Belma Aktürk (eds.), *Hükümetler ve Programları* (Ankara: TBMM Kütüphane-Dokümantasyon ve Tercüme Müdürlüğü, 1988), vol. 1, presents an official list of cabinets and Foreign Ministers starting with the Temporary Cabinet of April 25 to May 3, 1920, in which Bekir Sami was a Minister without Portfolio. He was elected Foreign Minister on May 3, 1920.

was also accorded the title of full Foreign Minister in the list of speakers in the minutes of the February 18, 1921, closed session, when he presented the budget of the Foreign Ministry.¹¹ Were those just loose renderings of his official title of “Acting” Foreign Minister?” It is difficult, however, to tell with complete assurance.

Alternatively, these attributions may attest rather to the fluidity of the National Struggle in the days that led to the formation of the Republic of Turkey. It is even possible that there were two individuals (he and Bekir Sami) using the one title of Foreign Minister at the same time, as there is an indication that such an arrangement might not have bothered the leadership in Ankara at the time.¹² But in the minutes of the open sessions of Parliament, Muhtar is always listed as speaking merely as “Acting Foreign Minister.” Nonetheless, because of the wording of

¹¹ In the official minutes of a closed session of Parliament as early as October 10, 1920, where Muhtar spoke on the political situation, he is listed in the record as Foreign Minister. He continues to be so listed at various times, but only in the minutes of the closed sessions published long after the event. The last time he was so listed was in the minutes of March 17, 1921. See TBMM, *TBMM Gizli Celse Zabıtları*, vol. 2 (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1980), pp. 2–10. See also, T.B.M.M., *Zabıt Ceridesi*, Devre I, İçtima senesi: 1, vol. 5 (Ankara: T.B.M.M. Matbaası, 2nd ed. 1942), p. 303 (session of November 9, 1920), which contained the memorandum of peace terms for Armenia of October 3, 1920, presented to Parliament on November 9, 1920. It was signed by “Turkish Grand National Assembly Foreign Minister Ahmed Muhtar” (“T.B.M.M. Hariciye V. Ahmet Muhtar”), even though Muhtar is clearly identified in those parliamentary minutes as speaking in Parliament only under the title of “Acting Foreign Minister” (“Hariciye Vekâleti V. Muhtar B.”).

¹² A possible example of this sharing of one title comes in Yusuf Kemal Tengirşenk, *Vatan Hizmetinde* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1981), pp. 191 ff which reports that when Yusuf Kemal left Ankara on December 14, 1920, to go to Moscow as Minister of Economics to finish negotiating the Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet regime, Acting Interior Minister Adnan (Adıvar) came to the train station and asked him to resign because the Ankara authorities did not want to have acting ministers serving for extended periods. But Adnan told Yusuf Kemal that he could sign the treaty with the Soviet Russians using his title as Minister even if he resigned. Yusuf Kemal said that he and Rıza Nur, who was traveling with him, sent letters of resignation from their ministries the following day from Sivas. Rıza Nur’s resignation as Education Minister was publicly noted, for Atatürk had already proposed his replacement the very day he left Ankara. See T.B.M.M., *Zabıt Ceridesi*, Devre 1, vol. 6, p. 377 (session of December 14, 1920). Hamdullah Suphi (Tanrıöver) was elected Education Minister in his stead on December 16. However, there is no similar action recorded in the minutes of Parliament to show that Yusuf Kemal was considered resigned, as no one was elected or appointed in his place. But if his report is correct that the Cabinet was willing to consider having two people use the same title that could allow two individuals to be considered full Foreign Minister during Bekir Sami’s tenure as Foreign Minister, given his long absences from Ankara.

the vote in Parliament “to the Foreign Ministry”, Muhtar’s exact status cannot be determined with complete precision.

Style in Parliament

Whatever his exact title, Muhtar worked closely with Atatürk during the early years of the National Struggle. Yet at the same time, Muhtar’s penchant for secretiveness led him consistently to fail to keep Parliament informed of his activities and budgetary requirements in a timely manner. Typical of his style, in the budget debate in February 1921 he had defended adding 50,000 lira for a secret fund which would amount to many times as much as the open budget. Muhtar explained that “Sirs, Those who know the intricacies of diplomatic procedure do not hesitate for a moment to agree that no Foreign Ministry without secret funds has existed up to now. No Foreign Ministry can be run without secret funds. This has been true since diplomacy began.” And he explained that while he was Chargé in Vienna he had used such funds to buy some very valuable information from a foreign diplomat during the Tripolitanian War. Moreover, he insisted that Parliament allow him to report expenditure of these secret funds to the Prime Minister and President alone. Although deputies voted down a five-deputy panel to supervise the use of these funds, it was clear that many in the assembly did not fully trust Muhtar to spend this money wisely.¹³

Muhtar’s involvement in high policymaking led him in the name of the Foreign Ministry to send a telegram to Eastern Front Commander Kâzım Karabekir on November 8, 1920, suggesting that it was essential that Turkey should carry out the “political and physical destruction” of the Armenian state.¹⁴ A month later, however, Muhtar declared to a closed session of Parliament that Turkey’s aim was “not to destroy the Armenian people,” but to secure the border in the east. Nonetheless, his

¹³ Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, *Zabıt Ceridesi*, Devre I, vol. 8, pp. 238–252 (session of February 15, 1921). Stanford Shaw, *From Empire to Republic* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2000), p. 1045, reports that Muhtar also at about this time headed the Kemalist intelligence organization. Just what his duties entailed remains unclear as Shaw does not supply exact dates or other details.

¹⁴ Kâzım Karabekir, *İstiklâl Harbimiz* (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1960), p. 901. “Binaenaleyh Erministanı siyaseten ve maddeten ortadan kaldırmak elzemdir.” Karabekir quotes this telegram as signed “Foreign Minister Ahmet Muhtar.”

involvement in policy toward Armenia at this time would rise to haunt his future appointment to Washington.¹⁵

On the substance of foreign affairs, it fell to Muhtar as Acting Foreign Minister to defend in Parliament the problematic status of Batumi. He first raised hopes of the deputies that it would be part of the new Turkish state. While negotiations were still going on toward the eventual Turkish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, he reported that the Turkish army “had decided to occupy Batumi Port, City and district” and he confirmed to the deputies that this formulation meant that “Batumi is ours.”¹⁶ When two weeks later he had to admit that Russian troops were there, he was asked to confess that he had been wrong and had misled the Assembly. He refused, saying: “What error?”¹⁷

Although his experience clearly made him one of the top Turkish diplomats, he seemed nonetheless at times prone to accept uncritically what he was told by foreign officials. At the end of 1920, when others saw ample reason to suspect Soviet intentions to absorb territory populated by Turkic peoples, he was one who rejected the notion that the Bolsheviks might present a danger to the fledgling nationalist regime in Ankara.¹⁸ Further, as late as January of 1921, he even argued that the Soviet regime could be trusted to assure the freedom of the Azerbaijan government as well as that of the Muslim population of the North Caucasus.¹⁹ Moreover, as Turkish Ambassador in Moscow during the critical period of Lenin’s health crisis and death, he was all too quick to accept Soviet assurances that Lenin would survive.

Ambassador in the East

On October 27, 1921, he was sent as Ankara’s Representative to Tiflis, an assignment that lasted until he was transferred to Moscow in December 1922. The Georgian capital was no trivial post in the eyes of the Ankara regime, as it played a key role in assuring that vital Soviet Russian war

¹⁵ TBMM, *Gizli Celse Zabıtları*, vol. 1, p. 244 (session of December 20, 1920).

¹⁶ T.B.M.M., *Zabıt Ceridesi*, Devre I, vol. 9, pp. 67–68 (session of March 10, 1921).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 205–209 (session of March 24, 1921).

¹⁸ For details of the rising suspicion of the Soviet regime among Turkish deputies at this period, see George Harris, *The Communists and the Kadro Movement: Shaping Ideology in Atatürk’s Turkey* (İstanbul: The ISIS Press, 2002), pp. 27–33.

¹⁹ Bilâl Şimşir, *Bizim Diplomatlar* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1996), p. 108.

matériel made its way to Anatolia. While in Tiflis, however, Muhtar was unable to prevent former Committee of Union and Progress triumvir Cemal Pasha, who was in his care and staying at the Turkish embassy building, from being assassinated by Armenian Dashnaks in July 1922. Muhtar was in the building at the time Cemal was murdered just after leaving the embassy, and the psychological effects of experiencing terrorism at such close hand would clearly color his own reactions when later faced with demonstrations against his arrival in the United States.

After a successful balancing act between the Soviet Russians and Georgians in Tiflis, Muhtar was Atatürk's natural choice when Ankara had difficulty in filling the key post of Ambassador in Moscow. In the Soviet capital during a two-year assignment, he contributed to restoring smooth ties after the strains induced by Ali Fuat's (Cebesoy) failed ambassadorship. He established close relationships with top Soviet officials, something that would coincidentally benefit him during his later Washington assignment. As a testimony to the good relations with Moscow that he was able to establish, he was given authority to carry on negotiations for a Commerce and Consular Accord with Russia in October 1923 in place of Atatürk's long-time trusted colleague Tevfik Rüstü Aras, who had originally been designated as the one to handle this matter.²⁰

After achieving success in repairing close ties with the emerging Soviet leadership in Moscow, Muhtar returned to Ankara and his parliamentary seat. While he would serve on the Foreign Affairs Committee, this period of parliamentary service found him detached from active participation in Turkish diplomacy. Yet it was from this vantage point in May 1927 that he was designated to be named Ambassador to the United States to restore diplomatic ties disrupted by the First World War.²¹

Ambassador to Washington

Why was Muhtar chosen for the Washington assignment? Today one can only guess at the answer. He was on hand in Ankara, while some

²⁰ T. C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri, document of October 1, 1923, no. 2805, File 431-18, Code 30.18.1.1., place no. 7.35.8.

²¹ US National Archives, record group 59, file 701.6711/190 which includes a note on the appointment of Muhtar as ambassador to Washington on May 27, 1927.

of the other plausible candidates were already at foreign posts. Despite his willingness to believe somewhat uncritically what foreign leaders told him, he was considered successful in repairing relations with Turkey's then chief foreign friend, Soviet Russia. He had shown the good judgment to send Atatürk a bear skin from Moscow, a trophy that the Turkish leader displayed prominently in his Ankara residence (where it remains today). More important, during the Struggle for Independence, he had worked closely with Atatürk in guiding Turkey's nascent foreign relations, and he was said to be a close friend of Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüştü Aras. Thus despite his lack of English and his somewhat elderly appearance, he appealed to the Ankara leadership as able to manage on his own at a distance. Moreover, the Washington post was not yet considered of the importance of say Britain or France, so that Ankara could take a certain risk in sending one who was not entirely equipped linguistically for the post, particularly as there were almost no senior Turkish ambassadors who spoke English. And, of course, French, of which he had a superb command, was still the language of diplomacy.

Muhtar himself did not leap at the chance to go to America in 1927. It has been suggested that he was not happy at the prospect of a long ocean voyage.²² His later writings hint that he may have initially been concerned for his personal safety because Armenian-American and Greek-American protests against the resumption of diplomatic relations had begun.²³ His wife's precarious health meant that she would not accompany him. He also was said to want more money for allowances before he left Ankara. And he could exploit the fact that the Turkish leadership had earlier that year told Admiral Bristol that Washington had to ratify the special bilateral treaty that İnönü had negotiated with the United States before the Turks would be willing to exchange ambassadors.

Accordingly, because the United States Senate had been unable to manage the two-thirds vote necessary for ratification of this bilateral treaty with the United States when it was presented to the Senate in January 1927, Muhtar was in no hurry to leave Ankara. Even well after Admiral Bristol had negotiated the *Modus Vivendi* in February 1927 providing for restoration of diplomatic relations, Muhtar showed

²² Roger R. Trask, *The United States Response to Turkish Nationalism and Reform, 1914–1939* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1971), p. 60. Trask devotes his main attention to the efforts of American ambassadors in Turkey and to the actions of the Ankara regime.

²³ Bilâl Şimşir, *Bizim Diplomatlar*, p. 124.

no interest in hastening to his designated post. It was thus not until November 1927, weeks after the American Ambassador Joseph Grew had already arrived in Turkey, that Muhtar finally set out for Washington. And even then he had to be propelled by Grew's implied threat to Foreign Minister Aras that the principle of reciprocity might otherwise incline Washington to recall its own Ambassador from Ankara and thus disrupt the rapprochement with the United States.²⁴

The new Turkish Ambassador arrived in Washington on November 29, 1927, with an escort from New York provided by the Department of State, amid charges by sympathizers of the Armenian cause that he was responsible for the death of 30,000 Armenians by promoting a Turkish invasion of Armenia while he was Acting Foreign Minister in 1920.²⁵ In his report of his reception, Muhtar exaggerated the power and danger of the Armenian protests against the resumption of diplomatic relations between Turkey and the United States which greeted his arrival. But he was not alone in his appraisal of the Armenian danger. The newspapers gave prominence to the strong criticism by Armenian-Americans of his coming and Ambassador Grew in Ankara echoed this concern. This opposition to Turkey would continue sporadically during his tenure. But in fact it is important not to exaggerate the extent of these protests, for aside from a few demonstrators holding signs at the pier, physical demonstrations against the Turkish diplomats did not take place in that era. Instead, Congress, the courts, and the media were the sites of opposition to Turkey by these opponents, led by former Ambassador to Germany James W. Gerard and Vahan Cardashian, a former Ottoman official some of whose family members had been killed in Turkey in 1915. Gerard and his Senatorial ally, Senator William H. King, would soon back off their press attacks, but Cardashian would remain a thorn in the side of the Turks until his death in 1934, just after Muhtar's tour as ambassador ended. However, with Cardashian's demise, some of the fire went out of Armenian-American protests for decades to come.²⁶

One reason for the decline in Armenian-sponsored press attacks was the willingness of *The Washington Post* to treat Turkey in a friendly and

²⁴ US National Archives, record group 59, file 701.6711/213, November 9, 1927, Ambassador Grew reporting a confidential conversation with Foreign Minister Aras. Following Grew's threat, Muhtar departed almost immediately. For a slightly different version of the reason for delay, see Bilâl Şimşir, *Bizim Diplomatlar*, pp. 122–123.

²⁵ US National Archives, record group 59, file 701.6711/213a, November 29, 1927.

²⁶ For Muhtar's report, see Bilâl Şimşir, *Atatürk Dönemi—İncelemeler—*, pp. 186–195.

supportive way. Within weeks of Muhtar's arrival, Mr. Bennett, an editor of that influential newspaper, invited him to lunch with the reporting staff of that paper and pledged to treat Turkey fairly and defend it from unwarranted accusations against it. At that time, the paper strongly supported the Republican Party and thus backed the Administration's contention that diplomatic relations with Turkey were not only legitimate, but desirable. And indeed, the *Post* lived up to its promise. It gave Turkey what can only be considered special treatment, mentioning Muhtar and/or Turkey favorably over 300 times during Muhtar's seven years in Washington, starting with a lengthy favorable article immediately after his lunch with the editors and reporters.²⁷

Settling in Washington

Muhtar's charge from Atatürk was "to do everything possible to restore, develop, and consolidate relations." As a result, his first order of business was to seek to persuade the United States Senate to revive the bilateral Grew-İnönü treaty. Although with the promises of backing from some unusually active and influential society figures and senior military officers he had some hopes of success, in the end he proved entirely unsuccessful in this endeavor. Caught up in partisan politics, Democratic Party Senators were unwilling to disappoint the Armenian community and the treaty was allowed to die without the second Senate vote which Muhtar had signaled Ankara that he hoped would take place in February 1928.²⁸

Changing the image of "the Terrible Turk" to that of Western-style citizen occupied Muhtar all through his tenure. And from the very first, to do it properly he believed would require money. In fact, only two weeks after arriving, he was already requesting "at least 20,000 lira" and he warned that if that sum were not forthcoming, he would be left in a very difficult position.²⁹ But in fact, besides money other

²⁷ Ibid., p. 176. Muhtar himself explained that the paper's role as Republican Party standard-bearer was behind the sympathetic position which Mr. Bennett, an editor of the *Post*, took toward Turkey. For the article welcoming Muhtar, see G. S. Smith, "The New Turkey," *The Washington Post*, December 9, 1927, p. 6. The article called Muhtar "an accomplished man of the world," who "does not yet speak English," but who spoke in French "eloquently of the new Turkey over which Mustapha Kemal presides."

