

THE ENTRY OF TURKEY INTO WORLD WAR II

by HARRY N. HOWARD *

During World War II the Turkish Republic, as was natural in view of its strategic position at the international crossroads, was of great interest to both the Axis powers and the nations against them, including the United States. A nonbelligerent ally of Great Britain and France, based on the preliminary agreements of May-June 1939 and the treaty of October 19, 1939, as the war moved down through the Balkan Peninsula during 1940-1941, there was much with the attitude of Turkey, particularly after Italian entry into the struggle in June 1940 and the attack on Greece on October 28, 1940, and the advance of German forces into Rumania and then Bulgaria, with the ultimate Nazi aggression against Yugoslavia and Greece on April 5-6, 1941. During January-February 1941 President Roosevelt sent Col. William J. Donovan to this troubled region to stimulate resistance to the Nazis, and Turkey and the United States seemed in basic agreement to the outlook toward the war. But Turkey remained a nonbelligerent substantially until the end of the war, although American entry into the conflict on December 7, 1941, without doubt, had a very positive influence in Ankara, and the defense of Turkey was declared vital to that of the United States under the Lend-Lease Act.

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There was little difficulty, as such, concerning the problem of the Turkish Straits, despite questions raised from time to time relative to the passage of German naval vessels. During the Hitler-Ribbentrop-Molotov conversations of November 12-13, 1940, the Soviet Government made clear its desires as to revision of the Montreux Convention of the Straits and delineated the "center of gravity" of Soviet interest and policy in the general direction of the Persian Gulf. It was hinted that the Soviet Union might join the Axis, into which Turkey might also be pushed, willingly or otherwise. There was considerable trouble about the problem of Lend-Lease supplies and the Turkish shipment of chrome to Germany, much misunderstanding of the Turkish situation generally, and great concern over the Turco-German agreement of June 18, 1941, a few days prior to the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union of June 22. Shortly thereafter, on August 10, however, Great Britain and the Soviet Union formally confirmed their fidelity to the Montreux Convention, announced that they had had no aggressive intentions or claims with regard to the Straits, and declared that they were prepared not only "scrupulously to observe the territorial integrity of the Turkish Republic", but, in the event of an attack by a European power, to render assistance.

While certain pressures were brought, particularly after the Moscow and Tehran conferences, and during 1944, relative to active Turkish belligerency, it now seems clear that, in the last analysis, neither the United States, nor the United Kingdom, nor even the Soviet Union actually desired Turkish entry into the shooting war or had any well-developed plans therefor¹. On the other hand, the

¹ Documentary evidence has now thrown considerable light on Axis and Allied policy concerning the Middle East during the war period. See especially Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States. Diplomatic Papers* (1939-1944), hereafter cited as *F. R.*; Department of State and H. M. Stationery Office, *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945* (1949 ff), Series D, Vols. I-XIII, cited as *G. D.*; United Kingdom, Foreign Office, *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, cited as *B. D.*; The Soviet Foreign Ministry, *Dokumenty Ministerstva Inostranikh Del Germanii*, Vipusk II. *Germanskaia Politika v Turtsii* (1941-1943). OGIz-Gospolitizdat, 1946 (French translation: *La politique allemande Documents secrets du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères d'Allemagne* (Paris, 1936), cited as *GPT*. The Nurnberg documents are: Office of the U. S. Chief of Counsel for *Prosecution of Axis Criminality, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression* (Washington, U.S. G.P.O., 1946-1948), 8 volumes, and Supplements A and B, cited as *NCA*.

Turkish Government, in the event of actual hostilities, was anxious about sufficient supplies and equipment, and had no desire either to undergo possible Nazi conquest or subsequent Soviet "liberation." Stalin showed little interest in the matter at Tehran in November 1943, although there had been some discussion of it at the earlier Moscow meeting in October. At the Cairo Conference in December 1943, President Roosevelt was little interested, did not blame the Turkish leaders for not wanting to get caught "with their pants down", and General Marshall feared that supplies for Operation *Overlord* would be diverted and that the Turks would "burn up all our logistics". When President Roosevelt put the problem of Turkish entry to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in July 1944, General Marshall's reply was essentially in the negative. Turkey broke with Germany in August 1944, and formally declared war on August 23, 1945, some days after the conclusion of the Yalta Conference.

The Entry of the United States into the War.

Thanks to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States entered the lists against Japan and, a few days later, was formally at war with Germany and Italy. Immediately prior to the attack, namely on December 3, the United States had publicly declared the defense of Turkey essential to that of the United States and formally extended Lend-Lease assistance to the Turkish Republic². During this period there was considerable discussion as to the position of Turkey and as to the possible impact of the American entry into the war. The Germans well knew that Turkey desired to avoid open hostilities, but pointed out that, while Great Britain could offer nothing to Turkey, Germany held in its hands the Greek islands at the entrance to the Dardanelles, which were of vital importance to Turkey. In the event of success against the Soviet Union, Turkey must become "more and more friendly," although since the era of the great Atatürk, Turkey had been pursuing a policy of national consolidation and domestic reconstruction and had expressed no desire at all "to obtain territorial gain." Nevertheless, it was thought, it might be induced to "enlarge its benevolent neutrality and to facilitate access to the Arab territories and the Suez Canal for the German High Command³."

² *U. S. F. R.*, 1941, III, 814 ff.

³ *GPT.* 10-17.

Prime Minister Churchill came to Washington for talks with President Roosevelt, arriving on December 22, and in a memorandum, dated December 18, he discussed the Turkish problem, noting the cautious Turkish policy, and the improbability of a German southward thrust⁴. While the Washington discussions were going on, Foreign Secretary Eden was in Moscow considering war problems with Soviet authorities and, in a talk with Marshal Stalin on December 16, the latter outlined in some detail Soviet proposals as to post-war settlements, especially as to Eastern and Southeastern Europe and Turkey. Stalin, it may be observed, thought Turkey should receive the Dodecanese Islands, with possible adjustments in favor of Greece in the Aegean Islands, while Turkey might also receive certain districts in Turkey and possibly also in Northern Syria. There was evidently "no uneasiness with regard to Turkey"⁵. But, in view of prior undertakings with the United States, Mr. Eden explained that it was "quite impossible" for Great Britain to commit itself as to any post-war frontiers. The Foreign Secretary reaffirmed the Anglo-Soviet position concerning Turkey before the House of Commons on January 8, 1942, noting that "the references to Turkey were in all respects friendly, and such as the Turkish Government themselves would have been glad to hear." Turkey had nothing to fear from an Allied victory, its territorial integrity was in no way threatened by either Great Britain or the Soviet Union, and "the Anglo-Soviet pledges that we gave to Turkey last autumn" would be "fully honoured." Both the Soviet Union and Great Britain wished "to see Turkey strong and prosperous"⁶.

The German Ambassador in Ankara, Baron von Papen, advised Berlin on January 6, 1942 that American entry into the war had produced a "sentiment of profound deception in Turkey" and, as a consequence, he was certain that Turkey would "reiterate and emp-

⁴ Sir Winston Churchill, *The Second World War. The Grand Alliance* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1950), III, 647-648, 651.

⁵ Churchill, III, 628-629; *U. S. F. R.*, 1941, I, 196-205.

⁶ United Kingdom, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Vol. 377, col. 373. This position was reaffirmed by the British and American press representatives in Ankara on January 13, 1942, and by Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, the British Ambassador, who had been in Moscow with the Foreign Secretary (Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, *Diplomat in Peace and War* [London, Murray, 1949], 173-179).

hasize" its desire to avoid hostilities and would not become engaged in a struggle for "interests which did not involve Turkey."⁷ The fact that Great Britain had decided to establish "a new order in Europe", with Soviet assistance, had disturbed Turkey. While the United States seemed invincible to the Turks, the Axis could turn the issue of the war to its advantage by inflicting a defeat on the British Empire, although Turkey preferred a balance of power in the Mediterranean, not Italian predominance. Another possible outcome would be the complete victory of the Anglo-American *bloc*, with Soviet assistance which, in the Turkish view, would mean that Europe would fall under Soviet domination. Thus, in von Papen's view, Turkey would attempt "to find the possibility of a compromise." Two possibilities might animate Turkey to abandon the principle of neutrality in favor of one side or the other. One was a decisive German victory over the Soviet Union in the spring of 1942 and especially an advance toward the Caucasus and a threat to the British oil region in the Persian Gulf, although any German attempt to "push Turkey prematurely" would "inevitably lead Turkey to take the other side." Some days before, von Papen had urged on President İnönü the Turkish interest in the destruction of the Soviet Union, only to find that the Turkish President emphasized the neutrality of Turkey which, he said, was more advantageous to the Axis than to Great Britain. If Turkey were effectively on the side of Great Britain, "the British Fleet would support the Russian flank in the Black Sea and a convenient way for the defense of the Caucasus would be found." As a result of discussions with Saracoğlu and Menemencioglu, von Papen felt that the confidence of the Turkish Government in German promises not to do anything which might prejudice its "morally delicate position with regard to the British ally", should not be shaken, although he considered Turkish faith in German victory unbroken. Nevertheless, von Papen concluded that any "modification of Turkish foreign policy to the advantage of either side" would be "the consequence of the later development of the military situation." On February 16, von Papen noted that, until the summer of 1941, Turkey had feared "above all a complete victory of the Axis States and the domination of Italy over the eastern Mediterranean region". But the war against

⁷ Franz von Papen, *Memoirs* (London, Deutsch, 1952), 485-487, 487-489.

the Soviet Union had "totally modified this aspect of things", and now the fear was that, with the aid of Anglo-American forces, the Soviet Union would rise again and "dictate the laws of the new order in Europe⁸."

The German Ambassador flew to Berlin again in mid-March to obtain further guarantees for Turkey from the Führer⁹. While the immediate Soviet threat to Turkey had lessened, British pressure, he thought, to bring Turkey into the war would increase, as soon as there was a new German setback in North Africa. To keep Turkey independent of the United Kingdom, von Papen's idea was to supply it with arms for one or two divisions. If Hitler approved, matters could be kept in better balance and, as a matter of face, Minister Clodius visited Ankara in the summer of 1942, a new commercial agreement was signed with Turkey and a 100,000,000 RM loan was granted. While von Papen seemed to have lost confidence in German victory, he also arranged for Turkish military missions to visit both the eastern and western fronts to see German troops in action.

On the other hand, the American Ambassador, Mr. Laurence A. Steinhardt, who had moved from Moscow to Ankara, was convinced that the Turkish people would certainly fight if they were attacked. He advised Harry Hopkins in March 1942¹⁰ that new Lend-lease shipments had made a marked impression, while Germany had not fulfilled promises of armaments, with the result that the Turks feared the Germans, and ardently hoped for an Anglo-American victory despite all their skepticism concerning Soviet policies relative to the Turkish Straits. Steinhardt found little evidence that Germany planned to attack Turkey in the immediate future. While Germany had prepared bases in the Balkans, there were

⁸ *GPT*, No. 18. See also H. R. Trevor-Roper (Intro). *Hitler's Secret Conversations, 1941-1944* (New York, Farrar, Straus and Young, 1953), 265, for Hitler's similar views, after Japan's action against the United States, in which he indicated that it was enough "for us to inform Turkey that we are renewing the Montreux Convention, and that we are enabling her to fortify the Straits", thus avoiding maintaining "an important fleet in the Black Sea, is merely a frog-pond." Hitler also thought the Turkish attitude toward Great Britain was "blowing cold."

⁹ Von Papen, 487-489; *U. S. F. R.*, 1942, IV. *passim*.

¹⁰ Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York, Harper, 1948), 552-553; *U. S. F. R.*, 1942, IV, 680-685. Steinhardt presented his credentials on March 10, 1942.

insufficient troops in Bulgaria and Greece for such an attack. The Ambassador thought the critical for the Turks would come "when the coming German offensive in southern Russia either stalls or goes through to the Caucasus," and the Germans would have then to decide "whether to try and go through the difficult terrain in Turkey or keep hammering at the Russians." But it was unlikely that either of these two considerations would exist before July or August 1942¹¹.

Such were the views during the early part of 1942, although the Turkish situation had changed somewhat with the new American position as an active belligerent. Near Eastern questions in general, and the problem of Turkey, in particular, figured largely in the Hitler-Mussolini conversation at Salzburg on April 29,¹² when Hitler declared that "Turkey was moving slowly but surely over to the Axis" the Turkish "hatred of the Russians" being "especially favorable" to this development. In Hitler's view, Turkey would "never be an enemy of the Axis" and, at most, "would remain neutral to the end of the war," but, in any event, the Führer believed that the Turkish desire for an increase in territory would prove an influential factor. To a question of Il Duce, Hitler indicated that he had obtained, through unofficial channels, information that Turkish territorial desires centered around frontier adjustments in the neighborhood of Edirne and along the Baghdad railway, and stated that Schulenburg's telegram of November 26, 1940,¹³ which had been brought to Turkish attention, had proved very enlightening to the Turkish Foreign Ministry, since it outlined Soviet ambitions in some detail, especially as to the Straits. Mussolini declared that he had

¹¹ But see Count Ciano, *The Ciano Diaries, 1939-1943* (New York, Doubleday, 1946), 76-77; *The von Hassell Diaries, 1938-1944. The Story of the Forces Against Hitler Inside Germany, as Recorded by Ambassador Ulrich von Hassell, a Leader of the Movement* (New York, Doubleday, 1947), 249.

¹² For text see XV Department of State *Bulletin* 367 (July 14, 1946), 57-64; Ciano, 472.

¹³ See especially *G. D.*, Series D, IV, 533-549, 550-570, 714-715. When Molotov visited Washington in May 1942, President Roosevelt touched briefly on the difficulties between "the Russians and the Iranians on the one hand and the Russians and the Turks on the other", but Molotov was not much impressed and, as Mr. Hopkins surmised, Molotov felt that the Russians "knew a good deal more about their relations with Iran and Turkey than we did." Sherwood, 559.

advised the Turks that Italy had no designs on Turkish territory and was prepared to cede Castellorizzo, which was within Turkish waters. The matter of an Axis declaration regarding India and Arabia was then taken up, but it was agreed that this matter could wait, and Hitler took the position that such a declaration would only be practical "when the Axis troops stood of the Caucasus."

