THE MAKING OF THE TREATY OF SÈVRES OF 10 AUGUST 1920 : THE STRAITS CLAUSES.

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When the First World War finally came to an end, the western Entente Powers had established a position of unparalleled power in the Near and Middle East[1]. They had defeated the Ottomans, and their allies, the Central Powers, and they had seen Russia, their traditional opponent in the area, collapse in civil strife and war. In the Armistice of Mudros, they had won the right to occupy the Straits defences, to sail ships-of-war into the Marmora and the Black Sea, and to occupy any part of Turkey necessary to their security.

The position they had won Britain and France, in particular, were determined to hold, and, if possible, to extend. On the Straits, they were resolved on the imposition of a new régime, one which would prevent a recurrence of the situation which had arisen during the war, when Turkey's closure of the Straits had caused incalculable damage to the interests of the Entente Powers. As, however, the position on the Straits was inextricably bound up with that of the Ottoman Empire in general, they concluded that they could not impose a new régime until they had worked out the details of a settlement for the area as a whole. In the meantime, therefore, they decided to concentrate on securing military control of the Straits. In this way they hoped to ensure that they would, in the immediate future, be able to obtain access to Constantinople and the Black Sea. Control of Constantinople would, they believed, enable them to control Turkey, while the appearance of their ships-of-war in the Black Sea would strengthen

1 This article is based mainly on British Foreign Office, Cabinet Office, Admiralty and War Office records (cited as F.O., CAB., Adm. and W.O.) in the Public Record Office, London.

their position among the Balkan states and enable them to influence events in Southern Russia and the Caucasus. The occupation of the Straits defences was begun on 6 November 1918. On 20 November 1918 General Wilson, the British officer in command of the operation was able to report that all forts and defences on both Straits were in his hands[2]. During the following weeks the guns on the Asiatic shore of the Dardanelles were dismantled or destroyed, allied contingents posted at strategic points on the Turkish railways in Anatolia and Thrace, and allied troops, under the command of General Franchet d'Espèrey, stationed in Constantinople. Steps were also taken to enforce the articles of the Armistice. The Turks were ordered to demobilise their armed forces and to despatch all arms and ammunition to the capital. Finally, in January 1919, the allied High Commissioners were instructed to assume executive control of the Constantinople police. For this purpose the city was divided into three zones, Pera and Galata falling to the British, Stambul to the French, and Scutari to the Italians[3].

While these operations were in progress, the Allies began to give serious consideration to the nature of the settlement they wished to see imposed on Turkey. In the course of the war they had negotiated a number of secret treaties and agreements, based on the principle of partition. The Anglo-Russian Agreement of March 1915, the first and most important of these, which had promised Russia possession of Constantinople and the Straits, had lapsed either when there ceased to be a central Russian Government recognised by the Allies, or when the Bolshevik government made peace with Germany. The Treaty of London, of 26 April 1915, however, which promised Italy 'an equitable share in the Mediterranean region adjoining the province of Adalia, in the event of the total or partial partition of Turkey in Asia',remained operative, as did the Anglo-French Agreement of May 1916, known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which defined the areas of direct and indirect influence and control that would fall to Britain and France in the event of an allied victory. The Agreement of St. Jean de Maurienne, of 18 August 1917, which assured Italy that the maintenance of the balance of power in the Mediterranean would receive equitable con-

2 W.O. 106/64, Execution of the Armistice with Turkey, 30 Oct.,-30 Nov. 1918.

3 W.O. 161/85, The Occupation of Constantinople, 1918-23, compiled by Brig. Gen. Sir J.E. Edmonds, Hist. Section, War Cab. Sec., 27 Sept. 1944.

sideration, should allied agreements concerning the partition of Turkey in Asia be modified or changed on the conclusion of peace, remained, on a technical level, in-operative, as it had been made subject to the consent of Russia, and this had not been obtained. Nevertheless Italy continued to insist that it should, on moral grounds, be recognised[4].

Attitudes and expectations concerning the peace settlement in the Middle East had, however, changed radically during the later stages of the war. As a Foreign Office memorandum noted: 'The falling out of Russia, the intervention of America, and the general development of the international situation have made the principles of nationality and democracy and the right of self-determination, in which these principles are translated into action, not merely one element among others in the aims of the Allies, but the essential aim and expression of their cause' [5]. In this context the influence of the United States, and in particular that of Woodrow Wilson, the American President, was of decisive importance. Wilson was determined to reshape the post war world in the image of his own ideal, namely, the right of all nations to find freedom through self-determination. He refused even to acknowledge the existence of the secret treaties and agreements, and let it be known among his allies that he would not accept a settlement based on them. Faced with the need to bring some degree of order and government to large areas of the Middle East, however, he was forced to compromise. He realised that if independent nation states were to be set up with any expectation of survival, they would, in the early stages of their existence at least, need great power tutelage. He worked, therefore, for the creation of a League of Nations, which would act as residuary trustee for the conquered territories. The League would be given powers to appoint mandatories over nations not yet able to sustain complete independence. In this way it would be possible to employ the resources and experience of the Great Powers in areas where political order had all but broken down, without the peace settlement, and the United States, being tarnished with the brush of imperialism[6].

4 Adm. 116/3240, Memo. respecting the Settlement of Turkey and the Arab Peninsula Nov. 1918, A.

5 Ibid., C.

6 L. Evans, *United States Policy and the Partition of Turkey, 1914-24 (Baltimore, 1964)*, pp. 57 and 92-4.

These developments were not unwelcome to the British. The secret treaties were essentially promisory notes issued, as Forbes Adam, a member of the Eastern Department at the Foreign Office, put it, 'to meet the temporary though pressing exigencies of war'. Britain had no wish to see them redeemed. Prior to the war, she had already established a strong position in Egypt and the Persian Gulf. During the war she had greatly extended her power and influence in the Middle East. Her armies had conquered Syria and Mesopotamia, while her support of the Arab Revolt had enabled her to establish herself as the principal patron of the Arab National Movement. In these circumstances, she believed her own position in the Arab provinces to be secure, and had no wish to see France or Italy establish a foothold there[7]. The French and the Italians, on the other hand, insisted that the relevant clauses of the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Treaty of London should be applied. They had, as they saw it, fulfilled their engagements on the bloodsoaked battlefields of Europe, and expected to be paid in full. They were aware, however, of the weakness of their position. They had contributed little or nothing to the defeat of the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless they were determined to resist British attempts to minimise the significance of the war-time agreements, and were less than enthusiastic concerning Wilson's crusade against imperialism[8].

Wilson's idealism contrasted sharply with the empirical approach of his European allies. He recognised, however, that it was in the interest of the United States, as a great maritime power, that her ships, both of war and commerce, should obtain free access to the Black Sea. E.M. House and R. Lansing, who advised the president, had discussed the question with British and French officials on a number of occasions during the last year of the war. They had agreed that the Straits should be internationalised or placed under a single mandatory power, and that the freedom of the Straits should be guaranteed. Wilson included a statement to this effect on the list of peace terms, known as the Fourteen Points, which he drew up and presented to Congress on 8 January 1918. Point Twelve stated :

> The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security

7 Adm. 116/3240, Memo. respecting the Settlement of Turkey and the Arab Peninsula Nov. 1918, C.

8 F.O. 371/4164, Balfour to Curzon, 12 Feb. 1919.

> of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees[9].

The original imspiration on this point had come from a group of advisers, known as the Inquiry, appointed by Wilson to study problems associated with the peace settlement. They had recognised the importance of the Straits in the context of the expansion of the Central Powers along the Berlin - Baghdad axis. International control of the Straits, they had pointed out, would in the future close this route to Germany and her allies. When asked, during the armistice negotiations with Germany in October 1918, to interpret Point Twelve from the point of view of an actual settlement, they had suggested that in practice it would add up to the following :

> It is clear that the Straits and Constantinople, while they may remain nominally Turkish, should be under international control. This control may be collective or may be in the hands of one power as mandatory of the League.
>
> Anatolia should be reserved for the Turks. The coast lands, where Greeks predominate, should be under special international control, perhaps with Greece as mandatory.
>
> Armenia should be [given] a port on the Mediterranean, and a protecting power established. France may claim it, but the Armenians would prefer Great Britain.
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> Syria had already been allotted to France by agreement with Great Britain.
>
> Great Britain is clearly the best mandatory for Palestine, Mesopotamia and Arabia.
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> A general code of guarantees binding upon all mandetories in Asia Minor should be written into the treaty of peace.
>
> This should contain provisions for minorities and the «open door». The trunk railroad lines should be internationalised[10].

This memorandum represented a subtle amalgam of moral fervour, practical politics and self interest. The Americans, it seemed, were, in fact, prepared to recognise British and French claims in the Middle East. Italy's aspirations

9 L. Evans, op. cit., p. 76.
10 L. Evans, op. cit., p. 76.

in Anatolia, however, received no mention. With this analysis in mind President Wilson prepared to leave for the Peace Conference which was due to begin in Paris in January 1919.

The British appreciated that Wilson's proposals, as set out in the Fourteen Points, did not, in general, conflict with their own aims in the Near and Middle East. As ever, their ultimate concern was for the security of their empire in Asia. They recognised that Russia would not long remain weak and divided. Nor did they underestimate the danger which would arise from a German revival. In addition, they felt compelled to consider the possibility of conflict with France and Italy, each of which had extensive ambitions in the eastern Mediterranean. They decided, therefore, that in place of the unreliable and unwieldy bulk of the Ottoman Empire, they would seek to establish a series of independent nation states. These, it was hoped, would prove to be both stable and friendly. '«Stability»', the Foreign Office noted, 'means the establishment of an effective Government, or Governments, acceptable to the populations; «friendliness» means the intention of such Governments neither to pursue a policy hostile to the British Empire nor to serve the interests of a third Power pursuing such a policy.'[11] Similarly, the nation states set up in southern Russia and the Caucasus following the revolution would be supported, and the Balkan powers encouraged in their 'unity, independence and strength'[12]. As far as possible, the claims of France and Italy, as defined by the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Agreement of St. Jean de Maurienne, would be minimised or cancelled by negotiation[13]. Britain, for her part, would expect to obtain mandates for Mesopotamia and Palestine, so that she might dominate the strategic approaches to the Persian Gulf and Egypt. Thus, in general, she would harness the forces of nationalism to the advantage of herself and the disadvantage of the other great imperial powers.