²⁸ Bilâl Şimşir, *Atatürk Dönemi—İncelemeler—*, p. 176.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 172.

talents would be required. It would be his ability to represent Turkey as a modern diplomat, who looked and acted the part, which would be equally important. And although by the end of his term he would turn out to have been quite successful, he was all along hobbled somewhat by his lack of English fluency. When he presented his letter of credence to President Calvin Coolidge, he, of course, did so in Turkish with a certified copy in French. But beyond an exchange of formal documents, he could not have a private conversation with the President in English. And to the end he traveled nowhere in the United States without being accompanied by an English-speaking member of his staff.

In terms of missed opportunity, he once delivered an address in Turkish on an American radio network on the subject of Turkish Polygamy Passing. It was left to a subordinate to translate for whatever audience remained these remarks that followed the official Turkish line in significantly exaggerating the progress the Republic had made in eradicating this traditional institution.³⁰ While that performance could hardly have helped win many friends for Turkey, he did gain favorable publicity on occasion from his choice of translators. He enjoyed good press when a modern-appearing, English-speaking Turkish college woman filled in to serve as his social secretary in the summer of 1929.³¹

A more effective avenue to deal with this perception problem was to take part with the newly organized American Friends of Turkey in celebrating anniversaries of the Republic of Turkey and other festive occasions. At these times before an audience of decision-molders, Muhtar delivered prepared addresses which his staff had put into English that emphasized the reforms that Atatürk launched during the 1920s. Accordingly a society editor of the *Washington Post* praised him in a lengthy magazine section article celebrating the Turkish republic.³² Muhtar's speech at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel on the tenth anniversary of the Turkish Republic was covered by the *New York Times*, which also took note of messages from President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Atatürk.³³

³⁰ "Turkish Polygamy Passing, Says Envoy," *The Washington Post*, March 10, 1930, p. 7.

³¹ "Turkish Maid is Secretary for Embassy," *The Washington Post*, July 16, 1929, p. 7. Miss Gedide Deha from the University of Chicago concurrently served as "translator for a staff which speaks little English."

³² Corinne Reid Frazier, *The Washington Post Magazine Section*, July 31, 1932: "There were no half measures when Turkey went modern."

³³ Trask, pp. 88–89. On the other hand, on March 9, 1929, Muhtar cancelled a speech on "Mohammedanism" which the day before he was recorded as agreeing to deliver at

And his efforts to play up the visit of three intrepid Turkish aviators and the non-stop flight of two Americans from New York to İstanbul garnered favorable publicity in major newspapers.³⁴

Muhtar would not prove to be a frequent visitor to the White House. But after presenting his credentials to President Calvin Coolidge, he attended the annual reception for ambassadors given by the President. The *New York Times* almost got him in hot water by reporting that he attended the New Year's reception in 1928, resplendent in "a bright green fez," something that would have violated Atatürk's cherished hat reform. Muhtar was quick to deny the story. In response, he maintained that he wore no head covering at all to this reception. Moreover, he pointed out that the normal color of the Middle Eastern fez was red, not green. And he strongly insisted that his costume of a black morning coat was in no way different from the garb of others at that occasion.³⁵ From the fervor of his denials, however, it was clear that this accusation hurt.

On a more personal occasion at the White House, in June 1929 he was present at a stag lunch given by President Herbert Hoover in honor of the visiting Turkish Minister of Health. He also found himself at small gatherings with Hoover's Vice President Charles Curtis from time to time. But in these circles his lack of English fluency obviously hurt and he was unable to develop a personal relationship with these top officials.

On the other hand, he did move quickly and effectively to establish relations with influential members of Congress, military figures, and social leaders in Washington. As an unaccompanied man, he was particularly welcome at social gatherings. And he used every lead he could manage to increase his circle of contacts. For example, he exploited mutual membership in the Free Masons to establish a relationship with Representative Frederick A. Britten of Illinois, Chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs, who otherwise would have had little reason to give a party in his honor in December 1928.³⁶ He often entertained

the Mt. Pleasant Congregational Church. He pled another engagement, but perhaps in fact he withdrew because of his poor English. "Turkish Envoy Cancels Engagement to Speak," *The Washington Post*, March 10, 1929, p. M22.

³⁴ "Ambassador of Turkey Will Entertain Visiting Flyers," *The Washington Post*, August 13, 1929, p. 7.

³⁵ "White House Gay at New Year Levee Attended by 3,300," *New York Times*, January 3, 1928, p. 1; "Turkish Formal Dress," *The New York Times*, January 13, p. 24.

³⁶ *The Washington Post*, December 12, 1928.

Representative Sol Bloom, another Free Mason, who was on the Committee for Foreign Affairs and was frequently found at social events along with the Turkish Ambassador. Several other friendly senators attended his functions. And on some social occasions he had the opportunity to spar gently with Senator William H. King, who had led those in Congress who opposed restoring relations with Turkey.³⁷

Aid from Prominent Personalities

Muhtar was launched into the social scene in Washington by two intrepid ladies with unusual ties to Turkey and a determination to see its representative well received. Of these, perhaps the most outstanding was Mrs. Grace Tytus McLennan, an unconventional figure for that era, who had already done much to publicize the Turkish reform movement in the United States before Muhtar arrived. This dynamic lady loved excitement and used the freedom accorded by her status as a woman estranged from her husband and possessing a large fortune to travel freely to meet revolutionary political leaders. She quickly had established ties to figures such as the former Russian leader, Kerensky,³⁸ and his last ambassador to the United States. And in the case of Turkey, she made at least two trips with her children to that country, one in 1923 and the other in 1926, traveling deep in Anatolia far beyond the ambit of most Americans and many elite Turks. She was clearly fascinated by Atatürk, whom she met in Ankara, on one occasion attending what she called a "State Ball" as his guest and having a long talk with him and with Prime Minister İsmet İnönü. A tall, graceful woman, she was said by Muhtar for a brief moment to have been the talk of Ankara when she visited in 1926.³⁹ Indeed, from observation of her on her junkets to Anatolia, her children judged that she had fallen deeply under the spell of the Turkish revolution and its leader.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, November 14, 1933.

³⁸ See the taped interview of AJB Johnston and John Stewart McLennan, Jr., July 19, 1982, Tryingham, Massachusetts, Tape 3 side A. John McLennan, who was Grace McLennan's son, noted "we sallied forth for two winters... for two months to six weeks at a time to Constantinople and 2 (sic.) we went to Ankara to visit Kamal Attaturk (sic.) who you know was an extraordinary firebrand and she [Grace] was fascinated by him and wrote a great deal about him."

³⁹ Bilâl Şimşir, *Atatürk Dönemi—İncelemeler—*, p. 192.

In the United States, Grace McLennan had defended Turkey regularly. For example, at the session of the Institute of Politics at Williams College which she attended as a member in August 1923, she rebutted the arguments of former American Ambassador to Turkey Henry Morgenthau, who attacked Turkey's recent success at peacemaking at Lausanne. She also took pride in reporting that she had spoken in favor of Turkey at Vassar, Harvard, Radcliffe's "School of Foreign Affairs," and the Contemporary Club of New York. Even at smaller occasions, such as her speech before the local Wednesday Morning Club of Pittsfield in the vicinity of her grand estate, she missed no opportunity to defend Atatürk's reform movement. She was also involved with Turkish literary feminist figure Halide Edib Adivar, who was in temporary self-exile abroad, and she entertained professors from Robert College in İstanbul when they reached the East coast. Grace McLennan was so active that her efforts to promote better understanding between Republican Turkey and the United States were apparently recognized in an article in the newly established *Milliyet*. And so hard did she work to provide a warm reception for Muhtar that he believed that the United States government must have been behind her efforts to make sure he met all the important figures of Washington society.⁴⁰

It was not surprising in view of that background that hardly had Muhtar unpacked his bags than Grace McLennan entertained him at a "large tea" and then presented him as guest of honor in her prominent political salon in Washington. Subsequently they attended other social gatherings together. In March 1928 she and her children would even join Muhtar in a ceremonial tour around the Washington area piloted by Col. Charles Lindbergh, who was still basking in the notoriety of his recent transatlantic flight.⁴¹ In April 1928, she published an article in *The World* on "The Modern Turkish Flapper," which helped Muhtar's

⁴⁰ Muhtar was undoubtedly wrong in supposing the United States government had sent her to smooth his path in Washington society as he reported to Ankara on December 27, 1927. See Bilâl Şimşir, *Atatürk Dönemi—İncelemeler—*, pp. 191–192. She was too independent for that. See also *The Brearley Bulletin*, November 28, 1928; "Social Notes," *New York Times*, July 22, 1926, p. 11; "Notes of Social Activities in New York and Elsewhere," *New York Times*, August 20, 1928, p. 20. She also did not miss an occasion to entertain Americans connected with Turkey such as Robert College Professor Hewitt, see "Social Notes," *New York Times*, August 17, 1926, p. 24. I have not been able to locate the *Milliyet* article.

⁴¹ "Lindbergh Takes Diplomats Flying," *New York Times*, March 27, 1928, p. 2. It seems quite in keeping with her character and access that she, and not the ambassador, would have been the one to arrange this ceremonial flight.

cause by celebrating Atatürk as responsible for improving the lot of women in Turkey.⁴² At her invitation, the Turkish ambassador would visit her establishment in the Berkshires (her so-called “Marble Palace”) the following summer. Unfortunately her untimely death in the fall of 1928 removed from the scene this vigorous defender of Turkey who was only then some fifty years of age.⁴³

But Grace McLennan was not the only well-connected woman to come forward to help the new Turkish ambassador. Muhtar’s embassy also benefited from the work of Mrs. Katherine Imbrie, wife of an American Major posted for a spell in Admiral Bristol’s entourage in Turkey after the end of the First World War. Her major contribution was to make sure that the feminists, who were then a powerful force in American politics, having engineered the right of women to vote and the Constitutional amendment to prohibit sales of alcohol, were not enlisted in the Armenian cause, where they could have undoubtedly caused Turkey significant trouble. Indeed, at Mrs. Imbrie’s urging, Mrs. Pinchot, one of the preeminent American feminist leaders of the age, simply tore up and discarded a letter requesting that she and her organization give support to the Armenian cause.⁴⁴ But beyond fending off the Armenian-Americans, Mrs. Imbrie used her extensive political contacts to introduce the Turkish embassy staff to influential Americans and guide them around the social scene in Washington.

In addition to these activist women, two admirals were cited by Muhtar in his report at the end of his first month in office in Washington as promising important support for Turkey. Admiral Chester hoped to revive his flagging hopes for a concession in Turkey, an endeavor on

⁴² See Grace McLennan, “The Modern Turkish Flapper,” *The World*, April 29, 1928, p. 6 N.

⁴³ *The Washington Post*, December 23, 1927, July 29, 1928. She also made contact with such important figures as Jan Masaryk. See her letter to Mrs. Edwin G. Merrill dated July 6, 1927, in *The Brearley Bulletin*. She broke her hip playing tennis. She was taken to a nearby hospital where she seemed to be recovering, but she died weeks later on October 29, 1928, probably of a blood clot. See her obituary in the *New York Times*, October 30, 1928, p. 29. Muhtar continued to feel indebted to her, and included her daughter in his functions to the end of his tenure in Washington.

⁴⁴ Bilâl Şimşir, p. 192. Bilâl Şimşir transliterated her name as “Pincha,” but he was referring to Cornelia Bryce Pinchot (1881–1960). Mrs. Pinchot, whose husband had been elected Governor of Pennsylvania largely thanks to her ability to organize women voters, was already in the throes of running for a seat for herself in the Congressional elections of 1928 when Mrs. Imbrie prevailed on her not to support the Armenian cause. It is doubtful that Muhtar’s audience in Ankara could have fully appreciated how significant Mrs. Pinchot’s refusal to support the Armenians was for the Turkish cause.

which he and his consortium had been working for decades. To ingratiate himself with the new ambassador, Chester claimed substantial influence among Senators in the matter of securing favorable reconsideration of the İnönü-Grew treaty of 1923. But when the treaty was not returned to the Senate for consideration in February 1928 as Muhtar hoped, Admiral Chester's influence was soon seen to have been overrated. And while Muhtar singled him out in the report detailing his first month's activities in Washington, Admiral Chester did not subsequently appear to remain in Muhtar's inner circle.⁴⁵

The other senior officer on whom Muhtar had high hopes from his first days in Washington was Rear Admiral Andrew T. Long. Long had powerful connections in the American arms industry and evidently had warm memories of service in Turkish waters. Muhtar had already established contact with Admiral Long within days of arriving in Washington and clearly hoped to use him to acquire military equipment for Turkey. At this very time, despite all the economic restrictions emanating from the Lausanne Treaty, the Turks actually succeeded in purchasing such major items as submarines in Europe in 1924.⁴⁶ Muhtar, with his competitive nature, clearly did not want to be left behind his European colleagues in making arms deals. We do not know whether or not he was specifically charged with procuring armaments by Atatürk, but his activities in this field certainly suggest as much. In any event, Admiral Long would prove to be a key link in Muhtar's plans, for the admiral had been an adviser to the three-power naval arms limitation conference in Geneva the previous year and proved well versed in how the arms business worked in the United States. He was also extremely well connected in Washington.

The relationship between the ambassador and admiral was reinforced by being together in repeated social events. Thus, for example, on January 18, 1928, Muhtar was guest of honor at a party given by Mrs. Lawrence Townsend, whose husband had been an ambassador in Europe many years before. Here again Muhtar would be thrown together with Admiral Long. And around this time the admiral would

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

⁴⁶ The Turks were avidly seeking submarines to build up their navy because strategic thinking held that the army was the primary force to deal with invaders and the navy was required only to try to sink ships through submarines and sea mines. Germany provided Turkey with funds for two submarines which were constructed in Holland to get around Versailles restrictions on German weapons production.

also assist Muhtar in his quest for weapons by introducing him to his close friend and colleague on the social scene, Rear Admiral Hilary P. Jones, who had served as a principal delegate to the Geneva arms limitation conference.⁴⁷

The Arms Connection

During the Struggle for Independence, Turkey began to build up its arms industry. But by war's end, Turkey still did not have the facilities to make the tanks and heavy artillery, modern aircraft, or naval units that its leaders felt it necessary to possess to insure national interests. That meant that one of the duties of Turkish ambassadors as they fanned out in the industrialized countries was to try to procure these items where they could be obtained at minimal cost from the disposal of arms used in the First World War or by subventions from companies or governments. A particular lack was the requirement for naval units. Indeed, in 1928 the Turkish Parliament adopted a ten-year program to build up its navy.⁴⁸ And among the most desired ship purchases, submarines were keenly desired by the Turkish General Staff. Later on, Ankara also displayed considerable interest in obtaining the rudimentary military aircraft of the day as well as weapons to be used by the land army. Muhtar was well aware of these strategic requirements and sought to play his part in meeting them.

