




The Making of Nuclear Turkey: The Acquisition Process of Jupiter Missiles

Nükleer Türkiye'nin Teşekkülü: Jüpiter Füzelерinin Edinim Süreci

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Özet

Soğuk savaş boyunca yaşanan tüm çatışmalar arasında Küba Füze Krizi bir nükleer savaş ile imha edilmeye en yakın olduğumuz olaydır. ABD ve Sovyetler'in böyle bir felaketi engellemek için diplomasiye yönelmesine rağmen, kriz öylesine şiddetliydi ki krizin ilk haftası nükleer bir savaşın kapıya dayandığı düşünülmektedir. Dünya kendisinin yok olmasına sebep olabilecek nükleer çatışmanın eşiğinde olmasına rağmen kriz diplomasinin derin labirentleri aracılığıyla aşılmıştır. NATO'nun aktif bir katılımcısı ve Jüpiter füzelerine ev sahipliği yapan ülke olarak Türkiye, bu krizin önemli bir parçasını oluşturmaktadır. Bu kriz akademi tarafından dikkatli bir şekilde incelenmiş olmasına rağmen füzelerin yerleştirilme ve kaldırılma süreçleri daha detaylı bir incelemeye ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Özellikle Türkiye'nin füzeleri yerleştirme kararının arka planı dikkate değer. Bu makale Türkiye'nin füzeleri kendi topraklarına yerleştirme iradesinin arkasındaki sebepleri ve füzelerin kaldırılma sürecini incelemektedir. Türkiye'nin kriz süresince edilgen bir aktör olduğu ve karar alma sürecine katılım göstermediği iddialarına karşın bu makalenin temel iddiası bu kabul sürecinin çeşitli sebeplere dayandığıdır. Dönemin iç ve dış etmenlerini göz önünde bulundurduğumuzda görülüyor ki ekonomi, ordu gibi siyasi güç odakları, tehdit algısı ve uluslararası unsurlar Türkiye'nin kararını hep birlikte şekillendirmişlerdir. Türkiye'nin krizdeki duruşunu değerlendirmek için ikincil kaynakların yanında yerel ve uluslararası gazete arşivleri gibi birincil kaynaklardan da yararlanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Küba Füze Krizi, Jüpiter Füzeleri, Soğuk Savaş, Nükleer Türkiye

Abstract

Of all the cleavages throughout the Cold War, the Cuban missile crisis was the closest one to eradication by a nuclear war. Although the USA and USSR were using diplomatic tools to avoid such a disaster, the incident was so severe that a nuclear war was expected in the first week of the crisis. Although the world was on the brink of a conflict that might have ended up with a nuclear confrontation, which was likely to entail complete destruction of the world, the problem was resolved through the deep labyrinths of diplomacy. As an active member of NATO, and the country hosting Jupiter missiles on its soil, Turkey constituted a substantial party of the crisis. Although this incident was studied carefully by the academy, the deployment process of the missiles and debates on the removal of the Jupiters need further examination. Particularly, the background behind Turkey's will to deploy these missiles need attention. This article investigates the reasons behind Turkey's consent to deploy the missiles and the removal process. Contrary to the arguments that Turkey was a passive actor during the crisis, and did not participate in the decision-making process, the main argument of this article is the reasons behind Turkey's consent were various. Regarding the domestic and external dynamics of the era, it is explained in this article that the economy, political power groups such as the army, perception of threat, and international factors were hand in hand in shaping the decision of Turkey. In order to evaluate Turkey's stance in this crisis, primary sources of the era, including international newspaper archives, were used aside from the secondary literature.

Key Words: Cuban Missile Crisis, Jupiter Missiles, Cold War, Nuclear Turkey

INTRODUCTION

Not very long had it been after the Second World War when the Cuban missile crisis emerged. Having become a party in a bipolar world continuously creating conflicts, Turkey could not abstain from engaging in the confrontation between two blocs. Turkey was amongst the Western bloc. After the crisis began, Turkey supported its allies through actions. However, this support was not welcome by the Soviets. On 28 October 1962, the Soviets attributed a linkage between missiles in Cuba, and those in Turkey.¹ The USSR offered to dispatch all the missiles in Cuba in return for a promise not to invade Cuba and dispatch missile sites in Turkey. Although the USA rejected this offer publicly, later, it was understood that this was the plan to be realized through the backdoor diplomacy. Turkey, as a country bordering with the USSR and hosting Jupiter missiles, had a unique entity. Namely, Turkey's geographical location and political stance was essentially important. Since it was geographically the closest member of NATO to the Soviets and a loyal ally Turkey was the bulwark against Soviet threat.