In the context of this policy, free passage of the Straits, which alone would enable her to make her presence felt in the Black Sea, was, for Bri-

11 Adm. 116/3240, Memo. respecting the Settlement of Turkey and the Arab Peninsula, Nov. 1918, B.

12 Adm. 116/3239, Peace Conf., South-Eastern Europe and the Balkans, Dec. 1918; F.O. 371/4156, Draft reply by Forbes Adam to a despatch from Calthorpe, undetad, citca Dec. 1919.

13 F.O. 371/7900, Notes on attitude of H.M.G. and Allies towards Turkey since the outbreak of War 1914, compiled by Forbes Adam, 8 Oct. 1922.

tain, essential. In order to secure this, the British concluded that Turkey, who had proved herself an unreliable guardian, must be replaced. The problem lay in finding a suitable successor. No easy solution presented itself. Britain could not, herself, take over: her rivals would not allow it. Nor would she accept a French or an Italian presence, as the War Office and Admiralty were agreed that it was 'essential that Constantinople, and the Straits should be held by a weak naval power'[14]. Control of the area by a lesser power, such as Greece, would, as Curzon pointed out, be not 'an avoidance but an encouragement of future trouble'[15]. A minor power would be subject to the jealousy and animosity of other minor powers in the area, and would in time, in all probability, fall under the influence of one or other of the great powers. Some form of international control was, therefore, the Foreign Office concluded, indispensable. After due consideration they recommended:

> Our interests require effective international control, that is control by a single mandatory Power, and the Power designated must, of course be acceptable to us. We shall be well advised to work for the appointment of the United States, failing which some mixed International Board of Control, on the model of the Danube Commission, may become inevitable[16].

Whilst accepting the need for international control, the Admiralty, however, were unwilling to support the Foreign Office proposal that the United States should take charge. Such a responsibility, they felt, 'might encourage her now or at some future time, to increase her fleet and to maintain ships in the Mediterranean... this might cause us embarrassment, and as it is generally agreed that harmonious co-operation with America must be the aim of British policy, the fewer the causes of possible friction the greater will be the chance of preserving good relations'[17]. They recommended rather that the Straits should be internationalised, 'with free passage for ships of all descriptions, all forts and other defences completely destroyed, and a com-

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14 W.O. 106/64, The Strategic Importance of Constantinople to the British Empire, a Gen. Staff memo., 22 Dec. 1918.

15 Adm. 116/3239, Peace Conf., Turkey, the Future of Constantinople, Memo by Curzon, dated 2 Jan. 1918, corrected to 2 Jan. 1919, II.

16 Adm. 116/3240, Memo. respecting the Settlement of Turkey and the Arab Peninsula, Nov. 1918, C.

17 Adm. 116/3239, Peace Conf., Turkey, Constantinople and Internationalisation, memo. by Mallet, 25 Dec. 1918.

mission similar to the Danube Commission to administer the waterways'[18]. As the Planning Division pointed out:

> If all fortifications commanding the Dardanelles, Sea of Marmora, and Bosphorus, and their approaches are dismantled, and formal guarantees not to rearm them are obtained (including the prohibition of minefields, torpedo-tubes, and other obstructions), the prompt use of a combined naval and military force upon any infraction of these guarantees would in all probability counteract any attempt to rearm them[19].

The General Staff, for their part, declared that they would support the Admiralty's recommendations, provided that the Straits remained untunnelled and unbridged, and that a Turkey friendly to Britain were created. They pointed out that the Balkan and Anatolian peninsulas formed a land bridge joining Europe and Asia. In Anatolia, the collapse of Ottoman power had created a vacuum:

> ... the law of vacuum is inexorable, and unless the autochthonous states of Arabia, Armenia and Trans-Caucasia can satisfy this vacuum, we must face an inevitable flow of invasion from Europe into Asia Minor.
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> What form this invasion will take it is early to prophesy, but the Germanic population of Europe still numbers 90, 000, 000, French ambitions have been reawakened, and above all, a powerful and ambitious Slavic State in the name of Greater Serbia is being formed. Perhaps we have the most to fear from the last named for it does not seem that Bulgaria alone will be able to stand between this State and Constantinople, and the present policy of Italy tends to alienate Greater Serbia from the Entente. At the same time the inability of the Entente to give practical help to Russia during the war and since the revolution may well result in an anti-Entente orientation to Russian policy in the future.
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> Therefore, from the broadest point of view, the importance of Constantinople to an Empire such as ourselves, with great interests in the East, is clear, and it is there that any future naval expansion based on a reconstructed Russia must be throttled.... In this connection, it has already been suggested that we should take over

18 W.O. 106/64, The Strategic Importance of Constantinople to the British Empire, A Gen. Staff memo., 22 Dec. 1918.

19 Adm. 116/1852, Notes on Matters affecting Naval Interests connected with the Peace Conf., Dec. 1918.

> and administer the country. The invitation is under investigation; but should it be politically desirable, its acceptance would be militarily advantageous; for we should be the surest guardians of our own interests and a predominant position at Constantinople would place under our control a ready-made Turkish garrison to bar the road to the East. This would be an important consideration in relation to post-war garrisons overseas[20].

These suggestions and recommendations were put to the Eastern Committee of the War Cabinet in December 1918. It was there agreed that 'the navigation of the Straits (including the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora, and the Bosphorus) should in future be open in both peace and war to the ships of all nations'[21]. It was not, however, decided under whose protection the maintenance of this right and the control of shipping and navigation would be placed.

France's policy in the Near and Middle East was not dissimilar to that of Britain. The French, like the British, wished to see independent nation states established in the area. Where Britain wished to obtain exclusive control of Mesopotamia and Palestine, France wished to establish herself in Syria. Where Britain sought to encourage the independence of the nation states as a means of protecting her empire in Asia from attack by one or more of the great powers, France did so primarily in order to contain German power on the continent. British interest centred, therefore, on Egypt, Arabia and the Persian Gulf, French interest on the Balkans, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. This polarity was clearly illustrated when, in December 1918, Clemenceau agreed to surrender Mosul to Britain in exchange for promises of British support for France in Syria, and in western and central Europe. In order to make known the identity of their aims in the Ottoman Empire, in November 1918, Britain and France published a joint declaration promising the subject peoples of the Empire assistance in the 'establishment of national governments and administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the native populations'[22].

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20 W.O. 106/64, The Strategic Importance of Constantinople to the British Empire, Gen. Staff memo., 22 Dec. 1918.

21 Adm. 116/3239, Peace Conf., Turkey, Constantinople and Internationalisation, memo. by Mallet, 25 Dec. 1918.

22 Adm. 116/3240, Memo. respecting the Settlement of Turkey and the Arab Peninsula, Nov. 1918, A.

As regards the Straits, too, France's approach, at this stage at least, resembled that of Britain. In a study of questions relative to the peace conference, the Etat-Major Général concluded that they would prefer the Straits to be placed under the control of an international - in effect, an inter-allied - commission, which would be made responsible for maintaining liberty of passage both in time of peace and in time of war. They recommended that France should propose the following article to the conference :

> Le détroit des Dardanelles, le Bosphore avec ville de Constantinople, les rives des ces détroits et celles de la Mer du Marmara, aussi bien du côté européan que du côté asiatique sur une profondeur de territoire à déterminer ultérieurement seront placés sous la souveraineté internationale direct representée par une commission internationale[23].

> The factors that influenced the Etat-Major Général are made clear in the following summary of a part of their original study.

> La guerre a montré les immenses dangers d'un pouvior sans controle a Constantinople. Attribuer les Détroits à une seule puissance est un danger à la fois pour la paix et pour la liberté economique. A ce dernier point de vue, le caractère international est plus marquée encore qu'au point de vue politique; le commerce de l'Europe Occidentale pénètre par les Détroits jusqu'au nord de l'Asie mineure, jusqu'en Armenie et en Perse. La Mer Noire n'est exclusivement russe.

> A une question d'ordre international, il faut une solution de même ordre. Un régime de liberté doit remplacer le monopole. C'est dans ce but qu'a été envisagée dès 1917 l'internationalisation des Détroits, Constantinople restant turque. Mais Constantinople est intimement rattachée aux Détroits, et toute separation ne purrait être qu'artificielle. Nous sommes amenés a concevoir un veritable Etat international qui aura la garde des Détroits et comme une mission d'arbitrage en Orient[24].

The strategic and commercial interests of Italy in the Near and Middle East were less substantial than those of her allies. Nevertheless she was determined to hold her allies to those clauses of the Treaty of London and the Agreement of St. Jean de Maurienne which promised her a sphere of direct

23 Archives du Ministère de la Marine, Paris, Ed 136. 2, Etat-Major Général, Etudes des questions relative a la Paix Chap. IV.

24 Ibid., summary.

and indirect administration and control in south-western Anatolia[25]. In this region she hoped to acquire fuel and raw materials for her industry, and an outlet for her surplus population. As regards the Straits, it was to her advantage, as to that of her allies, that the Black Sea should be open to ships-of-war and ships-of-commerce. She too, wished to exert influence on the riverain states, and ensure that trade flowed freely, without undue dependence on one or other of the great powers. She feared, however, that Britain and France would try to prevent her obtaining a share in the control of the Straits[26]. She concluded, therefore, that a settlement based on the principle of internationalisation would best suit her interests.