He had always defended the use of secret funds to further diplomatic activity and he apparently again put his ideas into practice in Washington, whether on orders from the government in Ankara is not yet clear.⁴⁹ It was later discovered that about this time in 1928, he and admirals Long and Jones began working together in a confidential effort to explore the purchase of submarines and aircraft, as well as other munitions from defense firms in the United States. This was a time when disarmament ideas were gaining ground in Washington leadership circles in the build-up to the Kellogg-Briand Pact of August 1928.

⁴⁷ "Capital Society Events," *The Washington Post*, January 19, 1928, p. 7.

⁴⁸ Dilek Barlas and Serhat Güvenç, "To Build a Navy with the Help of Adversary: Italian—Turkish Naval Arms Trade 1929–32," *Middle Eastern Studies*, (October 2002), vol. 38, no. 4, p. 149.

⁴⁹ When the matter was raised during Münir Erteğün's tenure as ambassador in Washington, the Turkish government took the position that there might have been "corrupt practices."

Accordingly, the notion of selling offensive weapons to a state such as Turkey, with which even restoring diplomatic relations had been controversial, was not likely to be popular. And that, along with Muhtar's natural penchant for secrecy, seems to account for his insistence that all arms purchase activities be held confidential. Yet, the public face of Muhtar's contact with the prominent admirals meant that when Muhtar subsequently entertained the Turkish Minister of Health, one of the highest ranking visitors to come from Ankara during his years in Washington, he made sure to introduce Admiral Long to him.⁵⁰

At the suggestion of admirals Long and Jones, in 1928 Muhtar began to cultivate Sterling J. Joyner, the Washington Vice President of the Electric Boat Company, which was the premier American manufacturer of submarines. Soon Muhtar was using a so-called "pleasure craft" supplied by the Electric Boat Company to wine and dine those he believed useful in acquiring munitions.⁵¹ Whether the price was not right or whether other circumstances discouraged the purchase of a submarine cannot yet be told. But in the end, these efforts did not result in the Electric Boat Company selling a submarine to the Turks. The confidential nature of these maneuverings did, however, lead to some embarrassment when Senator Gerald Nye's munitions committee in September 1934 exposed the ties between the Turkish Ambassador, the admirals, and the Electric Boat Company Vice President. This exposé, however, took place after Muhtar had returned to Turkey and died.⁵² It was left to his successor to quiet the uproar that attended these revelations.

⁵⁰ "Turkish Envoy Fetes Visitor on U. S. Tour," *The Washington Post*, June 29, 1929, p. 7.

⁵¹ A letter from Joyner "dated August 30, 1928, told of trips repeatedly taken by prominent officials on a demonstration pleasure boat." "One day Admiral Long had used the boat, the next day the Turkish Ambassador, the next day the then Chief of Naval Operations," etc. For this letter, see *The Washington Post*, September 7, 1934, p. 3.

⁵² "Boat Official Hailed 'Coup' In Congress, Inquiry Hears," *The Washington Post*, September 7, 1934, pp. 1, 3. In reporting on the Nye hearings, *The Washington Post* noted that the Electric Boat Company Vice President claimed that "the understanding involving submarines, aircraft and other munitions for Kemal Pasha, dictator of Turkey, had been approved by the State Department after careful discussion with a 'Mr. Shaw' and that any contract resulting would be approved by the State Department." At the same time, the Electric Boat Company official said the links between the Turks and the admirals and his company were so secret that he could refer to them only by numbers, the number one standing for the Turkish Ambassador and numbers four and five standing for the two admirals. Immediately after this exposé, Muhtar's successor, Münir Ertegün, came in to protest, but later Turkish Embassy officers returned to indicate that the Turkish government recognized that there had been illegal acts in the past involving senior government officials and approved the investigation. See US National Archives,

What the Nye Committee report did not bring out was the full extent of Muhtar's efforts to establish confidential relations with other arms suppliers. For example, as early as May 1928, he was attempting to put together a deal for machine guns with the Driggs Ordnance and Engineering Company and for tens of thousands of military-style revolvers from Smith & Wesson Company. In the course of weaving this web, Muhtar met privately with the Smith & Wesson sales representative Frederick N. Bungey in May 1928 at the suggestion of Sterling J. Joyner of the Electric Boat Company, who also enlisted Massachusetts Congressman Henry L. Bowles in this endeavor. Bungey told his superiors that "the whole matter is to be treated as strictly confidential as between the Ambassador and ourselves."⁵³

The following year, from March 27 to April 3, 1929, the US Navy cruiser *Raleigh* made a port call in İstanbul to act as what Senator Nye subsequently called a "sales ship" for private munitions makers. The cruiser's captain in a most unusual procedure had been ordered by the Chief of Naval Operations to demonstrate to Turkish military observers the effectiveness of late-model Driggs anti-aircraft guns, so that the Driggs Ordnance and Engineering Company of New York could persuade Turkish authorities to buy these weapons. Evidence is still lacking to show the exact nature of Muhtar's role in this particular successful effort to promote military sales, but his direct involvement would have been consistent with his broad search for weapons from the Driggs Company at this time.⁵⁴

record group 59, file 811.113/Senate Investigation/37 of September 11, 1934, and file 811.113/Senate Investigation/88. Months later Münir would ask the Secretary of State for additional details "with a view to possible prosecution" or to devising administrative measures to prevent future corrupt practices. See US National Archives, record group 59, file 811.113/253, memorandum for the record, June 6, 1935.

⁵³ See the University of Massachusetts, Smith & Wesson files, Series 3/3, Box 29, Folder 102, Sales and Service-Export-Turkey.

⁵⁴ "Coolidge Aides Divulged Our Gun Designs To Help Produce Foreign Orders," *New York Times*, September 8, 1934, p. 1, report of the Nye Committee hearings on the Driggs Ordnance and Engineering Company. Company President Louis Driggs sought to make sure that the Turkish authorities understood that Americans were willing to sell weapons despite Washington's declared interest in arms reductions. The *Raleigh* was on a year of "flagship duty" in Europe at the time and was specifically ordered by the Navy Department to demonstrate to a Turkish military audience its anti-aircraft weapons as part of a sales campaign. As a result, the Turkish authorities actually did buy some of these weapons.

Diplomatic Work

Muhtar also viewed his role as that of negotiator of treaties with the United States, although the Department of State and the Turkish government generally preferred Ankara as the proper venue for such activity. Shortly after Muhtar arrived in Washington, the American authorities proposed that Turkey join other states in adhering to an Arbitration and Conciliation Treaty. Despite the fact that the negotiating process for this treaty began in Washington, the American Ambassador in Ankara also played a part in the process of attempting to bring the Turks into line on the language of this instrument. Throughout, however, Muhtar attempted to concentrate proceedings in Washington. Whether or not that effort sparked objections from the government in Ankara is not clear, but Muhtar in discussing the issue with a senior American official indicated that “he did not share the views of his Government” in trying to modify the American text significantly.⁵⁵ And rather than defending his government, Muhtar blamed difficulties over wording raised by Foreign Minister Aras in Ankara as provoked by “an error in translating” by the Turkish side.

When Turkish desires for language not in Arbitration and Conciliation Treaties with other states were rejected firmly by the Department of State, Foreign Minister Aras indicated in June 1932 that he needed personally to supervise such negotiations and at the same time “volunteered about possibly changing his Ambassador in Washington.”⁵⁶ That would have required approval by Atatürk, however. Such approval was not forthcoming and Muhtar remained at his post. Yet in the end these differences in tactics and approach caused the Arbitration and Conciliation accord with Turkey to be abandoned without ratification. It was deemed unnecessary by the parties after two other treaties were negotiated in Ankara whose provisions ended once and for all the possibility of Armenian claims against the Turkish Republican regime.

Even though the Turkish regime did not view Washington as the preferred location for bilateral treaty negotiation, Muhtar was given authority to negotiate a Treaty of Residence with the United States in October 1931. And he presided over the exchange of ratifications of

⁵⁵ US National Archives, record group 59, file 711.6712A/36, memorandum of conversation of July 21, 1928.

⁵⁶ US National Archives, record group 59, file 711.6712A/48, Ankara dispatch of June 13, 1932.

this instrument on February 15, 1933. Of perhaps more significance, he had a role in negotiating with countries which were not represented in Ankara and in representing Turkey in multilateral forums in the United States. In September 1928 Ankara sent Muhtar authorization to negotiate and sign a friendship accord with China. The Washington embassy also represented Turkey at the International Civil Aviation Conference at the end of 1928.

Making sure that the movement for international disarmament did not disadvantage Turkey began to loom large in Muhtar's duties as the 1930s wore on. With his excellent contacts in the US Navy, he was in a good position to keep Ankara aware of the United States position in the dispute over cruiser tonnage with Great Britain.⁵⁷ He also took the initiative in defending Turkey's interests in connection with the General Disarmament Conference organized in 1931 by the League of Nations, an organization of which Turkey at that time was not a member. With a view toward preventing Turkey from being faced with unwanted international pressures to disarm, he argued persuasively with American authorities that officers of the Conference be elected by the Conference and not by the League of Nations where Turkey would not have a vote.⁵⁸ Whether he also continued to try to procure arms through his defense industry contacts cannot be told on available evidence, but it is clear that he interceded with the American government—but with only partial success—to allow Turkish officers to be trained in the United States.⁵⁹

Muhtar would play an important role in convincing his government to strengthen its controls over the production of opium derivatives. After several illicit shipments of narcotics from Turkish sources were seized in New York and Europe in 1930, Muhtar sent what American officials termed a "whizz" of a warning to Ankara that Turkey's image was being severely damaged. The American Embassy believed that his message, along with interventions by Ambassador Charles Sherrill directly to Atatürk, shook up Turkey's leadership and led the state to change its narcotics policy. Accordingly, the Turks soon ratified the Hague Convention of 1912 and took steps to rein in opium processing

⁵⁷ See, for example, T. C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri, report from Muhtar on October 13, 1929, following President Hoover's lengthy press conference statement on the Great Power cruiser dispute, file 4407, code 30..10.0.0, place no. 267.801..8.

⁵⁸ US National Archives, record group 59, file 500.A15A4/46, January 24, 1931.

⁵⁹ US National Archives, record group 59, file 811.22767/12, January 25, 1933.

in Turkey, measures which Ankara had not previously seen necessary to take. By the time Muhtar's successor had arrived in 1934, Secretary of State Cordell Hull was praising Turkey for curbing narcotics.⁶⁰

Economic Activities

As the world-wide depression began to bite after the 1929 collapse of the American economy, economic concerns began to preoccupy Muhtar. Seizing on President Herbert Hoover's proposal for a moratorium in reparations paid by Germany in June 1931, Muhtar saw this as an opportunity to reduce Turkey's indebtedness.⁶¹ He thus asked that similar treatment be accorded the Ottoman debt payments. However, he was informed that Hoover's proposals concerned only inter-government debt and not private or commercial debt like that owed by the Turkish government to American citizens. A reduction in Turkey's debt payments would await his successor's efforts.

More ambitiously, Muhtar attempted to coordinate the Turkish and American positions for the International Monetary and Economic Conference in London from June 12 to July 27 1933.⁶² In the process, he also kept Ankara informed of President Roosevelt's efforts to enlist the cooperation of major world leaders.⁶³ In the end, however, he was not successful. President Roosevelt repudiated the agreement reached by his representatives at the Conference and refused to bail out this gathering, which sought economic sacrifices principally from the United States on grounds that it appeared to be the world's wealthiest power of the day.

One of Muhtar's most important tasks in Washington in 1932 and 1933 was to arrange for American customs and economic experts to assist Turkey's development and recovery from the Depression. In this endeavor, he did not enjoy the confidence of Ali Rana Tarhan, the Minister of Customs and Monopolies in Ankara, who could not understand why Muhtar was given the lead in the effort to find a customs expert.

⁶⁰ US National Archives, record group 59, file 867,114 Narcotics/101, memorandum of conversation of December 20, 1930; "Turkey Is Hailed for Narcotic Curb," *New York Times*, July 10, 1934, p. 6.

⁶¹ US National Archives, record group 59, file 462.00R296/4383, July 1, 1931.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ T. C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri, report from Muhtar and two notes from the Department of State dated May 11, 1933, file no. 400-3198, code 30..10.0.0., place no. 221.487..7.

But Muhtar evidently had the trust of Minister of Economics Celal (Bayar) as well as of Prime Minister İsmet İnönü, and behind them all certainly he enjoyed Atatürk's favor. In his quest for renowned specialists, he contacted some of the most prominent economic figures in the United States. In the end, with Department of State help, he recruited Walter D. Hines to serve as an Economic Specialist to survey the Turkish economy as part of Celal Bayar's plan to give private enterprise a significant role in Turkey's etatist policy.⁶⁴ But almost immediately Hines became ill and died in January 1934. Muhtar then coordinated with his replacement, Edwin W. Kemmerer, to keep the economic team he had assembled in place so that it would have a chance to influence the Five Year Plan already being elaborated in Ankara under the impress of Soviet economic policies.

Relations with other states

In these years Turkey was spreading its diplomatic wings. As it began the drive to enter the League of Nations, the idea of increasing the number of states with which Turkey had diplomatic relations took hold in Ankara. Yet for reasons of economy the opening of new diplomatic establishments and the posting of Turkish diplomats were to be minimized. As a result, when the question of accrediting an envoy to the Mexican Republic was raised, Ankara decided to nominate Muhtar for this post, while retaining him as ambassador in Washington. Thus in June 1931 he received notice that he would receive new credentials as Minister to Mexico. The documents arrived in Washington by the fall of 1931, but he apparently did not view this additional post as sufficiently important to interrupt his active social schedule. Thus he did not actually present his credentials in Mexico City until May 1933. At that time, he went there by train but returned by boat to New York after two weeks in the Mexican capital.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ US National Archives, record group 59, file 867.01A/74, dispatch of October 3, 1932; file 867.01A/91, the Under Secretary's Memorandum of Conversation with the Turkish Ambassador, January 25, 1933, in which the latter said "that he was making a real study now of the individuals suggested for a general economic study of Turkey."

⁶⁵ His letter of credence was issued June 7, 1931. "Mr. Muhtar Will be Envoy to Mexico," *The Washington Post*, June 28, 1931, p. S 4; "Turkish Envoy Will Entertain on October 29," *The Washington Post*, October 14, 1931, p. 10; "Dinner Fetes Honor Envoys in Capital," *The Washington Post*, May 7, 1933, p. 7.

In addition to establishing Mexican ties, Muhtar sought to parley his Soviet experience into helping to thaw Washington's relations with the Soviet Union. *The Washington Post* even credited him with playing some role as an intermediary in dealings with the Soviet Union,⁶⁶ alleging that he was involved in bringing the Soviets and the Americans together. While this newspaper article was probably partly inspired by his campaign to emphasize his importance in order to combat the rumored effort in Ankara to remove him from his Washington assignment, it had some truth. When Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinoff visited Washington in November 1933, Muhtar was the only foreign diplomat who entertained the Soviet official, whom he had known from his tour in Moscow. The Department of State included Muhtar prominently in its entertainment for Litvinoff, and the Soviet Foreign Minister returned the favor by calling on Muhtar as he was leaving Washington.