In tandem with all reasons, the chief aim of the Western Bloc was to stop Communism. In order to succeed, the USA wanted to empower members of the alliance such as Turkey, Italy, and the UK sent nuclear weapons to these states. During the crisis, it is comprehended that taking sides has its drawbacks aside from its advantages. In this article, after a brief of the Cuban missile crisis' emergence, the essence of this article will be evaluated, namely the deployment process of Jupiters. Then Turkey's view on Jupiters in relation to independence will be linked before examining the removal process. In these stages, Turkey's stance will be examined in terms of the internal and external conditions of the era. Since Turkey was not the main actor creating the crisis, most research focuses on the relationship between superpowers and the crisis. However, the context that triggered Turkey to take part in this play is of vital significance. Therefore, the main objective of this article is to demonstrate why and how Turkey played a role in this conflict.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS: A BRIEF HISTORY

To understand the process and the crisis, one must know the emergence of the Cuban missile crisis. Its importance stems mostly from the threat that it puts the world in, namely nuclear warfare. In 1962, it jeopardized the stability of the world dangerously by producing a threat of nuclear war. At the very beginning, in 1957, the USA realized that there was a missile gap between the USSR and the USA. They fell behind the Soviet missiles and technology.² This missile gap was one of the promoting reasons leading the USA to speed up in missile technology and put great pressure on the administration since the USA was competing with the USSR in many spheres, and the technology was of vital significance. It was estimated that the Soviets had more than 20.000 ballistic missiles that could hit both the closest enemy and the farthest.³ In addition, Soviet launched satellites induced Western countries to foster their missile development program and revise their military ends, which stirred up the beginning of the Cuban missile crisis by the decision to establish stocks of nuclear warheads.⁴

¹ "Sovyet Rusya Küba Meselesine Nihayet Türkiye'yi de Karıştırdı: Kruçef Küba ve Türkiye'deki Üslerin 2-3 Hafta İçinde Tahliyesini İstedi" *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1962.

² Süleyman Seydi, "American Relations and The Cuban Missile Crisis", *Middle Eastern Studies* 46, no. 3 (2013): 433.

³ Thomas R. Phillips, "The Growing Missile Gap", *Central Intelligence Agency* (January 8, 1959), 11.

⁴ Larry M. Loeb, "Jupiter Missiles in Europe: A Measure of Presidential Power", *World Affairs* 139, no. 1 (1976): 28.

The sense of threat pushed European countries to have nuclear stocks and modernized weapons. When this shocking information came together with the missile bases in Cuba, J. F. Kennedy declared a quarantine foreseeing the pause of shipping to Cuba since these deliveries were mostly comprised of weapons and components for the bases. However, after the declaration of the quarantine, the case was seen so dangerous that the USA Minister of Finance Douglas Dillan broke his visit to Mexico short and returned to Washington since, he claimed, a nuclear war might start before the end of the week.⁵

The missile bases secretly settled on Cuba was the crux. Contrary to American intelligence estimates, which was approximately 10,000, there were 41,902 Soviet troops on the island on October 26.⁶ As expected, since there was not enough time to contact Moscow under an attack by the USA, local officers in Cuba were allowed to use nuclear armaments. This allowance was more than likely to lead the USA and the USSR to a nuclear war.⁷ Local officers on whom people might have some doubts about putting trust oversaw the missiles. Under an attack by the USA, they might use the weapons. In retaliation, after the first strike, the USA's attack would not be only on the island but also on the USSR since the responsibility of the settlement of nuclear weapons in Cuba was of the USSR. Furthermore, Kennedy was doubtful about the effectiveness of conventional forces, so he thought that a conventional war might eventually lead to nuclear warfare as predicted, and thus, nuclear deterrence must be provided.⁸ The notion of nuclear deterrence will be explained in the subsequent part. This policy was Eisenhower's, and Kennedy decided to keep on applying this policy and, therefore, did not deny the existence of Jupiter missiles in Turkey.

These missiles were filling the missile gap between the USA and the Soviets. As IRBM (Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile) it could be used to deliver warhead or place satellites into orbit. Aside from its importance for army and the prestige of the American Nation, these missiles were substantial to the US since it was the mere mobile ballistic missile of the US Air Force, which was a force multiplier in terms of its low possibility to be target for a pre-emptive strike. Jupiters also constituted the basis for the US Space Program.⁹

DEPLOYMENT PROCESS OF JUPITER MISSILES: WHY WOULD TURKEY ACCEPT THE MISSILES?

Turkey, as a participator to the Korean War and a member of NATO, was one of the candidates to deploy the missiles. The USA planned the deployment to be based on the agreement of the Pact of Mutual Cooperation, backed by the USA and comprised of Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey. The USA introduced IRBMs to Turkey and Italy in order to have the ability to retaliate Soviet weapons in December 1957, and by 1959 the US embassy was authorized to bargain with Turkey on Jupiter missiles. Turks showed a willingness to accept the deployment.¹⁰ Eventually the USA and Turkey signed an agreement on October 1959 to deploy Jupiters, and the first of the

⁵ "Nükleer Harb Başlyabilir" *Cumhuriyet*, 24 October 1962.

⁶ William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (London: Simon and Schuster UK Ltd., 2005), 547.