The Allies were agreed, therefore, that the freedom of the Straits should be assured. It was evident, however, that no decision could be reached on the means by which this might be accomplished, until the more complex and contentious question of the future of Constantinople had been decided. In Britain this issue was discussed at some length in the period prior to the Peace Conference. It gave rise to serious differences of opinion, which turned essentially on the question of whether the Turkish Sultan and his Govemment should be enpelled from their capital. The views of those who favoured expulsion, Curzon summarised thus:

> For nearly five centuries the presence of the Turk in Europe has been a source of distraction, intrigue, and corruption in European politics, of oppression, and misrule to the subject nationalities, and an incentive to undue and overweening ambitions in the Moslem world. It has encouraged the Turk to regard himself as a Great Power, and has enabled him to impose upon others the same illusion. It has placed him in a position to play off one Power against another, and in their jealousies and his own machinations to find pretexts for his continued immunity. It has been an inexpugnable barrier to the solution of the Balkan problem, or the full emancipation of the Balkan peoples. It has been an equal obstacle to the proper or good government of his own people, whose resources have been squandered in the polluted *coulisses* of Constantinople, or in the expenditure required for the upkeep of military and naval forces disproportionate to the real strength or requirements of the Turkish nation[27].

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25 F.O. 371/4164, Balfour to Curzon, 12 Feb. 1919.

26 R. Albrecht-Carrié, *Italy at the Paris Peace Conference* (New York, 1938), p. 209.

27 Adm. 116/3239, Peace Conf., Turkey, the Future of Constantinople, Memo. by Curzon, dated 2 Jan. 1918, corrected to 2 Jan. 1919, I.

On the particular issue of the Straits, he noted that the presence of the Sultan would make effective international control impossible :

> We can easily imagine the atmosphere in which... an [International] Commission (of which there could hardly fail, in these conditions, to be a Turkish member) would pursue its work - an atmosphere of incessant conspiracy and cabal. The wily Turk would revel in such a situation as affording renewed scope to his hereditary talents; and round the pivot of his own plots would revolve a whirlwind of international intrigue, in which the representatives of all the nations, who still aspired to his inheritance, would eagerly mix.
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> ... But little reflection, indeed, seems to be needed to show that the Commission and the Sultan could hardly be permanent bedfellows at Constantinople[28].

Curzon recommended, therefore, the creation of a Straits zone which would include Constantinople and be administered by an international commission, or alternatively, by the United States acting as mandatory. As for the Sultan, he could retire to Bursa or Konya, and there remain the head and focus of a purely Asiatic Empire. As regards Turkey in Europe, Bulgaria would receive the territories lying north of the Enos-Midia Line, Greece Eastern Thrace, Gallipoli, and Rodosto[29].

Those who opposed this view argued that expulsion of the Sultan would be 'a grave outrage to Mohammedan sentiment throughout the world and more particularly in India'[30]. E.S. Montagu, Secretary of State for India, led the opposition. He reminded Curzon of Lloyd George's wartime declarations : 'We are not fighting to deprive Turkey of its Capital', and 'Great Britain did not challenge the maintenance of Turkey, or of the Turks in the homeland of the Turkish race with its capital of Constantinople'[31]. Britain should not 'deal this blow to a Muslim Power when we have achieved victory over it with the assistance of Muslim arms'[32]. In any case, there was no satisfactory alternative to the Turks : 'Lord Curzon has stated so fairly the arguments for and against any solution of this difficult question that...

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28 Ibid., III.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid., I.

31 Adm. 116/3239, Peace Conf., Turkey, the Future of Constantinople, memo. by E.S. Montagu, 8 Jan. 1919.

32 Ibid.

we had better leave the Turks there simply because we can find no satisfactory alternative...'[33] Others went even further. Some suggested that internationalisation, itself, was unworkable, some that 'the disappearance of the Turk, while removing an admitted ill, will introduce a number of new and unforeseen complications in its place, that if his claws be clipped, and all power of offence taken away, he will become an innocuous, if not a positive respectable creature; that once his friendly relations with ourselves are resumed, he may even provide a benevolent buffer between the ambitions of Europe and our own Eastern possessions'[34].

In general, in this debate, the Armed Services backed Montagu. At a conference of representatives of the departmental missions of the British delegation to the Peace Conference, held in London on 30 January 1919, the Admiralty, strongly supported by the War Office and the Air Ministry, proposed that Constantinople should remain Turkish under international control. 'In particular, a mandate given to the United States of America by the League of Nations would afford opportunity and pretext for basing a strong American fleet in the Mediterranean - a danger which, from a strategical point of view, must at all mosts be avoided'[35]. This proposal the Foreign Office were unwilling to adopt. They wished to see the mandatory principle of the League of Nations applied to the Straits. If possible, a great power, such as the United States, should be selected to take charge. No form of internationalisation could be effective or permanent if combined with the retention of Ottoman sovereignty in Europe. In view of the objections of the Services, however, they agreed not to press for an American mandate, but rather to seek: 'the constitution of an international authority charged (a) with the control of waterways, and ports, and (b) with powers of administration (government) over an extent of territory on both sides of the Straits and of the Marmora, sufficiently large to guarantee the security of these waters against external attack'[36]. For their part, the Services agreed that it would be preferable if the proposed international authority were made independent of any local sovereignty.

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33 Ibid.

34 Adm. 116/3239, Peace Conf., Turkey, the Future of Constantinople, Memo. by Curzon, dated 2 Jan. 1918, corrected to 2 Jan. 1919, I.

35 Adm. 116/3239, Peace Conf., Turkey, the Future of Constantinople and the Straits, Recommendations of a Conf. held on 30 Jan. 1919.

36 Ibid.

> The executive authority of the international body controlling the zone of the Straits might [it was agreed] with advantage be vested in a High Commissioner chosen either from among its members for a period of years, or added by direct nomination of the League of Nations. The High Commissioner would be assisted (a) by the International body, which would include a Turkish representative, and which would act as his Council in controlling and supervising the passage of the Straits, and all ports, quays, docks, wharves, buoys and lights, &c., and in constituting and maintaining an adequate area in Constantinople as a free port; (b) by local Councils (municipal and other) representative of the inhabitants of the towns and districts included in the international zone, such Councils participating in the administration, and thus affording guarantees for the due maintenance of the civil and religious liberties and interests of the Turkish, Greek and other populations[37].

These recommendations, however, Lloyd George and Balfour ignored. They remained convinced that an American mandate would best answer the case : this alone would enable Britain and France to secure their interests in the area without the expense and acrimony which joint control would entail. In Paris, therefore, they sought to persuade President Wilson to accept a mandate. Wilson pointed out that the American people would probably not agree. Nevertheless he gave the proposal his support, and assured Lloyd George and Balfour that he would work for its acceptance at home. As a result, the possibility of an American presence on the Straits become a staple part of the peace proposals discussed during the first six or seven months of the conference : in January, when the question was first considered; in May, when it was discussed in connection with the Fiume affair, and in June, shortly before President Wilson's return to the United States[38].

During the Paris Conference, the Supreme Council received numerous delegations representing the minority peoples of the Ottoman Empire. They refused, however, to receive a delegation representing the Ottoman Government. Nevertheless, the Porte communicated its views concerning the peace settlement to the Council in a memorandum dated 12 February 1919. The Sultan and his advisers were well aware of the determination of the Allies to secure the freedom of the Straits. In their memorandum, therefore, they declared that the Straits should be 'ouvertes en permanence' to the

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37 Ibid.

38 H. Howard, *The Partition of Turkey* (New York, 1966), p. 220, H. Nicholson, *Peacemaking 1919* (London, 1933), pp. 272-282.

ships and commerce of all nations, 'sous des garanties internationales', and that this freedom should be assured, 'd'une façon permanente', both in time of peace and in time of war, 'tout en adoptant les mésures nécessaires pour la défense de la capitale de l'Empire'[39]. As far as the peace settlement in general was concerned, they requested that the principles of self-determination and national independence set out in President Wilson's Fourteen Points should be applied to the Turkish Nation, as to the other communities of the empire. In order to support their case, they provided statistics proving that Turks formed a majority of the population of each of the provinces which they claimed should make up a reconstituted Turkish state[40]. The Supreme Council were not impressed. They had no confidence in the good faith of the Sultan and his government and believed the statistics presented to be bogus. They continued rather to discuss the future of Turkey in terms of partition, spheres of influence, and national independence for the subject peoples. The French continued to insist that Syria and Cilicia should be handed over to them, while the Italians extended their occupation of those areas of south-western Anatolia to which they laid claim under the terms of the Treaty of London and the Agreement of St. Jean de Maurienne.

The Russian view, too, remained unrepresented at the Peace Conference. In July 1919, however, members of a Russian political conference held in Paris in the interests of the administration of Admiral Kolchak, presented a memorandum to the Supreme Council summarising the views of the conference on questions relevant to Russia in the negotiation of a peace settlement with Turkey. In this, the members argued that, in view of the importance of Constantinople and the Straits to Russia, she should be given a mandate for the area:

> ... les Détroits ont pour La Russie une importance primordiale au point de vue de la défense du pays. Si l'entrée dans la Mer Noire est libre à tout moment pour les vaisseaux de guerre des Puissances non-riveraines, la Russie est obligée de fortifier ses côtes d'une longueur de 2,230 kilomètres et d'entretenir une grande flotte, en grévant pour cela le peuple russe de lourds impôts. La Russie qui, tant au point de vue du commerce que de la longueur des côtes, possède une situation prédominante dans la Mer Noire, a, en toute justice, le droit d'utiliser la configuration de cette mer pour

39 F.O. 371/4156, Memo. on the Future of Turkey from the Turkish Government to the Peace Conference, 12. Feb. 1919.

40 Ibid.

> assurer la securité de son littoral méridional, sans imposer des charges excessives à sa population[41].