The German pressure on Turkey continued as the weeks passed. There were many discussions with the Turkish Ambassador in Berlin, H. Husrev Gerece¹⁴, whom Hitler considered a very able diplomatist, in which constant stress was laid on the Soviet threat to Turkey, the German victories, Pan-Turanism, and the American "bluff" in the war. Von Papen had his first interview with Numan Menemencioglu as Foreign Minister on August 26,¹⁵ in which the latter was quoted as reflecting the Turkish interest in "the most complete defeat of Bolshevik Russia" and indicating that Turkey had never entered into any *pourparlers* with the Soviet Union, with the exception of the declaration of March 24, 1941, under British pressure, reaffirming the friendship agreement of December 17, 1925. While von Papen was grateful for these assurances, he did not hide the German impression that Turkey had been listening altogether too much to the British and the Americans to the effect that Germany might be more dangerous in the future in the Black Sea than the Soviet Union, now seriously weakened. Menemencioglu, in any event, indicated that Turkish collaboration would be limited to a certain extent by the necessity of preserving neutrality.

Von Papen had a long talk the next day with the new Prime Minister, Şükrü Saracoğlu, on the question of the Turco-Mongol minorities and the future of the Soviet Union¹⁶. Saracoğlu, according to von Papen, desired "passionately the destruction of Russia,"

¹⁴ *Hitler's Secret Conversations*, 443; *GPT*, No. 23.

¹⁵ *GPT*, No. 26. Prime Minister Saydam died on July 8, and Saracoğlu succeeded him as Prime Minister. Menemencioglu became Foreign Minister on August 13, 1942.

¹⁶ *GPT*, No. 27. On Pan-Turanism see Sir Olaf Caroe, *Soviet Empire: The Turks of Central Asia and Stalinism* (London, Macmillan, 1953), 300 pp; Charles W. Hostler, *Turkism and the Soviets* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1957), 244 pp; Serge A. Zenkovsky, *Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia* (Cambridge, Harvard, 1960), 346 pp; Ivar Spector, *The Soviet Union and the Muslim World* (Seattle, University of Washington, 1959), 328 pp.

which was an "exploit" of the Führer, to be accomplished only once in a century. While the Führer had assured President İnönü of a place for Turkey in the New Order, as a power advance post in the southeast, the Prime Minister believed it "indispensable to preserve the absolute neutrality" of Turkey, equally in order not to compromise the position of Turkey for, in his view, the defeat of the Soviet Union was near, and the British would be led to conclude peace. Asked in what sense, practically, Germany could count on a "certain collaboration of Turkey, and how he envisaged Turkish interests in the administration of the provinces conquered from the Soviet Union," Saracoğlu replied that this would have to be subject of confidential talks.

Meanwhile, a new trade agreement had been signed with Germany on June 2, 1942, and it was announced on September 29 that Turkey had contracted to send some 45,000 tons of chrome, or approximately one half of the annual production, to the Krupp munitions plant in exchange for German arms. Despite Anglo-American pressure, there seemed little doubt at the time as to the execution of the agreement¹⁷. While Great Britain and the United States had their objections to the new commercial agreement, especially as to chrome, Great Britain apparently did not want more active Turkish participation in the war until after the British desert victory at El Alamein in October 1942. From that time on pressure was brought to bear to bring about more active participation, although there were differences between the British and American positions in this matter¹⁸.

On November 8 began the Anglo-American invasion of North Africa, with General Dwight D. Eisenhower in command of the American forces. Meanwhile, German forces had held the Balkan region,

¹⁷ *U. S. F. R.*, 1942, IV, 742-788. See also *ibid.*, 805-811, for American representations, September-December 1942, as to the passage of certain Axis vessels through the Straits.

¹⁸ See *New York Times*, December 20, 1942; Knatchbull-Hugessen, 185-188. See also *The Memoirs of Field-Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein*, K. G. (New York, Signet, 1958), Ch. VIII; George F. Howe, *United States Army in World War II. The Mediterranean Theater of Operations. Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative in the West* (Washington, Department of the Army, 1957), 72 ff; George Kirk, *The Middle East in the War, 1939-1945* (London, Oxford [RIIA], 1950), 455-456.

including Greece, firmly in their hands since the spring of 1941, and had continued their advance into the western and southwestern portions of the Soviet Union, although the Russians not only held firm at Stalingrad but, on February 2, 1943, liberated the beleaguered city. It was during this uncertain period, with the German advance into the Caucasus, and in anticipation of the fall of Stalingrad that the anti-Soviet propaganda campaign in Turkey reached new heights. But events themselves altered the picture, and the cautious Turkish Government veered gradually in the other direction.

In a conversation with Ambassador Winant, General W. B. Smith, and Foreign Secretary Eden on November 9, 1942, Prime Minister Churchill indicated that he was turning to the idea of getting Turkey into the war, with its 45 divisions, armed and *equipped by* the Allies for an invasion of the Balkan Peninsula, and he desired that Harry Hopkins, General Marshall and Admiral King return to London for further discussion of future plans¹⁹. Mr. Churchill, indeed, surveyed the problem on November 18, in a note to the British Chiefs of Staff, stressing that "a supreme and prolonged effort be made to bring Turkey into the war in the spring," although he expected naval forces would be fully engaged in the central Mediterranean and that only minor amphibious facilities would be available in the eastern Mediterranean. Moreover, access to Turkey could be obtained by rail through Syria, by coastal shipping, and a gradual buildup of air protection. The Dardanelles might become open to supplies for Turkey²⁰. If proper measures were taken, in the Churchill view, Turkey could be won, since it was an ally and would want to sit at the peace conference at the end of the war. Moreover, Turkey desired to be well armed, and its army was in good condition except for certain modern weapons. Hitherto, Turkey had been restrained from fulfilling its obligations, and an indulgent view had been taken of this situation because of British inability to help. But the situation had now changed, and with the destruction of Romel's forces, large forces might "presently become available from Egypt and Cyrenaica."

¹⁹ Sherwood, 656-657. Churchill wrote Stalin on November 13, 1942, concerning the passage of military traffic through the Mediterranean to Turkey (*Stalin's Correspondence*, I, 75-76).

²⁰ Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1950), IV, 697-698.

On the assumption of the Soviet Union maintaining its position in the Caucasus and holding the Caspian Sea, Mr. Churchill considered it possible "to build up a powerful British land and air force to assist the Turks," and felt the target date for the concentration should be April or May 1943. Turkey should be offered an Anglo-American-Soviet guarantee of territorial integrity and *status quo*, with which the Russians had agreed, followed by the despatch of a strong Anglo-American military mission to Turkey. Through the winter, Mr. Churchill proposed equipment of Turkey from Egypt and the United States with anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns and active construction of airfields. If operations were successful, the ultimate result would be "the opening of the Dardanelles, under heavy air protection, the passage of supplies to Russian Black Sea ports, and to any naval assistance the Russians might require in the Black Sea²¹."

Mr. Churchill advised Marshal Stalin on November 24 that President Roosevelt was in substantial agreement, and thought a new effort to bring Turkey into the war was in order, noting his desire to have the United States join in an Anglo-Soviet guarantee of Turkey's territorial integrity and status. He also indicated that a considerable consignment of munitions, including 200 tanks, would be going to Turkey and that, by the spring, he hoped to assemble a sizeable force in Syria. If Turkey were to enter the conflict, the Allies could attempt to open the shipping route to the Black Sea and bomb the Rumanian oil fields. Stalin agreed on November 28, remarking that entry of Turkey in the war by the spring would be "of great importance in order to accelerate the defeat of Hitler and his accomplices²²."

Whatever the presumed consensus between Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt, however, there was much difference of view in the United States as to the possible entry of Turkey into the war²³. On November 25, 1942, at any rate, President Roosevelt and General Marshall discussed future operations, including action in Turkey, and "it was agreed that there were many diplomatic questions involved," and that Turkey was unlikely to enter until it had received

²¹ *Ibid.*, 698-699; *Stalin's Correspondence*, I, 78-79.

²² Churchill, IV, 696.

²³ Sherwood, 658-659.

“considerable armament and other munitions of war.” General Marshall was dubious about sending heavier weapons to Turkey. While the Turkish Government was fully aware of the efforts to bring about a *Turco-Soviet rapprochement*, the Turkish press was suspicious lest the United States and Great Britain concede Soviet claims relative to Turkey, and the press took Foreign Secretary Eden to task for declaring in the House of Commons on December 2 that post-war peace depended on continuing the cooperation of the Great Powers, despite the Eden disclaimer of any Great Power dictatorship²⁴. When Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen visited London in December, he conferred with Mr. Churchill, Mr. Eden and the Chiefs of Staff and explained the Turkish position. While the desirability of persuading Turkey to enter the war was assumed, in principle, there existed a realization of the “many attendant problems and qualifications” which continued to engage Great Britain for months to come. Sir Hughe returned to Ankara with a message from Mr. Eden to Prime Minister Saracoğlu, taking note of the continuity in Turkish goodwill and declaring that Turkey “could count on the friendly sympathy and understanding of her Allies as an important factor serving the common interests of the two countries²⁵.”

The Turkish Problem at Casablanca and Adana.

President Roosevelt conferred with Prime Minister Churchill at Casablanca during January 17-27, 1943 and discussed the problem of Turkish entry into the war²⁶. It was agreed that Mr. Churchill should “play the cards” in Turkey, both for the United Kingdom

²⁴ See United Kingdom, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Fifth Series, vol. 385, col. 1254; Kirk, 455-465; Arthur Bryant, *The Turn of the Tide, 1939-1943; A Study based on the Diaries and Autobiographical Notes of Field Marshal The Viscount Alan Brooke, K. G., O. M.* (London, Collins, 1956), 529-530.

²⁵ Knatchbull-Hugessen, 185-186. Von Papen (p. 493), who talked with Menemencioğlu on January 7, 1943, as the Stalingrad disaster approached, reported that Turkey was more than ever determined to keep out of the war, although he felt that each new Allied success would make it more difficult for Turkey to withstand the pressure.

²⁶ For backgrounds see Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, *United States Army in World War II. The War Department. Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1941-1942* (Washington, D. C., Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1943), 363 ff; Maurice Matloff, . . . *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943-1944* (Washington, D. C., Department of the Army, 1959), 64 ff.

and the United States, in military matters, with the result that the United States played a secondary role relative to Turkey, although Turkish problems occupied "a considerable corner" in American foreign policy planning. On January 20, Mr. Churchill advised Mr. Eden of his plans to fly to Cairo and urged that, if Mr. Attlee and Mr. Eden thought well of the idea, the latter should "make the proposal to the Turks without delay." After consultations with the War Cabinet, however, Mr. Churchill was urged, on January 21, to return direct to London to give an account of the Casablanca meeting to Parliament, his colleagues being opposed to the trip on security grounds, but even "more strongly did they resist the Turkish proposal," since they were convinced "that the moment was not ripe for an approach" and did not want to court either "rebuff or a failure"²⁷.

The unhappy Prime Minister cabled Eden on January 21 that he thought a golden opportunity might well be lost, denied any intention to extort a pledge from Turkey, and declared that he was going only to explain how Turkey could be placed in a position of security by guarantees, substantial munitions and reinforcements in the event of attack. After talking with President Roosevelt, Mr. Churchill cabled Deputy Prime Minister Attlee and Mr. Eden, requesting a Cabinet review and the despatch of a cable to Ankara indicating his willingness to come "to a most secret rendezvous" with President İnönü and other Turkish leaders, and noting that he had been charged to speak both for Great Britain and the United States on equipment of the Turkish Army and the general defensive security of Turkey. The War Cabinet, however, maintained its position and felt that an approach at the summit would be premature. Churchill repeated his request on January 25, and on January 27,²⁸ the Turkish Government agreed to a meeting at Adana, which took place on January 30.

On the way to Adana, Mr. Churchill prepared a "wooing letter containing an offer of a platonic marriage" both from himself and President Roosevelt, stressing Anglo-American agreement that

²⁷ Sherwood, 683; Churchill, IV, 699-70, 700-703; Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, 2 vols (New York, Macmillan, 1948), II, 1365. For background documents see *U. S. F. R.*, 1943, IV, 1058-1060.

²⁸ Churchill, IV, 702-703; Bryant, 565 ff; *Stalin's Correspondence*, I, 88-89.

Turkey should be closely associated with the two Western democracies not merely during the concluding stages of the war, "but in the general work of rehabilitation" which would follow²⁹. He fully appreciated the Turkish attitude in the war, but noted that the Anglo-Americans, immediately on Turkish entry, would send at least 25 air squadrons and special units. He also noted that the war "temperature" would rise in the summer of 1943, with possible operations in the Black Sea, and added that Premier Stalin "was most anxious to see Turkey well armed and ready to defend herself against aggression." Both the United States and the United Kingdom, moreover, wanted Turkey as a "full partner in the Peace Conference," where all questions of changes in the *status quo* would have to be settled.

The purpose of the meeting on January 30 was to exchange views and impressions and to explore the possibilities of Turkey taking an active part in the war during the year, and the discussions turned largely on (1) the structure of the post-war world and (2) the arrangements for an international organization and the future of Soviet-Turkish relations³⁰. While Mr. Churchill assured that the Soviet Union cooperate in the post-war years and concentrate on internal reconstruction, and that Communism had "already been modified," the Turkish leaders were very skeptical³¹. When Prime Minister Saracoğlu adverted to Soviet imperialism, Mr. Churchill pointed out that there would be an international organization after the war and noted that, if things turned out badly, "it was better that Turkey should be strong and closely associated with the United Kingdom and the United States." In the event of Soviet aggression, "the whole international organization... would be applied on behalf of Turkey," and Mr. Churchill "would not hesitate to say so to Stalin."