⁷ Cody Fuelling, "To the Brink: Turkish and Cuban Missile Crisis During the Height of the Cold War". *International Social Science Review* 93, no. 3 (2017): 6.

⁸ Philip Nash, "Weapons in Kennedy's Foreign Policy", *The Historian* 56, no. 2 (1994): 290.

⁹ James N. Gibson, *Nuclear Weapons of the United States: An Illustrated History* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Pub., 1996), 169-171.

¹⁰ Nur Bilge Criss, "Strategic Nuclear Missiles in Turkey: The Jupiter Affair, 1959-1963", *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 20, no. 3 (2008): 103-106.

missile sites became operational on November 6, 1961.¹¹ Since the Turkish Army lacked manpower, the first squadron of Jupiter was manned by US soldiers. To fill the gap, the Turkish crew was sent to Cape Canaveral in the USA on June 28, 1961, after 12 months of English course.¹² According to the agreement, 15 missiles were to be deployed on Turkish soil.¹³ The warheads were under the US custody and without permission from both governments, Turkish and American in this case, the missiles could not be fired.¹⁴ However, the reasons why Turkey would accept to deploy Jupiters on its soil need further critic. What were these reasons behind the will of deploying Jupiters on Turkey? What did lead Turkey to make the decision?

One of the reasons why Turkey requested Jupiter missiles was the Soviet threat during the Stalin era.¹⁵ Stalin's requests on straits and claims on Turkish territory led Turkey to seek political and military protection from its allies. Modernization of the army was the only one facet of all aspects. The acquisition of the Jupiter missiles was expected to provide political and military protection. Although some discussed that these missiles were first-strike missiles and could provoke the USSR, the Turks were of the idea that nuclear missiles would deter the USSR in a time of crisis from striking to Turkey.¹⁶

Turkey saw nuclear weapons as an instrument of deterrence, and even if there were no nuclear weapons, some other contemporary weapons must substitute them for providing deterrence.¹⁷ However, the notion of deterrence must be explained in a detailed manner. "To deter means to stop someone from doing something".¹⁸ In nuclear deterrence, however, through the expected retaliation, a state can prevent an enemy from striking itself. Since the use of nuclear weapons means destruction, a country striking nuclear power would have to risk its existence. As a necessary explanation, should the decision to go nuclear mean suicide, one could not make it.

Although there were claims that the presence of these missiles would be provocative for the Soviets, the Turks rejected it. They stated that the absence of these deterrents would be provocative.¹⁹ As a state that soldiers govern, Turkey perceived the absence of necessary military tools to deter the enemy as weakness and argued that weakness would be the chief provocation against the Soviets. However, the question remained controversial. Although the USA considered Turkey's claim, if Turkey vitally needed these missiles was still arguable. It was discussed that Turkey's participation in NATO provided it with both political and military protection, and it was not necessary to acquire first strike nuclear missiles.

¹¹ Philip Nash, *The Other Missiles of October: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the Jupiters* (USA: University of North Carolina States, 1997), 103.

¹² Mark C. Cleary, *Army Ballistic Missile Programs at Cape Canaveral* (45th Space Wing History Office), 65. Retrieved from: <http://afspacemuseum.org/library/histories/Army.pdf>

¹³ Gibson, *ibid*, 170.

¹⁴ Priscilla Roberts, "Jupiter Missiles (Turkey and Italy)", içinde *Cuban Missile Crisis The Essential Reference Guide*, ed. Priscilla Roberts (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2014), 90.

¹⁵ "Around the World: Russian Anti-Rocket Request Is Rejected by Turkey". *The Washington Post*, 10 January 1965.

¹⁶ Loeb, *ibid*, 30.

¹⁷ US Department of State, Office of the Historian, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1961-1963*, by James E. Miller, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1994), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v16>.

¹⁸ Kenneth N. Waltz, "the Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better: Introduction". *The Adelphi Papers* 21, no. 171 (1981): 3-5.

¹⁹ Dana Adams Schmidt, "Turks Hope NATO Missiles Will Stay: Spurn Idea of a Deal With Soviet Over Cuban Crisis", *New York Times* (3 November 1962).

The missiles indeed provoked the USSR. Khrushchev's declaration that he merely needed to put a button to destroy Turkey demonstrates how serious this crisis could escalate.²⁰ Although the declaration was a bluff, its harsh manner shows that the USSR perceived the deployment as a direct threat. However, the USSR was not the only one to perceive threats. The foreign minister of Turkey, Feridun Cemal Erkin, said that the USSR already aimed against Turkey through some of its missile sites before those in Turkey were installed.²¹ According to this statement, Turkey was retaliating against the aggression of the Soviets.