As, however, the members recognised that there was little likelihood of the Supreme Council granting Russia a mandate, they declared that they would accept the establishment of an international commission, which, while remaining provisional, would administer the Straits until such time as Russia herself would be in a position to take over. The memorandum made little impression on the Allies. They were determined to decide the issue of the Straits to their own advantage, and had no intention of acting as guardians of the Russian interest until such time as the Great Bear had recovered her health and strength.

The Allies failed to draw up a draft treaty of peace in Paris. Even a rough draft of the treaty drawn up by the British delegation remained incomplete[42]. This was, according to Forbes Adam, a member of the Eastern Department of the British Foreign Office,

> partly owing to the preoccupation of the Conference in concluding treaties with Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria, but chiefly in the hope that President Wilson, on his return from Paris to the United States in July, might have found it possible to induce Congress to accept some active responsibility in the settlement of Turkey, such, for instance, as a mandate over the whole of Asiatic Turkey, which was at one time discussed, or for a restricted area around the Straits and the Sea of Marmara and including Constantinople[43].

Not until the end of October 1919 did it become clear that the Americans would not, in fact, accept a mandate, and that the Allies would have to think again. By then the situation had changed radically. The Turks, who at the end of the war had appeared hopelessly beaten, had begun once again to take a forceful hand in their own affairs. The cause of their revival, the one event certain to stir them to take up arms again, after more then seven years

41 E.L. Woodward, R. Butler and others (eds.), *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-39* (London, in progress), first series (herinafter cited as D.B.F.P.), iv. No. 450.

42 W.O. 106/64, Sketch of a Draft Treaty of Peace between Turkey and the allied Governments, 10 May 1919.

43 F.O. 371/7900, Notes on attitude of H.M.G. and Allies towards Turkey since the outbreak of war 1914, compiled by Forbes Adam, 8 Oct. 1922.

of almost continuous war, was the landing, on 15 May 1919, of a Greek expeditionary force at Smyrna.

The British were, it seems, mainly responsible for the Supreme Council decision to despatch a Greek army into Anatolia[44]. Fearful that the Italians might seize Izmir and set up a naval base there, Lloyd George and Balfour, following the advice of a conference of the representatives of departmental missions, which had been held on 31 January 1919, decided that they would encourage Greek aspirations in that direction[44A]. Not that British objections to an Italian presence were merely strategic. A Foreign Office memorandum, drawn up in November 1918, suggested that the Italians would be oppressive and incompetent :

> The population would probably oppose Italian intervention on the plea of self-determination, and are quite capable of driving them into the sea, or at any rate confining them to a few strategical points on the coast. As parties to the Italian claim, we and the other Allies would suffer the greatest moral damage from such a situation, and the results of Italian reverses in Tripoli have shown how dangerously the Pan-Islamic movement would be fostered by a similar reaction against an invader on the part of the Turks in Anatolia[44b].

The Greek occupation of Smyrna, and the disorders to which it gave rise, caused an explosion of anger among the Turks. 'By the end of May,' a War Office memorandist noted, 'the country was flooded with accounts of what had occurred. These accounts, which naturally were exaggerated, came as a great shock to the Turks, and had a unifying effect on the various factions into which the country was at that time split.'[44c] Out of this newfound sense of unity, Mustapha Kemal, a high ranking Turkish Army Officer, forged within a matter of months a national movement of remarkable strength and cohesion, able to enforce its authority throughout the greater

44 F.O. 371/4223, de Robeck to Curzon, 12 Nov, 1919, undated minute by H.C.

44A Adm. 116/3240, the Conflicting Claims of Italy and Greece in the Near East, Views of a Conf. held on 31 Jan. 1919.

44B Ibid., Memo, respecting the Settlement of Turkey and the Arab Peninsula, Nov. 1918, C.

44C W.O. 32/5733, History of the National Movement in Turkey, undated, circa Nov. 1919, p.1.

part of Anatolia and to call in question the right of the Supreme Council to act as sole arbiter of Turkey's fate.

In Britain these events were not entirely unforeseen. In a memorandum written as early as July 1917, Sir Mark Sykes had set out, with remarkable prescience, the conditions likely to prevail in the post war world :

> After the crucifixion of the last three years [he wrote] the democracies of Europe must for several decades remain pacifist, but the Turks under the C.U.P. will remain unchanged militarists. Fighting is the essential of the Turk's life; the peasantry of Turkey are warriors from birth *per se* and not *per accidents* as are the peoples of Europe. The C.U.P. knows that once Europe has settled down to peace no nation will go to war. As for the International Board of Control or League of Nations, the C.U.P. knows what such machinery is worth... they desire to prepare for the day when they will negotiate with diplomatists whose Governments will not go to war, while they will have behind them the Turkish machine, which will, by instinct, religion, and tradition, always go to war at the call of fanaticism, conquest or revenge...
> ... The enfeeblement of Bulgaria, the long period of disorder which must supervene in Russia, the coming political crisis in India, and Egypt, and the intellectual hostility of Persia to Great Britain, all combine to make Turkey's post-war military position most formidable[44D].

Curzon, too, was aware of the realities of the situation. In March 1919, he had warned that hopes of possible resistance were beginning to revive in the hearts of the Turks. The Dardanelles forts were held only by weak allied detachments. The British were evacuating Transcaspia. The Franco-Greek expedition to Russia had been followed by an inglorious collapse. Egypt was in a state of ferment, and Britain and France at loggerheads over Syria and Mosul. The Allies should take note that 'the Old Turk, who still hopes to re-establish the former régime, and the Young Turk, who means to cheat us, if he can, of the spoils of victory, look out from the crumbling watchtowers of Stambul'[45]. In April 1919, more than ever concerned at the course events were taking in Paris, he again took up his pen.

> That the Turks should be deprived of Constantinople [he wrote] is, in my opinion, inevitable and desirable as the crowning evidence of their defeat in the war; and I believe that it will be accepted

44D F.O. 800/206, Memo, by Sykes, 29 July 1917.

45 H. Nicholson, *Curzon : The Last Phase 1919-25* (London, 1957), p. 79.

> with whatever wrathful reluctance by the Eastern world. But when it is realised that the fugitives are to be kicked from pillar to post and that there is to be practically no Turkish Empire and probably no caliphate at all, I believe that we shall be giving a most dangerous and most unnecessary stimulus to Moslem passions throughout the Eastern world and that sullen resentment may easily burst into savage frenzy[46].

Curzon's prognostications had little effect. The power of decision lay at that time with Lloyd George and Balfour in Paris, and they used it without undue consideration for the opinions of their noble colleague in London.

The Turkish Nationalists made it clear, in proclamations issued at Erzerum and Sivas, on 7 August 1919 and 9 September 1919 respectively, that they claimed complete freedom and independence for those parts of the Ottoman Empire which had remained unconquered on the conclusion of the armistice, and in which Ottoman Moslems formed a majority of the population[47]. This meant, in effect, that they would not accept the loss of Constantinople, the Straits or any part of Anatolia.

> It will be noted [a War Office memorandist commented] that the underlying principle of this declaration [the Erzerum proclamation] is the defence of the National rights. As a result of the defeat of the Ottoman Army by the British forces the leaders of the Movement were prepared to lose Mesopotamia, Arabia Palestine and Syria, but were determined to defend-if necessary by force - the remainder of Turkey, which represented the home of the race. Two dangers to the integrity of Turkey were mentioned in the declaration, which were to be opposed if necessary by force. The first was the division of parts of Anatolia amongst the Greeks and Armenians; the second was the granting of any form of mandate, which would result in the Ottoman Empire losing its independence to the Powers[48].

As far as the Straits were concerned, however, the Nationalists appreciated, as the Porte had done, that it might be to their advantage to recognise the special significance of the sea passage as an international waterway[49]. They

46 Ibid., p. 80.

47 W.O. 32/5733, History of the National Movement in Turkey, undated, circa Nov. 1919, appendixes A. and D.

48 Ibid., pp. 2-3.

49 Archives du Ministère de la Marine, Paris, Ca 47, Cabinet, Conf. de Lausanne, Corresp., Bulletin d'Information Militaires No. 162, Turquie, Etude faite en 1918 par Ismet Pasha, donnant le point de vue turc sur les Détroits.

declared, therefore, in article IV of the so-called National Pact, which was drawn up in December 1919 in order to convey to the Allies 'the minimum of sacrifices which can be endured to achieve a just and lasting peace' :

> The security of the city of Istanbul (which is the seat of the Kalifate of Islam, the capital of the Sultanate, and the headquarters of the Ottoman Government) and likewise the security of the Sea of Marmara must be protected from every danger. Provided this principle is maintained, whatever decision may be arrived at jointly by us and all other Governments concerned, regarding the opening of the Bosphorus to the commerce and traffic of the world, shall be valid[50].

In the early stages of the rebellion, the British were not sure how far they should take the claims of the Nationalists seriously. Admiral de Robeck, British High Commissioner in Constantinople, believed the Turks meant what they said : 'They want Turkey for the Turks', he wrote on 10 October 1919. 'They want not foreign interference or foreign protection. They want to fight Europe, and above all, England, with the weapons of pan-Islamism and pan-Turanianism. They aspire to sign, not the death warrant of the Empire, but a lease of new life'[51]. A War Office memorandist, on the other hand, was more sceptical :

> Christian and Moslem alike have the same interests to represent the case as not politics but war. The Greeks desire to push the Entente into a fresh war with Turkey, in order that the fate of their hereditary enemy may be settled for ever. The more fanatical Moslems are anxious that the movement of Mustapha Kemal shall be considered the mobilisation of an army. Both sides therefore speak freely of battles, armies, the execution of opponents and the fall of towns; although no one had been killed and few even arrested[52].

Mustapha Kemal's 'real' programme, he suggested, was 'to avoid any immediate clash with the Allies, and reserve to his party such powers of compromise, as would put him in the position of being at once the saviour of his country, and able to come to a settlement with the Entente.'[53]

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50 E.D. Smith, *Turkey : Origins of the Kemalist Movement and the Government of the Grand National Assembly* (Washington, 1959), Appendix B.