²⁹ Churchill, IV, 706-709.

³⁰ The Churchill memorandum was given to President İnönü at the first meeting on the İnönü train. Mr. Churchill was accompanied by Generals Sir Harold Alexander, Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, Sir Alan Brooke, and Sir Wilfred Lindsell, Air Marshal Drummond and Commodore Dondas, and Sir Alexander Cadogan of the Foreign Office. President İnönü was accompanied by Prime Minister Saracoğlu, Foreign Minister Menemencioğlu, and Marshal Fevzi Çakmak, Chief of the General Staff. See Bryant, 570.

³¹ Knatchbull-Hugessen, 188-189. Von Papen, 494-495, states that the Turks were more concerned about future Turco-Soviet relations than with participation in the war.

On the whole, the visit appeared to have been successful, and Mr. Churchill seemed convinced that, from then on Turkish neutrality would be more "biased" in favor of the Allies, "somewhat similar to that of the Americans prior to their entry into the war³²." On February 2, 1943, he cabled Mr. Roosevelt, now back in Washington, that the highest Turkish security in the post-war era would be found in Turkey taking its place as one of the Allies, and he surveyed the possibility of Turkey becoming an active belligerent, perhaps in Balkan operations. Before incurring additional risks, however, he felt it would be right for Turkey to seek precise guarantees. Great Britain would be glad to give these, or join in a treaty with the Soviet Union, and the Prime Minister felt certain that the President "would gladly associate himself with this treaty", which "would naturally fall within the gambit of the world organization to protect all countries from wrong-doing³³." Mr. Churchill similarly advised Premier Stalin of the Adana meeting, but the latter replied coolly on February 6³⁴ declaring that the Soviet Union had made many friendly gestures to Turkey and that the Turks "did not react to our steps", evidently because they were afraid "to incur the wrath of the Germans," and he was afraid of a similar reception to any new overture. But, if Turkey wished "to make her relations with the USSR more friendly and intimate," the Turkish Government could say so. The Soviet Government would be willing to meet Turkey half way, and Stalin did not object to Churchill's stating that he had been kept informed of the Adana meeting, although he could not "say that the information was very full." A few days later, on February 11, Mr. Churchill told the House of Commons of the meeting and declared the British wish to see Turkish territories, rights and interests effectively preserved, and the desire to have "warm and friendly relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union³⁵."

³² Bryant, 573; Kirk, 456-458. See also *U. S. F. R.*, 1943, IV, 1060-1064, for the Steinhardt report of the Adana meeting.

³³ Hull, II, 1369.

³⁴ Churchill, IV. 713-716; *Stalin's Correspondence*, I, 90-91, 92-93, 386-387.

³⁵ United Kingdom, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Fifth Series, vol. 386, cols. 1467-1468; *Stalin's Correspondence*, I, 96, for Churchill's note to Stalin, February 17.

Some progress appeared to have been made, and on February 13, Foreign Minister Menemenciöglü, told Ambassador Vinogradov that he wished to enter into negotiations for an improvement in Turco-Soviet relations³⁶. While events moved slowly, the Germans were somewhat concerned with what had taken place at Adana. On February 20 President İnönü confirmed that it was a matter of Turkey's own volition whether it entered actively into the war, although he stressed the "indestructible" bonds between Great Britain and Turkey. Moreover, in an address of March 18, Prime Minister Saracöglü referred in warm terms to the meeting with Mr. Churchill, stating that Anglo-Turkish friendship was "not only dictated by our mutual interests", but was "a necessity vital to the interests of the two countries."

Shortly after the Adana meeting, von Papen journeyed once more to Berlin, returning with an assurance that Turkey would not be attacked, and there were rumors that assurances had been given Germany, based on the agreement of June 18, 1941, that Turkey would remain faithful to its written "engagements." Nevertheless, it appears that preference was given to the Anglo-Franco-Turkish treaty of October 19, 1939, for neither at Adana, nor later at Cairo, "never once were the terms of German treaty quoted" to the British "as precluding action on our side"³⁷. Indeed, Mr. Churchill felt that he could have had Turkey in the war on the Allied side before the end of 1943, without damage to the main projects, with much advantage, both to Turkey and the Allied cause³⁸.

The Turkish Problem at Moscow, October 19-30, 1943.

The next conference at which Turkish problems were to be discussed substantially was that at Moscow, although there were important developments, both on the battlefield and on the diplomatic chessboard in the intervening period. Germany was much

³⁶ Churchill, IV, 716; *Stalin's Correspondence*, I, 97.

³⁷ Knatchbull-Hugessen; 190-191; Von Papen, 494-495; *Stalin's Correspondence*, I, 99-102, for Churchill's communication of March 11.

³⁸ Churchill, IV, 716, later wrote: "Now in these years after the war when we see the United States sustaining Turkey with her whole power all has been put right, except that we did not have the considerable advantages of Turkish aid and all that this implied in the Balkan situation in the early months of 1944."

concerned with the Turkish attitude, and on June 15, 1943, Turkey confirmed its friendly relations with the Soviet Union. By the summer, new Lend-Lease material reached Turkey, although there was no indication of Turkey's active participation in the war³⁹. The invasion of Italy and the downfall of Mussolini, of course, made a deep impression in Turkey, as elsewhere, as von Papen did not fail to note.

There were also misunderstandings on the part of the United Kingdom as to the position of the United States regarding Turkey. Shortly after the Casablanca meeting and that at Adana, during the Eden visit to Washington in March 1943, Secretary of State Hull got the impression that the British Government was interpreting the President's agreement as to Great Britain's "playing the cards" with Turkey in a military way, to signify that it would also "handle all our relations in the political and economic spheres as well." While the President had spoken in general terms, by July 1943, it was clarified that the agreement applied only in the military sphere⁴⁰.

At the same time, Nazi Germany exerted strong pressure on Turkey during the spring and summer of 1943, and not merely through the several "peace" messages of the Führer, in which assurances were extended to that country. Ambassador von Papen hinted that if Turkey entered the war, or even increased its collaboration with the Allies, the German *Luftwaffe* would bomb Istanbul and other Turkish cities. While the Turkish press continued to stress Turkish neutrality, Prime Minister Saracoğlu, who also reemphasized the Turkish position, continued close military collaboration with the British. Nevertheless, a group in the Turkish Government, perhaps headed by Foreign Minister Menemenciöglü and Field Marshal Çakmak, opposed increased collaboration with the Allies, since the German summer campaign might be directed against Turkey, and it would be "ill advised" to commit Turkey too far in the Allied direction. But even this group, it appeared, was prepared "for a radical change in Turkey's status, provided there were more adequate

³⁹ See *Stalin's Correspondence*, II, 67-68 for Roosevelt's letter of June 4 on laying the groundwork for passive or active Turkish participation.

⁴⁰ See *U. S. F. R.*, 1943, IV, 1067, 1069-1071; Hull, II, 1367-1368.

preparation and equipment and adequate guarantees for the post-war period⁴¹.

President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill discussed the subject of Turkey once more at the Quebec Conference (August 17-24, 1943), when it was agreed that Turkey was to be asked to interpret the Montreux Convention strictly to keep German shipping of military value out of the Straits, to stop chrome shipments to Germany, and to improve rail communications, airfields, storage facilities and the Turkish armed forces. On the other hand, it was agreed that the Turkish Government should be supplied with as much equipment as could be spared. But it is noteworthy that the President, the Prime Minister, and the Combined Chiefs of Staff decided that, from the military point of view the time was "not right for Turkey to enter the war on our side." As already noted, Mr. Churchill was anxious to persuade Turkey either to come into the war or to make available to the Allies the Turkish airfields which the British had been developing, and he hoped the Allies might quickly dominate the Aegean and the Black Sea, and establish a direct supply route to the Soviet Union through the Straits. The American military advisers, however, maintained their strategy and opposed the assumption of new commitments in the Eastern Mediterranean⁴².

The Turkish Government did not respond to the Churchill overtures, and its hesitance led to a severe propaganda attack upon Turkish neutrality in *War and the Work-Class*, charging Turkey with failing to assist Yugoslavia and Greece and signature of the Turco-German agreement of June 1941. All this was most interesting in the light of Soviet policy during the early stages of the war, of the policy regarding Turkey in particular, and of the fact that, in the last analysis, the Soviet Union wanted no Turkish participation in the war in

⁴¹ Altemur Kılıç, *Turkey and the World* (Washington, Public Affairs Press, 1959), 103-105. See also Herbert Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought* (Princeton, Princeton University, 1957), 151-153, 692.

⁴² Hull, II, 1368; *U. S. F. R.*, 1943, IV, 1086-1087, 1087-1111, 1111-1150, 1150-1167. See also Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York, Harper, 1948), Ch. XVII; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe: A Personal Account of World War II* (New York, Doubleday, 1948), 194; Sherwood, 591, 746-747, 764-765; Churchill, *Closing the Ring* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1951), V, 133-137, 286-289. See also Matloff, 229, 261-262; John Ehrman, *Grand Strategy* (London, HMSO, 1956), V, 88-92.

the Balkan neighborhood and, in reality, demonstrated little interest in Turkey's entry into the war.

Not long after the Quebec meeting came the Italian surrender (September 2), and during October 19 - November 1, 1943, the Moscow Conference. Lord Ismay, who accompanied Mr. Eden to Moscow, noted that Churchill had foreseen that an Italian collapse would give a "wonderful change of seizing Rhodes and the other islands in the Dodecanese." With the Aegean in Allied hands, the Prime Minister considered that Turkey "would probably come into the war," and "convoys could then be sent to Russia via the Dardanelles and the Black Sea, instead of through the hazardous Arctic Ocean."⁴³

At Moscow the British Delegation set forth a twelve-point program which included "a common policy towards Turkey, a common policy in Persia."⁴⁴ Moreover, after the preliminaries on October 19, Mr. Molotov circulated a proposal "that the three Powers suggest to the Turkish Government that Turkey should immediately enter the war."⁴⁵ In response to an account from Mr. Eden, the Prime Minister, on October 20, advised Mr. Eden to find out whether the Russia were really attracted to British action in the Aegean, getting Turkey into the war, opening the Straits into the Black Sea and operations in the Balkans⁴⁶. Churchill was convinced of the great significance of getting into Rhodes and the other islands and building up an effective air and naval superiority in the Aegean, but wondered whether the Russians viewed sympathetically the British effort to hold Leros and the desire to take Rhodes. He noted on October 23 that if Turkey were forced into the war, it would demand

⁴³ Churchill, V, 218-219. Lord Ismay, *The Memoirs of General the Lord Ismay* (London, Heinemann, 1960), 322. Lord Ismay notes that the Churchill objective was similar to that which had inspired the Dardanelles campaign in 1915, but that there was much opposition in Washington and some in Whitehall. If only Alan Moorehead's *Gallipoli* (London, 1956) had been available to the military planners!

⁴⁴ See especially *U. S. F. R.*, 1943, I, 513-800, for the American documentation. Through "Operation Cicero", von Papen learned the details of the Moscow, Tehran and Cairo meetings. See L. C. Moyzisch, *Operation Cicero* (New York, Bantam, 1952), 182 pp; Elyesa Bazna, *I Was Cicero* (New York, Dell, 1962), 192 pp; von Papen, 499-505. See also Ehrman, V, 100-101.

⁴⁵ Churchill, V, 284-285.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 286-287.

air support, which could be provided only to the detriment of primary operations in Italy. If it entered on its own initiative, through non-belligerency, there would not be the same obligation, but a great advantage might be achieved. "The prize would be to get into the Black Sea with supplies for Russia, warships, and other forces," and Mr. Churchill did not consider such a Turkish move impossible, particularly if the Germans began to cut their losses in the Balkans⁴⁷. Molotov had, indeed, raised the question both of Turkish and Swedish participation on October 20, and Mr. Eden not only noted the difficulties of equipment, but stated that "under present conditions Turkey, whose military preparedness is still very backward, would, as our partner in the offensive, probably be more of a liability than an asset."⁴⁸ Mr. Hull, who could add nothing to the Eden statement, preferred not to speak on military matters. On October 28, Mr. Churchill cabled Mr. Eden confirming his own view that "we should not discourage the Russian desire that Turkey and Sweden should of their own volition become belligerents or actual allies." The United Kingdom should agree in principle, "and let the difficulties manifest themselves, as they will certainly do, in the discussion of ways and means."⁴⁹

Mr. Molotov told Secretary of State Hull on October 25 that the three Powers should "suggest peremptorily," in other words, "command" that Turkey enter the war, and Mr. Hull repeated that this was a "purely military matter" which came within the province of the President and the Chiefs of Staff. The President communicated the view of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on October 26:⁵⁰

It would not be deemed advisable to push Turkey at this moment into a declaration of war on the side of the Allies since the necessary compensation to the Turks in war material and war supplies including armed forces and ships would divert too much from the Italian front and the proposed OVERLORD operation. However,

⁴⁷ Churchill, V, 289; *U. S. F. R.*, 1943, I, 621-622.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1943, I, 583-588, for general discussion.

⁴⁹ Hull, II, 1297.

⁵⁰ *U. S. F. R. The Conference at Cairo and Tehran 1943*, pp 117, 121. Molotov saw no point in supplying arms to Turkey "without getting some fighting out of her." See also *ibid.*, 43, 86, for President Roosevelt's letter of October 26, 1943, expressing his hope for a talk, and President İnönü's agreement (November 14, 1943).

inquiries could be started on basis of lease by Turkey as a neutral of airbases and transportation facilities.