Intermediary in Aircraft Procurement

In line with Atatürk's oft-quoted dictum that the future lay in the skies, by the end of the 1920s the Ankara regime sought to create an aircraft industry to be able to manufacture and service the rudimentary aircraft of the day. Perhaps because the Wright brothers had been the first successful pioneers of flight, America was chosen as the primary source of assistance in the endeavor to set up an aircraft plant in Turkey. Indeed, after an American sales mission traveled to Turkey to demonstrate the export version of the leading Curtiss-Wright pursuit plane, the Turkish Ministry of Defense concluded an agreement with an American military sales mission from this company to support the manufacture and service of Hawk II planes at a newly established plant in Kayseri. But before long, this effort to manufacture under license 24 Hawk II fighter airplanes in Kayseri ran into difficulty. By 1933 the Turks had failed to meet the terms for liquidating the credit owed to the Curtiss-Wright firm for this deal.

⁶⁶ Harold J. T. Horan, "Soviet Recognition Reenters Picture," *The Washington Post*, December 19, 1933, p. 2. "Possible negotiations looking toward renewal of relations with Soviet Russia are causing considerable interest in all diplomatic circles here. Turkish Ambassador Ahmet Muhtar, *whose country acts as the liaison between the United States and the Soviet government* (emphasis added), has been in frequent communication with the Turkish Ambassador in Moscow of late."

Accordingly, in August 1933 Muhtar passed on to the Ministry of Defense the urgent request of the American company for Turkey to retire the debt of \$160,000 still outstanding. The Ankara authorities were slow in responding, and no word from Turkey had been received by November 1933. At this time, Muhtar found himself in New York to attend a banquet by the American Friends of Turkey in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Republic. While he was there, a senior official of Curtiss-Wright came to his hotel to complain about the continuing failure to settle this debt and to ask the Turkish Ambassador to serve as a go-between to assure payment. Muhtar, in a dispatch directly to Prime Minister İsmet İnönü, urged speedy compliance with the American firm's request and warned that this non-payment was damaging the credit and reputation of Turkey.⁶⁷ Apparently his second appeal was successful in prying out payment from Ankara. As a result, the Turks were able to continue to take delivery of motors as well as other equipment for the aircraft.

Difficulties

Other difficulties of a more minor nature dogged Muhtar during his time in Washington. Traffic violations and accidents on the part of his staff also intruded on his time. One member of his staff⁶⁸ was stopped for speeding several times. He had to deal with persistent claims for damages from accidents. His chauffeur even got into a brawl with a taxi driver. And when the Department of State raised this issue, Muhtar reported that he had to reprimand his driver sharply.⁶⁹ But whatever the value of the complaints, Muhtar defended his staff stoutly against any infringement of their diplomatic rights in these incidents.

⁶⁷ T. C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri, dispatch from Washington dated November 2, 1933, file no. 440.40, Code 30..10.0.0, place no. 267.802..14. Muhtar noted that Curtiss-Wright's Board of Directors included such important American bankers as Joseph C. Rovensky of Chase National Bank who were also putting pressure on Muhtar in this matter.

⁶⁸ Kemal Cenani was sent to Washington as Third Secretary "through the influence of" Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüştü Aras, despite what the American Embassy termed his "poor reputation." After arriving in the United States, he was involved in speeding incidents and an accident which raised claims for damages. See US National Archives, record group 59, file 701.5711/205, telegram of October 6, 1927.

⁶⁹ US National Archives, record group 59, file 701.6711/285 Washington Police Department, October 6, 1931.

Dean of the Diplomatic Corps

In April 1933, about a year before the end of his tour in Washington, Muhtar became Dean of the Diplomatic Corps by virtue of being the longest serving foreign ambassador in the capital. As a diplomat of the old school, that was an honor which he cherished. However, the Department of State refused him the meeting which he requested with the newly inaugurated President Roosevelt to announce himself as dean. The Americans explained that there was no precedent for such a meeting.⁷⁰ More importantly, Roosevelt was busy at this time dealing with the aftermath of the “bank holiday” and other such weighty matters. He had no time for such diplomatic show and Turkey did not yet loom large in Washington’s thinking.

Muhtar exploited his new status as dean to gain favorable publicity to the best of his ability. He evidently took good care to keep the *Washington Post* informed of his activities. As a result, he received consistently good press in this organ, enjoying positive references in its society pages even when his activities were merely “motoring in Virginia.” He also was cited as one of the capital’s most avid and devoted fishermen, apparently his principal hobby in Washington. On a more important note, being the dean, he led the diplomatic corps at the annual White House reception, where he outranked all other ambassadors. That was especially sweet as he took precedence over British Ambassador Sir Ronald Lindsay. Lindsay, when serving in Turkey at the time of the declaration of the Republic in 1923, had refused to accept Ankara as Turkey’s capital and had pressed other Europeans to follow suit. Moreover, Lindsay had argued that the new Turkish state was not worth the dignity of ambassadorial representation.⁷¹ In addition to receiving honored treatment at the White House, Muhtar was entertained as guest of honor by the Secretary of State and Acting Secretary of State on several occasions. And the *Washington Post* printed extensive coverage of his own diplomatic events.

Yet all was not sweetness and light. One of Muhtar’s last acts in Washington was to ask the Department of State to defend Turkey against criticism in the *Washington Star*. This rival of the *Washington Post* carried on its quest for readership by welcoming in its pages critics

⁷⁰ US National Archives, record group 59, file 701.6711/326, April 11, 1933.

⁷¹ Bilâl Şimşir, *Ankara... Ankara* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2006), passim.

of Turkey. When Muhtar complained, American authorities informed him that the offending article was the personal views of its author and there was nothing useful the American government could do to help in this matter.⁷² His successor would carry on the custom of complaining about media treatment of Turkey and asking the American government to intervene on Turkey's behalf.

Return to Turkey

Muhtar's retirement had been rumored as early as the end of 1932.⁷³ But at that time he stoutly denied asking to leave the diplomatic service and asked Ankara to contradict that report as well. Subsequently he fell into ill health and had to slow down, although the pace of his social activities did not noticeably diminish. That may be why he was recalled. Yet as a consolation for having to leave Washington on April 20, 1934, Muhtar was elected Kastamonu deputy just weeks before his death on July 3, 1934.

But for all the difficulties and unfinished business of his tour in Washington, Muhtar had moved Turkish representation from being a target of protest and press attacks over mistreatment of minorities in Turkey to its general acceptance as spokesman for a conventional secular state. Armenian-American criticism had not yet disappeared, but it had lost much of its force, and critics from this quarter no longer had the stature to block the negotiation of treaties. Muhtar's achievement was to demonstrate to Washington officialdom and society an urbane and secular face of Turkey. *The Washington Post* celebrated him as one of the best diplomats in the city and praised highly his contributions to improving the image of Turkey.⁷⁴ As *The Washington Post's* diplomatic correspondent wrote on March 12, 1933, summing up Muhtar's career just a year before he left Washington:⁷⁵

⁷² US National Archives, record group 59, file 811.461/166, memorandum of conversation December 12, 1933.

⁷³ "Turkish Envoy Quit: Fethi Bey May Come Here," *New York Times*, January 2, 1933, p. 13; "Turkish Envoy Surprised," *New York Times*, January 3, 1933, p. 5.

⁷⁴ "Notes of Official and Resident Society," *The Washington Post*, March 13, 1934, p. 13.

⁷⁵ Harold J. T. Horan, "The Diplomatic Pouch," *The Washington Post*, March 12, 1933, p. 7.

Back in the days of Venetian and Florentine grandeur, legates and ambassadors were chosen for their physical appropriateness to the task of representing either the Doges or the Medici. Not since Sir Esme Howard [British Ambassador to Washington 1924–1930] will the Diplomatic Corps have a dean who as exactly fulfils this unwritten law of diplomatic distinction as in the case of the new dean, Turkish Ambassador Ahmet Muhtar. The task of satisfying the exacting whims of the Gazi, or the Gray Wolf of Angora, as Mustapha Kemal has recently been called, is no easy one. However, the representative of Turkish interests in the United States under the direction of the present ambassador has eminently pleased the Iron Man of the Near East...

To a long list of diplomatic successes and honors the Turkish Ambassador has now added the distinction that seniority in the Washington Diplomatic Corps can give. His task it will be to represent the interests of the diplomats and upon his discretion, judgment and tact the settlement of any problem involving the interests of the corps as a whole and the State Department will depend...

Ahmet Muhtar has succeeded in bringing the United States and Turkey closer together than they have been at any time in history. He introduced the sending of American experts to Turkey to assist in the reorganization of the country. This at first provoked some repercussions not the least of which was the persistent reports launched from Paris that he was to be replaced by Fethy (sic.) Bey, Francophile former Turkish Ambassador in Paris. Only in this way could the Quai d'Orsey hope to discourage the growth of American influence in Turkey.

* * * *

When Ambassador Ahmet Muhtar first arrived in the United States, his presence provoked a storm of criticism because of Turkish treatment of Jews and Armenians that would have well discouraged any other less patient, less tactful envoy. In a short time, however, he had succeeded in mitigating this attitude. This humanitarian attitude had made him the choice of the Turkish government in arranging for the repatriation of prisoners while he was Minister at The Hague, in 1914 and after, in the war...

When the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed, he was appointed by the Porte to be diplomatic representative to the Ukrainian government. First of the deputies of the Old Guard to throw in his lot with the Gazi, he became a leading figure in the first assembly of the Nationalist party in Anatolia. Then it was dangerous to be known as a follower of the Gazi. He became minister for foreign affairs (sic.) in Mustapha Kemal's first government and gave Mussolini the example of holding three portfolios

at once, the ministries of foreign affairs, justice and interior.⁷⁶ He went to Tiflis as Turkish representative for the Georgian Republic and was the first Turkish Ambassador to the Soviet government. His success was so outstanding here that he was chosen to blaze the way for reopening Turkish-American relations and came here as ambassador in December 1927... He has the half-lidded eyes of a Kitchener, the aplomb of a Talleyrand and more tact than Olivier, the head waiter beloved of M. Caesar Ritz.

It would remain for his successor, however, to build on this impressive base in imparting even greater warmth to the Turkish-American relationship and better access to the President.

⁷⁶ There is no evidence that this claim was true.

CHAPTER SIX

CEMENTING TURKISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS: THE AMBASSADORSHIP OF (MEHMET) MÜNİR ERTEGÜN (1934–1944)¹

GEORGE S. HARRIS

Münir Erteğün (he would drop the first name of Mehmet when he took a last name in the 1930s), was the second ambassador from Turkey to serve in Washington after the First World War. He faced a slightly different task from that of his predecessor. By the time he arrived in Washington, Turkey was generally viewed in a favorable light by the decision-makers in Washington. But it was not yet thought of as having strategic importance. And it would be his task to deepen ties and establish a smoothly functioning military supply arrangement with Washington as Turkey's principal arms supplier. Active criticism by Armenian-Americans had waned considerably, though dealing with possible negative repercussions of the Armenian issue on public opinion would dog his path for much of his tenure in the American capital. Yet all in all, under his stewardship most impediments to establishing rather intimate relations between the United States and Turkey were overcome. And he would leave a strongly based relationship on which a remarkable post-war intimacy could be built.

Münir came from a background in many ways different from that of his predecessor. He was the son of a religiously oriented family. His father had risen to become Undersecretary of the Religious Endowments Ministry, while his mother was the daughter of Sufi Sheykh Ethem efendi of the *Üsküdar Özbekler Tekkesi* (Uzbek Lodge in Üsküdar). Münir himself remained religious and, according to his son, prayed five

¹ His basic data and career assignments were drawn from his Foreign Ministry personnel file, sicil numarası 63.

times a day all his life.² Yet his political approach was secular and he never had any trouble in fitting in appropriately with the West-leaning Kemalist regime. He was also unusual in having acquired a fair command of English from study with the head of an American missionary school in his youth. And he would have the opportunity to increase his proficiency through an assignment in London as ambassador before being posted to the United States.

With a degree from the İstanbul Faculty of Law, Münir entered Ottoman service in 1908 and later that year, after the Young Turk Revolution, became a translator for the Senate, indicating that his proficiency in foreign languages was already impressive. The following year he joined the Advisory Chamber in the Ottoman Foreign Ministry, before becoming a Legal Adviser to the Prime Ministry in 1913. He apparently remained in that position during all the First World War. He did take time out to marry Hayrinissa Rüstem in 1917 before going as Legal Adviser to take part in drafting the March 1918 Brest-Litovsk treaty with Czarist Russia. Next he participated in the May 1918 Bucharest peace negotiations to regulate the status of the Balkans as the First World War was coming to an end. In his position as Legal Adviser he finally shared in the disastrous Sèvres Treaty in 1920.

Against this background, in December of that year he took part in the Ahmet İzzet Pasha's (Furğaç) delegation to Ankara. When this mission seeking to reconcile Atatürk's nationalists with the Ottoman government failed, Münir, while still in Ankara, abandoned the Sultan and offered his services to the national cause. He was immediately recruited by Acting Foreign Minister Muhtar to join the Ankara Foreign Ministry on December 9, 1920.

Service as Ankara Legal Adviser

Two months later he was sent to serve Atatürk's regime as Legal Adviser to the Turkish mission at the London Conference of February–March 1921. His command of English proved useful in this context. And then in May he was dispatched to Adana to present to the French Ankara's counterproposals for a cease-fire in Cilicia. He also bore a letter

² A. L. Bardach "Interrogating Ahmet Ertegun, the Atlantic Records founder on Ray Charles, Islamic fundamentalism, and his own hipness." *Slate*, February 25, 2005, interview.

informing the French that Ankara rejected the agreements Foreign Minister Bekir Sami had reached with the Entente following the London Conference. In appreciation for his skill in carrying out this mission, in October 1921 Parliament voted him a special lump-sum bonus of 300 lira, an important amount in those days.³

Münir next played an important role in the Lausanne Peace Conference in 1922–1923, where his language facility was made use of by Turkish Chief Delegate İsmet Pasha (İnönü), who would champion him in future. He was selected to stay in Paris after the successful conclusion of the Lausanne Treaty to handle the important Conference to Apportion Ottoman Debt. At the conclusion of this service, he returned to Ankara as Chief Legal Adviser in 1924, where he was authorized along with Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Tevfik Kamil (Koperler) to negotiate friendship treaties with such states as Germany, Bulgaria, and Sweden.⁴ He also assisted Turkish Delegate Fethi (Okyar) in the unsuccessful attempt to prevent the British from including Mosul as part of their Iraqi mandate.

Foreign Service

After serving in this capacity as an Ankara-based official, Münir was given the first of the Foreign Service positions that would occupy the remainder of his life. He was posted as Minister to Berne for four years from 1925 to 1929. During this assignment he attended League of Nations meetings to defend Turkish treatment of minorities in 1925 and, clearly as a result of his command of English, he also was granted signing authority to conclude with Britain various subsidiary accords arising out of the Lausanne Treaty.⁵ In addition, he was assigned the task of serving as Turkish “Specialist Representative” to the Security Committee of the Arms Limitation Conference in Geneva in 1928. That would be followed by his appointment as Representative of Turkey

³ Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri, document of October 27, 1921, no. 1143, file 232–6, Code 30..18.1.1, place no. 3.34..14.