51 D.B.F.P., iv, No. 543.

52 W.O. 32/5733, History of the National Movement in Turkey, undated circa Nov. 1919, p. 4.

53 Ibid., p. 3.

That the National Movement posed a significant challenge to the authority of the Allies, however, the British did not doubt. When, therefore, in October 1919, it became clear that the United States would almost certainly not accept a mandate for Constantinople and the Straits, they returned to the task of negotiating a peace settlement with Turkey with an added sense of urgency.

In Britain, the effective withdrawal of the United States from the peace conference coincided with the appointment of Curzon as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the ending of the system of duel control which had prevailed during Balfour's absence in Paris. Curzon, more than any allied statesman, perhaps, was aware of the critical state of affairs in Turkey. He set to work, therefore, with great urgency. On 12 November 1919, he agreed with Pichon, French Foreign Minister, that, in view of the effective withdrawal of the United States, Britain and France, the only powers whose interests had to be 'seriously considered and reconciled'[54], should enter into confidential discussions in order to arrive at an understanding before the Peace Conference again considered the Turkish question. Once Britain and France had reached an understanding a conference should be called. Many questions, Curzon pointed out, remained to be decided :

> ... the future of Turkey-in-Europe and the setting up of some form of administration or control in Constantinople, whether or not the Sultan was left in Stambul; the question whether Greece was or was not to be allowed to remain in Smyrna; the question whether Italy was to have any foothold in Asia Minor or not; the question whether a mandate was to be given to any Power or Powers, either for the whole of the Turkish Empire or for any portion of it; the degree of sovereignty, if any, to be left to the Turk; the question whether, if no mandate were given or accepted, some form of international supervision would or would not, be required; the supervision of the Caucasus; the restitution of Armenia; and the future of Kurdistan[55].

The matter must be dealt with quickly : otherwise it was conceivable that 'the defeated Turk... would declare war upon the Allies, and dare them to enforce their terms... the ignominious result might be that the weakest and most abject of our foes would end by achieving the greatest triumph'[56].

54 F.O. 371/4239, Curzon's record of a conversation with Pichon, 12 Nov. 1919.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

On reconsidering the question of a Turkish peace settlement, Curzon concluded that, as the United States could no longer be expected to accept a mandate for the Straits, he would have to seek the creation of an international - in effect, an interallied - authority to administer the waterway; and that if internationalisation were to be made effective, the Sultan would have to be expelled. Curzon' colleagues generally accepted the need for internationalisation. On the question of expulsion, however, they remained divided. It was on this issue, therefore that debate, during the following months, turned.

The arguments put forward tended to repeat those presented on earlier occasions when the question had been discussed. Recent developments in Asia - in particular the rise of the Turkish National Movement and the growing influence and effectiveness of Bolshevik and Pan-Islamic propaganda and subversion - served merely to strengthen the convictions of both those who supported and those who opposed what Andrew Ryan, a political agent in Constantinople, called 'the bag and baggage alternative'[57]. Curzon was impressed by the growing power of the Turkish Nationalists in Anatolia. In a memorandum dated 4 January 1920, he pointed out :

> ... if we have to face, as I think we probably shall, a new form of Turkish nationalism, whether it be founded on religion or on race, or whether it be Pan-Islamic, or Pan-Turanian, will it be a more or less formidable factor if its rallying point and inspiration is the Sultan at Constantinople rather than a Sultan at Brusa? Will not the retention of the old capital give a prestige and an impetus to the movement which will add immensely to its potentiality for harm? A Nationalist Party in Anatolia under Mustapha Kemal may be a hard nut to crack. But a Nationalist Party with its Sovereign at Constantinople, even if his forts and warships have disappeared, will be a much more anxious problem[58].

Were the Sultan to remain in his capital, the Turks would be ideally placed to 'set the Powers by the ears, to embroil Governments and nations, and to inoculate the West with the worst vices of Eastern intrigue'[59]. Moreover,

57 F.O. 800/240, Ryan to Forbes Adam, 26 Nov. 1919; F.O. 371/4161, National Movement, report on the possible relations between Nationalist leaders and agents of the Soviet Government; W.O. 33/969, Causes of the Outbreak in Mesomotamia, appendixes 1 and 2.

58 F.O. 371/4239, The Future of Constantinople, Memo, by Curzon, 4 Jan. 1920.

59 Ibid.

Germany or Russia might 'get hold of the Sultan', as Germany had done during the war[60]. Ryan, and his colleague Forbes Adam, supported Curzon: they emphasised the dangers to Britain inherent in the forces of pan-Islamism and pan-Turanism, forces, according to Forbes Adam, dependent on the maintenance of the prestige of Turkey, a thing, itself, dependent on the retention of the Sultan-Caliph at Constantinople[61].

In reply to these arguments, Montagu pointed out that expulsion would prove 'a grave danger to the peace of the East' : it would deeply offend the Moslem communities of the British Empire; it would stimulate the Turkish Nationalist Movement, and lead to the creation of a Turkey *irredenta;* and it would encourage the Turks to join the 'forces of disorder in the world'[61a]. Far from securing Turkey against German or Russian penetration, it would make this more likely, as the Turks would be even further removed from the influence of the Allies. As for pan-Islamism and pan-Turanism, they would almost certainly prove a greater danger to the Allies if the Turks were expelled than if they stayed[62].

Curzon recognised that the expulsion of the Sultan would be unpopular with the Moslem communities of the British Empire. Nevertheless, he thought the consequences forecast by Montagu exaggerated. The Indian Moslems, he pointed out in his memorandum of 4 January 1920, had hardly reacted on previous occasions when Ottoman possession of Constantinople had been threatened. If, on this occasion, there were a disturbance, it would probably be little more than 'an artifical and an ephemeral explosion'. As for the alleged unanimity of Indian opinion, it was 'a factitious unanimity, the result of a prolonged and desperate agitation'. Even if Britain declared that she would leave the Sultan-Caliph in his capital, this would not bring her any added prestige in the Moslem world; rather it would call in question the ability of the Allies to control events.

> I assert unequivocally that if the Turk, whom the Allies have, as I have pointed out, three times declared their intention to expel from Europe as the price of defeat is nevertheless left in possession of his European capital, it will be regarded throughout the

60 Ibid.

61 F.O. 800/240, Ryan to Forbes Adam, 26 Nov. 1919: F.O. 371/4239, Memo. on Constantinople and the Straits by Forbes Adam, 10 Jan. 1920.

61A Ibid., The Turkish Peace, memo. by Montagu, 18 December. 1919.

62 Ibid.

> Eastern world as convincing proof not that the Allies would not, but that they could not, evict him ... Constantinople is the symbol to the East not of spiritual predominance, but of political power, and the measure of Mr. Montagu's anxiety to keep the Turk there, in order to placate the Moslem World, is the measure of the importance which its possession carries throughout the East... The longer view demands that we should not sacrifice the opportunity presented to us by the defeat of an enemy whose entrance into the war prolonged it for at least two years and cost us millions of treasure and tens of thousands of lives, to settle once and for all a question which more than any single cause has corrupted the political life of Europe for nearly 500 years[63].

It is evident that Curzon was unwilling to heed the views expressed by Montagu. In view of the weight of opinion opposed to his policy, however, and the fact that the Prime Minister remained undecided, he was forced to consider alternative solutions. One such put forward was that which became known as the 'Vatican Proposal'. This was that the Allies should agree 'to give the Sultan-Caliph a kind of large Vatican in Constantinople, but to keep the Turkish State in Anatolia otherwise separate with a town in Asia Minor as capital for administrative purposes'[64]. Venizelos had been among the first to suggest an arrangement along these lines In a conversation with Curzon, recorded in October 1919, he had declared that he strongly favoured the expulsion of the Sultan from his capital, but conceded that there was no reason why he should not 'retain his palaces and buildings, and even reside from time to time in Constantinople, if he cared to do so'[65]. Curzon was not averse to accepting such a compromise solution. Montagu, too, found some virtue in it : he saw that, if his case for the retention of the Sultan were rejected, a settlement along these lines would prove more acceptable to the Moslems of the Empire than one based on expulsion. When the subject came up for discussion in Cabinet, therefore, it was agreed that in the event of the Turk being expelled from Constantinople, the Sultan Caliph would be allowed to keep 'a residence at Roum'.

The meeting of British and French Prime Ministers and their Foreign Ministers, which Curzon and Pichon had arranged in November, opened in London on 11 December 1919. It at once became clear that the settlement

63 Ibid., The Future of Constantinople, memo, by Curzon, 4 Jan. 1920.
64 F.O. 800/240, Ryan to Forbes Adam, 26 Nov. 1919.
65 F.O. 371/4156, Curzon to Granville, 21 October 1919.

envisaged by Clemenceau and Berthelot, who had replaced Pichon as Foreign Minister, differed substantially from that favoured by Curzon and Lloyd George. In his opening statement, Clemenceau made it clear that he would prefer to see the Sultan remain in Constantinople, where he could be the more easily directed: in Anatolia, he would escape control, and the agents of various countries would then 'persist in the pursuit of old quarrels, renewing old traditions, and making trouble between the two nations [Britain and France] contrary to the tendencies of the Governments themselves'[66].

In fact, in France as in Britain, opinion was divided on the question of expulsion. As we have seen, the Etat-Major Général had advised that the presence of the Sultan in Constantinople would endanger allied control of the Straits[67]. Nevertheless, Clemenceau and Berthelot had decided on balance that they would prefer the Sultan to remain. They feared that expulsion would cause trouble for France in Algeria, Morocco and Syria; that Britain, aided and abetted by the United States, Greece, and other powers, would achieve a dominant position on any High Commission appointed to administer the Straits zone; and that, in the long run, expulsion would merely facilitate the conquest of the area by another power. As for the Turks, they would remain disgruntled and rebellious in Anatolia, having, as an influential French newspaper put it, 'little to hope for from the West, and little to fear'[67a].