Mr. Hull communicated President Roosevelt's views to the Conference on October 28, when Molotov brought up the subject of Turkish entry once more. It was now agreed that the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States should study the problem, and Stalin expressed his "disappointment" when he conferred with Mr. Eden the next evening.⁵¹ On November 1, an Anglo-Soviet agreement that Mr. Eden see the Turkish leaders on his return to London, was signed.⁵² While Mr. Hull was on his way home, President Roosevelt advised Mr. Churchill of his agreement that the United States would join "in making immediate demand on Turkey for use of air bases and later pressing Turkey to enter the war before the end of the year," subject to the condition that no British or American resources were to be committed to the Eastern Mediterranean area which were necessary for OVERLORD or for operations in Italy⁵³.

The decision to invite Turkey to enter the war was "an abrupt departure" from the Anglo-American position, and the "most difficult period" in relations with Turkey was now in the offing. Foreign Secretary Eden went to Cairo for three days of discussion with Foreign Minister Menemencioglu (November 4-6), during which he pointed out the urgent need of air bases in southwest Anatolia and explained the precarious British position at Leros and Samos. He also stressed the advantages to be derived from Turkey's entry into the war, stressing possibilities in the Balkans, the cutting off of Turkish chrome to Germany, and the contribution of Turkey to Germany's defeat. The Turkish Delegation, however, was unmoved by these

⁵¹ Churchill, V, 291-294. Eden conferred twice with Hull on the problem of Turkish air bases. Molotov objected to the "mild move" concerning bases, and ultimately it was agreed that Eden "would make a request of Turkey for the immediate use of air bases, while Great Britain would join with the USSR at a later date in requesting Turkey's entry into the war before the end of the year." Hull, II, 1312.

⁵² U. S. F. R. *The Conferences at Tehran and Cairo*, 134-136.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 151, 152-155. See also *The Memoirs of Anthony Eden, Earl of Avon. The Reckoning* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 477, 488-484. Eden agreed that Turkish entry was desirable, but notes that, on balance, "Turkey as an active ally might be more of a liability than an asset" —a view shared by Americans— because of its unpreparedness.

arguments, since it was fearful of German air attacks, and Mr. Menemencioglu was upset by Mr. Eden's "threatening tone." Indeed, the Turkish Foreign Minister contended that "to give the Allies the free use of Turkish air bases," almost certainly would involve Turkey in war and could not be discussed as an isolated issue. It was also distasteful to enter the war at the eleventh hour, and play the unheroic Italian role. Turkey, he said, "must have a definite task," and there were political and military points to be clarified⁵⁴. In view of this position, it was decided that Menemencioglu should return to Ankara, and that a final answer should be given as soon as possible as to whether, in principle, Turkey was ready to act. Further discussions would follow an affirmative reply. Otherwise, it seemed clear that relations with Turkey "could hardly fail to be affected by such a disappointment."

After the Eden-Menemencioglu meetings there were prolonged discussions in the Turkish Cabinet, as well as all-night sessions of the People's Party in Ankara, and further discussions among the American, British and Soviet leaders. It was also clear that the problem would come up at Tehran⁵⁵. Menemencioglu advised von Papen on November 13 that Eden had requested Turkish entry into the war, but he evaded any question as to Turkish bases. The Foreign Minister told Ambassador Steinhardt that if the Turkish Government could be satisfied that the Russians harbored no Balkan ambitions, the former "cordial and intimate friendship" could be restored. But Soviet officials professed to know nothing of Turkish fears, while considering that Turkish entry into the war would prove valuable. These, too, were matters which could be discussed at Tehran, along with the problem of the Straits⁵⁶. On November 18, the American Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed that it was desirable to bring Turkey into the war, but once more declared that it would have to be done "without diversion of resources that would prejudice the success of our commitments elsewhere." It was also noted that Turkey's fear

⁵⁴ Churchill, V, 334-335; Hull, II, 1369; Knatchbull-Hugessen, 196-197; Ehrman, V, 102; *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 161-162, 164-167, 174-175, 180-182, 190-192. Lord Ismay, 330-331, notes that the advantages to Turkey of entry into the war "were not so obvious" as the advantages to the British.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 71, 74-75.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 193-194, 199-200, 201-203.

of Soviet domination in the Balkans or the Dardanelles would probably lead to Turkey's entry in order to obtain a voice in the peace ⁵⁷.

The Turkish official reply of November 22 announced the decision "in principle to enter the war," but it was accompanied by an equally clear statement that action was impossible unless Turkey received adequate defense against German attack. The Government believed it should take an effective part in the war on the Allied side but laid great stress on the inadequacies of Turkish defenses. On the whole the reply was encouraging, and one with which the British Ambassador was in essential agreement ⁵⁸. Mr. Churchill felt that, "considering what had been happening under their eyes in the Aegean," the Turkish leaders could "hardly be blamed for their caution." In any event, arrangements had now been made, late in November, for a meeting among President İnönü, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, together with a Soviet Representative, in Cairo, following the Tehran Conference. The Turkish President was willing to come, provided he were not merely to be told of decisions already reached affecting Turkey, "but was being asked to participate in a free discussion between equals." ⁵⁹

At the same time, German military estimates of the Turkish position in late 1943 are of considerable interest ⁶⁰. Thus, estimates in November 1943 by the Armed Forces Operations Staff indicated that, while Turkey had maintained a policy of clear neutrality, the closer the Soviet armies came to the Balkans, the more difficult Turkey's position would be, although no surprise attack on the Axis was

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 210, 226. At a meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with the President on the *U. S. S. Iowa* on November 19, Admiral King "pointed out that if Turkey entered the war it would result in drawing away supplies and troops from other operations" (*ibid.*, 260). Ambassador Harriman noted on November 21 that the Soviet Union might be satisfied if Turkey came into the war "this winter" and thought pressures should be "intensified" (*ibid.*, 265-266).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 374-376. See also Ehrman, V, 103, where it is indicated that, by the third week in November, the Turkish Government was sympathetic, but clearly "unwilling to enter the war without complete military, and possibly diplomatic, security; the Aegean was again in German hands; and the Americans had shown themselves opposed to any diversion of forces to the area." See also Knatchbull-Hugessen, 196-197.

⁵⁹ Hull, II, 1369; *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Tehran and Cairo*, 43, 86, 100-101.

⁶⁰ NCA, VII, 949-952, 954-958.

expected. Turkey's position, in the German military view, was dominated by the question of the Straits, but expansionist claims, even against Bulgaria, did not exist. Nevertheless, if Turkey did change its attitude, further possible enemy operations from the European bridgehead of Turkey and operations against the Bulgarian-Rumanian Black Sea coast would have to be taken into account. The Germans had the impression that Turkey was determined to remain a nonbelligerent, but was willing to make further concessions to the enemies of Germany.

The Tehran Conference, November 28-December 1, 1943.

The road to the Tehran Conference had now been well paved. On the way to the Iranian capital, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill met at Cairo on November 22, and, in addition to conferring with Generalissimo and Mme. Chiang-kai-Shek about the Far East, found time to confer concerning Turkish and other problems prior to their discussions with Marshal Stalin⁶¹. At a meeting on November 24 they considered Mediterranean operations, and Mr. Roosevelt wondered concerning the effect on OVERLORD of action in the Mediterranean, including the question of Turkey's entry into the war⁶². While Mr. Churchill felt that preparations for OVERLORD should move forward, he still believed that nothing was needed in the Mediterranean which could be applied elsewhere and, if Rhodes were taken, "the whole Aegean could be dominated by our air force and direct sea-contact established with Turkey." Moreover, if Turkey could be persuaded to enter the conflict, or to "strain neutrality," the Aegean could be dominated and the Rhodes operation would be unnecessary. Without taking men or equipment from the decisive battles, the Black Sea could be dominated and a supply route to the USSR opened through the Straits⁶³.

The American position became very clear at the outset of the Tehran Conference on November 28, when Mr. Roosevelt met with the Joint Chiefs of Staff⁶⁴. While they had recommended a common policy concerning Turkey on November 26, to include the Soviet

⁶¹ For records see *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 293-455.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 329-334; Churchill, V, 328; Sherwood, 766-776; Matloff, 352-356.

⁶³ Churchill, V, 346.

⁶⁴ *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 459-652, for the records.

proposal to force Turkey into the war, there was to be "no diversion of forces or supplies for Turkey... to the prejudice of approved operations elsewhere." When Admiral King reviewed the British project for taking Rhodes, with the thought that the Turks would take all the other islands, he noted that the Allies would "have to give material, ships and supplies for opening up the Dardanelles." President Roosevelt remarked that "he did not have the conscience to urge the Turks to go into the war."⁶⁵ In a preliminary review of the course of the war at the first plenary session on November 28, the President noted the possible point of operation in the Mediterranean, but emphasized that "the large cross-channel operation should not be delayed by secondary operations." Marshal Stalin thought it would be helpful for Turkey to enter the war and open up the Balkans. But the Balkans were far from the heart of Germany, "and while with Turkish participation operations there would be useful, northern France was still the best."

Mr. Churchill also presented his view on November 28⁶⁷ and, coming to the "biggest problem," namely that of bringing Turkey into the war, he adverted his persistent theme. But how was it to be done? Was Turkey to move into the Balkans? What would the reactions in Southeastern Europe be and what influence would be exerted on the Germans in Greece? What was the Soviet view? Would the Soviet Union wish to go ahead, "even if it meant a delay of some two months from May 1 in launching 'OVERLORD' "? There was also the further project, as President Roosevelt indicated, "of moving up to the Northern Adriatic and then northeast to the Danube," although his staff was not pleased with this remark. Mr. Roosevelt, indeed, did not favor "any secondary operations which might tend to delay the cross-Channel invasion, OVERLORD," although he and Mr. Churchill had discussed possible future operations in Italy, the Adriatic and Aegean Seas, and from Turkey as a base in the event that the Turks might be induced to enter the war."

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 426-427, 477-482. See also General Omar N. Bradley, *Bradley: A Soldier's Story* (New York, Holt, 1951), 220.

⁶⁷ See especially Churchill, V, 350-353; Feis, 257-266; Matloff, 352-356. Sherwood, 779-781, indicates that Churchill repeated his position as to Turkey "with a persistence that was both admirable and monotonous."

Marshal Stalin commented at length on the Churchill remarks, inquired about OVERLORD and wondered how many divisions of Anglo-American troops would have to be allotted if Turkey entered the war. Told that some 20 air force squadrons and several anti-aircraft regiments would have to be given to Turkey, Stalin thought it would be a mistake to divert forces to Turkey and Southern France, the "best course" being to make OVERLORD the basic operation in 1944. In any case, he did not expect Turkey to take action. Finally, Mr. Churchill inquired whether the Soviet Government were "not very anxious to get Turkey into the war," and Stalin replied that he was "all in favor of trying again.... We ought to take them by the scruff of the neck if necessary." The President suggested that the timing of operations required careful thought, noting once more that any Mediterranean operation would probably postpone OVERLORD until June or July. While Mr. Churchill did not disagree in principle, he felt that his suggestions concerning Yugoslavia and Turkey did not conflict with the general conception, and he could not agree to sacrifice Mediterranean activities in order to keep the precise date of May 1 for OVERLORD, noting that if Turkey refused to come in, it could not be helped. Ultimately Stalin agreed that the politico-military problem of Turkey should be discussed, and since Turkey was an ally of the United Kingdom and a friend of the United States, they should persuade Turkey to enter the war actively. When Mr. Churchill suggested that Turkey would be "mad" if it declined the Soviet invitation and also lost British sympathy, Stalin declared that many people preferred to be "mad" and neutrals generally belligerents as "fools." In turn, President Roosevelt stated that, should he meet President İnönü, he would, of course, "do everything possible to persuade him to enter the war, but that if he were in the Turkish President's place he would demand such a price in planes, tanks and equipment that to grant the request would indefinitely postpone OVERLORD."⁶⁸

General Sir Alan Brooke substantially reiterated the Churchill position at a tripartite military staff meeting on November 29, while General Marshall stressed the limitations and the importance of

⁶⁸ *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 496, 508; Sherwood, 781; Churchill, V, 353-357; Matloff, 356-369.

OVERLORD⁶⁹. Mr Churchill also adverted to the Turkish problem on the afternoon of November 29, when he questioned that Turkish entry into the war would mean the diversion of more than two or three Allied divisions at the most. When he inquired what the Soviet Union would do if Bulgaria were to attack Turkey, Stalin replied that it would consider itself immediately at war with Bulgaria, if, as a result of Turkish entry, Bulgaria threatened Turkey, and he was willing so to inform the Turkish Government. But he did not believe Turkey would come in, and continued that there was no difference of opinion as to the importance of helping the Partisans, but that he must say that from the Russian point of view the question of Turkey, the Partisans and even the occupation of Rome were not really important operations. He said that OVERLORD was the most important and nothing should be done to distract attention from that operation.

President Roosevelt was "most interested" in these various views, but repeated his opinions as to logistics, timing and holding to the original date of OVERLORD⁷⁰. As the discussion continued, Mr. Churchill declared that if the effort to bring Turkey into the war were unsuccessful, "that would be the end of the matter."⁷¹

Mr. Churchill was ready to argue concerning the date of OVERLORD, and suggested a Technical Military Committee to discuss the problem, but there was no agreement as to Aegean operations when the Combined Chiefs met on the morning of November 30. When MM. Hopkins, Eden and Molotov met at lunch that day, however, there was much discussion of the Turkish problem, when Mr. Eden proposed a joint "summons" to Turkey, "making clear what consequences would follow if Turkey refused, with all three of us backing the demand." If agreeable, an invitation could be extended to President İnönü to come to Cairo for a "summit" meeting. While Mr.

⁶⁹ *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 514-528.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 533-540, 540-552; Churchill, V, 368; Sherwood, 788. Eden, 496-497, notes that Stalin had changed his mind since the Moscow Conference in October, that the Combined Chiefs of Staff were "lukewarm," and that Stalin was now opposed to putting pressure on Turkey, although he thought "we should go on asking for air bases."

⁷¹ *U. S. F. R., The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 555-564; 568-574; Churchill, V, 371-372; Sherwood, 792.