Furthermore, it was also important for maintaining the security and the need for the necessary tools. Through Jupiters, Ankara thought regional security would be provided since modern weapons were the popular way of sustaining the stability in the world. Through obtaining these weapons to counter the weapons of other countries, the Soviets in this case, with cheaper and affordable alternatives, would be more effective. Turkey considered that this alternative would increase its independence.²² The Turkish military perceived Jupiter missiles as a guarantee of independence since it would provide them with immunity against a superpower. However, this view is questionable. Since these weapons were told to be obsolete and have just an advantage for first strikes and, therefore, provoking an attack by the USSR, the guarantee could have easily turned into the destruction of the country. Briefly, although Turkey argued that it was a target, either way; being a target and being a target of nuclear weapons substantially differentiate.

Another reason why Turkey did not reject these missiles could be the long-enduring fights with Russia. Historical hostility between the Russians and the Turks was said to be ingrained among Turks, either town or peasant. The idea of hostility suggests that the Turks were not pro-neutralist or pacifists and would not object to the deployment of these missiles.²³ Although this was not the chief reason for the emergence of the crisis, it was perceived as a contributor.

As an ideology, communism seemed like a demon in Turkey. Before the coup in 1960, Prime Minister Menderes was convinced that close economic ties with northern neighbour the USSR, could be dangerous in terms of sovereignty. The immense fear of communism in tandem with the leftist coup d'état in Iraq contributed to this hesitation. However, this idea changed before the coup. During the Cuban missile crisis, Turkey, as an ally in NATO, supported all attempts of the USA not only by words but also by actions despite the danger of Soviet nuclear attack to Çiğli Base in İzmir, where Jupiter missiles were deployed.²⁴

On 24 October 1962, İsmet İnönü stated the stance of Turkey in this crisis that Turkey was a state that wants to live in peace and desires peaceful resolutions of international conflicts. "As a loyal ally," Turkey would take her responsibility when asked by one of the allies, namely the USA, just like Turkey would ask for when it was in need.²⁵ The danger did not prevent Turkey from acting. Turkish governments, both before and after the coup of 1960, were eager to receive these

²⁰ Philips, *ibid*, 10.

²¹ "Scrap Turk Missile Bases: U.S., Ankara Discuss Use of Polaris Subs Final Decision Goes to NATO Council". *Chicago Daily Tribune* (24 January 1963).

²² Kenneth N. Waltz, *ibid*, 7-8.

²³ Schmidt, *ibid*.

²⁴ Criss, *ibid*, 98-109.

²⁵ National Assembly Journal of Official Reports, Period: 1, Assembly: 1, Session: 135.

weapons because their visibility and the prestige associated with SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander Europe) defence system offered them a more advantageous political position.²⁶

More importantly, it was no secret that the Turkish officials wanted nuclear weapons. For the Turkish program for “Atomic Bomb”, the General Director of the M.T.A (General Directorate of Mineral Research and Exploration) was asked to collaborate with Ömer İnönü, Professor of Physics at METU then, and General Refik Tulga. Although Turkey was not expected to follow the steps of French, it was preparing to bandwagon if the proliferation breaks further.²⁷ Another sign of Turkish eagerness and US promotion to have modern nuclear weapons was Honest John missiles. After General Norstad, who was also one of the most important figures for the deployment of Jupiters, asked for the deployment of Short-Range Ballistic Missiles, Honest John missiles were deployed in Turkey in May 1959, before the Jupiters were deployed and the Cuban Missile Crisis emerged.²⁸ A similar case was to show up after the Cuban Missile Crisis was over and Turkey was to be provided with 8-inch howitzers in June 1965, which could be armed with tactical nuclear warheads.²⁹ It is evident that the background of Turkey’s eagerness to acquire nuclear weapons had been long an issue during the Cold War, until it signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

As aforementioned, the Turkish military was more eager than the USA for the adoption of Jupiter missiles since the General Staff had seen the country to be under enormous pressure and danger stemming from the Soviets. Besides, a civil coalition founded after the coup d’état, was being pressured by The General Staff of Army not to step back over the issue.³⁰ Since Turkey was a country considering obtaining modern weapons, the USA was also promoting Turkey to have modern strike capability such as nuclear weapons.³¹ It was thought to contribute to the defence of the alliance. One of the Western aims was to encourage Turkey to accept her role in discouraging the Soviet aggression as West’s best platform to deploy IRBMs. The deployment “transformed Turkey from an outpost to a central bastion of Western defence.” However, through acquiring the missiles, all of Turkey has become a central target for Soviet IRBMs.³²

While acquiring Jupiters, Turkey’s most significant problem was not to create the necessary infrastructure but to support it by a stable economy in contrast to its vast amount of debts, increasing inflation and corruption left behind by previous government.³³ In so far as Turkey was a developing country, it needed help from the Western bloc, especially from the USA. The main

²⁶ Seydi, *ibid*, 433-434.