⁴ Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri, document of February 24, 1924, no. 305, Code 30..18.1.1, place no. 9.15..2; document of May 13, 1924, no. 506, file no. 226–2, Code 30..18.1.1, place no. 9.25..3; and document of May 12, 1924, no. 507, file 422–1, code 30..18.1.1, place no. 12.64..13.

⁵ Ibid., document of May 24, 1925, no. 1954, file 422–2. Code 30..18.1.1., place no. 13.31..7.

to the 1930 Preparatory Commission to Reduce Arms. Moreover, as Ambassador to Switzerland it was only natural for him to take part in the work of the International Labor Organization which was based in Geneva.

On the strength of his performance on the larger international stage, he was promoted to the plum assignment of Ambassador to Paris in 1930. Here, in addition to his regular duties, he served as Atatürk's personal book buying agent.⁶ In this way, Münir played a supportive role in the effort to portray Turkey as an important source of world culture and in the language and educational reform that were associated with this effort. Moreover, through this book buying, he gained new insight into Atatürk's vision for his country.

Enjoying substantial support from the Turkish leadership, he must have expected that he would remain in Paris for more than two years. But Ankara politics dictated that Minister of Education Vasıf (Çınar) be sent abroad, setting off a chain of ambassadorial shifts. As a result, Münir was required to move from Paris to London as ambassador in 1932. London was also one of the most important diplomatic posts in the Turkish pantheon, inasmuch as improving relations with the British was central to Atatürk's foreign policy design. Yet Münir found that wooing the British was inexplicably not funded at that time. He had to make special appeals to Prime Minister İnönü to get reimbursement much after the fact to defray the expense of entertaining Greek Foreign Minister Dimitrios E. Maximos when the latter came through London to discuss the formation of the Balkan Pact in January 1934. And again he even pleaded poverty to request reimbursement for entertaining important British political figures to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the republic, a type of entertainment which he noted was routinely funded for other Turkish embassies.⁷

When Muhtar was recalled from Washington in 1934, Münir, with his background in English, an unusual skill among senior officers in the Turkish diplomatic corps in those days, and with his depth of foreign experience and ability to act on his own, seemed a logical candidate for the United States. It was perhaps finally his multilateral experience that tipped the balance, for others with less impressive diplomatic credentials

⁶ Bilâl Şimşir, *Bizim Diplomatlar* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1996), pp. 300–302.

⁷ Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri, copy of telegram of January 10, 1934, to London, code 030.10, place no. 227.526..9, and report of September 25, 1934, to Prime Minister İnönü code 030.10, place no. 129.928..9.

were considered.⁸ Thus he was uprooted from the London post and sent off to Washington after hardly two years in the British Isles.

Settling in Washington

Unlike the experience of his predecessor, Münir did not face hostile protests when he set foot on American soil. Instead, doors were immediately open to him. Within days of his arrival in Washington in June 1934, Münir saw Secretary of State Cordell Hull. Soon thereafter, although his wife was not yet with him, he followed up by calling on Eleanor Roosevelt, whom he obviously saw as a power behind the throne in Washington and whom his predecessor, lacking a wife accompanying him, had been unable to cultivate assiduously. Münir presented his credentials to President Franklin Roosevelt in the Red Parlor on June 26, 1934. He had the opportunity to follow up his contacts with the Roosevelt family, when in December of that year General Charles Sherrill honored him at a lunch in New York with Mrs. James Roosevelt, mother of the President, in attendance.⁹

Yet before he could focus his full attention on cultivating the powerful figures in Washington, he had to go to Mexico to present his credentials as contemporaneously Minister to the Mexican Republic. Having endured a Washington summer without any means of breaking the heat, Münir was all too ready to travel to Mexico City in October 1934 to present his credentials to the Mexican government as concurrently Minister to Mexico City. On October 4, 1934, therefore, he left Washington for a three-week trip to Mexico. Here he concentrated mainly on the possibilities for fruitful trade. But on return, his report of this mission shows Münir confident enough to make the bold suggestion that in future the Turkish Embassy in Washington should move to the salubrious climate of Mexico City for the summers. He also was not above pandering to his chief by distorting the Mayan place name for the quarter he traversed on his way to the Presidential Palace to exaggerate its resemblance to Turkish. Clearly in this way he was seeking to give

⁸ Former Minister of Customs and Monopolies Ali Rana Tarhan, who also spoke English, was apparently among others considered for the Washington post.

⁹ "Mehmet Munir Is Honored at N. Y. Luncheon," *The Washington Post*, December 18, 1934, p. 14.

support to the theory that Atatürk was then investigating to the effect that Turkish was the mother language of the world.¹⁰

Münir's return to the United States just in time to celebrate Turkish National Day in Washington would leave the Mexican post uncovered. However, Hasan Tahsin Mayatepek would come early the following year to act as Chargé for several years before again leaving Münir as the only Turkish diplomat accredited there, although still not resident.¹¹

Republic Day

Because his wife had not arrived in Washington by the time of the anniversary celebration of the Republic of Turkey in October 1934, Münir invited twenty-one year old Nihal Menemencioglu, daughter of former Ottoman diplomat Ethem Menemencioglu, to preside with him over this function. Nihal was then resident in town as her mother, after divorcing her father, had married an Egyptian diplomat who was subsequently posted to Washington.¹²

Hayrinissa Rüstem in Washington

Early in January 1935, Münir's wife arrived from Turkey and he could go into high gear in cultivating Mrs. Roosevelt. After the Roosevelts presided over a state reception on January 3, 1935, in honor of the diplomatic corps,¹³ the first he would attend as ambassador, he and his wife requested separate meetings with Washington power brokers, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Secretary of State Cordell Hull and his wife, Vice President John Nance Garner and his wife, as well as the Speaker of the House and the Chief Justice and their wives. His lobbying was successful enough that Eleanor Roosevelt entertained him and his wife

¹⁰ Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri, report of November 29, 1934, file no. 44054, code 30..10.0, place no. 267.802..28. Münir dropped the final "c" on Chapultepec to increase the resemblance of "tepec" to the Turkish "tepe," meaning hill and he used that to support his claim that this quarter bore "a Turkish name (Çapul Tepe)."

¹¹ "Official and Resident Society Notes," *The Washington Post*, October 5, 1934, p. 15.

¹² Evelyn Peyton Gordon, "D. C. Reception Marks Turkish National Day," *The Washington Post*, October 30, 1934, p. 13.

¹³ "State Receptions Start at Capital; President and Mrs. Roosevelt Entertain in Honor of the Diplomatic Corps," *New York Times*, January 14, 1935, p. 25.

as guests of honor at tea on January 10, 1935.¹⁴ Mrs. Roosevelt then even singled out Mme. Erteğün to include her with only a handful of other ladies in the Presidential box at a concert by Lily Pons on February 5, 1935.¹⁵ Mme. Erteğün was also a prominent guest at a "Hen Gridiron Dinner" given by the First Lady in March 1935 and a few days later was listed at the head of 50 invitees Mrs. Roosevelt entertained for lunch.¹⁶ Thus within three months of her arrival in Washington, Mme. Erteğün had become a fixture in top administration circles.

With his wife's arrival Münir also began an intensive round of entertaining powerful figures in Washington. Among his early guests was Senator William H. King, who had led the fight against exchanging ambassadors, and who continued to object to treaty relations with Turkey. But in the midst of this activity Münir failed to make sure that his embassy sent the customary July 4th felicitations to the Secretary of State. He suffered some momentary embarrassment when that failing was called to his attention. He assured the Department of State that it was merely an oversight.¹⁷

Münir, particularly at the start of his tenure in Washington, saw need to go into high gear to publicize Turkey. Yet, the need for financial stringency during the Depression meant that his staff remained limited. Thus he was the main publicist for Turkey in the embassy. As a result, within weeks of his arrival in Washington it fell to him to make a 15-minute speech on Turkish-American relations at 10:15 at night on the radio.¹⁸ In line with interest in America on the position of women in Turkey, he gave an early interview to *The Washington Post's* society editor, emphasizing the progress of Turkish women in gaining political rights.¹⁹ Soon he and his wife were listed as patrons of charity events, ranging from joining Mrs. Roosevelt in supporting the Trinity College Prom to sponsoring a benefit for the George Washington University

¹⁴ "Notes of Social Activities in New York and Elsewhere," *New York Times*, January 11, 1935, p. 30.

¹⁵ "Official and Resident Society Notes," *The Washington Post*, February 6, 1935, p. 11.

¹⁶ "Trinity College Alumnae Give Prom Tonight," *The Washington Post*, March 1, 1935, p. 16; "First Lady Heads Notable Women Invited to "Hen Gridiron Dinner," *The Washington Post*, March 3, 1935, p. S 3. Gridiron dinners were events where prominent politicians were lampooned.

¹⁷ US National Archives, record group 59, file 811.458/Turkey/12 of September 19. 1934. no. 122.

¹⁸ "Today on the Radio," *New York Times*, July 7, 1934, p. 25.

¹⁹ Hope Ridings Miller, "Role of Turkish Women Hailed by Ambassador," *The Washington Post*, December 12, 1934, p. 15.

Hospital.²⁰ And he regularly took part in events arranged for the diplomatic corps to keep Turkey in the limelight.

The Forty Days of Musa Dagh Issue

Münir's contacts with the Department of State also worked smoothly and with evident warmth. One of his first tasks on arrival was to convince senior officers in the Department of State that the plan by Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer to film Franz Werfel's *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, which played up "Turkish massacres in Armenia," would be "inopportune."²¹ Starting in November 1934, Münir protested to Wallace Murray, chief of Near Eastern Affairs in the Department of State and his usual contact in the American government, asking that all possible steps to be taken to prevent the production of this film by Paramount Studios because it risked triggering hostility toward Turkey by presenting a distorted picture of Turkish treatment of Armenians. He was wrong about the studio, for in fact it was Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer which had obtained the script. Münir was correct, however, about Hollywood's interest in making the film, though the studio was willing to make some modifications in the script in the interest of alleviating Turkish concerns. Thus started a continuing tussle between Hollywood film-makers and the Turkish Embassy in which the Department of State often acted as an intermediary, but one much more sympathetic to the Turks than to the movie industry.²² And in this struggle Münir was not above threatening a breach in Turkish-American relations if the Turks were not satisfied with the outcome.

As a result of Münir's protest, Murray passed on to Will Hays, the film industry's czar to enforce its Motion Picture Production Code, the Department of State's strong request that no damaging film be made. Hays was sympathetic to the Turkish case inasmuch the Production Code called for the history and institutions of other nations to be

²⁰ "New Sponsors For Spring Fete Are Announced," *The Washington Post*, April 3, 1935, p. 13.

²¹ US National Archives, record group 59, file 811.4061-MUSA DAGH/10 of April 22, 1935.

²² For a detailed review of this on-going struggle, see David Wekly, "Global Hollywood Versus National Pride: The Battle to Film *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*," *Film Quarterly*, vol. 59 (Spring 2006), pp. 35-43.

“represented fairly.”²³ While MGM’s management bristled at his intervention, Hays was not a man to be trifled with, and his warning against celebrating massacres was taken seriously. MGM’s executives argued, however, that the film did not treat Armenian massacres and they believed that it should not offend the sensitivities of the Turks.²⁴ For the moment, those assurances mollified Münir.

In April 1935, however, the Turks learned that MGM was going ahead with the film of Werfel’s novel, and that contrary to MGM’s reassurances the script included reference to Turkish atrocities. Münir immediately insisted that the Department of State tell MGM to abandon the movie altogether. Again Wallace Murray agreed to pressure MGM, which tried to ease Turkish anxiety by insisting that MGM had no intention of suggesting that the Turks had engaged in genocide. But after reading the script, the Turkish ambassador strongly disagreed with the portrayal of Turkey and again demanded that the film not be allowed to continue. This time he also raised the problem directly with MGM, informing a studio vice president “in no uncertain terms that ‘Turkish honor’ was on the line.” And he backed this up by threatening that if the film were made, Turkey would ban MGM products.²⁵

By now the controversy had spread to the Turkish press, which reinforced threats to boycott MGM films. And these articles in leading Turkish newspapers seemed only to embolden Münir to write the Secretary of State to threaten to disrupt Turkish-American relations if the film were made. Accordingly, at Secretary Hull’s direction Wallace Murray on September 7, 1935, again approached Will Hays to kill the project once and for all. The confluence of all these forces seemed to have the desired effect, and the studio agreed to back down. Münir seemed to have won—but only for a time.

Regularizing Military Supply

The Turkish Embassy was busy on other fronts as well. As the 1930s went on, the international situation increasingly deteriorated. By the mid-1930s, Turkey felt under threat from the Italians in particular. Thus, building on his predecessor’s successful activity, Münir had

²³ See the Motion Picture Production Code of 1930.

²⁴ Wekly, p. 37.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 38.

begun in 1935 to press the Department for assistance in purchasing additional aircraft and other military equipment. Indeed, the acquisition of war matériel increasingly became the leitmotif of his tenure in Washington.

In his early years in Washington, the Turks were denied some requested arms and munitions for reasons of military secrecy. But by September 1937 he was able to get permission to buy 20 model 139 W airplanes, the export version of the B-10 Glen L. Martin bomber. Unfortunately for the Turks, this plane became obsolete by the time that the Second World War broke out, however. And with the coming of the war, the availability of war matériel for sale formed the main barrier to successful purchases as Britain cornered much of the available supply because it enjoyed a higher priority in acquiring weapons. In this situation, purchases for the Turkish military would include mules (!) for the Turkish army and other low-end war matériel. Because of the scarcity of supply, the ambassador himself would focus on trying to beat out the competition for planes ordered by the French but undelivered before the fall of France. Beyond equipment he also sought American military instructors for the air force and permission to send Turkish officers to the United States to study anti-aircraft artillery and sanitary measures for naval ships. He was frustrated in these training requests, as American legislation then on the books did not permit approving this activity.

As war clouds gathered, the sale of chrome ore became an object of rivalry between the United States and Germany. That led Münir also to become personally involved on several occasions with efforts by the United States to purchase chrome. On one occasion, he secured an exception from the Ankara government to transfer ownership of chrome ore from the UK to an American company, an exception which he argued balanced off a Turkish request to be allowed to buy a militarily-useful restricted commodity, tetraethyl lead, from the United States.²⁶

Other Activities

Another preoccupation early in his tenure was to reduce Turkish indebtedness to private American claimants contracted during the period since the outbreak of the First World War. After lengthy negotiations

²⁶ US National Archives, record group 59, file 867.01B11/4 of April 4, 1940 and file 811.20 Defense (M)/ 410, Memorandum of Conversation of September 24, 1940.

on this subject resulting in a greatly reduced sum, in September 1937 he told the Department of State Near Eastern Affairs Division “with tears in his eyes” that “This is incomparably the happiest day of my whole career,” when informed that American officials had shaved \$400,000 off the some \$800,000 debt Turkey had earlier agreed to pay to individual Americans.²⁷

Perhaps as a result of his closeness with Iran’s envoys in Washington, the Iranian government asked him to take charge of Iranian interests in April 1936, when the Shah ordered his legation closed and recalled his envoy.²⁸ On April 6, 1936, Münir notified the Department of State of his additional status.²⁹ Later that year that role involved him in a tax investigation over art objects and rugs that were being auctioned in Washington. In his capacity as protecting officer for the Iranian interests, he testified that these goods were not the property of the Iranian government, hence might be subject to customs duties. He maintained his position as protector of Iranian interests in the United States for at least two years.³⁰

As the 1930s progressed, Münir played only a minor role in two of Turkey’s major interwar issues: the refortification of the Black Sea Straits and the annexation of the Sanjak of Alexandretta (or Hatay as it is called in Turkish). Turkey’s formal request to change the status of the Straits was delivered to all the Lausanne Treaty signatories in April 1936, but in addition the Turkish Ambassador in Washington called at the Department of State to deliver an information copy of the Turkish request to the American authorities as the United States was not a signatory to the treaty. But beyond this notification Münir had no negotiating role in the preparations for the Montreux Convention, because the United States, after internal discussion, decided not to become involved and Turkish decision-making on this issue was concentrated in Ankara.³¹

At the end of 1936, as the dispute over the fate of the Sanjak of Alexandretta began in earnest between France and Turkey, Münir also made

²⁷ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1937*, vol. 2, pp. 955–956.