Lloyd George and Curzon had no intention of giving way to the French. They set out, therefore, to persuade Clemenceau and Berthelot that they were mistaken. Complete control of the Straits, Lloyd George pointed out, could not be assured if the Sultan remained in Constantinople : 'Constantinople was situated at the gates of the Bosphorus. There were perhaps some 500,000 Turks in Constantinople. If they were left in control there, they would close the Bosphorus, even though the Dardanelles were open'[68]. Nor was the question merely strategic. Without the taxes raised by the city and

66 CAB. 29/81, I.C.P., 1, 2.

67 Archives du Ministère de la Marine, Paris, Ed 136. 2, Etat-Major Général, Etudes des questions relative à la Paix, Chap IV, Détroits et Canaux interoceaniens, Constantinople et Détroits, summary.

67A F.O. 371/4156, Question of Straits and future of Constantinople, Derby to Curzon. 26 Dec. 1919.

68 CAB. 29/61, I.C.P. 1, 2.

port of Constantinople, the Straits zone could not be made financially self-supporting. The Allies would then have to bear the whole expense of garrisoning the zone. In any case, if the Sultan remained, Britain and France would have to control him. That would mean condominium. He did not think they wanted that. Curzon, for his part, stressed the danger of pan-Islamism, which would resct on the French 'in Tunis, Tripoli and Algeria, no less than on the British in Egypt and India'[69].

In the course of the discussions, both Lloyd George and Curzon mentioned the 'Vatican Proposal'. The Sultan might have Yildis Kiosk, as a residence, and as a religious centre of Islam, and be allowed to have a small Turkish guard, just as the Pope had his guard in the Vatican. This proposal Clemenceau rejected out of hand. He was opposed to the creation of a new Pope in the East : 'it was quite bad enough to have one Pope in the West.'[70]

On the question of expulsion, however, Clemenceau proved more flexible. The refusal of the United States Congress to ratify the German Peace Treaty had struck a damaging blow to the security of France in Europe. In these circumstances, he felt he must maintain good relations with the British. He assured them, therefore, that he wished to arrive at 'some satisfactory arrangement' and suggested that the conference should appoint representatives, who would 'meet and compare the two systems that have been proposed... and work them out in full detail and submit them in writing', so that he and Lloyd George could decide between them[71]. Later, it would seem, he went even further. For when, shortly thereafter, Berthelot communicated a draft settlement, Lloyd George and Curzon were delighted to note that one paragraph declared :

> La liberté des Détroits ne sera garantie efficacement que par la neutralisation des rivages des Dardanelles et du Bosphore. On est ainsi amené à constituer autour de Constantinople un petit Etat neutralisé sous la garantie des grandes Puissances, en attendant la Société des Nations; le territoire de cet Etat se composera du Bassin de la Mer de Marmara et des Peninsule [s] du Dardanelles et de la Troade[72].

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid.

71 Ibid.

72 F.O. 371/4239, Turkish Peace Settlement, note communicated by Berthelot on 12 Dec. 1919, with comments by Forbes Adam and Vansittart.

The scheme drawn up by Berthelot proved acceptable to Curzon in almost every respect. It was designed to give Britain and France a position of complete control on the Straits Commission. Lesser states, such as Italy, Greece, and Rumania, might be represented, but power would remain in the hands of 'les deux pays qui possèdent en Turquie des intérêts et une influence propondérante'[73]. When on 22 December 1919, therefore, Curzon and Berthelot met to discuss the matter further, no serious difference arose between them. They agreed that, in addition to Britain, France and Italy, the United States and a reconstituted Russia might also be represented on the Commission, as might Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria (if and when she became a member of the League of Nations). They also agreed on the method of appointing the Chairman of the Commission. This they designed in such a way that for the first six years, at least, 'Great Britain and France would really decide the elections'[74]. The land frontiers of the new state would be : in Europe, the Enos-Midia line; in Asia, on the Bosphorus the Shile-Guebize line, and on the Dardanelles a line running from Tenedos to a point approximately twenty five kilometres east of the end of the Dardanelles on the Sea of Marmora. The coast line of the Sea of Marmora, between Guebize and the eastern end of the frontier of the Dardanelles zone, would remain under Turkish control, but demilitarised[75].

Curzon's success in reaching agreement with Berthelot did not lead Montagu to abandon his opposition. On the contrary he redoubled his efforts. On 1 January 1920, he circulated a memorandum, calling in question Curzon's whole conduct of the negotiations. Curzon had, he declared, ignored a Cabinet decision that alternative schemes should be prepared, played into the hands of the French, who intended 'to cause trouble in the British Empire', and ignored the opinion of those parts of the Empire' whose manpower and resources were mainly responsible for the defeat of Turkey, and whose external and internal security depended upon the solution'[76].

On 5 January 1920, in order that the question might be once more discussed before the Cabinet met finally to decide the issue the following day, Lloyd George and Curzon convened a special conference of ministers

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid., Anglo-French conf., 22 Dec. 1919.

75 Ibid.

76 W.O. 32/5735, The Turkish Peace, II, memo. by Montagu, 1 Jan. 1920.

and heads of departments. At this meeting Montagu repeated the charges he had made in his memorandum of 1 January 1920. Curzon, he declared, had ignored all alternative schemes, including that which he, himself, had suggested, whereby the Sultan would be left in Constantinople, the administration of Turkey in Europe being taken over by an international commission. It was particularly important that the Cabinet should realise the consequences of expulsion:

> ... Secret information had been received to the effect that, from the moment this treaty was signed, we should have for the first time a movement, comparable to the Sinn Fein Movement, breaking out in India, in favour of complete separation from England[77].

The stigma of a harsh settlement would inevitably fall on Britain, a consequence which the French would be quick to exploit. Already they were saying it was up to them to protect the interests of the Mohammedans. 'We should tell the Turks that we intend to keep them in order but we also intended to help them. If we raze every fort along the Straits, limit the Turkish Army, control Constantinople with the Sultan there under our eye, set up an International Commission, and an International Police Force, the Turk must be helpless.'[78]

In the face of this onslaught, Curzon remained steadfast. It was not his fault no alternative proposals had been drawn up: Berthelot had simply surrendered to the British view. He did not intend to place the Turks in manacles; on the contrary he wished to see a substantial Turkish state established in Anatolia, stretching as far as the frontiers of an Armenian state in the east and Cilicia in the south.

> In respect of the military arguments... the Military problem might be reduced in proportion, but it would not be solved by leaving the Turk in Constantinople. The problem was Mustapha Kemal, who was a Nationalist, and snapped his finger at the Sultan. Was that menace made greater or less by leaving the Turk in Constantinople? This was a disputable point. If he were left there, the whole Moslem world would say that he had triumphed after all[79].

In the end, however, Curzon was defeated. When, the following day, the Cabinet met to discuss the issue, which was described as being one of

77 CAB. 23/20, Cab., meeting, 6 Jan. 1920, appendix I.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid.

'great urgency' and 'extraordinary difficulty', they decided that, though there was much to be said in favour of expulsion, yet the Sultan should be allowed to remain in his capital. The Straits zone should be garrisoned by an international force, of which the British Empire would contribute a part[80].

In reaching this decision, the Cabinet were clearly influenced by Montagu's predictions that wide-spread subversion and rebellion would follow expulsion. Numerous intelligence reports had been received, suggesting that Bolshevik, Nationalist, and Pan-Islamic forces were attempting to coordinate their activities and launch a combined attack on Britain and France in Asia. In these circumstances, Montagu's report of secret information regarding the possibility of 'a movement, comparable to the Sinn Fein Movement, breaking out in India', made a great impression.

A report on the strategic position on the Straits, presented by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the First Sea Lord, also played an important part in convincing a majority of the Cabinet that they should vote against expulsion. In their note, the Naval and General Staff had advised :

> If... the Sultan and the Turkish Government were removed into Asia Minor the whole military position would be altered to our disadvantage, for in peace we should lose both knowledge of his plans and power to check his preparations and the powerful deterrent from evil doing of our having the Sultan and the whole of his Government under our guns would have disappeared. If, therefore, the Sultan and his Government are removed from Constantinople a much larger garrison would be required, and a more elaborate system of defence, especially on the Asia Minor side, where a veritable frontier, with all its disadvantages and bickerings and constant aggravation would have to be set up[81].

Fear that, following expulsion, France would exploit Britain's discomfiture, proved a third, and perhaps decisive, factor inspiring the Cabinet decision. Before concluding their business, the ministers instructed Lloyd George to inform the French that the publication in France of numerous premature announcements and articles, laying the responsibility for expulsion at Britain's door, had carried great weight with the Cabinet in determining them not to proceed[82].

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80 Ibid., Conclusions.
81 Ibid., appendix III.
82 Ibid., Conclusions.

Curzon was deeply shocked by the Cabinet's decision. Not only had they repudiated his policy, they had, he felt, rejected his unparalleled knowledge and experience, Short of resignation, however, there was little he could do; but protest. The following day, therefore, he wrote :

> I ask to place on record my earnest and emphatic dissent from the decision arrived at by the majority of the Cabinet yesterday - in opposition to the advice of the Prime Minister and two successive Foreign Secretaries - to retain the Turk in Constantinople, I believe this to be a short-sighted and, in the long run, a most unfortunate decision.
>
> In order to avoid trouble in India - largely manufactured and in any case ephemeral, - and to render our task in Egypt less difficult - its difficulty being in reality almost entirely independent of what we may do or not do at Constantinople, - we are losing an opportunity for which Europe has waited nearly five centuries, and which may not recur. The idea of a respectable and docile Turkish Government at Constantinople preserved from its hereditary vices by a military cordon of the Powers - including, be it remembered, a permanent British garrison of 10,000 to 15,000 men- is in my judgement a chimera. Nor will it be found that the decision, if carried into effect in Paris, will either solve the Turkish problem or calm the Eastern world.
>
> The Turk at Constantinople must have very different measure meted out to him from the Turk in Konia. He will retain a sovereignty which will have to be a mere simulacrum, and those who have saved him will, unless I am mistaken, presently discover, that his rescue has neither satisfied him nor pacified Islam. But, beyond all I regret that the main object for which the war in the East was fought and the sacrifice of Gallipoli endured - namely the liberation of Europe from the Ottoman Turk - has after an almost incredible expenditure of life and treasure been thrown away in the very hour when it has been obtained, and that we shall have left to our descendants - who knows after how much further sacrifice and suffering - a task from which we have flinched.
>
> I may add that the refusal of the Cabinet to endorse the scheme prepared by M. Berthelot and myself was resolved on without any consideration by them of what the rival scheme will be, i.e. a Turkish State still centred at Constantinople but under international supervision. When produced it may cause some surprise[83].