Molotov favored bringing Turkey into the war immediately, he was less optimistic about it after the Eden-Menemencioğlu talks in Cairo and, when Mr. Hopkins stated the Roosevelt understanding that this might delay operation OVERLORD, he stated that "Marshal Stalin would be against getting Turkey into the war now if this necessarily meant a delay in OVERLORD." Molotov also inquired what Mr. Churchill had meant when he had suggested that, if Turkey rejected the demands, "its post-war rights in the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles would be affected." Mr. Eden did not know, but supposed that "the whole basis of relationship with Great Britain would be changed."

The latter problem was somewhat clarified when Marshal Stalin and Prime Minister Churchill lunched with President Roosevelt on November 30.⁷² Mr. Churchill declared that such a "large land mass" as Russia "deserved the access to warm water ports," and that the question "would of course form part of the peace settlement," and "could be settled agreeably as between friends." Stalin though the question could be raised "at the proper time," inquired as to the regime of the Straits, and indicated, since Great Britain no longer objected, that "it would be well to relax that regime." Mr. Churchill agreed, but questioned the advisability of doing anything at the time, "as we were all trying to get Turkey into the war." Marshal Stalin thought there was no "hurry," and was merely interested in discussing it "in general." Churchill saw no objection "to "this legitimate question," and hoped "to see Russian fleets, both naval and merchant, on all the seas of the world." President Roosevelt, in a general observation, declared that the Baltic should be free to merchant vessels, with free zones in the ports, and that trustees should be appointed for the Kiel Canal, "while the Dardanelles ought to be free for the commerce of the world."

The Turkish problem was discussed again at the Roosevelt-Churchill-Stalin luncheon on December 1, when Hopkins, Eden, Clark-Kerr and Harriman were present⁷³. Some consideration was given to the proposed meeting with President İnönü in Cairo, and much to the assistance to be given to Turkey, if it entered the war.

⁷² *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 565-568, 585-593.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 585-93; Churchill, V, 389-393; Sherwood, 793-795.

Mr. Churchill reiterated his well known position, and stated that if the Turkish President did not come to Cairo, he would see him subsequently in Ankara "and present to him the ugly case which would result from the failure of Turkey to accept the invitation to join in the war, and the unappetizing picture of what help could be afforded her if she did." On the military side, Mr. Hopkins pointed out again that "the United States Chiefs of Staff had not given consideration to the detailed requirements of the Turkish operation," the question of available landing-craft, among other things, being of crucial importance. Mr. Churchill persisted, however, noting the "priceless opportunity" for Turkey to sit at the peace conference, and stressing the Soviet guarantee as to Bulgaria and the advantages of association with the victorious Allies. Stalin thought it possible that Turkey would not even have to fight, although bases might be given, although Mr. Eden explained that these facilities had been refused on the ground that Germany would react against any Turkish provocation, and Mr. Menemencioglu preferred to "come in by agreement," rather than "be brought in indirectly" as a result of such action. Mr. Churchill considered this position largely an excuse, since the Turks not only refused to "strain their neutrality" as to bases, but indicated that they were "insufficiently armed" to become a belligerent. He preferred to offer something substantial, and if it were refused, "then they would wash their hands of Turkey, both now and at the peace table." At this point, Molotov recalled the Churchill hint that a Turkish rejection might adversely affect the Turkish position at the Straits, but the Prime Minister indicated that he was far from his Cabinet, although he personally "favored a change in the regime of the Straits if Turkey proved obdurate." Molotov had "merely meant to indicate that the Black Sea countries were very much interested in the regime of the Straits."⁷⁴ On the other hand, President Roosevelt wanted to see "the Dardanelles made free to the commerce of the world and the fleets of the world, irrespective of whether Turkey

⁷⁴ In a memorandum of December 15, 1943, dealing with Soviet attitudes as expressed by Stalin at Tehran Charles E. Bohlen noted: "The Soviet Government, would like to see the Montreux Convention in regard to the Straits replaced by a regime affording freer navigation to merchant and naval vessels both in war and peace. This question was not pursued in any detail". *U S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 484.

entered the war or not." In the end it was agreed that President İnönü should be invited to Cairo to meet with Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt, the Soviet Union being represented by Ambassador Vinogradov and Mr. Vyshinsky.

In the end, it was agreed at Tehran and confirmed in writing on December 1, as foreshadowed at Moscow, that, from the military view, "it was most desirable that Turkey should come into the war on the side of the Allies before the end of the year," and February, 14, 1944 was set as the date on which Turkey should be asked to enter the conflict as an active participant. Moreover, note was taken of Stalin's statement that "if Turkey found herself at war with Germany, and as a result Bulgaria declared war on Turkey or attacked her," the Soviet Union "would immediately be at war with Bulgaria," a fact which "could be explicitly stated in the forthcoming negotiations to bring Turkey into the war."⁷⁵ Mr. Churchill was pleased that "strong efforts were to be renewed to bring Turkey into the war with all that might accompany this in the Aegean, and follow from it into the Black Sea."⁷⁶

The Cairo Summit Conference, December 4-6, 1943.

All arrangements were soon made for the gathering at Cairo, where the Turkish Delegation, headed by President İnönü, arrived on Saturday morning, December 4, for the "free and unprejudged discussion as to the best method by which Turkey could serve the common cause," on which the Turkish President had insisted⁷⁷. The Turkish Delegation was to display a customary caution throughout the discussions, and someone remarked that the members "wore hearing devices so perfectly attuned to one another that they all went out of order at the same instant whenever mention was made of the possibility of Turkey's entering the war." But there was another side

⁷⁵ *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 651-652. For disposition of Italian shipping, merchant and war vessels, in which the Russians were much interested, see *ibid.*, 596-604, 112, 120, 126-129, 622-623, 873-874, 876-877; Churchill, V, 392-393, 405.

⁷⁶ Churchill, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁷ *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 662-667, 858-859; Knatchbull-Hugessen, 197-198. Evidently President İnönü had been authorized by the Government and Party to go to war. Vyshinsky did not arrive until December 7, when the President was leaving.

of the story. Although Mr. Churchill was "never discouraged," both President Roosevelt and Mr. Hopkins were very skeptical, and the American Chiefs of Staff "were actively alarmed that Turkey *might* come into the war and thereby, as General Marshall liked to put it, 'burn up our logistics right down the line.'" ⁷⁸

Prior to the meetings with the Turkish Delegation, in a meeting on December 3, the Anglo-American Combined Chiefs of Staff once more discussed the Turkish problem ⁷⁹. Sir Alan Brooke again declared that all necessary preparations were going forward in anticipation of Turkish action, and Admiral King raised a question as to requirements. The Combined Chiefs did not propose that Allied forces be concentrated in Thrace to cooperate with the Turks, who were to be "persuaded to stand on the defensive and to concentrate their forces for the protection of the Straits," while the Allies bombed Bulgaria. The opening of a supply route to the Soviet Union through the Straits would be useful, and bases would be asked from which to protect convoys, and a "reasonable scale" of air defense for Turkish cities could be provided. Both Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt met with the Combined Chiefs on the morning of December 4. Mr. Churchill reiterated his position, and Mr. Roosevelt declared that nothing should be done to hinder OVERLORD of ANVIL (Southern France), adding that "we should scrape up sufficient landing craft to operate in the Eastern Mediterranean if Turkey came into the war." Mr. Eden thought the Soviet Union would probably agree to postponing the date for Turkish action from December 31, 1943 to February 15, 1944.

When the President and Prime Minister met with President İnönü on the the afternoon of December 4 ⁸⁰ they laid stress, of cour-

⁷⁸ Sherwood, 799-800; Hull, II, 13689, Robert Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors* (New York, Pyramid, 1965), 237-238, 248, 390, 392, adds few details.

⁷⁹ U. S. F. R. *The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 668-674, 675-681, 782-783. See also Erhman, V, 184.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 690-698. At dinner that evening, given by President Roosevelt in honor of President İnönü, Mr. Churchill did most of the talking. Later, Mr. Roosevelt told Mr. Churchill "that if he, Roosevelt, were a Turk, he would require more assurance of aid than Britain had promised before abandoning neutrality and leading his nation into war" (Admiral William D. Leahy, *I Was There: The Personal Story of the Chief of Staff to Presidents Roosevelt and Truman* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1950), 245).

se, on Turkish entry into the struggle, although Mr. Churchill "would not invoke the alliance" or ask Turkey to enter "unless such action could be taken without unfair risk for Turkey." But the time had now come, and Mr. Churchill stressed that the advantages for Turkey "would be permanent and lasting, more particularly from the point of view of Turkish relations with Russia." If the opportunity were missed, later Turkey might find itself alone, "not on the Bench, but wandering about in Court." The Soviet pledge as to Bulgaria was stressed, along with the great political consequences of Turkish action in the Balkans. President İnönü, who was pleased with the invitation and "for the offer of study," reiterated Turkish fidelity to the alliance with Great Britain, but did not accept the thesis that there would be danger for Turkey in staying out of the war, and noted its unpreparedness. If the Allies were prepared to meet the minimum essential requirements of Turkey, and Turkey could be useful, it would enter the war, although Mr. İnönü was convinced that "the Germans would react to the utmost of their ability." He did not believe that thus far, preparations and supplies had been encouraging, and could contemplate two things: (1) a plan of preparation involving supplies to Turkey and (2) a plan of collaboration. The Turkish President could not accept a background of suspicion "and a demand to come into the war blindly, with a statement that when Turkey had entered the war she would be told what her part was to be." At the close of the meeting, Mr. Churchill submitted a program embodying: ⁸¹

(1) A declaration after the present Conference that Turkish policy had not changed.

(2) A period of approximately six weeks during which material, especially for anti-aircraft defence, would be pushed into Turkey.

(3) Immediately thereafter, the placing of British and American combat squadrons on the prepared airfields.

(4) German protests and Turkey's diplomatic reply, but steady continuation of reinforcements and preparation.

⁸¹ *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 705-711. Roosevelt and Churchill met with the Combined Chiefs of Staff on December 5, when Churchill repeated his project. Admiral Leahy declared that "as far as the United States Chiefs of Staff were concerned, they were quite right to leave Turkish program to the British Chiefs of Staff to decide upon."

(5) Reactions in the satellite countries - Bulgaria, Roumania and Hungary. These reactions would be very important, as they would dominate the attitude of Germany. Throughout this period Turkey would continue to send supplies including chrome (but only a little) to Germany. The Germans would be afraid to push things too far. They would be afraid of the Turkish advance towards belligerency having the effect on Bulgaria of making her change sides.

The Churchill program was further discussed in some detail on the afternoon of December 5,⁸² but President İnönü once more insisted on "the practical side," and noted that if the Allies continued to insist on dates, "Turkey would be in the war in four or five weeks." Moreover, he regretted the Russian absence from the meetings, since it would have been "most useful" for the Russians to "realize that everybody was trying to help but that the method of fixed dates was impracticable." Mr. Roosevelt thought there was much in this and summarized the situation as being "that the Turks did not want to be caught with their pants down." The target date depended on the progress made. Finally, President İnönü declared that "a general plan of preparation must be agreed among the experts" and that "both parties must play a part in reaching a decision as to what was a reasonable, practical plan." At the end, Mr. Churchill felt that the discussion "seemed to have got into a difficult circle."

Mr. Hopkins and Foreign Secretary Eden explored the problem in detail with Foreign Minister Menemenciöğlü on December 5,⁸³ and the latter reiterated the Turkish view that the materials shipped to Turkey since the Adana meeting had been insufficient, a point which British officials contested. When General Wilson explained that the total force intended for Turkey would be 32,000, 11,600 of them air forces, Mr. Menemenciöğlü indicated that the proposals for infiltration were acceptable in principle, but made a reservation as to precise numbers, pending consideration by the Turkish General

⁸² *Ibid*, 711-718. Sherwood, 800 states that, during the talks, "Roosevelt frequently betrayed a considerable amount of sympathy for the Turkish point of view and even stated, on one occasion... that it was quite understandable that these distinguished and amiable gentlemen should not want to be caught with their pants down".

⁸³ *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 726-733.

Staff. But if the program of infiltration were accepted, Turkey would not take action leading to entry war until sufficient supplies had been sent. In addition, Mr. Menemenciöglu referred to the Soviet position relative to Bulgaria, a point which he wanted to discuss with the Soviet Government. The Foreign Minister also indicated that "willing entry" was also the desire of the Turks, although they must, he repeated, have "a minimum of essential preparations," which, moreover was "a commitment to the Turkish people." All he asked was "comprehension," and it "lay in our hand to determine when Turkey could enter the war since this would be determined by the supply of the necessary material." But infiltration of personnel could go ahead while the discussion of supply and equipment was under way.

President İnönü repeated the Turkish theme at dinner with President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill at dinner on December 5. As Admiral Leahy observed, Mr. Churchill "pleaded, cajoled, and almost threatened the soldier President of the once powerful Ottoman Empire in an effort to commit him to taking his people into the war." Once more Mr. Churchill told him he would have to come in to have a seat at the peace making. But "the Americans did not urge the Turks as vehemently as did the British."⁸⁴ The three leaders substantially repeated their performance on the evening of December 6.⁸⁵ Mr. Churchill reiterated his plan of action, President İnönü stressed the period for material preparation, and President Roosevelt emphasized the cardinal point that such a period had not been envisaged, but rather a mixed period, in which Turkey would commit only neutral acts and receive equipment and material. President İnönü noted that Turkey had not contemplated facing the German army alone for months, but had thought that, "when the Germans declared war the Turks would be in touch with some Anglo-American forces." Neither President Roosevelt nor Prime

⁸⁴ Leahy, 214.

⁸⁵ *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 740-747, 811, 817. During the latter part of the meeting, Mr. Hopkins slipped a handwritten note to the President saying: "Couldn't you see the President [İnönü] alone for five minutes to say goodbye and ask him to be ready to go to war Feb. 15. The Combined Chiefs reported on December 6 that the Allies should "undertake such action to exploit the entry of Turkey into the war as is considered most likely to facilitate or accelerate the attainment of the overall objectives."