²⁷ Stuart Rockwell to Benjamin Read, “Turkish Interest in Atomic Weapon Development”, 6 October 1966, *Nuclear Weapons and Turkey Since 1959*, ed. William Burr (Washington, D.C.: The National Security Archive, 30 October 2019). Retrieved from: <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//dc.html?doc=6532128-National-Security-Archive-Doc-14-Stuart-Rockwell>

²⁸ US Defense Department, “Ground Atomic Support Command for Defense of Turkish Straits”, 26 March 1958, *Nuclear Weapons and Turkey Since 1959*, ed. William Burr (Washington, D.C.: The National Security Archive, 30 October 2019). Retrieved from: <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//dc.html?doc=6532116-National-Security-Archive-Doc-04-Defense>

²⁹ Office of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Atomic Energy), “History of the Custody and Deployment of Nuclear Weapons: July 1945 Through September 1977”, February 1978, *Nuclear Weapons and Turkey Since 1959*, ed. William Burr (Washington, D.C.: The National Security Archive, 30 October 2019). Retrieved from:

<https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//dc.html?doc=6532113-National-Security-Archive-Doc-01-Office-of-the>

³⁰ Nasuh Uslu, *The Turkish-American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003: The History of a Distinctive Alliance* (Nova Publishers, 2003), 137-170.

³¹ Fatih Tokatlı, “The Policy of Eisenhower Administration Towards Turkey, 1953-1961”. (Unpublished Master’s Thesis, İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University, 2004), 47.

³² Waldo Drake, “Turkey: West Bastion, Prime Target of Soviet: U.S. Missiles Turn Turkey Into Bulwark Against Soviets”. *Los Angeles Times*, (13 November 1960).

³³ Drake, “Turkey: West Bastion, Prime Target of Soviet”, (13 November 1960).

reason leading the Turkish Military to support the deployment was the need for the US economic and military assistance to keep the army up to date. Without assistance, the military government appears to be weak against a bordering superpower.³⁴ Although the Turkish Military was one of the most powerful allies of the USA against the Soviets in the region, the financial difficulties of the country endangered sustainability of a power needing regular modernization. Moreover, Turkey, in fact, achieved to increase military assistance from the USA through the agreement on the deployment of missiles. Since the country was seen and said to be a “cornerstone of the Western defence system”, General Norstad asked the Congress for an increase in the military and economic aid to Turkey.³⁵ Utilizing being a loyal ally to a superpower, Turkey tried to maximize the benefits by taking advantage of the conflict of superpowers.

Excluding domestic issues, Italy’s reasons to consent to the deployment of Jupiters were also similar to Turkey’s. On 16 March 1959, the USA and Italy signed an agreement foreseeing the deployment of two squadrons, which was equal to 30 Jupiter missiles.³⁶ Italian crews were sent to the USA and their training began in September 1959 and finished in October 1960.³⁷ The language was the main problem that caused the training of the Turkish crew to fall behind.

Lacking an independent nuclear program such as French, Italy wanted to utilize the opportunity. Through the agreement, apart from being provided with modern nuclear weapons for the first time, Italy also wanted to improve the relationship with the USA and earn prestige and status amongst members of NATO.³⁸ Although the prime minister of Italy had some doubts about deploying and keeping missiles, they did not want to lose the status in NATO that they merely shared with Turkey, the other host of Jupiters.³⁹

INDEPENDENCE AND JUPITERS

Independence was a likely result of having nuclear weapons. However, having merely nuclear weapons would not guarantee independence. Although being fully independent seemed not possible in a bipolar world, being relatively independent was possible with different requirements such as a modern army and a strong economy. Turkey’s increasing dependence on the USA aid in military assistance and modernization process contributed to the acceptance of deployment on Turkey. As an instance, in 1958, “\$234 million” of total “\$359 million” foreign aid was given by the USA,⁴⁰ which indicated that the significant part of foreign aid was the USA’s. Turkey, although it was an independent state, could not earn its economic independence.

After the Cuban missile crisis, despite the increase in the economic and military aid, Turkey was to comprehend how important it was to gain independence in certain areas when encountering the Cyprus issue, which had been a severe crux between Turkey and the USA. Besides, American officials used Jupiter missiles as a trump card. Kennedy tended to achieve his ends by trading Jupiter

³⁴ Seydi, *ibid*, 439.

³⁵ Nurhan İnce and Robert Olson, “Turkish Foreign Policy: 1960-1964: Continuity, Change and the Cyprus Crisis”, *Istituto per l’Oriente C. A. Nallino*, (1977), 272.

³⁶ Gibson, *ibid*, 170.

³⁷ Cleary, *ibid*, 65.

³⁸ Nash, *The Other Missiles of October*, 49.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 104.

⁴⁰ Criss, *ibid*, 210.

missiles with Cuban missiles, instead of risking war over Jupiter missiles when the process was near the end.⁴¹

After learning the secret diplomacy traffic, Turkish politicians were more careful in their relationship with the USA since it was seen that there was a “*quid pro quo*”.⁴² Namely, Turkey perceived that the USA was ready to risk Turkish interests and did not hesitate to bring Turkey to the table in return for an agreement with the Soviets. Not only did the crisis and secret diplomacy traffic lead Turkish politicians to question the relationship with the USA but also with NATO. It was perceived that “NATO could, under some circumstances, bring insecurity rather than protection” since, after the deployment of Jupiters, Turkey was one of the main targets with the USA in a crisis far distant from its shores.