83 F.O. 371/4239, The Peace with Turkey, memo. by Curzon, 7 Jan. 1920.

The production of a rival scheme was, in fact, put in hand by Lloyd George, immediately following the Cabinet meeting. Montagu was given the task of drafting it. The scheme he produced clearly reflected his desire to placate Turkey and the Moslem world. Turkey's frontier in Europe, he suggested, should be either 'the pre-war frontier from Aya Stefano to the left bank of the Maritsa opposite Hadi keui, thence the left bank of the Maritsa to Enos, to include Adrianople', or 'an approximately direct line between Enos and Midia'[84]. The Straits, and the inter-allied force securing them, should be placed in the hands of an international commission, which would also control Turkey's finances[85].

All this was too much for Curzon. When the scheme was considered in Cabinet he at once launched a blistering attack on it. Lloyd George, therefore, asked him, in turn, to draw up a counter-draft which, while leaving the Turks in possession of their capital, would yet avoid the disastrous consequences he had suggested would result from the realisation of Montagu's proposals. This Curzon did. Turkey's frontier in Europe, he suggested, should be the Chatalja lines. The remainder of Turkey in Europe should go to Greece. As for the question of control, two separate commissions should be set up, each with its own responsibility. Membership of the Straits Commission might take the form he and Berthelot had suggested at the Conference of 22-23 December 1919. Alternatively, it might be confined to the representatives of France, Britain and Italy[86].

In proposing the Chatalja lines, Curzon was prompted by the fact that Berthelot had, himself, included this proposal in an alternative draft, which he had communicated to London following the Conference of 22-23 December 1919[87]. He was also prompted by Venizelos who, in a memorandum dated 12 January 1920, reminded him that if the Allies were to 'entrust to Greece the military guardianship of the Gallipoli Peninsula, it would be possible to utilize the Anglo-Franco-Italian Military force to which is entrusted the protection of Constantinople and the Straits, for the more effectual protection of the Eastern Coast of the Dardanelles and of both coasts of the Bosphorus'[88].

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84 Ibid., Letter from Forbes Adam to Phipps, 19 Jan. 1920, appendix A.
85 Ibid.
86 Ibid., appendix B.
87 Ibid., Vansittart to Curzon, 12 Jan. 1920, enclosure.
88 Ibid., Forbes Adam to Phipps, 19 Jan. 1920, appendix C.

When the Cabinet discussed Curzon's counter draft, they decided, according to Forbes Adam, 'under the influence of the usual forces', that the proposed controls over Turkey were too severe[89]. Curzon was, therefore, obliged to accept a number of minor amendments to his counter draft, designed to placate Moslem opinion[90]. This he did with ill grace. He remained convinced that, as he had suggested in an introduction to the original counter draft, Turkish possession of Constantinople would render 'illusory and unworkable in practice the major part of the safeguards proposed for the straits...,' and that neither his fellow countrymen nor his allies would maintain and provision a force sufficient to secure the Straits zone[91].

On 12 February 1920, the Allies met in conference in London to draft a treaty of peace with Turkey. The understanding which Curzon and Berthelot had reached, in December 1919 - January 1920, enabled them to make rapid progress. They quickly agreed that the Sultan should be allowed to remain in his capital. This decision they took virtually without discussion. Millerand, who, in January 1920, had succeeded Cemenceau as President of the Council, merely pointed out, in terms almost identical with those used by Montagu, that 'France had very great Mahometan interests, and that she was bound to consider these when addressing herself to the problem of Constantinople'[92]. Nitti, the recently elected Prime Minister of Italy, not fully aware perhaps of what had passed between the British and the French in December 1919, some-what half-heartedly put forward the 'Vatican Proposal', adding, however, that he, himself, was opposed to it. Lloyd George, for his part, was content to express his 'apprehensions as to the wisdom of the course which... commended itself to them'[93]. Curzon did not even bother to speak.

Having taken this decision, the allies turned their attention to other questions concerned with the peace treaty, and in particular, to that of securing allied control of the Straits. On this question, too, they quickly reached agreement: a demilitarised Straits zone should be created, secured

89 Ibid., Forbes Adam to Phipps, 19 Jan. 1920.
90 Ibid., appendix D.
91 Ibid., appendix B.
92 CAB. 29/82, I. C.P., 28, 2.
93 Ibid.,

by an inter-allied force and administered by an international commission[94]. In Europe, the frontier dividing Greece and Turkey should be the Chatalja line, though the Enos-Midia line might be considered should the Allies decide to compensate Turkey for the loss of Smyrna[95]. The frontier of the Straits zone should stretch, in Europe, from Karachali to Kara Burun; in Asia from Kenier to a point approximate to Singirli by way of Manias Gul and Isnik[96]. Within the Straits zone, all fortifications, works, and roads and railways suitable for the transportation of mobile artillery should be destroyed, and their reconstruction forbidden. Not less than three battalions of infantry, two batteries of artillery and an indefinite number of technical troops should be stationed in the zone to ensure that no action detrimental to the Allies should accur[97]. Article I of the draft articles dealing with the administration of the Straits should read:

> The navigation of the Straits, including the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora and the Bosphorus, shall in future be open both in peace and war (except as provided below) to the ships of the Allied and Associated Powers, of all States members of the League of Nations, and of States non-members of the League of Nations on an application being made to the Council of the League of Nations and approved by them, provided that such States accept the provisions of the present scheme. These waters shall not be subject to blockade, nor shall any right of war be exercised nor any act of hostility be committed within them, unless in pursuance of a decision of the Council of the League of Nations[98].

Turkey should delegate to a Commission of the Straits control of all waters between the Mediterranean mouth of the Dardanelles and the Black Sea mouth, and the waters within three miles of each of these mouths. The commission should be composed of representatives appointed respectively by the United States (if and when she was willing to participate), Britain, France, Italy, Russia (if and when she became a member of the League of Nations), Greece, Rumania and Bulgaria. The great powers should have two votes

94 Ibid.,
95 Ibid., 36, 2.
96 W.O. 32/5735, Military Aspects of the Turkish Peace Settlement.
97 CAB. 29/82, I. C.P., 36, 2, appendix 1.
98 CAB. 29/83, I. C.P., 57, appendix 1.

each, the minor powers one[99]. The Commission should have its own flag, budget and organisation[100].

While the Allies continued their deliberations, events in Turkey did not stand still. During the first week in February 1920, Turkish Nationalist and irregular forces attacked the French garrison at Marash and drove it from the town. According to the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople, between 15,000 and 20,000 Armenians were then massacred[101]. Though the War Office had learnt something of these events from 'a confused French report'[102], received 11-12 February 1920, and from the reports of their own agents received during the following fortnight[103], Curzon did not become aware of their full import until 27 February 1920. He at once informed Lloyd George, and they agreed that the Supreme Council should consider the matter the following day[104].

After discussing the question at length, the Supreme Council decided that action should be taken both in Cilicia and Constantinople. In Cilicia, France should make herself responsible for the restoration of order. In Constantinople, the Allies should take

> ... some drastic measure... this might assume the form of occupying the War Office or some important Government building, and of securing the persons of the Grand Vizier and the Minister of War, or of such Ministers as are primarily responsible, and placing them in confinement, either on land or in an Allied man-of-war, pending a further investigation of the matter[105].

The allied High Commissioners should be asked to consult and advise what steps, in this or in any other sense, they might recommend.

This request de Robeck received on 29 February 1920. He at once arranged to consult with the French and Italian High Commissioners. At the same time he agreed with the French High Commissioner that no recom-

99 Ibid., minutes.
100 Ibid., 92, appendix 2.
101 Ibid., 53, 1.
102 F.O. 371/4162, W.O. to G.H.Q., Const., 9 Feb. 1920.
103 CAB. 29/83, I. C.P., 53, 1.
104 Ibid.,
105 Ibid., 55, appendix.

mendation should be made until the Council had considered the contents of a telegram he had despatched that morning. In this he had pointed out that the means required to impose the peace settlement would depend on the terms proposed. If these were severe, the Allies would only be able to impose them by force; if lenient, they might attempt to form a *bloc* of moderate elements round the Sultan, whom they might support against the extremists.

> I feel most strongly that course to be followed by Allies should not depend for its direction or jurisdiction on what has happened in Cilicia... what we have to adjust our action to is the wider issue raised by Nationalists to resist drastic peace, and apparent intention of Peace Conference to impose one[106].

The Supreme Council appreciated de Robeck's point. When, therefore, on 5 March 1920, they next considered the question, they decided that, as the settlement they proposed was severe, they would go ahead and authorise the occupation of Constantinople. The Turkish Government should be informed that the occupation would continue until the terms of peace had been accepted and executed, and that, if any further outrages occured, the peace terms would be rendered even more severe[107]. This decision, the Council, on 10 March 1920, confirmed[108]. On 16 March 1920, the operation was accomplished. The Ministries of War and Marine, the Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones and other Government buildings were seized. In one case only was resistance offered; in the fight which ensued, one British and five Turkish soldiers were killed[109].