²⁸ The Shah may have been reacting to an incident in which the Iranian envoy had been stopped for speeding, raising questions about whether his diplomatic status had been violated.

²⁹ US National Archives, record group 59, file 705.9167/2 of April 6, 1936; “Art Objects Held Not Iranian Property,” *Washington Post*, April 24, 1936, p. 2.

³⁰ “Iranian Jewels Not for Budget,” *New York Times*, January 22, 1938, p. 14.

³¹ See Roger R. Trask, *The United States Response to Turkish Nationalism and Reform, 1914–1939* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), pp. 228–232.

a trip to the Department of State to inform Washington of Turkey's desires for the eventual status of this territory. But again because the locus of major action in this issue lay elsewhere, either in Ankara, Paris, or at the League of Nations of which the United States was not a member, Münir's further role again would be merely peripheral. Accordingly, it was largely left to the American representatives in Paris, Geneva, and Ankara to keep Washington informed of developments in this issue.³²

Münir, however, did feel a continuing need to protect the image of Turkey and its leader. In the service of this cause, he called in at the Department of State in April 1938 to discuss his desire to have *The Insider's World*, Chicago, Illinois, as publisher of the short-lived sensational *Ken Magazine*, prosecuted for an article, "Ataturk, Hoodlum as Hero." He raised such a fuss that his message was relayed to President Roosevelt. But Münir had gone further than the Turkish President desired. Shortly thereafter he had to return to the Department of State to say that the Turkish government would not seek to prosecute, but to pass on the message that Atatürk appreciated President Roosevelt's interest in the matter.³³

Also in 1938 for the last time during Münir's tenure in Washington, the specter of filming *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* again appeared on the horizon. The Turkish Embassy was quick to press the Department of State to intervene once more. And with the threat that American business in Turkey would be harmed, MGM finally abandoned the quest to make this contentious film. It would later sell the rights to John Kurkjian, and in 1982 the movie would finally be made under Armenian auspices. Without the sponsorship of a major movie studio and lacking the major Hollywood stars that MGM had once considered, the final product would not have the lasting negative impact on Turkish-American relations that Münir had forecast.³⁴

In the last year of Atatürk's life, other critical articles appeared in the American press. Münir found himself frequently going to the Department of State to protest. Indeed, even as Atatürk's health deteriorated

³² US National Archives, record group 59, file 751.67/116, Memorandum of conversation, December 29, 1936.

³³ US National Archives, record group 59, file 867,001 Ataturk Kamal/45, April 30, 1938. See also Trask, p. 91.

³⁴ Welky, p. 40. The movie was finally made under the directorship of Sarky Mouradian.

just days before he finally died, an article in *Life* called “Tipsily Atatürk” caused Münir to express his regret, though he seemed to have learned by then that American constitutional provisions guaranteeing freedom of the press made forcing a retraction impossible.³⁵

Atatürk’s Demise

When Atatürk died in November 1938, Münir came to the Under Secretary to thank him for designating a special representative to the funeral. However, this appreciation turned out to be premature, for the Ankara authorities were not pleased at the level of representation at the funeral. In January 1939, Münir was sent back to make representations on this issue.³⁶

Atatürk’s death also provided a benchmark to judge the advance in relations since Muhtar arrived in 1927. The American press was all but unanimous in paying tribute to the Turkish President as a modernizer who was dragging his people behind him in his quest to make Turkey a Western-style state.³⁷ No longer would a paper of the stature of the *New York Times* headline an article calling Atatürk “Dictator of Turkey,” as it had done until just before his death.³⁸ And America’s leaders were beginning to see Turkey as an important state in an unstable Middle East.

False Alarm

In July 1939, the Department of State learned that the Turkish government was seeking to have Münir elected a Justice of the Permanent Court of International Justice. In the end, however, Turkey lacked the international prestige needed to win that election and Münir remained in Washington.

³⁵ “Tipsily Atatürk of Turkey,” *Life* (October 31) 1938.

³⁶ US National Archives, record group 59, file FW 867.001 Atatürk/Kamal/85, January 9, 1939.

³⁷ See Trask, pp. 92–93.

³⁸ “Dictator of Turkey welcomes Edward,” *New York Times*, September 5, 1936, p. 3.

Turkey at the World's Fair

An opportunity to foster understanding of Turkey on a broader scale was presented by the New York World's Fair in 1939. Turkey made a major investment in its pavilion to dramatize its new identity as a secular republic. When two Turkish buildings at the Fair opened, *Time* magazine quoted Münir to the effect that he believed that Turkey had "spent more than it can afford on exhibits," but he explained that that effort was merely a measure of the importance of the Fair in Turkish eyes.³⁹ He played a public role in celebrating Turkey Day at the Fair and made sure that the Turkish personnel there were supported adequately.

Religion in Politics

As evidence of Münir's raising stature in the eyes of the American administration, after the Second World War broke out in Europe, Assistant Secretary of State Adolph Berle, Jr. summoned him to get his reaction to a proposal to mobilize Islamic and Greek Orthodox Church leaders to join the Vatican to promote the cause of peace. Evidently caught off balance by this somewhat impractical notion, Münir, while throwing cold water on the project as requiring "a radical reversal of the policy of the Turkish government," nonetheless suggested that "the Turkish government sympathized so thoroughly with the objectives" of President Roosevelt that Ankara would give it serious consideration. Münir even floated his personal notion that the General Director of Religious Affairs could be put in contact with an American representative to coordinate an appeal to the various heads of Islamic communities. But he indicated that he would not inform Ankara of the American idea unless Washington wanted him to go ahead.⁴⁰

At a follow-up meeting on April 24, 1940, having had time to consider this proposal further (and likely to probe Ankara's views, despite his disclaimer), he completely reversed his position relative to the potential of the General Director of Religious Affairs to deal "independently" with foreign representatives. And although he specifically denied having

³⁹ *Time* (May 15) 1939.

⁴⁰ US National Archives, record group 59, files 740.00119 European War, 1939/285, Memorandum of conversation, April 5, 1940.

consulted with Ankara, Münir reported that what he termed an unrelated effort of a peace organization in the United States to enlist President İnönü in a similar endeavor had been seen as unwelcome in Ankara. The Turkish authorities decided in that case that "it would be inadvisable to make any reply whatever, even an acknowledgment." And he emphasized Ankara's determination to exclude Turkish religious officials from any role in political affairs. In short, he completely repudiated his previous cautious approval of this venture. To make his position even clearer, the following month, he returned to repeat that such a proposition to enlist Turkish religious leaders would embarrass Turkey.

Rapprochement with Greeks

More successful was Münir's concerted effort to woo Greek public opinion in tandem with Atatürk's fruitful diplomacy toward Athens. He and the Greek Chargé socialized with some warmth. But beyond normal diplomatic contact, Münir also established warm relations with *Ahepa*, the Greek solidarity organization. This warmth progressed to the point that in 1940, after a damaging earthquake in Turkey, the Greek-American leaders of that organization gave the Turkish Ambassador a check for \$2,000 for relief purposes.⁴¹ And this effort to bury past antagonisms with Greece guaranteed that Turkey would not be the subject of a bad press from Greek quarters in the United States, until the issue of Turkish resistance to independence for Cyprus broke out in the 1950s.

Turkish Foreign Policy Questions

As the Middle East became an area of maneuver between the Axis and the British and French in 1940, Iraq began to loom as a prize which either side might win. The anti-colonialist Iraqi Prime Minister Rashid Ali al-Gaylani increasingly sought to align Baghdad toward Berlin. Münir, who was in tune with Washington's views, easily understood the danger that a pro-Axis Iraq would present to Turkey and played a major role in pushing the Ankara government to cooperate with the British in a temporarily successful effort to force al-Gaylani out of office. However, Münir, far from the Iraqi scene, was premature in judging that

⁴¹ "Ahepa Gave Turkey \$2,000 for Relief," *The Washington Post*, March 7, 1940.

the crisis had past just when al-Gaylani was gathering force to return to power on the heels of a military coup. Thereafter, Turkey was merely an observer in this contest between Allies and Axis over Iraq.⁴²

All during his tenure, Münir reacted strongly to challenges to the conduct of Turkey's neutrality policy. Thus when some journalists interpreted the Turco-Bulgarian non-aggression pact of 1941 as a potentially hostile act, he made sure that the Department of State understood that there were good reasons for concluding this pact early in 1941 to prevent the entry of Nazi troops into Bulgaria.⁴³ And he was careful to let the press hear his explanation as well.

Turkey's neutral stand during the Second World War required a constant balancing act. Münir touted his nation's policy of peace at a gathering of the American Friends of Turkey in New York in March 1940.⁴⁴ Then he had to explain the treaty between Turkey and Germany in June 1941. Equally he had to justify the Turkish government's neutrality in the Russo-German conflict which broke out that month.⁴⁵ He made a considerable effort to try to convince a skeptical audience of the rightness of Turkey's refusal to cut off economic ties, especially the sales of chrome ore, to Nazi Germany the following year. That was particularly difficult as it was a stance which meant that America's decision in 1942 to join Britain in the pre-emptive purchasing of Turkish chrome and other goods would be expensive. Difficult as these arguments were, they helped avoid triggering American press censure of Turkey's stance.

In the end his efforts to woo the American administration would pay off to the point that even before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and precipitated America's declaration of war on the Axis on December 7, 1941, Roosevelt announced publicly that the immediate delivery of arms to Turkey was a "Vital Link in Defense" of the United States. When the press inquired about how such a decision for the United States to shoulder British responsibilities to arm Turkey could have been taken, Münir claimed to know nothing about it. In fact, he had

⁴² US National Archives, record group 59, file 741.90611/28 of December 2, 1940. Gaylani would return to power in Iraq, requiring a British military force to expel him into exile in May 1941.

⁴³ US National Archives, record group 59, file 767.74/118, Memorandum of Conversation with the Turkish Ambassador on February 19, 1941.

⁴⁴ "Turkey's Peace Aims Stressed by Ertegun," *New York Times*, March 21, 1940, p. 10.

⁴⁵ US National Archives, record group 59, file 762.6711/17, Memorandum of Conversation, June 20, 1941.

been in negotiation with the Department of State to take over supplying war matériel directly rather than through the British.⁴⁶

Despite this favorable announcement, Münir experienced frustration in his efforts to buy 20 P-40 pursuit aircraft originally designated for France before it fell to the Nazis. After the Department of State indicated its support for the transaction and Ankara deposited a million dollars for these planes, the Treasury Department refused to accord Turkey the priority necessary to receive these weapons systems. Nonetheless, Münir repeatedly pursued American officials in his frustrating quest. And, although the Turks had received some other fighters and bombers and were promised other planes that had not been delivered, by April 1942, "they [were] feeling some irritation." Hence, American diplomats pleaded with the War Department for "the immediate dispatch to the Turks of at least a few modern planes and the meeting of their minimum military necessities." Only years later, as the war progressed, would Turkey gradually receive some of its desired aircraft.⁴⁷

A Possible Replacement

In mid-1942, a problematic event took place that proved troublesome for Münir. After false rumors circulated in Ankara that he would be replaced and retire,⁴⁸ an unreliable and overly ambitious Turkish diplomat, (Mehmet Ali) Şevki Alhan, was sent as Turkish Minister to Washington. That move was obviously designed to increase the level of representation from Counselor to Minister at the number two spot. But Şevki apparently arrived in Washington with the idea that he would eventually replace Münir who was approaching retirement age. Şevki also wanted to score a "coup" in securing American aid to Turkey that

⁴⁶ "Turkish Envoy and Wife Feted by First Lady," *The Washington Post*, January 11, 1935, and Edward T. Folliard, "Roosevelt Orders Arms for Turkey At Once as Vital Link in Defense," *The Washington Post*, December 4, 1941. US National Archives, record group 59, file 867.24/192, memorandum of conversation October 3, 1941, in which the Turkish Ambassador asked that lend-lease aid to Turkey be handled by the Department of State.

⁴⁷ US National Archives, record group 59, file 867.248/101, memorandum of January 11, 1941; file FW867.248/119, Ankara telegram of April 2, 1942, which gave a summary of Lend Lease deliveries and promises.

⁴⁸ Hope Ridings Miller, "Capital Whirl," *The Washington Post*, February 12, 1942. Münir said as he had "no official notification" he could not verify the report of a replacement, but he had no intention to retire.

would make his advancement certain. Heavy-handed in his approach, however, and openly critical of his treatment in Washington, he was not successful in either matter. Münir was reported as merely “tolerating” him and did not agree to another Minister as second in command when Şevki left to be Ambassador to Canada at the end of 1943.⁴⁹

Clenching the Arms Relationship

Designing a new Lend-Lease relationship became a major focus of the Turkish Ambassador’s activities as the Second World War continued. Increasingly Washington saw need to “acquire maximum goodwill in Turkey,” which held a key geographic position blocking the Axis powers from entering the Middle East. Münir skillfully exploited this negotiating strength. After his frustrations earlier in the war, starting in the spring of 1943 he worked hard to shape the terms of the draft treaty to supply military matériel to Turkey. Explaining that as a neutral it was difficult for Turkey to adhere to the Atlantic Charter, he argued even more strongly than his home office in Ankara to drop all reference to this Charter in the Lend-Lease agreement. And he was tenacious in requesting that other language be changed which he thought could under some circumstances require payment for military goods and services. In the end, he sent off the whole negotiating record to Ankara for final approval. American officials believed that thanks to his efforts, the final text proved somewhat more advantageous to Turkey than if it had been negotiated solely in Ankara.⁵⁰

End of a Mission

Like his predecessor, Münir became Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Washington in April 1944. He did not have long to enjoy this distinction. His health had been deteriorating by the end of 1943 and he

⁴⁹ Hope Ridings Miller, “Newest Minister in Washington Is Baffled—And Vexed—By Capital’s Housing Problem,” *The Washington Post*, August 21, 1942, p. 18; US National Archives, record group 59, file 701.6711/489, Memorandum for the Files, November 8, 1943, to which a superior officer had added the note that the source of the information apparently “is beginning to catch on to Şevki.”

⁵⁰ US National Archives, record group 59, file 867.24/646, Memorandum of Conversation, March 10, 1943; file 867.24/653, Memorandum of conversation, March 20, 1943.

had to send another member of his mission to the Department of State with apologies that he could not take part in negotiations at times thereafter.⁵¹ He became quite ill in October 1944 and suffered a serious heart attack on November 2, 1944. He died on November 11, 1944.⁵² His wife, Hayrinussa Rüstem, whom he married in 1917, stayed on after his death for a while in Washington to be with her children, before returning to Turkey.