Minister Churchill, however, considered the possibility of German invasion very great, although they thought there was a possibility of air attack, an eventuality for which Turkey would be prepared. Both thought the Turkish army, especially the infantry, "very good," since it had been mobilized for four years. Finally, President İnönü, who was unwilling to come to a definite decision, but indicated that, within three or four days, he would be ready to reply to the proposals, and would see what could be provided within two months. The Turkish staff would offer its "observations, including modifications and additions." The Turkish President was "forcing himself to try to find a possible position in the Allied program." A preparatory two month period was now proposed to him. The Allies had the material and the transport, but he did not know how much was to be available, although the primary effort was to be concentrated on aviation material and personnel and, as he saw it, "it was contemplated that Turkey would enter the war with anti-aircraft preparation alone."

While President Roosevelt left for home early on December 7, Mr. Churchill conferred for the last time with President İnönü⁸⁶. At the very outset he put the proposal "that by February 15th all measures should be taken to render possible the fly-in of the 20 Allied squadrons," by which time the situation might have evolved, although Mr. Churchill could not forecast enemy action between December and February 15, 1944. If President İnönü, after February 15, would not receive the Allied squadrons, and wished to prolong the discussions, Mr. Churchill would have to think of other plans, and the squadrons would have to be used elsewhere, and the question could not be reopened with Turkey, and the Allies would be told that "our policy with Turkey had failed." To the Turks this was a repetition of previous conversations, and Mr. İnönü proposed to respond in three or four days. Mr. Churchill indicated that if the President envisaged a long program of re-equipment, this would be equivalent to saying that the "negotiations were ended." Mr. İnönü responded that the best answer Mr. Churchill could require would be a simple acceptance of the proposal; or, if accepted, preparations could continue, and a mutually acceptable plan elaborated; if not, Mr. Churchill "would have the right to change his plans." Mr. Churchill tho-

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 750, 751-755.

ught this would mean a complete change of policy, the war would move west, and "Turkey would lose the chance of coming in and of reaping the advantages which entry into the war would promise her." The alliance "would cease to have any value for war purposes, although friendship would remain". Mr. İnönü thought it not impossible to find a solution, and in the end it was agreed that British experts should go to Ankara for military conversations.

So much for the Cairo discussions. Precisely what was Turkey's position? President İnönü agreed "in principle" to enter the war, subject essentially to two conditions : (1) that there be a joint military plan of action; and (2) that Turkish deficiencies in equipment, supplies and transport be made up so that Turkey could defend itself. Moreover, the Turkish leaders desired a "peep" into "the more distant political future". It was clear that the Turkish statesmen were much influenced by their suspicions that they were being pressed to enter the war as pawns on the global war chessboard and that their acquiescence would be the occasion to use Turkish air and naval bases "without assigning any special role to the Turkish forces." In other words, Turkey was willing to fight only when it could be reasonably certain that it was strong enough to prevent the rapid destruction of the country or its principal centers. The strengthening would take time, but OVERLORD was now only six months away, and it was hardly possible to postpone this operation against the Germans in France ⁸⁷. The Cairo communiqué declared that the three leaders had examined the general situation, taken into account the "joint and several interests" of their countries, and indicated that "the closest unity" prevailed among them "in their attitude to the world situation," as well as with the Soviet Union ⁸⁸.

After the conference closed on December 6, Mr. Churchill told Lord Ismay that the Turkish Government would state that its policy

⁸⁷ Hull, II, 1370; Knatchbull-Hugessen, 198-200; Churchill, V, 415-418. Von Papen, 513-516, has a similar account of the Turkish position, with the additional details that the Turkish leaders were informed of the 1944 war plans, including Balkan operations, with the landing of Allied forces at Salonika. He adds that it was clear to Menemenciöglü and the General Staff that the use of air bases would lead to "complete destruction" of İstanbul and İzmir, and certain by December 12 that preparations for a Salonika operation would not be complete.

⁸⁸ *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 831-832.

was unchanged⁸⁹. Preparation of the airfields would move forward and British squadrons would be ready to fly in within about six weeks. Mr. Churchill doubted that Bulgaria would attempt to invade Turkey, and thought Turkey should continue to the last in relations with Germany and Bulgaria, and should reply diplomatically to any protest, while continuing preparations. Bulgaria might try to make a separate peace, and Mr. Churchill did not suggest that Turkey declare war at any stage, but continue its re-equipment "and await the enemy's actions." When the sea passage from Egypt to Turkey was cleared, every effort was to be made to get supplies into Izmir and through the Dardanelles, so that the further equipment of the Turkish Army and the feeding of Istanbul could proceed as fast as possible. On completion of the British fly-in, Mr. Churchill believed Turkey should facilitate the secret passage of six or eight British submarines into the Black Sea⁹⁰.

On returning to Ankara, Foreign Minister Menemencioğlu told the press that the conference had been one of "the most important events in this phase of the war."⁹¹ He was "extremely satisfied," noting that the comprehensive conversations had been "so intimate and searching" that he could say "that our relations with the United States and the Soviet Union" were "almost as cordial and strong as those with England." The problems had been studied "with a frankness which was sometimes brutal but with understanding." While Turkish foreign policy had remained "unchanged," the delegation had left Cairo "in an atmosphere of complete cordiality."

While Mr. Churchill was grieved at the results of the conference, and the American Joint Chiefs of Staff were "sorry," they were also partly relieved because of logistical considerations⁹². The Russians were also evidently satisfied. Andrei Vyshinsky did not arrive in Cairo until December 7, but he indicated that he had not expected any

⁸⁹ Churchill, V, 415-418.

⁹⁰ See Matloff, 369-373; Ehrman, V, 212-213, 221, 194-195. When Churchill left on December 7, İnönü kissed him, but Eden thought this a poor result of fifteen hours of "hard argument" (Eden, 497).

⁹¹ U. S. F. R. *The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 839-840. Steinhardt thought the meeting had been "most helpful in drawing Turkey much closer to the Allies; although nothing definite was agreed upon for the time being" (*ibid.*, 844).

⁹² Feis, 304.

Turkish commitment to enter the war by December 31 and was skeptical as to any irrevocable commitment on February 15. Ambassador Steinhardt thought the Soviet Government would be satisfied "if the Turks enter the war at any time in the spring as may fit in with the overall Allied plans." Moreover, he thought the Russians were permitting the British to take the lead in dealing with Turkey, subject only to the discussions concerning the Balkans and the position to be taken by the Soviet Union, if Bulgaria should declare war on Turkey, aid Germany, or permit German troops to pass through Bulgaria ⁹³.

Near the end of 1943, Turkish cooperation with the Allies appeared at its peak, and the Allies were secretly using certain bases in the region of Izmir. Moreover, the American Office of Strategic Services and the British Intelligence Service worked actively in Turkey with the connivance of the Turkish Government. Nevertheless, Turkey did not openly permit the use of airfields by the RAF when operations were launched against the Dodecanese Islands, although it did permit the shipment of supplies to the islands from the Turkish mainland. It also rendered assistance when the operations failed and Allied forces were compelled to evacuate ⁹⁴.

Difficulties With Turkey.

Ambassador von Papen, who was much interested in the Cairo meeting, conferred with MM. Saracoğlu and Menemenciöğlü immediately thereafter, recalled Soviet ambitions as outlined in the Hitler-Molotov-Ribbentrop discussions of November 1940, and warned that war would follow if Turkish air and naval bases were made available to the Allies, a fact of which the Turkish leaders had long

⁹³ *U. S. F. R. The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, 858-859. Ambassador Vinogradov told a member of the Turkish Delegation to pay no attention to the discussion as to Turkey's entry into the war, since the Soviet Union did not consider it necessary. That evening, it was explained to President İnönü that, since that Turkish principle was to do the opposite of what the Soviet Union suggested, perhaps, the time had come for action!

⁹⁴ Kılıç, 103-104. On December 27, Hitler advised a conference that "on February 15 the Allies want to put pressure on Turkey to enter the war. If there is a crisis in the Crimea then, it will make their propaganda for them." See Felix Gilbert, *Hitler Directs His War* (New York, Oxford, 1950), 91.

been aware⁹⁵. Churchill considered the possibilities of a separate German invasion of Turkey "to be absolute rubbish."⁹⁶ He advised President Roosevelt on December 18 that the Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, would also be in charge of Turkish operations. On December 24, the British Chiefs of Staff advised the Prime minister that, while negotiations with the Turks should continue, Aegean amphibious operations should be ruled out. He advised the President on January 4, 1944 that, if events with Turkey developed favorably, certain Italian warships to be transferred to the Soviet Union be ready to operate if desired in the Black Sea."⁹⁷

Although they had not been formally communicated, the Tehran decisions had become clear to Foreign Minister Menemencioglu during his November discussions with Mr. Eden. But there was little justification for the Turkish suspicion, although "a definite pact had been made, by which willynilly, Turkey would be in the war by January 1, 1944."⁹⁸ Meanwhile, work at the air bases was to be accelerated, a joint plan of campaign for Turkish participation was to be prepared, and the political implications examined, and no blame was to attach to Turkey if the reply were negative. Even if the bases were made available, active Turkish participation was not necessarily expected. The Turkish Government maintained its position that it could not rush use of the air bases unless its armed forces were equipped "beyond the possibility of disaster," and on this point progress proved impossible.

While Anglo-Turkish military staff discussions were carried on in January 1944, they broke down on February 3, 1944. At the outset, as the British Government complained, the Turkish authorities considered the United States less insistent on Turkey's entry into the war, and felt that the British alone were putting pressure on Turkey. While the British Government wanted complete American support, Mr.

⁹⁵ Von Papen, 515-518.

⁹⁶ Churchill, V, 422. See also Eden, *Freedom and Order* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1948), 226-239, for address of December 14, 1943.

⁹⁷ Churchill, V, 424, 431-432, 457; Matloff, 426-427; *Stalin's Correspondence*, I, 186-187, II, 115-118.

⁹⁸ Knatchbull-Hugessen, 198-200. Nor was there any justification for the Turkish suspicion of a plan to partition the Balkans, under which Turkey would fall within the Russian sphere.

Hull instructed Ambassador Steinhardt on January 11 simply to tell the Turkish Government that, along with Great Britain, the United States hoped that Turkey's decision would be "to join its forces with those of the United Nations for rapid victory." As the talks dragged on, the British felt that the Turks were deliberately demanding so much in war materials that they would remain neutral until the necessity for entry would have passed. Mr. Hull advised the President of the stalemate on February 4 and proposed that the United States cooperate with the British by instructing Ambassador Steinhardt to "cool off" in his relations with the Turkish Government for the time being. Anglo-American arms shipments ceased early in February. The Anglo-Turkish gap could not be closed, but, as Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen remarked, the British felt "that there was enough substance in the Turkish military point of view to justify" Turkey's "reluctance to enter the war till her genuine needs had been met."⁹⁹

A period of difficulties now ensued, even if events moved ineluctably toward a Turkish break with Germany. There were Anglo-American discussions with Turkey as to the ways in which Turkish chrome shipments to Germany could be cut off, and at one time President Roosevelt considered sending a personal message to President İnönü on the problem¹⁰⁰, and Turkish officials suggested bombing the Maritsa bridge between Turkey and Bulgaria, over which 85 per cent of the chrome reached Germany. When German negotiators reached Ankara to renew the Turco-German commercial agreement, Ambassadors Steinhardt and Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, on April 14, warned that if arrangements were made to supply the Axis with strategic materials, the United States and the United Kingdom "would apply blockade measures similar to those we had applied to other neutrals during the war."¹⁰¹ No doubt the

⁹⁹ *U. S. F. R.*, V, 814-818; Hull, II, 1370-1371; Knatchbull-Hugessen, 20; Kirk, 460.

¹⁰⁰ *U. S. F. R.*, 1944, V, 820-836. See *Stalin's Correspondence*, II, 131-132, for Roosevelt's message of March 18 to Stalin, with text of draft letter to President İnönü, and Stalin's reply of March 20, in which he had "little hope of positive results."

¹⁰¹ *U. S. F. R.*, 1944, V, 825-831; Hull, II, 1371-1372. Steinhardt reported on April 14 that Menemencioğlu had agreed to cut chrome shipments by about 50 per cent to some 4,200 tons monthly. He considered Menemencioğlu very cooperative and noted von Papen's almost daily protests.

Turkish Government was also impressed with Anglo-American military successes and with Secretary Hull's vigorous address regarding the neutrals on April 9.¹⁰² On April 20 Turkey announced that chrome shipments were to stop immediately, as von Papen was informed¹⁰³.

Mr. Menemencioğlu had had great difficulty in persuading the Cabinet to suspend chrome shipments, which became effective on April 21, and it caused consternation in German circles, which no longer considered Turkey's entry into the war on the Allied side possible¹⁰⁴. The step was so significant that both Mr. Steinhardt and Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen thought a review of Anglo-American policy toward Turkey in order. They believed it advisable to seek global agreement with Turkey involving discontinuance of further shipments of all strategic materials to the Axis in return for agreement to supply Turkey with commodities essential to the maintenance of its economy. Secondly, both thought it desirable to be informed as to whether Turkey's active military participation in the war were envisaged or the objective were to be limited to "obtaining Turkey's full cooperation short of participation in the war." If active participation were the aim, immediate consideration should be given to preparations, since the Turkish Government thought three to four months' preparations necessary. If not, but subsequent developments dictated later entry in the fall, without intervening preparations, there would be an unfortunate repetition of the events of the fall of 1943. Mr. Steinhardt observed that the Turkish Government would be prepared to participate actively if furnished the 180,000 tons of war material and the approximately 60,000 tons of gasoline previously requested and a plan of joint military operations were elaborated. If the United Kingdom and the United States were only interested in cooperation short of war, Mr. Steinhardt believed it could be obtained by advising the Turks definitely that this cooperation was the maximum desired and that "we are prepared to meet the country's essential economic requirements."¹⁰⁵ Despite the obvious problems involved the Department of State was in substan-

¹⁰² Goodrich-Carroll, *Documents on American Foreign Relations*, VI, 25-35, for text.