The principal features of the proposed peace settlement - the cession of Thrace up to the Chatalja lines to Greece, complete international control of the Straits, the presence of an international force in that zone, close financial supervision of the Turkish Government, the cession of Smyrna to Greece subject only to Turkish suzerainty, the creation of an independent Armenia and the probable creation of an independent Kurdistan - the Supreme Coun-

106 D.B.F.P., vii, No. 50, n. 7.

107 Ibid., appendix I.

108 Ibid., No. 60.

109 D.B.F.P., xiii, No. 24: F.O. 371/4223, Operations and Intelligence Summary No. 12, British H.Q., Smyrna.

cil communicated to the High Commissioners on 6 March 1920[110]. The severity of the proposed settlement shocked the Commissioners. On 10 March 1920, therefore, they despatched a joint telegram to the Supreme Council, advising them of the consequences they believed would follow :

> First, a refusal by Turkey to sign the treaty or to ratify it if it is signed or to execute it if it is ratified. Second, the abdication or deposition of the Sultan, the accesion of a new Sultan, and the creation of a new Government in Asia, the flight of Parliament to Anatolia, the rising of the whole of the Turkish elements and widespread massacre of Christians in Asia Minor and Thrace. As soon as the stipulations of the treaty become known there is a danger that these consequences, and in particular the massacres, will at once ensue. Third, attempts in Europe which may be continued indefinitely to secure any action against the Greeks between the Bulgarians and the Turks. Fourth, the possibility of combined action in the future in Asia between the Bolsheviks, the Arabs, and the Turks[111].

The High Commissioners clearly hoped that the dire consequences they predicted would persuade the Supreme Council to redraft the terms of the peace treaty. The Supreme Council, however, refused to alter course. Lloyd George and Curzon, in particular, were determined to see the draft treaty implemented. To this end the Supreme Council instructed the Versailles Commission of Military and Naval Experts to advise on the military measures which would be required to execute the treaty[112].

The Allies completed the draft treaty at San Remo, 18-26 April 1920. They dealt, in particular, with the Armenian and Kurdish question, and the financial clauses. As far as the Straits were concerned, little of any consequence was decided : a proposal that the frontier of Turkey in Europe should be altered was considered and rejected; and a number of articles dealing with the administration of the Straits modified or deleted[113].

The question of Turkey's frontier in Europe was raised, in a rather circuitous fashion, by Nitti. Using his authority as President of the Council,

110 CAB. 29/83, I. C.P., 66, appendix 1.
111 Ibid., 74, appendix III.
112 D.B.F.P., vii, No. 74.
113 CAB. 29/86, I. C.P., 101, 102, 103.

he instructed Foch's Commission of Military and Naval Experts to report on the military consequences which would follow from the extension of Greek sovereignty to the Gallipoli Peninsula and the shores of the Sea of Marmora. The Commission advised that the extension of Greek sovereignty would make allied control of the Straits zone difficult. Using this report as a pretext, Nitti proposed that the Supreme Council should reconsider the question[114].

Nitti's proposal reflected the discontent the Italians felt with the proposed settlement. They objected to the presence of the Greeks on the Straits and in Asia Minor. They looked on Greece not as an ally, but as a competitor in the eastern Mediterranean. 'If Greece owned the Gallipoli Peninsula', Nitti informed his allied colleagues, 'he could not regard the freedom of the Straits as assured'[115].

Lloyd George and Curzon rejected Nitti's proposal. They believed that a divided sovereignty on the Straits, far from threatening, would actually promote allied control. In any case, as Lloyd George pointed out, military control of the area assigned to Greece would remain in allied hands; civil administration alone would be Greek[116].

As regards the administration of the Straits, the Allies agreed that, in order that the principle of complete freedom should be sustained, article 1 of the draft articles should be amended to read :

> The navigation of the Straits, including the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora, and the Bosphorus, shall in future be open, both in peace and war, to every vessel of commerce or of war and to military and commercial aircraft without distinction of flag. These waters shall not be subject to blockade nor shall any right of war be exercised or any act of hostility be committed within them, unless in pursuance of a decision of the Council of the League of Nations[117].

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114 Ibid., 101, 5.

115 Ibid.,

116 Ibid.,

117 Ibid., 102, appendix 1; Adm. 116/2034, Adm. to British Naval Delgation, 12 April 1920.

They also agreed that article 8 should be amended in order that, in the event of liberty of passage being interfered with, the High Commission should inform, not as previously proposed, the commander of the allied forces, but the allied ambassadors, who would then concert with the allied commanders such measures as might be deemed necessary[118].

On 20 April 1920, the Supreme Council considered the execution of the peace treaty. They decided that, as the Versailles Commission of Military and Naval Experts, whose report they had before them, had advised that twenty seven divisions would be required to execute the treaty in full, and as nineteen only were available, they would seek what Curzon referred to as the 'progressive realisation of the treaty, so far as our forces permit it'[119]. As for the areas which might, in the first instance, be left out of account, the Council adopted a suggestion, put forward by Venizelos, that these might include the Armenian provinces. As for the disarmament of Turkey, this might be left to 'whatever Turkish government might be at Constantinople when the treaty came to be signed...' Should the Turks in Anatolia resist, the Allies should ocupy strategic points and deprive Turkey of her sources of revenue. In this way, her 'arteries would be cut and she would be compelled to give in'[120]. The Allies were, however, unwilling to abandon the Armenians completely. They decided, therefore, to make one more effort to persuade the United States to 'come forward and assist', either by accepting a mandate for an Armenian state, or by sending military and financial aid to its people. As Lloyd George pointed out, the approach offered an additional advantage : if President Wilson rejected an invitation, he would no longer be able to lecture the Allies on their handling of the Turkish question[121].

On this basis, the Allies agreed to present the terms of peace to the Turks in Paris on 11 May 1920. The remainder of the conference was given over to completing the final draft of the peace treaty and the tripartite agreement which was to accompany it.

During the later stages of the Conference of London and the Conference of San Remo the position of the Allies in Turkey continued to deteriorate.

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118 Ibid.,
119 CAB. 29/86, I. C.P., 99, 1.
120 Ibid.,
121 Ibid.

On 2 April 1920, the Turkish Government resigned rather than issue a declaration condemning the National Movement in terms acceptable to the allied High Commissioners[122]. Its successor, formed by Damad Ferid Pasha, was constructed 'entirely on non-party lines', made up of 'unknown men', its authority dependent, to a large extent, on the support of the occupying powers[123]. Towards the end of April the Nationalists defeated the forces of Ahmet Anzavour, a Circassian bandit, whom the Sultan had appointed governor of Balikesir. As a result, Nationalist troops were able to occupy areas bordering the Sea of Marmora, and to threaten the Allies in their control of both the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles[124]. In Anatolia, Mustapha Kemal continued to publish his defiance of the Allies : 'La nation ottomane tout en gardant son sang-froid et modération est résolue à défendre ces droits sacrés et plusieurs fois séculaires comme état libre et indépendant...'[125] Meanwhile, from Cilicia came rumours of the impending withdrawal of French forces from the area, while the Italians, for their part, were reported to be currying favour with the Turkish Nationalists, supplying them with arms and equipment and encouraging them in their opposition to the Greeks[126]. Finally, on 29 April 1920, came news from Washington that Congress had voiced strong disapproval of the allied proposal that the United States should accept a mandate for Armenia. American participation was, therefore, Sir A. Geddes, British Ambassador at Washington, reported, 'highly improbable'[126a].

The position of the Allies was, however, far from hopeless. As Lloyd George reminded his collegues, they controlled Constantinople, the Straits, Smyrna and parts of Cilicia[127]. In Thrace a Nationalist rebellion, headed by Jaffar Tayar, had recently collapsed[128]. In Smyrna a powerful and well organised Greek army was ready to strike at the Nationalists, should the Supreme Council authorise it to do so. 'If France and Italy were reluctant to commit themselves', Venizelos had told P. Kerr, Lloyd George's Private

122 D.B.F.P., xiii, No. 42.
123 Ibid., No. 45.
124 Ibid., No. 54.
125 Ibid., No. 58.
126 Ibid., No. 55.
126A Ibid., No. 57.
127 CAB. 29/86, I. C.P., 99, 1.
128 D.B.F.P., xiii, No. 54.

Secretary, in March 1920, 'Greece was willing to undertake the task with the cooperation of the British troops now in Constantinople.'[129] France and Italy had, indeed, grown 'reluctant'. They could not, however, afford to pursue an independent policy, and were compelled to respect Britain's determination to resist the Nationalists and to impose a harsh peace on the Turks. Neither wished at that stage, to jeopardise the whole structure of the peace conference and risk destroying the alliance. Lloyd George and Curzon were, therefore, aware that, despite the disturbing indications of Italian and French disloyalty, their allies were unlikely to renege on their commitment to the principle of a jointly negotiated settlement.

The settlement envisaged in the draft treaty was essentially that which the Allies had agreed in the secret treaties drawn up in the course of the war. Britain was to obtain Mesopotamia and Palestine, France Syria and Cilicia, and Italy south-western Anatolia. In one respect, however, the settlement differed. Control of Constantinople and the Straits, the greatest prize of the war in the area, had fallen not to Russia but to the western Entente Powers. The defeat of Russia, however, which had made these powers strong on the Straits, had created a power vacuum in Anatolia. This vacuum they were, themselves, unable or unwilling to fill. They had, therefore, attempted to draw in the United States. Though at first the Americans had shown interest, in the end they had retired. As a result, the Turks had been left free and unhindered to reestablish their power, and had become, of all the defeated peoples ,the only one capable of challenging the Supreme Council. At Sam Remo, the Allies continued to hope that, in the wake of a peace settlement, the Nationalist Movement would lose its momentum. If, however, it continued to grow, it was evident that they would soon be called on to decide how far they would go in defending their hard won position, both on the Straits and in the Near and Middle East as a whole.

129 Ibid., No. 18.