President Roosevelt, newly appointed Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, and other senior officials sent effusive notes of sympathy to their Turkish counterparts, attesting to Münir's favorable performance in Washington and the mounting importance of Turkey in the world. His remains were temporarily buried in Arlington Cemetery in Washington to await war's end. Then, in an extraordinary gesture, his body was brought back to Turkey on the Battleship *Missouri* for permanent burial in 1946 as a demonstration of American support against Soviet Russian demands concerning the Straits. A stronger attestation of his success in Washington could not be imagined.

Münir thus well earned his reputation as a serious diplomat representing an important second-level state. He was not the social personality his predecessor had been, although he did the normal amount of diplomatic entertaining and attended all the social functions that seemed necessary. His approach was business-like and he clearly saw his task of bringing the United States into line with Turkey's needs as an endeavor requiring constant attention. He was reputed to have taken almost no vacations during much of his time in Washington. Yet on the lighter side, his embassy became a Mecca for jazz enthusiasts on the initiative of his sons and it would play a significant role in sponsoring American music. Moreover, thanks to his sons, the Turkish Embassy took the lead in desegregating the capital, hosting black musicians at a time when Marian Anderson was unable to perform at Constitution Hall in Washington because she was black.

Although he was adept at entertaining, there is reason to believe that he was shy. He preferred when possible to steal away from the demands of the diplomatic circuit to his hobby of jewelry making as an amateur

⁵¹ US National Archives, record group 59, file 867.24/866, Memorandum of Conversation of March 3, 1944.

⁵² US National Archives, record group 59, file 500.C114/1852 report of July 25, 1939.

silversmith of considerable creative ability.⁵³ Journalists who interviewed him did not find him particularly outgoing. And as late as 1938 his English was judged to be only a C+.

But his efforts to win friends in high places and especially to keep the Lend-Lease arrangements on track kept the Washington powerbrokers aware of Turkey. In this way, his activities built on those of his predecessor and thus helped to prepare the way for the major economic and military assistance programs that would distinguish Turkish-American relations in the Cold War years.

⁵³ Gerald G. Gross, "Mehmet Munir Ertegun Is a Profound Scholar Who Makes Work His Hobby," *The Washington Post*, January 16, 1938, p. B 2; Carolyn Bell, "Diplomatic Circling," *The Washington Post*, December 6, 1942, p. S 2.

EPILOGUE

NUR BILGE CRISS

The overall theme that binds these essays is a large picture of Atatürk's Turkey from the founding years of the nation-state to the death of its founder in 1938. This picture is based mostly on U.S. official, academic, personal, and popular record. The American dimension is significant not only because all the essays rely on hitherto untapped original sources, but also because Americans and Turks had not been enemy combatants in World War I. They had no vital scores to settle.

Although wartime and post-war anti-Turkish propaganda flourished in the U.S.A., American policymakers, with advice from their official representatives and non-official agents, made a distinction between the "new Turks" and the "old Turks." This approach may be construed as pragmatic foreign policy on the part of Washington, but Mustafa Kemal Pasha and his colleagues, military as well as civilian, were definitely made of different mettle from that of the previous ruling elite, the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) leaders.

The collection of essays in this volume is a first in foreign relations between Turkey and the United States of America, which gives credit, long overdue, to official and unofficial diplomats. Contributing authors believe that observers of and envoys to Atatürk's Turkey (1919–1938) shed light on the worldviews, policies, and modes of interaction from both sides of the Atlantic. The essays employ official documents, but also consult diaries, memoirs, personnel records, society pages of newspapers, and archival sources recently made available to the public. Thus, the experiences and observations of the not-so-famous people help reconstruct time, space, and mentalities.

The Cold War and its variants, strategy, geopolitics, military alliance in NATO, containment, and crises dominated 20th century historiography. Consequently, students of foreign affairs today can hardly imagine that the United States figured in Ottoman/Turkish history before 1946. The essays presented here are about an epoch in American history as much as they are about the history of the formation and early Republic of Turkey.

The first Chargé d'Affaires (U.S.A.), David Porter, was appointed to the Ottoman Empire in 1831, and was promoted to Minister Resident in 1839. American representation at the highest level was changed to Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in 1882 with the appointment of Lewis Wallace.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the U.S. had two consulates general in the Ottoman Empire, one in Constantinople and the other in Cairo. American consulates in the Empire were situated in İzmir (Smyrna), Kandiye (Candia, Crete), Beirut, Jerusalem, Jaffa, Trabzon (Trebizond), Samsun, Adana, Ayıntab, Rhodes, the islands of Chios, Cos and Mytilene (Lesbos), Sivas, Sidon, Kale-i Sultaniye (Çanakkale, Dardanelles), Suez, Portsaid, Latakia, Philipopolis, Salonica (Thessalonica), İskenderun (Alexandretta), Bursa, and Aleppo.

In 1901, the U.S. representative was entitled Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. Assigning ambassadors abroad marked a turning point in U.S. diplomatic history as the Great Powers symbolically began to acknowledge the U.S.A. as another Great Power. The official title of U.S. ambassadors in Turkey remained the same to this day except for the cessation of official diplomatic relations between 1917 and 1927. Ankara reciprocated in 1927 by sending an ambassador to Washington, D.C. after the ten year interregnum to continue representation at that level, which had begun in 1859 when the Ottoman Empire sent its first ambassador there. In 1940, Lewis Heck, who had been one of the two (the other being G. Bie Raundal) trade commissioners in Istanbul in 1918, wrote:

Direct conflict between two nations so widely separated has naturally been rare. During the episode of the Emperor Maximilian the State Department had to protest against his efforts to recruit troops in Egypt, and only some 900 in all actually left for Mexico. During our civil War the Porte was strongly sympathetic to the Northern cause, and it was also one of the few pro-American governments in Europe during the war with Spain. In fact, the Sultan sent a message to the Moslems of the Philippine Islands urging their submission to the American forces of occupation, and in 1912 provided, at the request of the Philippine Government, a man learned in Moslem religion and law to teach the Moros how to behave in a more peaceful manner.¹

¹ Lewis Heck, "Sidelights on Past Relations between the United States and Turkey," *American Foreign Service Journal* 17:2 (February 1940), pp. 61-111.

That the Sublime Porte (Ottoman government) was supportive of the Northern cause during the American civil war is not surprising, because its foreign policy orientation was to uphold the rights of legitimate governments. But for the Sultan-Caliph of Muslims, to send a message to the Muslims of the Philippines, asking to submit to U.S. forces of occupation is puzzling. Assuming that this gesture was made by Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909), whose rule was contemporaneous with the American-Spanish War, the matter becomes more intriguing. On the one hand, the sultan used pan-Islam as a foreign policy tool against European imperialism. On the other hand, he was in search of alliance(s) with those countries which did not covet Ottoman territory. So, this gesture might have been yet another diplomatic effort to win favor with the United States.

In 1912, the Committee for Union and Progress leadership was desperately searching for international support. The leaders indiscriminately approached every Great Power. The CUP government may well have extracted such a call from the elderly and pliable Sultan Mehmet Reşat (r. 1909–1917) with potential American support in mind, because what Heck refers to as the Philippine government was hardly a sovereign entity.

There was a peculiar trend to reach out to the United States on occasion. An interesting little book, published in 2007 was entitled *1889/1894 Afetlerinde Osmanlı-Amerikan Yardımlaşmaları* [Ottoman-American Mutual Aid during the 1889/1894 Natural Disasters].² Based on U.S. archival records, the author tells the story of how Sultan Abdülhamid II sent substantial aid in gold from his personal account to the victims of the Jonestown/Pennsylvania disaster in 1889, and again to victims of forest fires in what should be very obscure places to İstanbul, such as Wisconsin or California. In return, when a terrible earthquake hit İstanbul in 1894, American people reciprocated in sending aid to the people of İstanbul. Humanitarian aid also has diplomatic/political overtones and consequences. Then, the worst disaster of all times, World War I came. Had it not been for the American Near East Relief Organization (NER) which distributed aid to the victims of war, the U.S. Congress might have voted to declare war on the Ottoman Empire. The U.S. administration argued that NER's work would be cut off if war was declared.

² Fatma Ürekli, (İstanbul: Doğu Kütüphanesi, 2007).

Upon United States entry to the war, President Wilson referred to this conflict as “the war that will end all wars.”³ However, “After the young men had taken part in the war which was to make all future war impossible, the old men applied themselves to making the peace which would render all future peace impossible.”⁴ Consequently, although conventional usage refers to the Paris conference of 1919–1920 as a peace conference, this is misleading. Treaties of Versailles with Germany, St. Germain with Austria, Neuilly with Bulgaria, Trianon with Hungary, and Sèvres with the Ottoman Empire were all dictated, with the intent to punish the vanquished. Of all these countries only Turkey was able to reverse the *diktat*. Hence, Turkey had no reason whatsoever to fight in World War II; Ankara had made its peace with the West at Lausanne.

Building up and enhancing relations with the U.S.A. was part and parcel of Atatürk’s diplomacy to strike a balance in Ankara’s Euro-Atlantic relations. This pattern underlies Turkey’s foreign policy pattern to this day, however overlooked. A similar pattern may be detected in U.S. foreign policy, with the objective of involvement in world affairs. Turkey and ironically the Soviet Union became listening posts for the U.S.A. on European affairs as of 1933 because of the Nazi threat, long before the Cold War set in. And even with the Cold War behind us, Turkey’s relations with the United States continue to draw strength from these enduring factors.

³ *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, ed. Charles Seymour, 4 vols. (London: Ernst Benn Ltd, 1926), vol. 2, p. 474.

⁴ Andrew Ryan Papers, St. Antony’s College, Oxford. Epigram from a personal letter to Andrew Ryan from Aubrey P. Edgcumber, in Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918–1923*, Ibid., p. 1.

APPENDIX

CONDENSED MEMORANDUM CONCERNING THE ORGANIZATION AND POINTS OF VIEW OF THE LEAGUE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE RIGHTS OF ANATOLIA AND RUMELIA

I. Our league was not in existence when the Sublime Porte signed the armistice of September 30, 1918.

After the conclusion of the convention on the basis of the principle of nationalities formulated by President Wilson, our nation firmly entertained the hope that it would obtain a just peace and was eagerly looking forward to such a continuation. As a matter of fact, the carrying out of the armistice gave arbitrarily rise on the part of the Entente Powers to daily increasing transgressions and violations of its clauses.

The non-Moslem elements with which we have had a joint existence ab antique, encouraged by the favor shown to the Entente Powers, broke into open attacks on the dignity and rights of the nation and State.

Istanbul, the seat of the caliphate and throne, was occupied by the forces of the Entente Powers in a brutal and oppressive form. The police and gendarmerie having been placed under the control of the occupying powers. This constituted a de facto interference with the administration of the capital and the independence of the country.

The regions of Adana and Adalia were occupied right up to Koniah. The cession of Smyrna and the surrounding territory as well as of Thrace to Greece and the creation of an extensive Armenian State to eastern Anatolia on the one hand, and of a Republic of the Pontus along the Black Sea shore of the Empire on the other hand, began to be seriously discussed.

It was natural under these circumstances, that the Turkish nation should feel deeply affected by these operations directed against the integrity of its territory and independence as well as against its dignity and other legitimate rights.

On the other hand the Chamber of Deputies, in session at Istanbul, having been dissolved, the cabinets which came to power in succession and were composed of incapable individuals did not derive their authority from the national forces and escaped the control of the representatives of the nation. Presently it was realized that these cabinets were

not only lacking in the necessary qualities for defending the rights and dignity of the nation, but that they actually lent themselves to the satisfaction of the ambitions of the foreign powers, principally England, in whose hands they had become simple toys.

Thus it came to pass that the nation, which began to feel seriously concerned about its existence, felt the necessity of manifesting directly its power and administrative action by its personal intervention.

As a consequence, national organization sprang up spontaneously in every part of the country.

Of these national organizations the following are principal: The Erzeroum Association for the Defense of the Fatherland; The Diarbekir Association for the Defense of the Fatherland; The Cilicia Association for the Defense of National Rights; The Smyrna Association for the Defense of National Rights (this association latterly assumed the name of "Association for Defending the National Rights and Preventing Cession of Territory"); The Thrace and Pasha İli Association (this association having combined with the association of Western Thrace adopted the general denomination of "Association of Thrace"). A number of associations were also formed in İstanbul, of which the National Unity Association is the principal.

These associations have no connection whatsoever with the existing political parties or those in formation. On the contrary, they are entirely free from all political ambition and owe their existence exclusively to the common aim of safeguarding the territorial integrity and other rights of the Nation and State. They are all acting under the same influences and causes.

II. It was while these associations formed throughout the country were busy extending their organizations in a perfectly orderly and peaceful manner—they were looking forward with confidence to the assertion of the principles of right and justice—that the Greeks occupied Smyrna and the environing country under the patronage of the Entente Powers and committed on this occasion untold atrocities. The Greek troops and the local Greeks who had joined them in arms started a general massacre of the Mussulmen population in which the officials and Ottoman officers and soldiers as well as the peaceful inhabitants were indiscriminately put to death and subjected to forms of torture and savagery worthy of the Inquisition and constituting in any case a barbarous violation of the laws of humanity.

Naturally the outcry was great among the Mussulman population. It appealed for help. The voice thus raised by the innocent and tormented Mussulman of Smyrna reverberated through the land. The whole nation rose as one man to oppose the barbarously hostile action of the Greeks. Meetings were organized in the towns and even in the villages and telegrams dispatched by the hundred to the Entente Powers and the whole civilized world, tearfully appealing for protection and help. These solicitations of the whole people for a reversion of the laws of humanity and justice remained unheard. On the contrary the Greeks extended the zone of their operations to the continued accompaniment of their first atrocities. In İstanbul the oppressive measures of the English acting in conjunction with the Central Government took a severer form. The Italian forces in Adalia were increased. In Cilicia the Musulman population continued to be subjected to insult and outrage and reinforced measures were adopted for the suppression of Turkish authority. The Greek bands whose activity was directed from İstanbul and Smyrna indulged in increased outrages at the expense of the Mussulman element.

At his juncture the Ferid Pasha cabinet, which in no wise represents the feelings and wishes of the nation, was invited to send a delegation to Paris. The treatment with which our delegates met at the congress was only another instance added to so many others of the offensive attitude so easily adopted toward Turkey.

III. The nation, realized that salvation resided in the formation of a general and joint organization acting in perfect unity. The population of Traibzond and Erzeroum took steps in June 1919, in view of the convocation of a congress in the latter town which was to bring about the unification of the eastern vilayets. At the same time, a resolution was adopted at Amasia for the meeting of a congress at Sivas for the unification of the whole of Anatolia and Roumelia.

On the 23rd of July, 1919, the first of the intended congresses met at Erzeroum. It was composed of the elected representatives of all the vilayets, subprefectures, and areas of eastern Anatolia. It remained in session 15 days. (The proclamation embodying its essential resolutions, system of organization, aims and points of view is in principle the same as that of the congress that followed at Sivas and is annexed in the Turkish original of this memorandum).

On the fourth of September 1919, the second Congress met at Sivas. It was composed of the elected representatives of western Anatolia and

Roumelia, and acting in the name of eastern Anatolia, a body of fully empowered delegates elected by the Congress of Erzeroum. The latter Congress having already established the principal basis of action of the national movement, the Sivas Congress completed its deliberations and adopted its resolutions in the course of a week. (These resolutions as mentioned above are annexed to the present memorandum.)