Additionally, being out of the decision-making process in terms of dismantling process of Jupiters showed Turkish politicians Turkey’s limited say and the hardship of managing relationships with superpowers that might compel another country to do whatever was asked for.⁴³ The USA and Soviets eventually received what they wanted. At the end of the process, some argued that these incidents stimulated Turkey to follow a more flexible foreign policy letting it to bank on its own instead of an ally that might turn it adrift.⁴⁴

DEBATE ON REMOVAL OF JUPITERS

At the very beginning of the crisis, the Soviets firstly suggested a solution including the “termination of the quarantine and a pledge not to invade Cuba” and no article foreseeing the removal of Jupiter missiles in Turkey. However, the day after offering it, the USSR changed its attitude and asked the USA to remove the missiles.⁴⁵ It was called “the blackest hour of the crisis”.⁴⁶ The answer of the USA was to reject the second offer and consider the first one. The USA made an allusive and inconceivable statement claiming that Cuba and Jupiters should not be linked. Even though it was rejected, there was an open door in the statement to reconsider the removal of Jupiters after the Cuban crisis was over.⁴⁷ Some sources confirmed that claim. According to a record by officials, Kennedy linked the Jupiter missiles in Turkey with those in Cuba. This record also confirms that Kennedy was ready to trade-off these two missile sites and he pushed harder in Oval Office meetings to make it happen.⁴⁸

After deploying the missiles, the Turkish military was against these missiles to be subject to negotiation between the USA and its rival. Yet, the production of missiles was stopped in December 1960, and the USA had even been planning to deactivate missile sites when the last missile was turned over to allies.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, several times had Turkey rejected the removal of Jupiters since it had funded the deployment, and the public was likely to oppose fiercely due to the

⁴¹ Ibid, 117.

⁴² George S. Harris, “The View From Ankara”. *The Wilson Quarterly*, (1982), 132.

⁴³ Nasuh Uslu, *ibid*.

⁴⁴ Süleyman Seydi, *ibid*, 452.

⁴⁵ “Sovyet Rusya Küba Meselesine Nihayet Türkiye’yi de Karıştırdı”.

⁴⁶ Roger Hillsman cited in Barton J. Bernstein, “The Cuban Missile Crisis: Trading the Jupiters in Turkey?”. *Political Science Quarterly* 95, no. 1 (1980), 113.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 112-119

⁴⁸ Walter Pincus. “Transcript Confirms Kennedy Linked Removal of Missiles in Cuba, Turkey”. *The Washington Post*, (22 October 1987).

⁴⁹ James N. Gibson, *ibid*, 171.

tremendous pride of the Turkish people seeing themselves as an independent ally of West, unlike Cuba⁵⁰. Even the discussion on the topic was obtrusive for the Turkish government pressured by the military. The government adjourned the debate with the USA many times. It rejected a discussion on the displacement of missiles that were the source of prestige and deterrence when the Cuban missile crisis emerged out of the blue. Foreign Minister Erkin stated that the removal was “out of the question”.⁵¹

To prevent a linkage, the USA expressed the differences between Cuban missiles and Jupiter missiles and why they should not be linked. Firstly, the USA argued that she did not secretly deploy the missiles to Turkey. It was an open process conducted by NATO and declared the will to the world in 1957. Unlike Cuban missiles or other missile bases of the USSR targeting the capitals of European countries, Jupiters and Thor missiles, according to the USA, were the tools for the collective defence of the allies.⁵² When the USSR officials perseveringly asked for the removal, Foreign Minister of Turkey Cemal Erkin said that they knew Jupiters were both dangerous lightning arresters and a guarantee. To clarify; the missiles, though they were provoking a USSR strike to Turkey, were tools to be used when the country was under great danger. Nevertheless, to assuage the crisis, the Soviets should have initially removed the bases in Warsaw Pact countries threatening Turkey.⁵³



Figure 1: Erkin: “The missiles threatening us should be removed first” (Cumhuriyet, 1 November 1962)

The obsolescence of these missiles was one of the reasons promoting the debate on dismantling. Although these missiles were still lethal, the reason why they were called obsolete was that they need “countdown” before firing. Since Polaris and Minuteman were relatively quicker than the Jupiter missiles in terms of firing time, they would make a better deterrent against the

⁵⁰ Nasuh Uslu, *ibid.*

⁵¹ Sam Pope Brewer. “Turkish Delegate Bars Bases Offer”, *New York Times* (28 October 1962).

⁵² “Amerika, Küba Buhranı Karşısında Türkiye'nin Durumunu İzah Etti”, *Cumhuriyet* (26 October 1962).