¹⁰³ Von Papen, 524-525; Hull, II, 1372.

¹⁰⁴ *U. S. F. R.*, 1944, V, 831-834.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 834-836.

tial agreement with Ambassador Steinhardt¹⁰⁶. It indicated that it would attempt to secure the views of the military authorities as to possible Turkish entry into the war, and recognized that agreement with the United Kingdom was necessary before definitive discussions with the Turkish Government, noting that the basic bargaining position relative to Turkey was "extremely strong," since Turkey would need American supplies, and both the United States and the United Kingdom would be "on the giving rather than the receiving end."

Ambassadors Steinhardt and Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen explained the situation to Foreign Minister Menemencioğlu on May 10 and protested a new Turco-Hungarian agreement, only to meet the reply that the latter should not be taken "too seriously." While they wanted a complete stoppage, Mr. Menemencioğlu was working for a 50 per cent reduction and noted that Turkish economic life could not be entirely "strangled." The Foreign Minister was willing to consider a general agreement for (a) discontinuance of all chrome shipments to the Axis, (b) reduction of all other strategic shipments by 40 per cent, and (c) agreement by the United States and the United Kingdom to furnish Turkey's essential requirements within their capacity to do so. But he had to refuse a demand for a complete cessation of all shipments involving a rupture with the Axis, a luxury which Turkey could not then afford. On May 13 the two Ambassadors noted the difficulty in reconciling the Turco-Hungarian agreement with Turkish assurances, but considered that the threat of an Anglo-American blockade would have adverse political repercussions, and pointed out the Turkish willingness to enter into a general economic agreement with the United Kingdom and the United States. Time was of paramount importance, they thought (1) to make the Turks understand that the United States and Great Britain were in earnest, (2) to prevent a renewal of the Codrus and other Axis agreements, and (3) to stop the outflow of strategic commodities at the earliest possible moment. As a measure of good will, the Foreign Minister informed the two Ambassadors on May 20 that he had directed Turkish authorities that exports of strategic materials to the Axis were to be reduced immediately by 55 per cent¹⁰⁷.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 835-838.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 838-845.

The Department approved the Steinhardt suggestions on May 20, and he left an *aide-mémoire* with Menemencioglu on May 23 embodying them. The Foreign Minister considered them bases for agreement, which he was anxious speedily to conclude because of the pressure to which von Papen was subjecting him. But he had to deal with Parliament, wanted nothing in it which might affect Turkish sovereignty, and pointed out that premature publicity might cause the Germans to take action which could upset the negotiations. The Turkish Government proposed a draft agreement on May 26 involving prohibition of chrome exports to the Axis, reduction in the export of other strategic materials by 50 per cent, preferential orders from Allied sources, and mutual agreement as to the furnishing of supplies to Turkey. The British Embassy advised the Department of State on May 26 that, as a result of the chrome decision and the generally favorable Turkish reorientation, once more the question had arisen, on the eve of operations in the West, whether the Allies "should not increase the threat to Germany's position in the South-east of Europe through Turkey by reestablishing military contacts with the Turks." But the United Kingdom was no longer willing "to pay any price for Turkey's entry into the war at this stage," although voluntary entry would be welcome, and it was thought that the best way to maintain the threat to Germany through Turkey was to concentrate on the economic field, until the launching of OVERLORD. The British Government thought the effect on the Germans of the rupture of economic and diplomatic relations, coupled with the presence of a military mission might be "extremely satisfactory."¹⁰⁸ Proceedings followed somewhat along these lines, and on June 1 the British Government accepted the idea of an exchange of notes, and Mr. Steinhardt was authorized to sign provided the Turkish Government agreed to the reduction of Turkish shipments to the Axis and the Anglo-American supply of commodities¹⁰⁹.

Meanwhile, on May 27, the Turkish Government approached the Soviet Union with a proposal for closer collaboration, including consultation on Balkan problems, and on June 5 it had been advised that the Soviet Government was ready to talk if Turkey broke with

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 845-853.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 853-868.

Germany and entered the war as an evidence of its sincerity, in which event it could lay claim, both during the war and in the peace, "to a deserving place among the Allies."¹¹⁰ In Ankara, Ambassador Vinogradov seemed relatively disinterested and considered these developments "a family affair between the British and the Turks," although he desired to be informed. But he indicated that the Soviet Union had no direct interest whether Turkey entered the war or not, since events had taken such a turn that, belligerent or nonbelligerent, Turkey would affront the Soviet Union. In turn, the Turks felt that, if Turkey entered the war, it would take its place among the victorious powers; but if it were subject to German invasion, it would have no alternative but to await liberation by another occupation, perhaps permanent and otherwise more terrifying. If Turkey remained aside, Anglo-Turkish harmony would be broken, Great Britain would no longer be interested, and the Soviet Union would have full freedom to discuss problems with Turkey at its leisure. Having calculated on these bases, the directors of Turkish policy evidently considered the second better than the first.

Despite the Turkish action as to chrome in April, Mr. Churchill told the House of Commons "bluntly" on May 24¹¹¹ the war could be won without Turkey, that no pressures had been brought to bear, and that the course which Turkey had thus far taken would not "procure for the Turks the strong position which would attend their joining the Allies." However, the Prime Minister noted the suspension of chrome deliveries and looked toward the complete suspension of economic relations. Finally, he was confident that a still better day would dawn in Turco-British relations, and, indeed, "with all the great Allies." By June 10 came the Turkish decision immediately to reduce by 50 per cent the export of other vital materials to the Axis and to consult with the Anglo-American representatives with a view to further reductions. By this time, however, there were other difficulties, especially in June, with respect to the passage of certain German ships through the Straits. The Foreign Office protested, and on June 14, Mr. Eden announced in the House of Commons that

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 863-865.

¹¹¹ United Kingdom, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Fifth Series, Vol. 400, cols. 762-786.

Great Britain "was profoundly disturbed" by the situation. Since Foreign Minister Menemenciöglu had been misled concerning the ships in question, which had passed from the Black Sea into the Aegean, he resigned on June 15, 1944.¹¹²

The Turkish Entry into the War.

By this time, with Soviet forces pouring into Rumania in April 1944, the Balkan problem became an important subject of Allied diplomacy, in view of the question of whether the Soviet aim was liberation or the extension of Soviet power and control a problem with which the Turkish Government was much concerned¹¹³. The British Government approached the United States on May 30 relative to approval of a possible Anglo-Soviet division of the Balkan area into spheres for military operations. Secretary of State Hull opposed the arrangement, but President Roosevelt, on the urging of Prime Minister Churchill, but without the knowledge of the Department of State, agreed to the proposal on a temporary basis on June 12, 1944. When the Prime Minister conferred with Molotov and Stalin during October 9-16, the arrangement was further extended, with the result that the Soviet Union was to have a basic predominance in Bulgaria, Hungary and Rumania, and Great Britain in Greece, with the two sharing influence in Yugoslavia. Mr. Hull, never convinced of the utility of the agreement, felt that it had "an untoward effect" at the Yalta Conference in February 1945¹¹⁴.

¹¹² See *U. S. F. R.*, 1943, IV, 1086; *ibid.*, 1944, V, 859-860; United Kingdom, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Fifth Series, Vol. 400, cols. 1986-1988; Harry N. Howard, *The Problem of the Turkish Straits* (Washington, D. C., U. S. G. P. O., 1947) 40-41, 50-68; Cemil Bilsel, "International Law in Turkey," 38 *A. J. I. L.* 4 (October 1944), 553-556; "The Turkish Straits in the Light of Recent Turkish-Russian Correspondence," *ibid.*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (October 1947), 727-747; Ahmed Şükrü, "The Straits: Crux of World Politics," XXV *Foreign Affairs* 2 (January 1947), 290-302; von Papen, 527; Knatchbull-Hugessen, 201.

¹¹³ In general see Robert L. Wolf, *The Balkans in Our Time* (Cambridge, Harvard, 1956), 251-264; Stephen G. Xydis, *Greece and the Great Powers, 1944-1947: Prelude to the "Truman Doctrine"* (Thessaloniki, Institute for Balkan Studies, 1963), 31-48, 54-59.

¹¹⁴ For the details see *U. S. F. R.*, 1944, V, 112-115, 117-118, 119-127; Hull, II, 1451-1457; Eden, 533-536; Churchill, *Triumph and Tragedy* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1953), VI, 74-75, 77-79, Ch. 16; Goodrich-Carroll, *Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1944-1945*, VII, 347-348; J. R. M. Butler, *Grand Strategy* (London, HMSO, 1956), 104-105; Feis, 291.

At the same time, the United States and Great Britain worked definitely to bring about a complete break in Turco-German relations, Operation OVERLORD having begun on June 6, with the Allied landings on the Normandy beaches¹¹⁵. On June 23, Lord Halifax, in an aide-mémoire to Mr. Hull, urged that the time had come to press Turkey into a break with Nazi Germany, since Turkey's relations with the Allies had recently undergone "a considerable change for the better," and both the question of the Straits and the export of chrome had been settled and assurances had been given that Turkey wished "to cooperate whole-heartedly with the Allies." There was hope for making progress in relations with Turkey, and the time had come "to tell Turkey exactly what we are prepared to contribute to her equipment for the role in which we now propose to cast her." But Mr. Eden did not propose to go quite as far as the Soviet Union, which had already told the Turkish Government that it should break with Germany and declare war. Nevertheless, only by a complete break could Turkey clarify its policy and fill "the international position" to which it was entitled "both during the war and at the peace making," although Mr. Eden did not believe it desirable at the moment to invoke the alliance of October 1939. If it did become necessary, the Turkish Government would be reminded that the only time on which the alliance had been invoked was when Italy came into the war on June 10, 1940 and, in default, it was suggested that it should, at least, break diplomatic relations. On the other hand, a request for a break might face the Allies with Turkish demands for assistance in the event of German retaliation, a point on which they could not commit themselves. They would have to try to persuade Turkey that the Germans would not and could not take violent counter-measures. At the moment, Mr. Eden preferred to

¹¹⁵ Mr. Eden (*Memoirs: The Reckoning*, 533, 534-535) advised on June 7 that the only practicable policy to check Soviet influence in the Balkans was to consolidate the British position in Greece and Turkey and that "we should have to abandon our policy of trying to force Turkey into the war under the implied threat that, if she does not want to come in, we shall leave her to 'stew in her own juice' after the war. . . . Although the Soviet Government now take the line that they are not interested in whether Turkey comes into the war or not, they have probably never liked the Anglo-Turkish alliance, and the present deadlock in our relations with Turkey suits them very well".

avoid resuming military conversations, although he realized that the Turkish Government might press for them at the price of a break with Germany ¹¹⁶.

Ambassador Steinhardt was authorized to support this British proposal, although Prime Minister Saracoğlu was convinced that a mere break would be of little or no use, and that it would be easier to go war, after first giving the Bulgarians an ultimatum to drive the Germans out of Bulgaria. As he cabled on June 23, ¹¹⁷ Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen thought that, to achieve success, it would be necessary to supply Turkey with essential requirements. He also doubted that a complete rupture could be achieved without a commitment as to military assistance. Ambassador Steinhardt agreed that it was desirable to advise the Turkish Government as soon as possible of the Anglo-American objectives, since, their attainment would require long discussions, especially as to severance of economic relations with the Axis and the supply of Turkey with basic requirements.

When Sir Hughe, on June 30, urged Prime Minister Saracoğlu to break completely with Germany, the latter observed that this was a difficult and "dishonorable" action, and that it could not be taken without the approval of the Party, the Grand National Assembly and the country -an approval more difficult to obtain than that for entry into the war. To the observation that Turkey would probably still need an excessive amount of war material and that present Allied plans did not envisage Turkey's participation in the war, and that he knew of no plan for a major Balkan operation, Saracoğlu replied that the British might now "fix what Turkey needed in the way of military equipment, the preparatory period and the date of her entry into the war." In Mr. Saracoğlu's view, Turkey might issue an ultimatum to Bulgaria to drive the Germans out of the country, and, if it failed to do so, Turkish forces, aided by Soviet troops, would drive them out. But Sir Hughe was not authorized to discuss this matter, and he urged the Prime Minister to consider the request for a break, which he promised to do. Later, the British Ambassador

¹¹⁶ *U. S. F. R.*, 1944, V, 859-862; Hull, II, 1373-1376; Kirk, *The Middle East in the War*, 461-464.

¹¹⁷ *U. S. F. R.*, 1944, V, 862-863.

agreed with the Prime Minister that he had not made his request under the alliance, although he had done so "with a view to ascertaining whether the alliance was still alive". If the Turkish Government complied with the request, the British Government "would thereafter treat Turkey as a full ally."¹¹⁸

Ambassador Steinhardt, soon expected in Washington, was authorized to support the British effort, but this did not preclude pressure on Turkey to go further along the lines of the Soviet proposal that it enter the war, if it were "agreed that this course is militarily desirable in the light of present circumstances."¹¹⁹ On July 1 he told Mr. Saracoğlu that the war was progressing so rapidly toward inevitable Allied victory that the present might be "Turkey's last opportunity" actively to "associated herself with the United Nations." The Prime Minister, however, had been hurt by the British policy of "sulking" since the departure of the military mission in February, and remarked that Turkey recently had doubted that "Britain really wanted Turkey to enter the war," although the Russians had spoken plainly in the matter. The Turks, a proud people, did not like being treated as "inferiors or colonials." The Russians had offered to declare war on Bulgaria, if Turkey entered, and the road to Yugoslavia would be opened, "and it would be for the British to decide whether they wished to cross the Adriatic into the Balkans." The Council of Ministers would consider the problem on July 3, and the Prime Minister added, without forecasting, that a negative reply to the specific request "would not mean that the Turk Government was not prepared to discuss Turk entry into the war along the lines outlined above." The American Ambassador was now convinced more than ever that Turkey was not only willing but anxious to enter the war in the near future, and that if such action were desirable, it could be achieved "if account is taken in London of Turkish susceptibilities." By offering additional war material commensurate with operations to be undertaken, with delivery at an agreed time, assuring fighter protection of its principal cities, and obtaining Soviet assurances as to Bulgaria, Ambassador Steinhardt thought, Turkey would "undertake to enter the war as of an agreed date."