At this general Congress it was once more established that all those parts of the Empire which were under Turkish authority at the time of the conclusion of the armistice between the Sublime Porte and the Entente Powers formed one joint block of territory and that our compatriots of the same faith formed a united body pursuing one aim in perfect unison. The Congress took the name of "League for the Defense of the Rights of Anatolia and Roumelia". In this fashion the whole nation and the Ottoman Army which is recruited from among the sons of the nation and whose primary duty is the defense of the Fatherland form the sources of our strength.

A "committee of representatives" was elected with powers to pursue the common end and to administer the affairs of the organization.

IV. As shown in the annexed regulations, the foremost object of our league is, on the one hand, to constitute the national forces into a factor for the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Fatherland within the borders already mentioned and for the defense of the national independence and the rights of the caliphate and throne and, on the other hand, to establish the supremacy of the national will.

Concerning our non-Moslem compatriots with whom we have lived together for such a long time (Armenians, Greeks, Jews, etc.) we have no other point of view or feeling than to be sincerely animated with the best intentions toward them and to consider them entitled to perfect equality with ourselves. We are absolutely certain that if the country is freed from the evil influences and suggestions which have been at work in its midst so far, the different races of the Empire will live in peace with one another and lead, in common, a happy and prosperous life.

The high and pure aims which are ours exclude all aggressive intentions against the Entente Powers. It will be natural and inevitable for us, however, to defend ourselves and retaliate in answer to attacks in a material form upon our existence in violation of the laws of justice and humanity.

V. It is to be deplored that whereas the nature of our aims was to be gathered from our explanations as well as from our acts, a number of evil-minded and malevolent individuals, starting a campaign of misrepresentation and false rumors, sought to attribute to our intentions forms which never crossed our minds and had no connection whatever with truth. In this respect, those who went furthest are the English and the Ferid Pasha cabinet which, as already stated, is but a tool in their hands.

Ferid Pasha and his colleagues are convinced that they could not enjoy any authority whatsoever if the administration was run on constitutional and liberal lines and rested on the national forces. That is why, the nation, having given proof of its maturity and shown its general capability as well as its consciousness of its civil and natural rights, the only concern of this cabinet is to crush the national organization and its action. In this campaign one of its weapons is the fear of the unionists, those unionists who gained such unenviable notoriety the world over by their misrule lasting several years to the great detriment of the nation and by their last crime which was to plunge the country into an abyss from which it is experiencing such difficulty in extricating itself. Speculating on this fear the present cabinet is fatuously seeking to discredit our action which is free from every kind of self-seeking ambition and is pursuing thoroughly national aims by representing these as being connected with unionism. Another weapon to which the cabinet clings is the fear of bolshevism. In the official communications they are striving to get through to the provincial governors, they are not ashamed to assert that the Bolsheviks have entered Anatolia and that all our activities are inspired by them.

As a matter of fact we realize and estimate the painful consequences to which unionism has led the nation much better than Ferid Pasha and his likes. Our object, so far from being to deal the last blow to the existence of our fatherland and nation by launching upon adventures, is to proceed with the greatest discrimination and forethought and to find the means for insuring their survival and welfare. Consequently there can be no relationship between us and the unionists.

As to the Bolsheviks, there is no room whatever in our country for this doctrine, our religion and customs as well as our social organization being entirely unfavorable to its implantation. In Turkey there are neither great capitalists nor millions of artisans and workingmen.

On the other hand, we are not saddled with an agrarian question. Finally, from the social point of view, our religious principles are such as to dispense us with the adoption of bolshevism. The best proof that the Turkish nation has no leanings in favor of this doctrine and that, if necessary, it is ready to combat it, is to be found in the attempt of Ferid Pasha to deceive the nation by way of alarming it into the belief that bolshevism has invaded the land or is on the point of doing so. The Ferid Pasha cabinet is truly a coat cut to measure of the expansionist ambitions of the English. The latter, founding their plans on their experiences in India, Egypt, and the other countries they have succeeded in bringing under their arbitrary rule, realize full well that after reducing the Turkish nation to the condition of a flock deprived of all sense of human dignity and all national and patriotic virtues, as well as of the right of liberty and education, they will be able to degrade it into a troop of slaves bowing to their will. This is the end toward which they are working, having recourse to numberless intrigues in our midst in view of its attainment. To quote a few instance of their tactics:

- (a) Falsely accusing quite a number of Ottoman citizens of unionism, opposition to England, and what not, they proceeded to arrest and exile them, thus tampering with the country's judicial rights. Besides this, they are busy discovering or creating reasons for the arrest of the Nationalists and patriots remaining in the country and employ the Government as an instrument for persecuting them.
- (b) With the idea of bringing about the partition of the Empire and creating a fratricidal struggle between Turks and Kurds, they incited the latter to join in a plan for the establishment of an independent Kurdistan under English protection, the argument put forward by them being that the Empire was, in any case, condemned to dissolution. For the carrying out of this enterprise they spent large sums of money, had recourse to every form of espionage, and even sent emissaries on the spot. Thus an English officer of the name of Naivill exerted himself in this sense for a long time at Diarbekir, having recourse to every kind of fraud and deception in his operations. But our Kurd compatriots, guessing what was on foot, drove him out of the place as well as a handful of traitors who had sold their consciences for money. Disappointed in his action at Diarbekir, Mr. Naivill betook himself to Malatia with several adventurers belonging to the Bedrihan clan and whom he had won over with money but who enjoy no credit with their kinsmen such as

Kiamouran, Djaladoh, and Diarbekirli, Djemil Pasha Zade Ekrem. There he renewed his attempt in view of the establishment of an independent Kurdistan in collaboration with the mutesarif (sub-governor), Khasil Bey, also a member of the Bedrihan clan.

On the other hand, combining with the Vali of Kharput, Ghalil Bey—an instrument of the self-seeking Minister of the Interior Abil Bey and the likewise self-seeking Minister of War Suleyman Shefik Pasha—who was committed to take measures against the national movement and more especially against the Sivas Congress, he and the crowd of his associates started the cry, “The Armenian soldiers are going to occupy the country—to arms,” intending in this manner to provoke a rising of our simple-minded Kurdish compatriots. The object of this wicked plan was threefold: To resuscitate Kurdish particularism, to destroy the national forces, and to create a conflict and the shedding of blood between children of the same country. The conspirators did not even shrink from trying to implicate in the projected tragedy a detachment of troops Ghalil Bey had asked for under pretense of pursuing personally a band of brigands which was said to have ransacked the mail. (Several documents concerning this affair are annexed to the present memorandum.)

These individuals met with the confusion which was to be expected of their underestimation of the national forces. The local population which remained innocent of all participation in these intrigues very soon understood their criminal meaning and was proceeding to take the culprits into custody when they fled.

- (c) While perfect tranquillity was reigning in Eski Shehir, English troops entered the house of the local commandant, Col. Atif Bey, and putting forward the most unlikely calumnies against him, carried him off under the eyes of his soldiers and sent him under escort to İstanbul. In explanation of the emotion and effervescence very naturally caused among the local population by the outrage the English spread reports to the effect that the Bolsheviks and unionists were invading the district and on this pretense adopted special military measures in the locality.
- (d) Ferid Pasha publishes, by means of the telegraphic agencies, the report that disturbances are taking place in Anatolia and his accomplices, the English, making out that the Armenians are being made the victims of outrages in Sivas, addresses a minatory note to the

Sublime Porte. At the same time an outcry is raised on the invaded ground that a massacre of the Christians is being planned at Marzivan. As a matter of fact, not only has it been ascertained materially that no such things have happened, but that there is absolutely no likelihood of their occurring. On the contrary, the encounters which were taking place in the region of Samsoun before the organization of the national movement between the Greek bands formed with a political object and the Mussulman population against which the former were practicing their ferocity and who, in the absence of all protection on the part of the army and gendarmerie, was forced to act in self-defense, have stopped as a result of the advice given to both sides by the national organization and without recourse having been had to measures of force. To-day perfect tranquillity reigns in this region as in the other parts of the country.

VI. We entertain no unfriendly dispositions toward the Armenian Republic of which Erivan is the center. For the present the league has no relations with this State and is not interested in it. Our knowledge concerning it is derived from rumors and indirect information. We know, however, so much to be a fact that the Armenians in the new State are carrying on operations in view of exterminating the Mussulman element in obedience to orders from the Armenian corps commander. We have had copies of their orders under our eyes. That the Armenians of Erivan are following a policy of extermination against the Mussulman and this wave of sanguinary savagery has spread right up to our frontier is also established by the fact of the presence within our borders of numerous Mussulman fleeing from death on the other side. The government of Erivan has, on the other hand, resorted to direct acts of provocation such as the practice of gunfire this side of the border.

Although the course of these events the English encouraged on the one hand the Armenians in the attitude adopted by them against the Mussulman or even stirred them up to it and, on the other hand, enumerating to us the outrages of the former and describing them as unbearable, they urged us to retaliate by attacking the neighboring State. But we, putting up with the Armenian provocations, turned a deaf ear to the indignations of the English, feeling sure that the truth would make itself known soon enough. As a matter of fact we thought we could detect in the attitude of the English trying to launch us upon an attack against Armenia, the plan of creating a situation of which they would avail themselves to dispatch their own troops into that country.

All these maneuvers of the English were started by their officers and representatives after they saw themselves obliged to evacuate Caucasia.

We hear that conflicts are taking place between the Azarbaijanese and the Erivan Armenians. We presume that the reason for this is the refusal of the Armenians to join the alliance concluded between the Azarbaijanese and the Georgians against England's protege, Denikin, who is trying to push southward.

It is quite natural that the Mussulman of Erzeroum and Van, and more particularly those among them living in the border regions should have reached a high state of excitement as a result of the news reaching them daily of the massacres in Armenia and the sight of the unfortunate refugees having escaped death and whose condition is lamentable. What adds to their effervescence is the gunfire practice of the Armenians without our border. But our organization has succeeded in appeasing them and all likelihood of violent reaction on their part has been exerted.

VII. Refraining from going to the assistance of the unfortunate Mussulman population in Armenia and from collaborating with the Mussulman of Azarbaijan, we consider it indispensable to confine our action and aims to the task of insuring the future existence and welfare of the Fatherland and Nation, within the borders already defined. We are, in effect, convinced that Touranism is a mischievous conception. We consider that, by dispersing our material and moral forces in the pursuit of chimeras a long distance from our frontiers, we will only weaken the strength we require for defending the seat of the throne and caliphate which is the heart of our Fatherland and the knot of our existence.

Quite recent events, unfolding themselves under our very eyes, have taught us to remain faithful to moderate conceptions. For instance, during the general war which has not yet ended in peace, the man at the head of our Government employed the Ottoman forces to attain such ends as the conquest of Caucasia, the strengthening of the Azarbaijan Government and the recovery of Egypt. As a result of this policy the very source of life in our real Fatherland, the population has diminished considerably. Many fertile and otherwise valuable lands have been wrested from us and even within the frontiers we have assigned to ourselves as our last future, our capital, as well as such peerless sections of our country as Smyrna, Adalia, and Adana are under foreign military occupation. Whereas, if we had not entered the war, or at least, if having entered it, we had wisely employed our forces with a view to defending our territory within its existing borders, instead of wasting

them in ambitious enterprises, our situation, though perhaps still that of a vanquished people, would be different from what it is.

In any case the spreading of the preposterous report that Touranism forms part of our aims and action is but another instance of the calumnies in which the English indulge at our expense.

VIII. With a view to distorting the truth, that is the purely national character of our movement, the English have also thrown into circulation reports to the effect that we have obtained money now from the Germans or Bolshevists, now from the foreign Mussulman or unionists, now again from Enver Pasha, and we do not know who else. These reports suiting the Ferid Pasha cabinet, it is giving them prominence after sorting and strengthening them. In reality our league has no connection whatsoever with the sources just mentioned, and can not have, since, as explained from the very beginning, our object is purely national and patriotic and follows an open course. To accept money from any source whatsoever, it is necessary for us who pursue a conservative and legitimate object, to sacrifice the money thus received to the intentions and wishes of the donors.

Generally speaking, our league does not require as large sums of money as is imagined. Ours is not an illegitimate object, acceptance of which by a foreign power we are trying to obtain by means of money. Nor are we in a position obliging us to buy the conscience of some other nation. Nor, again, are we in the necessity of suggesting an unknown object to our nation, spending money for the purpose. Our league is the result of a pure and patriotic movement born of the national consciousness and consists in the adoption by this movement of a national form and organization. Our treasury is the conscience of the nation which has learnt to appreciate the value of independence and patriotism. The sources of our revenues are the spontaneous donations of the nation.

IX. After the armistice the European powers fell into the mistake of imagining that in Turkey there was not a nation conscious of its rights and ready to defend them. Whatever a lifeless country and a bloodless nation is worthy of that is what it was sought to apply to us. The idea was entertained at the Versailles conference of partitioning our fatherland and distributing its fragments as presents right and left. It is a subject for thankfulness that these preposterous decisions, which were calculated to plunge humanity in new tragedies, have been deferred. It is also

a subject for thankfulness that the decisive resolutions concerning our fate have been made dependent on the deliberations and decisions of the American Congress. It was the faith placed in the nationalistic and natural principles put forward by the American Nation that brought about the end of the general war which has soaked the soil of the globe with human blood and strewn it with human corpses, thus causing the shedding of endless tears.

We entertain an unshaken confidence that thanks to the humane decisions of the Americans the ground will be found for the establishment of an enduring and perfect peace. We have no doubt that the American Nation and the American Congress, representing the cause of civilization, right, and justice in its midst, have been sufficiently enlightened in regard to our pure-hearted Turkish people and its degree of attachment to and connection with civilization and will adopt the most efficient, equitable, and practical resolutions concerning its fate, leaving us thus overflowing with gratitude.

X. The Turkish people possess a more than 10-century-old right of existence in these lands. This is established by the survival of numerous relics of the past. As for the Ottoman State, it dates from seven centuries and can boast a glorious past and history. We are a people whose power and majesty were recognized by the world in three such continents as Asia, Europe, and Africa. Our men of war and merchantmen sailed the oceans and carried our flag as far as India. Our capabilities are proven by the power we once wielded and which had become world-wide. But during the last century the intrigues of the European powers in our capital and as a result of these intrigues their interference with our independence, the restrictions with which they trammled our economic life, the seeds of discord they sowed between us and the non-Moslem elements with which we had been living on fraternal terms for centuries, and added to these circumstances the weakness and resulting misrule of our Governments have acted as obstacles to our advance in the paths of modern progress and prosperity. The painful condition which is ours to-day does not in the least imply any radical incapacity on our part or incompatibility with modern civilization. It is solely due to the persistence of the adverse causes enumerated above.

We can give the most positive assurances that our country, if freed from the incubus of foreign intrigue and intervention and if its affairs are managed by a capable government respectful of the national will

and wishes, it will presently assume a condition which will be a source of satisfaction to the whole world.

We make a special point of adding that the assistance of a powerful and impartial foreign nation will be of great value to us in saving us from the iniquitous oppression of which we are the victims and in hastening our development.

We derive great hope from the Wilsonian doctrine embodying the nationalistic principle and from the spirit of justice and humanitarianism displayed by the American Nation in its action to insure its triumph.

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