⁵³ “Erkin: Önce Bizi Tehdit Eden Üsler Kalkmalı”, *Cumhuriyet* (1 November 1962).

Soviets.⁵⁴ Another reason for dismantling Jupiters was that the deterrence of missiles decreased since the locations were known.⁵⁵ However, it must also be mentioned that there was speculation on the locations of the missiles. Aside from the site in İzmir, it was claimed that there were Jupiter launching sites near the coast of the Black Sea.⁵⁶ However, it is not sure if there were missile sites or this news was false. Lastly, since these missiles were told to be mobile, this argument seems invalid in terms of the danger it might pose because of the known launching sites.

As for the debate on removal, even though President Kennedy had some doubts about the usefulness of Jupiters, publicly linking two cases was perceived as weakness during the crisis. The debate was severe. Even Robert Kennedy, then minister of Justice, blamed the USA's Permanent Representative to the UN to be weak for the mission since he tended to bargain on the Jupiter missiles and the Guantanamo Base in return for Soviets to remove their bases and missiles in Cuba.⁵⁷ He also thought that the alliance and a key contributor, Turkey, needed to be taken into consideration, and the USA should not do anything that might offend both parties.⁵⁸ It was also discussed that if the missiles were dismantled in exchange for the Soviet missiles, this would let Communist penetration in the Middle East and the eastern Mediterranean area. However, regarding that the USA now has the capability to strike deep into the Soviets through submarine-launched the Polaris missiles, dismantling Jupiters could be militarily reasonable.⁵⁹

However, the President and the minister of Justice did not want to take a step when the crisis began. Yet, Kennedy still had doubts that these missiles were able to provoke a pre-emptive strike due to its capabilities instead of a weapon surviving an attack by the enemy and leaving the chance to retaliate.⁶⁰ A pre-emptive strike is an attack that was carried out when there is an expected attack from the enemy. A country makes in order to stop a presumed attack before it is blown.⁶¹ Kennedy thought that, since Jupiter missiles were first-strike weapons in nature, these missiles could entail a pre-emptive strike by the USSR that would destruct Turkey.

The prestige of the USA was also on the table. The USA could either trade-off and lose prestige disregarding its allies or be prepared to risk nuclear war. De Gaulle, the French President, claimed that the USA could trade the interest of any ally and abandon it if it receives enough *quid pro quo* in return. The act of accepting the second offer of the USSR covering the dispatch of missiles would confirm the words of De Gaulle and put the USA in a tight spot in terms of the stance with allies against enemies.

There were also some objections from Turkey. The foreign minister rejected the removal since the country spent money to build the bases, and it would be challenging to explain to Turkish people why the funds were spent in return of a weapon taken back from them, which could lead Turkey to look defenceless.⁶² Nonetheless, there were still reasons for the USA to displace missiles,

⁵⁴ John G Norris, "U.S. to Dismantle Jupiter Missiles In turkey and Italy Next Week", *The Washington Post* (25 March 1963).

⁵⁵ Hedrick Smith, "Turkey Willing for U.S. To Remove Missiles", *The Globe and Mail* (21 January 1963).

⁵⁶ Hanson W. Baldwin, "Guard NATO Flank: Turkish Missiles Now Obsolescent", *The Globe and Mail* (29 October 1962).

⁵⁷ Uslu, *ibid*.

⁵⁸ Bernstein, *ibid*, 102.

⁵⁹ Hanson W. Baldwin, "Installations in Turkey Form Key Element of NATO Power", *New York Times* (28 October 1962).

⁶⁰ Loeb, *ibid*, 32.

⁶¹ Waltz, *ibid*, 4.

⁶² Fuelling, *ibid*, 9.

and one of the reasons pushing the removal of Jupiters was that the Soviets would use the Turkish IRBMs (Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles) to justify arming Cuba.

Nevertheless, Kennedy's being seemingly against the removal of Jupiters until the end of the crisis led İnönü government and people, especially students, to advocate the firm stance of Kennedy regarding the missiles in Turkey until they learned the truth of trading Jupiters.⁶³ During the crisis, National Federation of Students declared support to the Turkish government and peaceful policies.⁶⁴ Amongst bureaucrats and statesmen; Cemal Gürsel, the President of Turkey declared support to American policies and pledged allegiance to the Alliance.⁶⁵ İnönü was also amongst those who declared support explicitly. In an interview, shortly after the crisis, with Drew Pearson, İnönü stated that the missiles in Turkey were to be removed after careful consultations regarding the obsolescence of Jupiters and pointed out that he has confidence in the words of the USA.⁶⁶ This case was to be changed soon. In the second half of the 60s, he changed his mind and expressed that the USA used Turkey as leverage in its foreign policy. It did not abstain from bargaining away the interests of Turkey.⁶⁷