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 866-867.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 868-870.

The Turkish Council of Ministers reached its decision on July 3, and Prime Minister Saracoğlu told Mr. Steinhardt that, within the next day or so, the British and American Governments would be informed that Turkey was "prepared to break off relations with Germany immediately."¹²⁰ But Turkey wanted assurances-not "conditions"-that it would be treated by Great Britain as a "full Ally," receive assistance in surplus exports, and such war material as Great Britain and the United States might regard as "necessary to protect the country against a surprise attack by Germany... and, should Turkey become involved in the war, to be furnished as much war material as may be deemed necessary by Britain and the U. S." But a complete break with Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania was not contemplated, although such action would be taken if and when requested. Although the British and Soviet Governments had not yet been informed of the new position, Ambassador Steinhardt judged that the rupture with Germany was viewed "as merely a step towards entering the war." Likewise on July 3, President İnönü wrote to President Roosevelt of the "unswerving fidelity" of Turkey to its alliance, its "open solidarity with the cause of the Allies," and its determination, at the proper time, to give "more effective and tangible expression to this strong desire for cooperation."¹²¹ The next day, the Prime Minister gave Robert Kelley, the American Chargé, copies of the draft note which he hoped to receive from the British Government and the draft Turkish reply¹²². The former provided the assurances; the latter, under the Anglo-Turkish alliance, announced the break with Nazi Germany. The Turkish Government was anxious to avoid delay in taking the action desired by its ally and, while it desired "assurances," it was imposing no conditions for action. The British and American Embassies were convinced that Turkey was sincerely desirous of giving much greater assistance than hitherto, and that it

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 870-871.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 872.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 873-875. Turkey desired an assurance as to "the right of Turkey, devolving upon her as equal allied partner to take part in the settlement of all international questions at the time of the liquidation of the war and the edification of the peace." Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, however, pointed out that the United Kingdom could hardly agree to this sweeping request, and Mr. Saracoğlu admitted that it could be changed appropriately.

was fully prepared to break with Germany "in accordance with the desire expressed by the British Government," and with Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary if so requested.

But a Soviet aide-mémoire of July 10 to Secretary Hull repeated the Soviet reservations to the British proposals concerning Turkish entry into the war, and on July 11, ¹²³ Mr. Hull authorized Ambassador Winant, in London, subject to agreement by the military authorities, to inform the Foreign Office that the United States agreed in principle with the Soviet Union, but that the Turkish Government, by making the break with Germany a preliminary step toward early entry into the war, would be in a position to contribute toward hastening the victory over Germany, and there would be no question as to fulfilment of the Moscow and Tehran decisions. From the long-range view, it seemed likely "that a Turkey which has earned its seat at the peace table might be a useful friend." Unless a forthright reply along these lines, worked out by the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom, were made immediately, the Turkish Government might be led to sever relations with Germany on its own, "thus pushing their alliance with Britain into the background and turning their eyes eastward."

With the Soviet armies now poised on the Rumanian frontier, Prime Minister Churchill considered it the last chance for Turkey to join the Allies, and he felt that Turkey's entry at that stage would have a powerful influence on the future of Southeastern Europe. Moreover, Turkey now offered to go as far as breaking off relations with the Axis ¹²⁴. As he wrote to Stalin on July 11, Turkey was willing to break relations immediately, and he agreed that it ought to declare war, but feared that if it did so, the demands for war material and equipment would be so high it would be difficult to supply Turkey. Mr. Churchill thought it wiser to "take this breaking off relations with Germany as a first instalment." Turkey would then

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 875-879. Among other things, the Soviet aide-mémoire summarized the Turco-Soviet exchanges of May-June 1944.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 879-881; Churchill, VI, 79-80; *Stalin's Correspondence*, I, 235-237. Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery (*Memoirs*, 219), wrote in this period that Turkey had not reacted as hoped, but that it had not mattered overmuch, and the day might come when Turkey would regret its attitude, since the Allies were going to win.

be assisted against a German vengeance air attack, and out of this might come Turkish entry into the war. Alluding to the Turco-German alliance in World War I, Mr. Churchill thought a Turkish break with Germany now "would be a knell to the German soul," and it seemed "a pretty good time to strike such a knell." But the United Kingdom did not favor either the proposed Turkish exchange of notes or a request for immediate Turkish entry into the war. A break would involve no military commitments, and it would "produce very nearly the same moral effect on Germany and in the Balkans generally as would a declaration of war." Secretary Hull informed Fleet Admiral Leahy of the situation on July 13, requesting the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and noting his inclination to accept the British view, provided both the Turkish and the Soviet Government understood that a break in relations was "only a first step towards active belligerency¹²⁵." Mr. Hull similarly advised Ambassador Harriman in Moscow on July 14, and he thought the difference between the Anglo-American and the Soviet position was "only one of method and not of substance¹²⁶." The Stalin reply to Churchill on July 15 was skeptical as to "half measures on the part of Turkey". He could see no benefit to the Allies, and thought it better to leave Turkey in peace "and to her own free will and not to exert fresh pressure on Turkey," in which case Turkey would have no claim "to special rights in post-war matters¹²⁷." In the light of Soviet policy concerning Turkey, it is not difficult to speculate as to the essential reasons for Stalin's position. But, interestingly enough, when General Marshall, in behalf of the American Joint Chiefs of Staff, replied to Secretary of State Hull's request for the military view, he stated on July 19¹²⁸ :

¹²⁵ *U. S. F. R.*, 1944, V, 882-883. Among the advantages, according to Mr. Hull, were: (1) Immediate high altitude flights over Turkey to the USSR; (2) immediate expulsion of some 2,000 German agents from Turkey; (3) immediate creation of a favorable attitude as to use of Turkish air bases; (4) immediate use of Turkish harbors; and (5) active Turkish cooperation in furthering the Allied war effort. Ambassador Steinhardt told Admiral Leahy during July 12-13 that Turkey had made a "formal offer" to Great Britain to break with Germany and enter the war at any agreed time but that the British Government had not replied (Leahy, *I Was There*, 245).

¹²⁶ *U. S. F. R.*, 1944, V, 883-884.

¹²⁷ Churchill, VI, 80-81; *Stalin's Correspondence*, I, 238-239.

¹²⁸ *U. S. F. R.*, V, 884-885.

From a military point of view the Joint Chiefs of Staff concur with the Secretary of State in the opinion that it is desirable that Turkey sever relations with Germany as soon as practicable. As to the proviso that such action be regarded as only a first step toward active belligerency, the Joint Chiefs of Staff concur therein, subject to the reservation that in taking this position, the United States should inform Turkey and our Allies, that the United States is not thereby committed to military, naval, or air support of any campaign in the Balkans.

The Joint Chiefs were also "definitely opposed to the diversion of any resources from the approved operations in Italy and the Western Mediterranean." Subject to these military reservations, Mr. Hull advised both the British and the Turkish Government on July 20 of the American position, noting American willingness to render financial and economic assistance to Turkey in the event of a break with Germany¹²⁹.

A similar reply went to the Soviet Union on July 22, indicating that Turkey's entry into the war was expected and that Turkey would not be considered an ally until it was at war with Germany¹³⁰. At the same time, the British Ambassador replied to Prime Minister Saracoğlu in the matter of a break in relations, and Mr. Kelley, the American Chargé, was told on July 24 of the decision to submit the question to the Grand National Assembly on August, 2. But the Soviet Union persisted in its view that the Turkish action was both too late and unnecessary, as Ambassador Harriman was informed on July 27. After discussing the problem with Andrei Vyshinsky on July 30, Harriman recommended postponement of any further dis-

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 885, 886-887; Hull, II, 1375-1376. On July 22, the British Government expressed the hope that the United States would cooperate "in the immediate resumption of supplies to Turkey as soon as relations between Turkey and Germany have been broken."

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 885-892. The Turkish reply of July 22 took offense at British characterizations of Turkish policy as "obscure" and "confusing", and noted: "The Turkish Government, conscious of having pursued a clear and clean-cut policy, and which, in spite of all vicissitudes, has never deviated from the line of its policy fixed for many years, considers itself entitled to point out the injustice of this characterization and to hope that the happier and more appropriate terms which have often been used in British documents and statements will be preferred to describe Turkey's policy."

cussion, and concluded that the Soviet Union, which would share in any benefits from Turkish action, without being under any obligation to Turkey, had "used the British and our action vis-à-vis Turkey without approval to free itself of its obligation assumed at Moscow to concert with us in dealing with Turkey." But he had no indication that it had "any specific plans at present regarding Turkey which would give rise to difficulties between us." Meanwhile, Mr. Kelley cabled on July 26¹³¹ that he was having difficulties with the Foreign Minister concerning the American reservation against military operations in the Balkans, and it was explained on August 7, five days after the formal break, that American military resources were already committed to major European campaigns, and the Joint Chiefs were unwilling to make additional commitments, although they were willing to consider "whether any resources would be diverted to the Balkans in the event a campaign developed there."

Turkey broke economic and diplomatic relations with Germany on August 2, 1944, a step which the United States and the United Kingdom welcomed. The United States considered it "as a step towards full cooperation with the United Nations in their struggle against Nazi aggression."¹³² Prime Minister Churchill told the House of Commons on August 2 that he could not forget that "Turkey declared her alliance with us before the present war, when our armaments were weak and our policy pacific." "New life" had now been infused into the alliance, and if Turkey were attacked, Great Britain would make common cause. Mr. Churchill hoped that the break would "contribute to the continuity of friendship of Turkey and Russia."¹³³ But the Soviet Union was very reserved, and there were open statements in *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, along with continued attacks, that Turkish entry into the war would serve no useful purpose and was no longer desired¹³⁴. While the Turkish Government continued disturbed over attitudes reflected in the Anglo-American press, in a letter to President İnönü on August 18, President Roosevelt

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 892-897.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 897.

¹³³ United Kingdom, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Fifth Series, Vol. 402, cols. 1459-1487.

¹³⁴ See also the remarks of Ambassador Vinogradov to Ambassador Steinhardt on August 26; *U. S. F. R.*, 1944, V, 898-899.

hailed the Turkish action "as a step toward cooperation in bringing this war... to a speedy and victorious conclusion ¹³⁵."

In the months which followed, the United States and the United Kingdom opened conversations with Turkey concerning passage of the Straits into the Black Sea for the purpose of sending supplies to the Soviet Union. By November 1944, as the Mediterranean route again was opened for Allied Shipping, the eastern front moved westward, and by January 15, 1945, some 870,000 tons were shipped to the Soviet Union *via* the Persian Gulf and the Black Sea. Meanwhile, Bulgaria surrendered on September 9, 1944, and Athens was liberated on October 14. The formal Turkish declaration of war came on February 23, 1945, following the Yalta Conference, and on February 27, Turkey signed the Declaration by United Nations.

Some Summary Observations.

At the intercontinental crossroads, it was natural that Turkey pursue a cautious, careful and realistic policy during the war, as, indeed, it did. But the evidence indicates that Turkey remained a faithful nonbelligerent ally of Great Britain under the alliance of October 1939, and that its position served well the interests, both of Turkey and the Allies against the Axis. Had Turkey acted prematurely, the entire Middle East might well have been thrown open to the armed forces of the Axis during the critical period of 1940-1942 ¹³⁶. Turkey did not become involved in actual armed conflict largely because there were no concerted or integrated plans for Turkish operations, no Balkan campaign was carried out on a scale to involve Turkish forces, and no supplies were diverted by the Western Powers for this purpose. Indeed, with the possible exception of the period when Italy entered the war in June 1940 and the winter of 1943-1944, despite Mr. Churchill's position, the evidence would seem to indicate that neither the United Kingdom nor the United States, nor even the Soviet Union actually desired Turkey's entry into the "shooting war." The British Chiefs of Staff and the War Cabinet appeared very skeptical as to the advantage of active Turkish participation, as compared with that already found in the Turkish position as a non-

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 898.

¹³⁶ See, for example, Ambassador Cevat Açıkalın, "Turkey's International Relations," XXIII *International Affairs* 4 (October 1947), 477-491; Kılıç, 109-113.

belligerent ally, with neutral status, at the intercontinental crossroads. The United States held firmly to the view that the knockout blow against Germany was to be delivered in the West and was not disposed to divert supplies to any secondary front. This is clear from the discussions at Quebec, Moscow, Tehran and Cairo, where even Mr. Churchill indicated that he would settle for "strained neutrality" on Turkey's part. Despite all the talk and propaganda to the contrary, the Soviet Government and Premier Stalin do not appear much interested in Turkey's active participation, as noted particularly at Tehran because of (1) the priority of Operation OVERLORD which "must come first;" (2) the Soviet objection to Turkish or other non-Soviet forces in the Balkans; (3) the Soviet desire for concessions at the Straits and elsewhere in Turkey; (4) the Soviet objection to Turkish representation at a post-war peace conference; and (5) the Soviet desire to "talk" and make propaganda out of Turkey's non-participation in the "shooting war." The Soviet position concerning Turkey during the period of Nazi-Soviet collaboration, when the Turkish Government was given a very thinly veiled warning on October 31, 1939, because of its close association with Great Britain and France, throws Soviet policy relative to Turkey into very sharp relief, indeed ¹³⁷.

¹³⁷ See Knatchbull-Hugessen, 203-204; Kirk, 465-466. .See also P. E. A. Romeril, *War Diplomacy and The Turkish Republic: A Study in Neutrality, 1939-1945* (M. A., dissertation, McGill University, 1959), 194 pp., which is now in the course of publication.