One of the reasons why Kennedy was against any step back during the crisis was the possible results of being perceived as weak against the USSR. Furthermore, a concession at the beginning of the crisis would cause other ones in addition to the weakness. For instance, Paul Nitze, a former Assistant Secretary of Defence, claimed that the next concession asked by the USSR would be denuclearization in the borders of NATO countries.⁶⁸ Thus, a concession obscured from the public that will be implemented right after the crisis was appeased, was more suitable. Secret diplomacy traffic worked, and on 28 October, Khrushchev ordered the removal of missiles⁶⁹, and by 10 November, the missiles were confirmed by the USA to be dispatched.⁷⁰ However, the termination of the quarantine lasted until the end of negotiations.⁷¹

After being informed about these reasons, one of the expectations from the USA was to substitute Jupiters with equal weapons since Turkey wanted to assure the atomic capability equal to the missiles deployed on its soil. For reassurance, the Turks thought that robust military assistance and modernization were of vital significance.⁷² After the decision of removal, Turkish and American officers started debating on what they should do about Jupiters. Shortly after, the Turkish Foreign Minister Feridun Cemal Erkin signalled to accept the offer to change Jupiters with some other weapons like Polaris submarines that were to substitute the weapons.⁷³ By the end of the year, the removal process was finished, and submarines carrying Polaris missiles arrived at the Mediterranean.⁷⁴

⁶³ İnce and Olson, *ibid*, 279.

⁶⁴ "Gençlerin Bildirisi" (*Cumhuriyet*, 27 October 1962).

⁶⁵ "Küba Olayı ve Gürsel". *Cumhuriyet* (25 October 1962).

⁶⁶ Pearson, Drew. "Turks Favored U.S. Missile Exit: Greek Relations", *The Washington Post* (17 August 1963).

⁶⁷ Uslu, *ibid*.

⁶⁸ Bernstein, *ibid*, 106-118.

⁶⁹ "Kruçef Küba'daki Tecavüzi Silahların Geri Çekilmesi İçin Dün Emir Verdi". *Cumhuriyet* (29 October 1962).

⁷⁰ "Amerika, Küba'daki Füzelelerin Söküldüğünü Resmen Doğruladı". *Cumhuriyet* (10 November 1962).

⁷¹ "Kriz Şimdilik Geçti, Küba Meselesi Diplomatik Kanala İntikal Etti: Amerika Anlaşma Müzakereleri Süresince Ablukayı Kaldırmıyor", *Cumhuriyet* (27 October 1962).

⁷² Seydi, *ibid*, 442-450.

⁷³ "Turks Give Up Missile Bases, Long an Issue in the Cold War", *New York Times* (24 January 1963).

⁷⁴ "Polaris on Duty In Mediterranean", *The Atlanta Journal and the Atlanta Constitution* (31 March 1963).

CONCLUSION

The Cuban missile crisis had shown that Turkey as “the central bastion” of Western forces was the cornerstone of the crisis between the USA and the USSR. While sustaining a strong relationship with the USA, as the only NATO member bordering with the Soviets, Turkey played a significant role in the Alliance, especially at the beginning of the crisis. Many reasons pushed Turkey to act throughout the crisis. Among them, modernization of the army, security threat, the need for economic assistance, domestic political strain, relationship with the USA, and need for a deterrent can be counted. Although Turkey was not the main crux between superpowers, the missiles deployed on its soil was one of the chief reasons triggering the crisis.⁷⁵ As examined in the article, Turkey was not a passive actor, though not a superpower during the crisis.

Although it was later understood that Turkey was used as leverage against the Soviets and its say scaled down at the end of the crisis, the removal process was shown not to be related to the Khrushchev’s offer during the crisis. Instead, it was perceived to be about the obsolescence of the missiles. Eventually, the Cuban crisis was over after secret diplomacy traffic that remained veiled for a long time. Seemingly, İnönü’s stance during the crisis and a short after showed that Turkey’s trust in the USA and merely banking on one country could be problematic. As opposed, one of the benefits of this problem was that it demonstrated how important it is to have independence, although not entirely. Acting only upon the Turkish interests gained more importance.

Another possible conclusion might have been that the Turkish say in NATO diminished. After the replacement of Jupiters by Polaris submarine launched missiles, defence minister of Italy said that the Italian say in NATO was decreased since Italy had now no say in the use of Jupiters, namely the US does not need Italy’s consent to use these missiles anymore.⁷⁶ Same would apply to Turkey. When the missiles were deployed on Turkish soil, the Turkish Air Force and USAF had to consent to use these missiles. However, the Polaris missiles were only under the American Navy’s control, which were perceived as a decrease in Turkey’s and Italy’s deterrence capability and say in NATO.

⁷⁵ Bahar İzmir, “İki Müttefik Bir Kriz: Türk Amerikan İlişkilerinde Jüpiter Füze Krizi”, *Humanitas International Journal of Social Sciences* 5, no. 10 (2017): 188.

⁷⁶ Leo J Wollebomg, “Voice on NATO is Weakened, Italian Claims”, *The Washington Post* (21 February 1963).

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